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**UNIVERSITY OF JAMMU**  
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***B.A. Semester II***

**SUBJECT : PHILOSOPHY**

**UNIT : I-V**

**CODE NO. PL-201**

**LESSON No. : 1-15**

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# **SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

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*EDITING AND PROF. READING*  
**Dr. K. Bakshi**

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**SYLLABI AND COURSE OF STUDY IN PHILOSOPHY FOR  
B.A. SEMESTER-II**

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There shall be one written paper of 100 marks and of three hours duration. 20% of the marks shall be reserved for Internal Assessment. Paper will be set for 80 marks obtained by regular students. Internal Assessment received from the colleges will be added to the marks obtained by them in the University examination and in case of private candidates, marks obtained by them in the University examination shall be increased proportionately in accordance with the statutes/Regulation.

**PL-201            Social and Political Philosophy**

**Unit-I            Introduction**

- 1.1    Meaning, nature of Social and Political Philosophy.
- 1.2    Relation of Social Philosophy with Sociology.
- 1.3    Relation of Political Philosophy with Political Science

**Unit-II            Society and Its Theories**

- 2.1    Meaning and Nature of Society.
- 2.2    Relation of Individual to Society.
- 2.3    Theories of Society:
  1.      Social Contact theory of Society.
  2.      Organic Theory of Society.

**Unit-III            Social Problems**

- 3.1    Meaning and Characteristics of Social Problems.
- 3.2    Major Social Problems (Rural and Urban) – Their Causes.
- 3.3    Remedial Measures of Social Problems.

**Unit-IV            Basic Political Concepts**

- 4.1    Concept of Liberty - J. S. Mill

4.2 Concept of Equality – J. J. Roussears

4.3 Concept of Justice – John Rawls

**Unit-V**            **Crime and Punishment**

5.1. Crime - Meaning and Causes

5.2 Methods of Prevention of Crime

5.3 Theories of Punishment – Preventive Theory.

– Retributive Theory.

– Reformative Theory.

**NOTE FOR PAPER SETTING**

The question paper will contain two question from each unit (total ten questions) and the candidates will be required to answer one question from each unit (total question to be attempted will be five) i.e there will be internal choice within each unit.

**Books Recommended**

- |    |                                     |                                 |
|----|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Social Philosophy—                  | R. N. Sharma                    |
| 2. | Social Philosophy—                  | J.S. Mackenzie.                 |
| 3. | Social Philosophy—                  | Dr. Balkrishana S. Pandit       |
| 4. | Social Problems in India—           | Vidya Bhushan and D.R. Sachdeva |
| 5. | Sociology– Principles of Sociology— | C.N. Shankar Rao                |

# SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

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**Introduction : Nature and Scope of Social Philosophy;  
Relation of Social Philosophy with Sociology**

**Structure**

- 1.1 Objectives**
- 1.2 Introduction**
- 1.3 Nature of Social Philosophy**
- 1.4 Scope of Social Philosophy**
- 1.5 Definition and Nature of Sociology**
- 1.6 Relation of Social Philosophy with Sociology**
- 1.7 Conclusion**

**1.1 OBJECTIVES**

The basic aim of this unit and this lesson is to introduce the social aspect of philosophy to the students of well known discipline called philosophy. Philosophy, basically, is the subject which deals with the concepts of Real and ultimately Real. It is pursuit of wisdom and hence philosophers are called wise men. With the process of social development social problems have increased. These problems need an altogether new perspective of dealing with them. Social problems need attention of philosophers. Therefore, a new study of social philosophy developed in the modern age. The students of philosophy have to devote some time in understanding and solving complicated problems from an entirely new point of view. The lesson is to introduce these facts to the students of philosophy.

**1.2 INTRODUCTION**

Social philosophy is relatively a new development in the field of philosophy as an important branch or area of study. A philosopher is a man who is constantly

engaged in knowing the Real. Philosophy is a comprehensive subject consisting of branches like Metaphysics or theory of reality, Epistemology or theory of knowledge, Logic, Ethics and Aesthetics. A student of philosophy is generally supposed to deal with all these different areas of knowledge very objectively and rationally. Philosophy is aimed at developing critical and analytical attitude and a rational point of view of life. With the growth of civilization and advancement of knowledge life has acquired new dimensions and meaning. This is particularly true of the period of last two hundred years during which the social life of man has become more complicated. There are so many social problems which need solution for the sake of peace and happiness of all. Philosophy tries to deal with social problems in a totally different way. As a branch of philosophy, social philosophy is the study of society and social relations. It is an objective and critical approach to solve common social problems.

Social philosophy is now recognised as an important branch of philosophy. Social philosophy as the term indicates is the philosophy of society. Human society is nothing but a network of social relations. There is a consciousness among individuals who constitute society that they are related with each other in one or the other way. Human beings have feelings, emotions, instincts, desires and passions. They are also conscious of right and wrong, good and bad. All these influence man's consciousness and his relation with others. Love, hatred, jealousy are as powerful factors in social life as sympathy, benevolence and sacrifice are. Then unity and diversity are the basic trait of social life and social relations. There is element of interdependence in social life which has assumed a wider dimension of interdependence among nations of the world. Today, a society is to be measured not by men and their groups but by the interaction and inter-relations that exist among them. Social philosophy deals with all these issues in a dispassionate manner. It seeks to determine facts and values involved in the network of social relations. Social philosophy looks at the human society in all its perspectives: past, present and future. Many social issues which are somehow ignored by political and economic developments, form the domain of social philosophy.

With the growth of large cities after industrial revolution demands have increased as compared to the available resources. The competitive life of cities is faced with enumerable

social problems. Social conflicts, violence and crimes have assumed dangerous proportions. A social philosopher has to attend to these problems to find out the causes and remedies in the larger interest of ideal human relations. The growth of various social institutions and organisations as also their role in social life forms part of the subject matter of social philosophy.

### **1.3 & 1.4 NATURE AND SCOPE OF SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY**

As the philosophy of social values, social philosophy has two aspects - critical and appreciative. In its critical aspect, it evaluates the sociological facts in the light of supreme good of man and thus examines validity of social values. Validity of social values is tested through the test of moral standard as from the western point of view. From Indian point of view the moral level is not the highest level of human development. Therefore the real criterion should not be merely moral but also spiritual, so that the moral values themselves may be evaluated. In its appreciative aspects social philosophy seeks to appreciate the natural tendency of man to distinguish good and bad, proper and improper through the use of reason.

Social philosophy is a normative science. Since the goal of social life is harmonious development of social relations, social philosophy seeks to enquire the conditions of such relationships. It is the norm or the standard of peace and happiness in the society. A social philosopher determines the laws and institutions which help in the maintenance of healthy social relations. Thus a supreme ideal is set for the proper assessment of such relations. As a normative discipline social philosophy differs from positive studies such as sociology, economics and political science. According to Prof. J. S. Mackenzie, social philosophy makes "effort to study values, ends, ideals and not primarily what exists or has existed or may be expected to exist, but rather the means and worth of these modes of existence".

Philosophical approach is more comprehensive and tries to harmonise facts and values. Therefore, when a philosopher seeks to examine social life and social problems he does not exclude any aspect of social life. However, he pays more attention to the 'value' aspect of social relations. Social philosophy does not merely discover facts which it takes from other social sciences, its main function is to examine social values in the light of social facts. In this way an attempt is made to present

harmonious picture of social good.

By the scope of any subject we generally mean the area and the subject matter which that subject covers. Scope refers to the totality of contents. Each subject and for that matter each science has a well defined subject matter to be a systematic study. Social philosophy is also a science of society and hence a systematic study of social problems. By comprehending the main problem which is to discover the philosophical foundations of the society, the scope of social philosophy can be understood.

Since social philosophy is a branch of philosophy its scope is more limited. Whereas philosophy studies variety of metaphysical, epistemological and ethical issues, social philosophy confines itself only to social problems. In the words of Mackenzie, "Social philosophy, in particular, concentrates its attention on the social unity of mankind, and seeks to interpret the significance of the social aspects of human life with reference to that unity". All the aspects of human life are included in the scope of social philosophy.

As a distinct subject of study, social philosophy has acquired a definite meaning. It is to be understood as a different subject than sociology. While sociology deals with all aspects of human and social life, social philosophy concentrates its attention to the problems related with social relationships. It is also an effort to study social values in existence. At the same time it may also be pointed out that social philosophy does not ignore the conclusions of various social sciences, it interprets such conclusions for the benefit of knowing social relations.

Social philosophy also deals with social organisations and social institutions which influence social life and social relations. It studies the role of social institutions and problems they face in achieving their ideals. Social philosophy sets norms of behaviour and makes assessment of the functioning of various social organisations. Thus it performs a very important function. Social conflicts which arise due to social relations also form part of the subject matter of social philosophy. Then the problems of industrial society such as crime also attract attention of social philosophers. For example, why and how a normal human being turns hostile and indulges in criminal activities? Social philosophy studies all problems of society and suggests measures to bring harmony and peace. In short, social philosophy is the value study of human society.

### **DEFINITION OF SOCIOLOGY**

Before we try to understand relation of social philosophy with sociology, it is necessary to understand the meaning of sociology. Sociology has grown as the science of society. In the modern age, the simple social life of the ancient period was replaced by highly complex life with innumerable problems. Hence, a separate science to deal with the society and its problems became necessary. Sociology is the systematic study of social life and social institutions. Sorokin describes sociology as the study of social life. In the words of George Simmel, "Sociology as the science of the form of human inter-relations". In brief, sociology is that social science which studies the forms and kinds of human relations in society. As most of the social sciences depend on sociology for their studies, sociology is called science of social sciences. Sociology studies all aspects of social life such as social traditions, social processes and behaviour, forms of social relations, impact of social forms on social relations. In short, sociology is the factual study of society as a whole.

### **RELATION OF SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY WITH SOCIOLOGY**

Sociology is one of the significant subjects in the way of portraying human nature. Every man is social, thus none's activities fall outside the study of this subject. The word sociology has been derived from the Latin word 'Socius' meaning associate or companion and the Greek word "Logos" meaning theory. Thus the etymological meaning of Sociology is the theory or science of human association or society. Thus Sociology is that social science which studies the forms and kinds of human relations in society. Infact sociology includes all the problems of society. In the words of Motwani, "Sociology seeks to see life full and see it whole".

There are two schools about the scope of sociology - synthetic and formal.

According to first School Sociology is the science of society. It studies social relations.

According to second, School, Sociology studies not the social phenomena, relations and duties, but their forms.

In short sociology studies different aspects of social life such as social tradition, processes and behavior, forms of social events and their inter relations, impact of social forces on social relation etc.

### **Relation of social philosophy with sociology.**

Both social philosophy and sociology study the same problems of the society, although from different angles and methodologies. Social Philosophy is a normative science, while sociology is prescriptive one.

Sociology studies the man within the limitation of time and place, but social philosophy studies human society as a part of big universe. Sociology's main focus is on facts whereas Social Philosophy deals primarily with values. Values without facts are empty whereas facts without values are meaningless. Thus social philosophy and sociology are inter-dependent. The question of this interrelation has received an impetus since the end of the Second World War.

'Social Philosophy' according to Pascal Gilbert, " Social Philosophy is the meeting point of sociology and philosophy".

Social philosophy is concerned with the questions of fundamental principles and concepts of social life. It is also concerned with enquiries into the validity of the presuppositions and principles of social science in its synthetic function. Social philosophy seeks to bring together its results with those of other social sciences.

In short, social philosophy is concerned with the ultimate values of social life and the various means of attaining them. Like social philosophy, sociology also deals with social values but only so far as they are considered as sociological data.

According to Pascal Gilbert, "The role played by the idea of duty in the development of the Roman Juridical Institution or the influence of the concept of Dharma in making of Indian Institutions - belongs to scientific part of sociology or social philosophy".

Although philosophy deals with the questions of validity, but in practice the validity of social ends is generally supported by common affirmation. It has been pointed out that sociology is only productive so far as it consists of a philosophical basis, otherwise, it runs the risk of being reduced to a thing of shreds and patches, where facts and investigations on them are piled, but no final meaning is achieved.

Hence, Social philosophy is closely connected with sociology.

Differences between the two

- 1) Social Philosophy studies human values where as sociology studies social relations and processes.
- 2) The approach of sociology is factual while that of social philosophy is axiological. Sociology describes relatives as they are in themselves but social philosophy evaluates them in the light of the supreme human values.
- 3) The method adopted by social philosophy is philosophical whereas that of sociology is scientific. Social philosophy is not merely descriptive but also critical.
- 4) Sociology emphasizes the creative and constructive aspect of social event, while social philosophy tries to discover the meaning and motivation of social processes. Sociology studies social problems but social philosophy determines the place of human society in the universe. Sociology attaches great importance to facts and social philosophy to values.
- 5) Social philosophy deals with human values and is a value study of the society and social relations but on the other hand sociology is a factual study of events and processes. It studies social relations as what 'they are' where as social philosophy studies then as what they 'ought to be'.
- 6) Social philosophy is a normative discipline whereas sociology is a positive science. One is concerned with values and the other with facts. Since social philosophy is a normative science, it tries to evaluate social relations and social institutions with the criterion of supreme human ideals as values. But sociology is only concerned with facts of social life.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

It must be confessed that social philosophy, like philosophy in general, has no direct practical results. But this is not to say that it has no practical value. Social philosophy does help us to discover the guiding principles by which our course as social beings has to be directed. The social life is very complex and it is difficult to apply definite principles to it. But we have to remember that man is midway between an animal and a god. Therefore all aspects of his life have to be studied with imaginative insight, as well as with scientific precision. Social philosophers keep this in mind and very consciously set practical ideals and goals before mankind. Their emphasis on human values helps the society from drifting into life of merely eating and drinking, like that of other animals. Thus social philosophy has very important role as a subject.

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**Relation of Political Philosophy with Political Science**

**Structure**

- 1.3.1 Objectives
- 1.3.2 Introduction of the terms political science and political philosophy
- 1.3.3 Dissimilarities between the two
- 1.3.4 Relation between the two
- 1.3.5 Conclusion
- 1.3.6 Glossary
- 1.3.7 Questions
- 1.3.8 Suggested reading and references

**1.3.1 Objectives**

To introduce to the student the terms political philosophy and political science

Enabling the student to understand the relationship between political philosophy and political science along with the discussion of dissimilarities between the two

**1.3.2 Introduction of the terms political science and political philosophy**

**Political science:** Aristotle regarded political science as the master of all the sciences. This is because political science influences every facet of the social endeavor of man. Political science focuses on studying the governments, the formulation of public policies, description of political systems and processes, and

political behavior. The basic function of studying political science is that it helps us in understanding politics. Political science is a vast field that encompasses other subjects like public policy, sociology, international relation and economics. The topics like national politics, political theory, comparative politics, history and law is also included in political science. It is often described as the study of politics defined as ‘who gets what when and how’.

**Political philosophy:** It is the study of politics and related subjects like property, rights, justice, law and liberty. It indicates a general view about political attitudes and beliefs, which is synonymous to the concept of political ideology. Many scholars consider political philosophy as a sub-branch of political science. Political philosophy is the more traditional approach to politics.

Ever since the '40s or '50s, though, some academicians have been trying to make the study of politics more methodologically sound, using statistics or other methods of formal analysis. Those people have reconstituted themselves as political scientists, and often have certain differences with political philosophers.

### **1.3.3 Dissimilarities between Political Philosophy and Political Science**

1. Philosophy is a branch of learning which is concerned with understanding the essence or idea behind something. So political philosophy is based on ideas. Plato, who is known as father of political philosophy, dealt with the theory of ideas. Political science on the other hand is more inclined to use the approach of common sense. It is descriptive. Aristotle, also the father of political science, thinks it is better to have a practical approach.
2. Political philosophy is a careful study of a search for knowledge while political science is a systematic look at political systems and how they interact.
3. Political philosophy is the analysis of topics like material goods, justice and emancipation in addition to law and civilian rights while political science is concerned with the empirical usage of politics.

4. Political philosophy is an entire blueprint for a society known as a utopian, such as Plato's Republic while Political science is about the state as it is and the study of it.
5. Politics as a subject include **theory and practical** knowledge of the workings of politics.

Political philosophy can be included in the theory part i.e. what ought to be while political science relates to the more practical part of the politics i.e. what is.

6. Political philosophy takes man to be a rational animal while political science views man as a political animal.
7. Political philosophy is a normative discipline whereas political science is a positive one.

#### **1.3.4 Relation between the two**

Political philosophy being a normative discipline deals with ideals while political science being a positive one deals with facts. Ideals without facts are useless and facts without ideals are empty; thus political philosophy and political science are intimately related to each other. Political science tells about the functioning of a state which is often a struggle for power but political philosophy being concerned with the ideology of the state [which is the regulating authority], lays down the way for avoiding power struggle. Both the disciplines deal with the relation between the government and the governed. Political philosophy lays down the goal and political science determines the form of political organization through which that goal may be achieved. However a welfare state can only be conceived when both political philosophy and political science work in co-ordination with each other.

#### **1.3.5 Conclusion**

Thus both are complementary to each other. A good medium between the two is Machiavelli's Prince. It's essentially a realpolitik, a political science approach, with a philosophical bent. A good piece of work would cover both areas otherwise it ends up as either useless or baseless.

### 1.3.6 Glossary

**Utopian**: Excellent or ideal but impracticable.

**Positive science**: It is the science in which the scientist is engaged in undertaking experiments and in reporting the results of his experiments. His theories should not go beyond the experimental data. The term was coined by Comte.

**Normative science**: Normative science is an accumulated body of provisional knowledge that seeks to discover good ways of achieving recognized aims, ends, goals, objectives, or purposes.

### 1.3.7 Questions

- What do you understand by the terms political philosophy and political science?
- Differentiate between political philosophy and political science.
- What is the relation between political science and political philosophy? Elaborate.

### 1.3.8 Suggested reading and references

- Political Science Theory by S.N. Dubey
- An Introduction to Political Theory by O. P. Gauba
- Principles of Political Science by A. C. Kapur
- Introduction to Philosophy by J.N.Sinha
- A Manual of Ethics by J.N.Sinha

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## Society & Social Institution

**B. A. Sem-2**

**Unit-2**

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### PHILOSOPHY

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**2.1 Meaning and Nature of Society and its importance**

**2.2 Relation of Individual to Society**

**2.3 Theories of Society :**

**1. Social contract theory of Society**

**2. Organic Theory of Society**

**Structure**

**Objectives**

**Introduction**

**Society—Meaning and Nature**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

The main objective of this lesson is to develop awareness in students about the special trait of human beings that they are social animals. A man or woman cannot live outside the society; since their development and satisfaction of needs is not possible outside the society. Therefore it is essential to know what society is and what are social institutions. This knowledge is basic and important for understanding the role of individual men and women in the society. We are mutually dependent and must co-operate in the larger interest of social peace and happiness. Enumerable people perform all sorts of actions motivated by variety of factors. They are usually not conscious regarding the expectations from them as a part of society. Perfect consciousness of social life is imperative need of all developing societies.

## INTRODUCTION

In this lesson a detailed discussion is aimed on society and social institutions.

How individual is related with society and what role social institutions perform in the fulfilment of social and individual urges of common people?

### 2.1 SOCIETY MEANING AND NATURE

Man is described as a rational and social animal - by need, nature and necessity. Man is subject to some elemental and derived needs which he can only satisfy within the frame work of an organization. Therefore, collective living which man has created during the long course of his evolution is known as society. Without Society he cannot advance and it is impossible to fulfil any expression of his personality and faculties without the support of a society. He requires society for the sake of a good life. Society makes his life pleasant and worth living.

In society we find definite order of mutual behaviour and relationships. Hence the organization in which different associating individuals are found together in term of social relationship may be termed as society.

Many sociologists have tried to define the term society in different ways. Following definitions throw light on the meaning or society.

- 1) **Arnold.W.Green.** "A society is the largest group to which any individual belong. A society is made up of a population, organization, time, place and interest".
- 2) **Talcot Parsons.** "Society may be defined in so far as it grows out of action in terms of means, ends, relationships, intrinsic or symbolic".
- 3) **Giddings:-** "Society is the union itself, the organization, the sum of formal relations in which associating individuals are bound together."
- 4) **Prof. Wright:-** "Society is not a group of people. It is the system of relationship that exists between the individuals.

From the above it is clear that there are two types of definitions of society.

- i) Functional definition
- ii) Structural definition

From the functional point of view society is defined as a complex or group of humans in reciprocal relationship interacting upon one another enabling human organisms to carry on their life activities and helping each person to fulfil his wishes and accomplish his interests in association with his fellows.

From the structural point of view society is total social heritage of folkways, mores and institutions, habits, sentiments and ideas.

Thus, it is evident from the above discussion that society is not only a group of people, it is a system of relations also. It is the largest permanent group in which individuals exist together and is marked by their common interest, common territory and common mode of life. It consists of every kind of relationship entered into by men and any other social creatures with one another.

### **Nature of Society**

Man is essentially a social being. The gregarious instinct in man is the main cause of his desire to live in association with others. Society provides all kinds of security whether it is physical or emotional. Man is a unique person who plans his life according to his own desires. In the earlier times society was formed for the preservation of the resources and provision of adequate means of living for the group. It is not possible for man to live alone, so some kind of social unity is needed. There are, no doubt, diversities in human societies all over the world but still uniting factors are more dominant than the dividing ones- from family to the large institutions like state, society performs different roles and fulfils different aspirations in the life of man.

Society is the name given to social relationships by which every human being is inter-connected with his fellow men. Man depends upon society not only for food and protection but also for education, equipment, opportunity, content of his thoughts and aspirations. For the development of culture and language also man depends on society. Culture has its two aspects - material and non-material. Material culture is reflected in scientific and technological development whereas non-material culture is reflected in the traditional customs, folkways, norms, traditions, ideals etc. In some societies, the material culture dominates while in others the non-material dominates. On the basis of culture, society has been classified into two categories.

- 1) Traditional society.

2) Open Society.

Whichever the society may be, the following points throw light on the general nature of society.

- 1) **Society is abstract:** - The term society denotes to a system of social relationships which are abstract and invisible. According to Renter, "Just as life is not a thing but a process of living, so society is not a thing but process of associating". Thus, though society is a real thing but in essence it means a state or condition so it is an abstraction. It refers to definite relationship between individuals and groups, and a process of relationships. Thus society is an abstract system of relationship among human beings.
- 2) **Society is a permanent organization.** Unlike a crowd or gathering, society has a permanent existence. The origin of society refers back to the dawn of history of man. The society will continue to exist till the man possesses the feeling of sociability.
- 3) **Sociability in society is essential.** We cannot think of a 'manless' society. A person having friendship with animals only cannot be called as a social being. So society exists only where social beings behave towards one another in a manner determined by recognition of each other.
- 4) **Society involves both co-operation and conflict:-** In order to achieve their aims, men have to join hands with each other. At the same time they have conflicting tendencies also. Social organization and social institutions also contribute to the sense of co-operation of individuals in society
- 5) **Psychical content- Feelings and Emotions:-**According to MacIver and Giddings, social relationships possess a psychical element which refers to a common objective and common interest. There is no society in the world without this realization - society exists only where social beings behave in an organized manner. Social relations are characterized by an element of emotion and feelings in them and they involve sentiments also.

These characteristics of society have thrown light on the nature of society in a way that now we can define society as that permanent organization which is abstract and deals with social relations.

Another way of understanding the nature of society is by considering the

theories related to the nature of society. The prominent among these are:

- 1) **The individualistic or atomistic conception of society:-** The persons holding this view conceive society in terms of a heap. They maintain that when a number of individuals exist together for the purpose of life, they constitute society. They believe that society is nothing but individuals living together. For them, society is formed by accidental unison of individuals. When they would separate from each other, society would come to an end.
- 2) **The mechanistic character of society:-** Another view considers society as having a mechanistic character. It is believed that physical conditions plus human individuals constitute society.

The critics of this theory argue that the individuals are not like machines. Unlike machine a human being is self-conscious and rational and considers himself as an end in himself. So society cannot be considered as a mechanical whole.

- 3) **The idealistic view:-** According to some other sociologists society is an organic whole and it is like an organism. Individuals are to society what limbs are to an organism.

To conclude we can say that society is an abstract organization. It is not a group of people but a structure of their interactions and mutual relationships. These relations involve a psychic element in them. Thus society is the system of relationships that exists between the different individuals. An advanced society is the outcome of man's endeavour and efforts.

### 2.3 THEORIES OF SOCIETY

**The organic theory of society.** Many theories have been put forward regarding the nature and origin of society. The organic theory is one such theory which attempts to explain the nature of society.

In the words of Mackenzie "the organic theory got its impetus from evolution". This theory is based on Biology as it believes in analogy between society and a living organism. The organic theory is based on a scientific approach regarding the nature of society.

This theory has got its own views regarding the relations that exist between the individual and society. Society is compared to a living organism and human beings as parts of that organism. If any part of the body of the organism is cut off, then it dies. Similarly an individual should sacrifice his self - interest for the sake of larger interests of the society. In fact both society and individual have a reciprocal relationship in which the interests of both are of equal importance.

This view of considering society as an organism got impetus in the philosophy of Herbert Spencer. The main arguments of Herbert Spencer in this regard are -

- 1) Both natural and social organisms begin in very simple forms. They grow and then later on develop complex structures. Such a growth is called organic.
- 2) In both (The natural and social) organism, there is a sustaining system consisting of alimentary canals (mouth, stomach etc) in the former and the 'production centres' in the latter; a distributory system consisting of the circulatory apparatuses (arteries, veins etc) in the former and the transportation system (road railway etc.) in the latter; and a regulatory system consisting of the nerve motor mechanism (brain, nerves etc), in the former and government in the latter.

Hence according to this theory, the society is like an organism whose structure and functioning resembles that of an animal and which also develops according to the same laws. The cells of this organism are individuals. Association and institutions, etc. are its arteries. In the words

of Spencer, "Social structure can be compared to an animal body whose system of nutrition has its counterpart in society in the industrial and agricultural systems, the circulatory system with the heart, arteries and veins corresponds to the communication and transport system of the society and the nervous system to the government, and so on."

A society is a living being in the sense that it is not a mere mechanical device but rather shows symptoms of growth. However, even if it is an organism, it is an organism of organisms, each one of which has a life of its own. Its relations to others also are not merely external, but may interpenetrate its own being. Thus one finds that the analogy between living organism and human society is not absolutely correct.

**Criticism :-**

- 1) The main defect of this theory lies in reducing the relation of individual and society to the relation between cell and the body. There is basic difference between them. The individual is a conscious being with brain that thinks and contemplates. The cells of the body do not have any consciousness of their own. They have no individual existence apart from the body. It is incorrect to consider society as an organism of individuals.
- 2) There is extreme unlikeness between the two in many respects. While the natural organism is concrete in structure as all its parts are bound together in close contact, the social organism is discrete and its units are widely dispersed.
- 3) There is a nerve sensorium in the natural organism that concentrates all consciousness, but it is diffused in the social organism. Every individual in the society is endowed with a uniqueness and consciousness. It is not only that the individuals exist for the society but the society also exists for the good of the individual.
- 4) There may be some similarities between the natural and social organism but it is said that the analogy should not have been taken to such a magnified extent. This theory appears to be an unnecessary exaggeration.
- 5) The major defect of the organic theory of society is that the relation between body and cell has been considered identical to the relation between society and the

individual. But they are different. The individual is a conscious being which has its own brain. On the other hand the cells have no existence of their own apart from the body in which they live. Hence it is wrong to refer to society as the organism of individuals.

In spite of these defects the organic theory of society is quite successful in explaining the nature and functions of society. It is helpful in understanding the working of the society.

### **Social Contract theory**

The social contract theory on the origin of the society has a framework of its own. Its starting point is a state of nature or a condition that prevailed before the emergence of the society. Hobbes points a very dark and gloomy picture of the man living in the state of nature. According to him, it was a very horrible condition in which man was the enemy of man. Man being a selfish, egoistic, brutal and aggressive creature was free to defend himself either by running away or by killing his enemy. There was nothing like peace, security, order, property, justice, industry learning or what we now find in a society. There was always a fear and danger of a violent death. Hobbes believed that man has a competitive spirit and tries to overpower others for his own gains. In brief, "life of man was poor, brutish and nasty." It was a pre-social condition in which there was no peace and no collective life but a continuous fear of death. Man was the enemy of man in this horrible state of war of all against all. Naturally there was no distinction between right and wrong and moral and immoral. Man moved only through instincts. There was no knowledge or desire of the ultimate good in man, 'kill whom you can and take away what you can'.

The only standard that determined the way of life in this state of nature was the instinct of self-preservation. There are two ways of self security either run away from the scene or kill the enemy. The escape from such a horrible state of nature was affected by means of a contract made by the 'ideally reasonable men'. By this contract everyone surrendered their rights to a sovereign. The sovereign would then see that no one took away the life or the possession of any fellow being and would act as a jury in case any such brutal offence was committed. The decision of the sovereign would be final and abiding on all people. In this way, the humans left behind their animal past and made an entry into a civilised form of living. In this

process, society was established.

Like Hobbes, **Locke** also stated with a hypothetical state of nature but it was not unsystematic or pre-social. The individuals living in this state had a society in the form of peaceful, collective life and they enjoyed three natural rights - *Right to life, liberty and property*. In other words it was a state of perfect freedom as no one was to ask anyone regarding anything. It was not a condition of war as Hobbes had believed; rather it was a condition of equality.

Although the state of nature was not a condition of bliss, it was also not a condition of violence. But it was constantly degrading, so the law of nature informed men to have a social contract for the more effective protection of these rights. Locke says, "the state of nature had the condition which was full of fear and continual dangers and suffered from three main shortcomings: the non-existence of an established and settled legal system, the absence of an appropriate authority to execute laws and the want of an impartial judge to give and endorse just decisions. Hence in order to escape from this ill condition and gain certainty and security, men made a contract to terminate the state of nature and enter into the civil society or common wealth. Thus the men living in the state of nature voluntarily contracted and agreed to join to form a community for their comfortable, safe and peaceful living.

Locke supposes the making of two contracts.

- 1) The first was the social contract where by the civil society was established to meet the drawbacks of the state of nature.
- 2) The second was the governmental contract. It was made when the state was established. This contract was between the community and the rulers.

Rousseau, another pioneer of the social contract theory draws a very soft picture of the state of nature and the primitive man. He said that the primitive man was neither moral, nor immoral but he was 'a noble savage' who led a life of happiness and simplicity. But this condition could not last long. With the rise of civilization, the institution of private property grew- it created a sense of jealousy and struggle and subverted the noble instincts.

These evils terminated the era of simplicity and happiness. To live in the state of nature grew impossible. As a result the institutions of the family, private property, society, government etc. came into existence. The people living in state of nature entered a contract according to which men surrendered their natural rights to the collective.

According to Rousseau, "A social contract was made by the individuals in their individual as well as corporate capacities, all surrendering their all rights in favour of all, a corporate whole was created with a will of its own, desiring good of all."

It is said that Rousseau's theory lies midway between Hobbes on the one side and Locke on the other.

**Criticism :-**

- 1) Hobbes theory of social contract appears to be false from the historical and philosophical point of view. The whole explanation appears as a fiction of the created story of the mind. The making of a social contract appears to be imaginary. It is also inconsistent from the philosophical point of view since it is impossible to imagine how people who were always in the state of constant warfare changed overnight into peaceful beings and entered the contract.
- 2) This theory is wrong from the historical point of view. Man has lived under some authority since all recorded history. It is wrong to think of any period when man lived without authority.
- 3) Society is a result of long evolution; hence it is thoroughly uncovering to take it as a creation of some sudden move like the making of a social contract.
- 4) It is believed that man consented to enter the social contract. But as a matter of fact, not one but many factors have played their part in the making of the society. The element of consent might just be one of them.
- 6) Moreover the social contract theory conceives man as prior to the society. This is wrong because socialization is a necessary condition for the development of

personality. In fact both must have been together. One must not have preceded the other.

- 7) It is seen that whenever man had to exist without society, he could never develop properly. This fact is proved by the condition of children who are not nursed with proper social foundations.

## Social Problems

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### Unit-III

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#### MEANING OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

By : Dr. Krishan Singh

#### Meaning and characteristics of Social Problems.

3.1 **Objectives:-** To enable students

- To understand the meaning of Social Problems.
- To precisely define the Social Problems.
- To differentiate the Social Problems from Personal Problems.
- To have a wider understanding of the characteristics of Social problems.

**Introduction:-** Man being the only social creature continuously interacts with other members around him. These interactions result into social relations and subsequently in the emergence of society. Society provides security and a feeling of mutual dependence to an individual. It also provides the scope for the all around development of its members. Good social relations ensure the progress of a society while on the other hand adverse social relations give rise to social problems. So we may say that the social problems are such problems which are considered bad for the progress of a society.

**Meaning of Social Problems:-** In order to get at the roots of the problems of society, it is important to first understand the meaning of the term "Society". Society is a web of social relationships. Social relations are the relations among the members of the society and are different from the relations that exist between other objects in nature. Social relations are the relations between the human beings and that too particularly the interactive relations. Presence of meaningfulness distinguishes the social relation from all other types of relations. In short, society means the social relations in any form i . e. interactions between human beings in any imaginable form.

Sociologically, society evolves from unit acts which give rise to meaningful actions,

meaningful actions result into social inter-relations, these relations giving rise to patterned relations and patterned relations culminating into institutions and institutions into sub-structures and structures. In a nutshell, society consists of relationships emerging out of meaningful individual actions. The word 'meaningful' is important here for the reason that it distinguishes 'willed - actions' from the 'instinctive-actions'. The willed-actions distinguish humans from all other living beings.

Generally, all problems below the level of institutions are not considered as social problems due to the mere reason that they do not involve larger social life and thus are limited to personal level. A social problem worth the name must involve larger social interests and not the individuals separately. For example, suicide due to frustrations of personal nature are personal problems but farmers suicide where many farmers are committing suicide due to frequent failing of crops and increase in debts due to wrong government policies is a social problem. This needs to be fought collectively by the people.

Various institutions or collective wholes merge into sub systems and systems. This merger also brings in greater diversity at higher levels. Individual systems exert different influences on the system/society. These influences are not always positive but are also sometimes unhealthy. The unhealthy influences disturb the established social relations and hence give rise to social problems. For example, marriage is one of the fundamental institutions. Earlier, voluntary gifts as per the financial conditions of the parents /relatives were given in the form of dowry. But, slowly the practice perpetuated and presently, the dowry is demanded as a matter of right by the people. Insatiable lust for dowry results into torture and sometimes into murder of innocent brides. This is a social problem. It is not an individual problem for the reason that it does not affect one individual or a few individuals and also because it cannot be tackled by a single individual or a small group of individuals. It affects greater part of the society and requires concerted social effort for its eradication.

Another important point which needs mention here is that the social problems change with the passage of time. Positive social changes destroy certain conditions and eliminate some social problems but at the same time certain changes can result in the development of newer problems. For example, sati is no more a serious social issue but on the other hand *population explosion* which was not a social problem till India's

independence, has become a serious problem to be tackled at war footing.

Social problems, by nature, are different from the personal problems as they involve larger section of the society. There is a general agreement within the society for their being considered so. Society agrees that there is something undesirable. A consensus emerges about a condition which is detrimental to the larger interests of the society. This consensus is on the basis of the ideals of the society and not arbitrary. Therefore, we may say that social problems are the problems of values in the society. Any thing which is considered as a deviation from the path of social ideal may be considered as a social problem.

**Definitions of Social Problem :** In the above discussion we have seen that situations which have adverse effect on a group of people or a section of society and need the collective efforts of the group or society for their rectification are called social problems. Based on the above discussion following definitions by different social thinkers may be mentioned:-

- i Social problem is "A situation confronting a group or a section of society which inflicts injurious consequences that can be handled collectively." (Reinhardt)
- ii. Social problem is a "deviation from the social ideal remediable by group effort." (Walsh and Furfey)
- iii. "A condition which is defined by a considerable number of persons as a deviation from some social norms which they cherish." (Fuller & Myers)
- iv. "A way of behaviour that is regarded by a substantial part of a social order as being in violation of one or more generally accepted or approved norms." (Merton & Nisbet)
- v. "A problem in human relationships which seriously threatens society or impedes the important aspirations of many people." (Raab& Selznick)

A cursory look at these definitions brings out two points very clearly. Firstly, a social problem affects a section of society and not a particular individual in isolation. Secondly, social problems are remediable only through collective actions of a group or society as a whole. It is also clear that any problem which does not involve larger sections of society may not be termed as social problem.

**Characteristics of Social Problems:** On the basis of the meaning and definitions we can bring out the following characteristics of social problems:

- i. All social problems are the situations which affect the large sections of the society. Any problem which affects any one person or only a few persons is not considered as a social problem.
- ii. All social problems demand collective social remedial action. Since, the social problems affect a larger section of society, they can be tackled only through collective efforts of the group or society.
- iii. All social problems are different from the personal problems. Social problems have wider area of affect. A personal problem affects only a person or a small group of persons whereas a social problem affects larger part of society or society as a whole.
- iv. All social problems are deviations from the set patterns of social relationships.
- v. All social problems have injurious effect on the society. Social problems hamper the growth and harmony of the society by bringing in various elements like mistrust, fear etc.
- vi. Social problems have the causes of their origin within the society.
- vii. Social problems occur in all societies.

**Suggested readings :**

1. Ram Ahuja; *Social problems in India (Second Edition)*, Rawat publications, Jaipur-2007 .
2. P. Gisbert: *Fundamentals of Sociology (third Edition)*, Orient Longman Ltd. Bombay-1973.

**Exercise:**

1. What do you understand by social problems?
2. Differentiate between personal and social problems?
3. Define social problems suitably?
4. Write some characteristics of social problems?

## 3.2 SOCIAL PROBLEMS & THEIR CAUSES

By : Dr. Krishan Singh

### Major Social problems (Rural & Urban) and their causes

**Objectives :** To familiarize students with:-

- i. Difference in social problems occurring in urban and rural set ups.
- ii. The understanding that major social problems are common for both urban and rural settings.
- iii. The causes of various social problems.

**Introduction:** Social problems occur in all societies. No society is free from the social problems though the types of problems may differ from time to time and society to society. Social problems arise from within the society and therefore the causes of these problems have to be found within the society.

**Rural and Urban Social Problems:** Some times social problems are differentiated on the basis of urban and rural areas. Though some scholars agree with this distinction but by and large the social problems are such that they cannot be distinguished on these lines. Before discussing the common major social problems, which are more important, it would be important to look at the problems based on the distinction between urban and rural background.

**3.2.1 Urban Social problems:** Most of the urban social problems can be attributed to over concentration of population and lack of social control. Following may be considered as some of the important social problems in urban areas:

- **Crime :** The problem of crime in urban areas may be attributed to anonymity and lack of social control. In cities, people from different areas come in search of jobs. These people generally come to city centres alone and stay with other people in rented places. They indulge into various criminal activities with out any fear of being watched by their family and relatives.

- **Pollution :** Pollution is another major problem in the urban centres. High concentration of vehicles is the source of both air and noise pollution. Apart from this, industrial

waste from the factories is constantly polluting the water resources. Presence of large number of poor population results into the emergence of large slums which in turn add to the problem of pollution.

- **Over dependence on others:** Interdependence in urban life gives rise to many serious problems. People depend on the services of others and in the event of breakdown of these services life comes to a stand still. People depend on others for water supply, power supply, waste disposal, transportation etc. These services are essential for day to day living. When any one of these services is disrupted due to any reason, e.g. strike etc., life becomes difficult.

**3.2.2 Rural Social Problems:** Just as the urban problems arise due to over concentration of population, the rural problems may be attributed to sparse and scattered population. Some of the important social problems associated with rural living are:

- **Lack of basic facilities:** Rural living is characterized with very poor basic facilities in the field of health, education, transport, industry etc. These facilities are rare if not totally absent in the rural areas. People have to travel long distances to reach to hospitals. In case of emergency, many people do not even reach the hospitals and die en route. People from rural areas have to come to city centres for education, jobs etc. and have to stay a wretched life away from their families.

- **Backwardness:** Lack of education and ignorance of modern discoveries and inventions in various fields keep the people backward in many ways. People continue to believe in traditional means of earning bread and treating the sick. Lack of knowledge of modern medicine and confidence in traditional ways of healing which include magic and rituals result in serious complications and premature deaths. Lack of education hinders the progress of society. There is no criticism of existing values which have become fixed over the long period of time.

- **Strong resistance to change and progress:** Due to backwardness the people living in rural areas become skeptic to any change. They look at all change as bad and resist the same to protect their cultural identity.

**Major Social Problems:** Division of Social Problems into Urban and Rural problems may be correct in certain situations but over all society cannot be divided sharply into rural and urban society. More over general social problems are all pervading, e.g. poverty, corruption, terrorism etc. are presently the major social issues confronting both

the rural as well as urban areas. We cannot in any way say that poverty is rural based or urban based nor can we convincingly call corruption as urban based or rural based. Therefore, it is important that while talking about major social problems we do not take the distinction between rural and urban too far. It is pertinent to mention that there are both advantages and disadvantages of rural and urban dwelling but social problems can hardly be divided specifically into rural and urban problems. We will now explain some of the most threatening social problems in India.

- **Poverty:** There has always been a disparity in distribution of wealth among people in society. Concentration of wealth in the hands of resourceful and powerful people and deprivation of the same to the general masses is a serious problem. Majority of people struggling to produce wealth to be enjoyed by few has always been a reason of great unrest. While some have surplus wealth, others have not even enough to meet the basic requirements. Though, it is generally said that equal distribution of wealth is neither possible nor desirable but the fulfilment of basic needs of all ought to be desired and must be addressed, or else we are not fit enough to be called humans .

Poverty is a great social problem and is the root cause of many other problems. It gives rise to a feeling of powerlessness along with a feeling of insecurity and frustration. It creates a sense of inability to maintain and develop social relations with others as a result of lack of resources. People tend to compromise on the issues of self respect, nationalism, social values etc. while in the grips of poverty because satisfaction of basic needs, e.g. food and shelter can make a person to commit any crime against any body.

- **Unemployment:** Unemployment is a great source of poverty. Employment not only provides security to the employee and his family but also brings stability in the society. Employment determines the social status of a person. An employed person is respected by the family as well as by the society. An unemployed person is looked down upon both by the family and the society for no fault of his. Unemployment generates insecurity and is the source of many other problems. Unemployed people, due to frustration, indulge into anti-social activities, adopt illegal means for earning livelihood, commit various types of crimes and become source of trouble for the society.

Apart from this, unemployment of educated youth is a great loss to the society. Society fails to utilize the expertise and knowledge of educated people. The energy and knowledge which could be used for betterment of the society is used against the society in the form of committing terror acts, loots, robberies, spreading hatred etc.

- **Population Explosion:** Population is another major social problem. Though in developed countries, population is not a problem as growth rate is negligible; in developing countries it is a major problem. Population is the mother of all problems in developing societies. Poverty and unemployment are generally the result of over population. The number of jobs and resources available are far less in comparison to the population. The available means with respect to food, shelter, transport, education, safe drinking water facilities etc. have already become insufficient. Any effort on the part of developing economies is falling short in the face of fast growing population. *It will not be wrong to guess that all social systems will shortly crumble under the pressure of over population if the growth is not checked with stern measures.*

- **Corruption:** Corruption, understood in simple terms means accepting bribe in return of some favour. It is not a new phenomenon. Corruption has been prevalent in all societies since times immemorial. Misuse of authority as a result of consideration of personal gain which may not be monetary is corruption. It has also been defined as "the use of public power for private advantage in ways which transgress some formal rule or law."

Today, corruption has become the greatest threat to the social system. It has percolated in all walks of life. People indulge into corrupt practices with out considering its impact. Food items, life saving drugs, vegetables, fruit, milk and even water is adulterated. The lust for money has made man forget that the same poison that he is selling will soon threaten his own existence. Other social areas are no different. Power in the hands of corrupt people is used against the society. Political corruption, bureaucratic corruption etc. has done great harm to the society. People are losing faith in justice and law enforcing bodies. Time and again guardians of society have failed people on various counts.

- **Communalism:** Division of society on the basis of religions and communities whose interests are opposed to each other may be termed as communalism. The antagonism between various communities is called communalism.

Communalism is a great threat to the peaceful existence of people. It leads to activities like mutual hatred, loot, arson, dishonoring of women and killing of innocent people. Communalism ignores the basic teachings of religion like love, tolerance and good will towards other religions. Vested interests are always in the look out for opportunities to exploit people on religious matters. They continuously spew fire against other religions and preach irreligious and anti-social thoughts at religious congregations and places. The 'vote bank' politics has done more harm than good to the people world wide. Small matters are

flared up into communal riots.

- **Terrorism:** Terrorism is a system of intimidation through the use of violence. It is used to generate fear among a community for some political purpose. It is defined as "a method whereby an organized group or party seeks to achieve its avowed aims chiefly through the systematic use of violence" A terrorist is a person who carries out the program of a group. Terrorism not only threatens but destroys and kills. Destruction and killing is a part of the program of terrorism. The aim is to create havoc upon those who are regarded as obstacles or enemies. Use of explosive devices at railway stations, bus stands, trains, mass killings, assassinations of important persons etc. is the part of the game to create public hue and cry.

Terrorist acts are generally directed against persons who, as the representatives of authority, interfere with the achievement of objectives of the group. It is not a fight between individuals but a struggle between social groups and political forces. Terrorists punish those individuals whom their organization considers guilty of subverting their program. Many societies in the world are today facing this problem. Religious fundamentalism, regional aspirations etc. are the breeding grounds of terrorism. India has been under threat and facing the problem of terrorism of both religious and regional types for decades.

- **Violence against Women:** Violence against women is not new. It has been persisting in the society from times immemorial. Women being considered physically weak have always been provided protection by men, who in turn exploited them in various ways.

In modern world, women have come to occupy important positions in the society. From the position of a domestic help to the positions of prime ministers and presidents, women serve the society in various capacities. Women have immensely contributed to the development and advancement of society. With the widening of role of women in society, different provisions have been made for their upliftment. Women empowerment is the talk of the day in academic as well as in social circles. But despite all this, crime against women has shown no downward trend. It continues to remain a great social problem. Harassment at places of work, eve teasing at public places and torture (physical and mental) at home is no revelation. Crimes like rape, kidnapping, torture and dowry deaths etc. continue to haunt women in particular and society in general.

**3.2.3. Causes of social problems:** Social problems occur in all societies. Whenever

and wherever a relationship is affected between a group of individuals leading to maladjustments and conflicts, there is a social problem.

There are numerous conditions in social set up which become the sources of social problems. The important social conditions responsible for social problems found in social environment are:

**(a) Contradictions in social system:** Contradictions in social system give rise to various types of unrest in the society. This means, on the one hand social systems preach a particular idea for the betterment of society and on the other hand, the same idea is resisted in practice. For example, we talk of 'Women Empowerment' in academic circles but we are reluctant in conceding the basic rights of women. They are not allowed to take decisions freely and choose the course of their life. Similarly, politicians who legislate laws feel no hesitation themselves in violation of these laws. These contradictions become the source of trouble for the society.

**(b) Malfunctioning of Economic systems:** Malfunctioning of economic system is another main cause of social problems. It is the mother of all problems in the society. Economic self-sufficiency is the mainstay for any social progress. When the economy is not justifiably distributed in the society, it breeds poverty, unemployment, crime etc. People tend to commit any crime to fulfil their basic needs of food, shelter and clothing.

Historically, economic factors have been responsible for great revolutions like 'Russian Revolution'. Whole of Marxism is the product of economic disparities. Economy is the life line of any society and faulty economic policies can destroy any social system.

**(c) Lack of change in religious system:** Change is the law of nature. Any thing which does not change with time becomes obsolete and hinders the progress. Religion is no exception. Conditions which are responsible for the development of religion along with its associated activities undergo changes and therefore, it is important that religion also shows flexibility in incorporating such changes. Many beliefs which originally had no scientific explanations are now explained adequately by sciences. For example, 'Children are the gifts of God' have been scientifically explained.

Belief in God, and religious rites and rituals are two different things. Belief in God is a core issue and does not necessarily need to change. But, religious outlook and practices/ beliefs have to undergo change with the changing times. The progress and change in society has to be complete and not lopsided. We cannot have religious backwardness and scientific

advance at the same time. For example, 'pains are the fruits of our bad deed' as decided by God and development of medical science to ameliorate the pains cannot go together. Also, 'children are the gifts of God' and 'population control' policy cannot go hand in hand.

**(d) Defective functioning of political system:** Political system is another important area which needs consideration. It is an important part of social system. Political system takes care of the aspirations of the people through good governance and helps in the progress of the society. Any type of political system has to take into consideration the aspirations of the people and move in a required direction. For example, Justice and Equality before law are the ideas of importance in politics. But, if the political system becomes faulty, the politicians, in place of serving the society start hoarding wealth etc, indulge in nepotism, corruption; the whole system will crumble. Political corruption has grave consequences for the society. The leaders who are supposed to lead the society towards progress can also destroy it through their ill motives and short sightedness.

**(e) Natural factors:** Sometimes the social problems arise out of conditions which are beyond the control of individuals and society. Situations like flood, drought, earthquake, etc. are the problems which can neither be foreseen nor can be tackled in a definite manner. Sometimes this results in heavy loss of life and property. But the main problem is when the people have to shift from one place and settle at another place. The problem of rehabilitation is a serious social problem. The natural factors are the cause of not only death and destruction but they suddenly reduce even the affluent people to poverty and wretchedness.

**In another view social problems arise due to following factors:**

**1. Differentiation and Multiplication of Interests and Functions:** The principle that the greater the number of parts in a machine or an organism, the greater the probability of maladjustment among the parts holds good for human societies too. Multiplicity increases the chance for the collision of interests of various individuals, groups, institutions and systems. Communal riots, political crimes etc are the social problems which are the result of the clash of interests of different religions/castes and classes.

Every society is divided into various groups and sections with different goals and functions. Each group and section tries to promote its own interests without taking care of the interests of other groups/sections. Whenever a group finds its interests compromised, the problem begins.

## **2. Accelerated Frequency of Social Change or Growth of Civilization:**

This has been made possible due to the multiplication of scientific and mechanical innovations. For example, the invention of machine has destroyed many old forms of employment resulting in the migration of millions of people and has given rise to class conflicts. It is, thus, the structural and functional maladjustments arising from revolutionary inventions which create many social problems.

Further, Civilization is always justified by culture. Culture is generally considered as the sustaining force behind the civilization. Culture and civilization move hand in hand in a balanced society. Since, civilization can be borrowed whereas culture cannot be, the growth of civilization can be far more rapid than the growth in cultural sphere. When the distance between culture and civilization widens, the crisis begins. Since civilization has justification within a culture and culture some times fails to cope up with fast growing civilization, we find, what in modern society is called a cultural crisis.

**3. Man's developed insight to make a scientific analysis:** Ever since man has developed his social insight of looking into the working of nature, issues which were formerly regarded as simple are now perceived as the result of various kinds of natural conditions which influence man and society. Sometimes ignorance is bliss. People accept the things and happenings without raising a question and therefore, there is no problem. Social rules, rites and rituals, institutions and systems are accepted as given. But with the slow and steady dawn of scientific knowledge, many unscientific customs and rituals come under strong criticism by the people creating ripples in the society. With knowledge people become aware of the long existing problems. For example, sudden upsurge in the rate of divorce in the society is the result of critical analysis. People think it useless to carry the burden of a problematic relation which does not bring happiness to any of the partners and so there is no point to spend whole life under social pressure and therefore, they opt for divorce.

The above mentioned causes and conditions are necessarily responsible for the social problems. Any social problem, except the problems arising out of natural calamities, has one or the other mentioned cause. Occurrences of natural calamities are considered beyond the control of man. But it must be remembered that though man cannot reduce the amount of damage done due to them, he can definitely minimize the pains following the damage with the state of preparedness and the will to act.

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Ram Ahuja: *Social problems in India (Second Edition)*, Rawat publications, Jaipur-2007 .

**Exercise:**

1. What are the major Social Problems? Discuss in Detail.
2. Distinguish between Urban and Rural Social Problems.
3. All social problems cannot be divided into Urban and Rural social problems. Do you agree?

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### 3.3 REMEDIAL MEASURES OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

By : Dr. Krishan Singh

#### 3.3.1 **Objectives :**

- To train students in visualizing the solutions of social problems.
- To show that social problems can be solved through right sort of initiatives both at personal as well as social level.
- To make students aware that the solution of social problems is the responsibility of every individual and so, as the members of the society, they can not ignore it.

#### 3.3.2. **Introduction:**

Every society faces problems in one or the other way. Remedial action of every social problem involves the understanding of particular conditions which are responsible for the problem and also the causes behind the emergence of such social conditions. It must be remembered that 'Better the diagnosis of the problem and the conditions there of, easier it would be to find the solution'.

#### 3.3.3 **Remedies of Social Problems** : (Common for all social problems)

Solution of social problems depends upon finding out the causes and conditions responsible for the emergence of such problems. It must be remembered that a social problem erupts due to multiple conditions, though it shall always be possible to identify the main condition or conditions. Also, every problem, though arising out of the combinations of many common conditions needs to be looked into as a unique problem and is likely to have individualistic traits which may differentiate it from other problems. Further more, social problems arising of natural factors are extremely difficult to handle. Sometimes even a normal social problem becomes difficult to handle due to the fact that vested interests impede the measures and programs initiated to solve that problem. For example, poverty may be controllable through social and government initiatives but these initiatives are not allowed to reach the poor and needy. Rise of Naxalite movement in India may be taken as

a case in point. But after understanding and judging social problems, society has to be effective and has to take some action whether it is by attempting to alter the established social institutions or by adopting measures without trying to change the existing institutions. A curative action can be an organized or personalized action. The former is an action through group effort like giving a share to industrial workers in the management of the industry; the latter is action through individual life and influencing others by living a life in accordance with good principles. Gandhiji used the second method for solving the problem of untouchability - by living with untouchables and treating them with sympathy and kindness. When others imitated his example and followed him, effect became greater and greater. On the other hand organized action can be taken by the state or a political party or by an official group. An important point in organized action is the distribution of functions between the various agencies. Sometimes the problem is solved by the combination of both organized and personalized action.

It must be noted that the social problems can be solved only when the constituent individuals of the society possess the following feelings:

1. **Feeling that a situation can be corrected:** It is important for the people who are working to correct a situation to have a strong faith that it is not impossible to correct the situation. This feeling raises level of confidence and motivation of the people.
2. **Determination to correct the situation:** A half hearted effort may result in wastage of time and resources. Also, a failed attempt serves to raise doubts in the minds of people about the possibility of solution of the problem. Therefore, a situation can be corrected only if the people have strong determination to correct it.
3. **Confidence in the people and a belief that there is no limit to progress:** Strong faith in the capacity and capability of the people is also a very important factor in the success of any social mission. Any doubt about the strength and intelligence of the people can be counterproductive. It prevents the leaders from taking bold decisions which are mandatory in the solution of any social problem.
4. **The use of technological and rational knowledge and skill for correcting the situation:** Knowledge plays an important role in handling

the problematic situations. Any problem situation emerges due to some causes and has the support of society. Therefore, it is not possible to handle the situation without the knowledge and skill to counter it.

While attempting any solution to a social problem following points must be kept in mind:

1. **Multiple-factor approach :** Every social problem owes its emergence to a number of factors. For example, crime in society is caused by factors like poverty, unemployment, corruption, social associations etc. Therefore, while visualizing a crime free society, we must first consider controlling these factors.
2. **Interrelatedness:** Social problems are interrelated. No social problem can be considered in isolation from other problems. As said above, crime, poverty, unemployment, social associations and structures are inseparable social problems. Isolating one from the others is a serious mistake.
3. **Relativity:** Every social problem is relative with respect to time and space. What is considered a problem in one society may not be considered so in other societies. Also, what is seen as a problem today may not be considered as a problem ten years later. For example, population is a great problem in countries like India but it is not considered a problem in western countries. Similarly, population was also not a problem in India till independence. Therefore, we can say that social problem are relative and appear and disappear in time.

#### **Remedies of Social Problems: (Suggestions for remedy of particular problems)**

Theoretical diagnosis and attitude required for attempting to solve the problems is not sufficient in getting rid of the social problems. Every social problem is a unique problem and needs to be tackled separately. Eradicating the social conditions responsible for a particular problem even after knowing them is still a herculean task. Since dealing with social problems involves dealing with human beings, the desired ends are difficult to achieve. For example, for eradication of poverty in India, Government has initiated numerous programs but even after sixty years of independence, the condition has not improved much. One reason for the failure of all concerned programs is the lack of interest and dedication of government and the agencies involved in implementation of the policies.

Though it is difficult to tackle social problems but it is not impossible to do so. Following remedial measures may be suggested for the eradication of social problems individually:

**Poverty:** Numerous schemes and programs designed and implemented by the state and central governments in India have miserably failed to achieve the desired ends. The lack of coordination between various groups and agencies involved in the implementation of programs has resulted into the wastage and misappropriation of huge sums of money by corrupt officials and the people for whom the funds are meant remain deprived of them. To get over such problems, following points if sincerely implemented may help:

**i. Creating employment:** Generation of employment through Jawahar Rozgar Yojna is not enough. Government needs to frame economic policies in such a way that millions of unemployed and unproductive people, who are burden on the society, become a productive force. This will be a great asset for the society.

**ii. Controlling population Growth:** Population pressure on the economy is one of the important reasons responsible for non achievement of the goal of poverty eradication. Government should focus primarily on this problem and try to control population through strictest measures if required. When we know for sure that the solution of all our problems lie in controlling the population growth, then we must use all means at our disposal to achieve the required results.

**iii. Distribution of national wealth:** National wealth is distributed as subsidies for the benefit of poor and the needy as well as for the upliftment of certain weaker sections. These subsidies are misused by the influential and rich people in connivance with Government agencies. The involvement of 'babus' in the hierarchy must be minimized. The schemes meant for the villages should come directly to village level committees and should be implemented directly. This will save the time and money consumed by the corrupt babus.

Apart from the above, following measures can also contribute to the poverty alleviation:

- Forming a time bound result-oriented action plan for rapid industrialization. Industrialization will increase job opportunities for the people.
- Participation in the emerging global markets.

- Reduce irrelevant government expenditure.
- Providing technical training to youth at subsidized rates.
- Helping women to be self-reliant through carefully planned programs.
- Involving people in developmental programs.
- Constituting dedicated teams of committed persons in monitoring the implementation of programs.

**Unemployment:** The social problem of unemployment can be controlled to a great extent through:

**i. Encouraging self-employment:** It is not possible for the government to provide jobs to every single citizen but at the same time it is definitely the responsibility of a popular government to look after the welfare of the people. Therefore, government should encourage self-employment among the unemployed youth both in rural and urban areas. Adequate amount of financial help without interest or at low interest may be made available to the people who want to work.

**ii. Vocational Courses:** Re-Organization of vocation is important to meet the present requirements. Old and out-dated vocational courses are not of much help to the people. Therefore, modern vocational courses may be arranged for the youth.

**iii. Identification of industrial requirements and designing skills to meet those requirements:** Old methods of producing skilled manpower without taking into consideration the market requirements must be stopped. That is not only wastage of time and money but also a method of increasing unemployment.

So, it is emphasized that greater stress should be laid on the creation of opportunities for self-employment, augmentation of income levels of working poor and shift in emphasis from creation of relief type of employment to building of durable production assets in the rural areas. This will help in minimizing the unemployment and creating an atmosphere of self-reliance.

**Population control:** All policies and programs to control population in the past have failed to control the menace of growing population. Learning lessons from the previous failure we need to stress on the following:

**i. Raising the marriageable age of girls:** Girls are still considered as the burden

by the parents in many backward societies. The parents still consider them as a liability. They try to marry them as early as possible. Marriageable age of girls in India is 18 years. In many cases, the girls give birth to two or more children by the time of attainment 22 years of age. It is emphasized that the marriageable age of the girls should be raised to 21 years. Through this, the phenomenon of 'children producing children' can be stopped. This will also make the expecting mothers mature and responsible in looking after the children.

**ii. Spacing of children:** A general awareness campaign must be launched to educate people about the gap between two children. This will make the parents to look after the children in better way and subsequently decrease the number of children also.

**iii. Women Education:** Women education is a very important factor in controlling the population growth. In backward societies, we still find that literacy rate in women is very low. As a result, they lack in decision making and asserting their will. Through education they can be encouraged to become self reliant and also taught the benefits of small families. Education will bring empowerment both at mental as well as financial levels.

**iv. Stern Policy for the government employees:** This is another measure which can be put into practice to control the population. Millions of employees are working in both the public as well as private sectors. Like the emphasis on reservation policy, the government should make it mandatory for the employees not to have more than two children. Any employee having more than two children should be punished in a suitable way. For example, stopping his annual increment, promotion etc. on the other hand employees having just one child may be given extra benefits as incentives as is being done in case of single girl child.

Ultimately, these suggestions can be put into practice only if we have a political will to control the population. Without this, no policy, whatever it may be, is bound to fail.

**Corruption:** The drive for elimination of corruption has to begin with the public awareness. Public has to take the responsibility to vote into power only such individuals who have the reputation of honesty and dedication. They must elect such leaders who have the spirit to work in tandem with the public to roll back the present state of corruption. Following means may be suggested:

**i. Voting for the right person:** People definitely know the history of the candidates they are voting for. Rising above the caste, religion and personal aspiration,

people must elect the right candidates. This would eliminate the political corruption which is the root cause of all other types of corruption. Corrupt leaders with criminal background shelter anti social elements and even pressurize the dedicated and sincere officials to work as per their directions. Uprooting political corruption is a greatest challenge which the people have to face.

**ii. State Funding of elections:** Another suggestion to clean politics of corruption is to fund the election through state exchequer. It is seen that a normal person cannot afford to contest election as it is a costly affair. The aspirants depend upon the funding from various sources. These sources exert influence on the politicians for their nefarious designs. Also, the misuse of money for purchasing votes, horse trading etc can be checked through this method.

**iii. Placement of honest and reputed persons at key posts and vulnerable points:** To control corruption in public offices, it is important that honest and reputed persons be deployed at important and vulnerable places.

**iv. Increasing vigilance:** In public interest, vigilance of the public offices should be increased. People found guilty of accepting bribes/bribing must be dealt with severely. These agencies must work to reinstate public confidence that works can be done even without paying bribes.

**Communalism:** Communalism is a great threat to national unity and integration. It is high time that we rise to the occasion to fight it out. It must be remembered that the forces spreading communalism are anti social and work for the achievement of their personal and selfish agenda. In order to eliminate this threat following suggestions are made:

**i. Enactment of strict laws and implementation of existing laws:** Enactment of new laws to deal with the communal forces and destroying the breeding grounds of communal feelings is the need of the hour. Also, the existing laws must be implemented with utmost sincerity and dedication. The policy of zero tolerance must be followed to deal with communalism.

**ii. Committees for communal harmony must be established:** In order to enhance communal harmony among various communities, committees of people belonging to various religions must be established at different levels. These committees must work for communal harmony.

**iii. Placement of administrators of secular credentials at sensitive places:**

This is an important factor. Many times it is seen that during communal tensions the administration sides with one community thereby aggravating the situation in place of defusing it. The scope for such occasions needs to be eliminated with utmost seriousness.

**iv. Crushing the communal violence:** Any act of communal violence must be crushed with heavy hand. No mercy needs be shown to the people taking part in communal violence or instigating communal violence.

**v. Ban on political parties with communal agenda:** Party agenda for elections must be drawn and submitted to election commission before going to election. It must be seen that no party goes to election with any communal issue. Registration of parties violating the agenda during campaign must be cancelled.

**Terrorism:** Like communalism, terrorism is another serious problem worth serious attention. Communalism is believed to be one of the main reasons for terrorism. In order to crush terrorism following measure needs to be put in place:

**i. Cooperation of the Citizens:** Terrorists recruit their cadre from the common masses. It is important that the citizens cooperate with the agencies in crushing the terrorism. For this, the security agencies must make confidence building efforts to secure the cooperation of the citizens.

**ii. Choking the financial resources of the terrorists:** Terrorism thrives on financial affluence. Financial soundness empowers the terrorists in securing the services of people in government agencies through heavy bribes. Extra efforts are required to trace and block the financial sources of the terrorists.

**iii. Refusing the demands of the terrorists:** As a policy, no demands of the terrorists should be conceded. Once their demands are accepted, it works as a moral booster. People may have to make sacrifices for containing this menace.

**iv. Improving intelligence:** Another important factor in combating terrorism is to improve intelligence to the maximum degree. This will help in pre-empting the terrorist strikes and there by lessen the damage done by terrorist acts.

**v. Fast Track Courts:** To deal with the captured terrorists, special fast tract courts must be established. Decisions regarding punishment and the implementations of the decisions should be quick. Provisions for maximum punishment including the capital punishment should be made. Stringent rules for avoiding litigations of cases pertaining to

terrorists must be devised.

**vi. Training of security agencies:** Stress should be given to the special training of security agencies especially those involved in counter insurgency. Terrorists are the greatest enemies of the society and therefore a policy of 'no mercy' towards them must be strongly inculcated into the minds of the people fighting terrorism.

**Violence against women:** Many rules and laws have been enacted over the years to curb the menace of violence against women. But, all these enactments have proven futile due to the lack of will on the part of agencies as well as the victims. Cases of domestic violence in various forms are showing the upward trend. It being difficult to prove the crime in most of the cases and also due to legal hazards and social harassment involved, most women tend to keep quiet and tolerate it as their lot.

So far the remedial measures are concerned; it is important for the community to understand that until and unless the women themselves take initiatives and fight it out on day to day basis there is no solution. In this context, the concept of women empowerment may play an important role. Empowerment in the real sense means that the women should have financial security in the society as well as the psychological strength in decision making and executing those decisions. Empowerment means to shed over dependence on others for any reason. Relation of reciprocity based on equality should be the order in all social and professional relations. So, it is important to mention that both family and society will have to change attitude of over protection towards women. This attitude has hindered their self confidence and made them dependent. Women must learn to secure sufficient space for their development and healthy living. However, following points may be suggested as necessary measures to alleviate the sufferings of victims:

**i. Establishment of alternative homes to house victims:** In order to give an immediate relief to the victims, it is important that voluntary organizations and government establish alternative houses to temporarily shelter women who are in any way the victims of the social apathy and are turned out of their homes. For example, the victims of rape, kidnapping, even with the allegations of bad character are socially boycotted and are turned out of their homes without any fault of theirs. The provision of alternative homes will provide shelter to these victims and give them security till their problems are solved.

**ii. Establishment of cheaper and fast track courts:** The lengthy process of justice is expensive and needs lot of money which may not be possible for the victims to

arrange. Financial problems keep most of the victims away from the legal process. So, it is important that the government establish special courts for the benefit of the victims.

**iii. Social and voluntary organizations:** Social and voluntary organizations must be encouraged to take up the particular cases of women with their parents/in-laws and with the concerned agencies to redress the immediate problems and take up the cases for legal settlements.

**iv. Publicity:** Above measures may not be of much help if the victims did not know them. Therefore, it is imperative that the wide publicity be given to all the measures being taken to help the victims in particular and women in general through print and electronic media.

#### **3.3.4 Suggested Readings ;**

1. Ram Ahuja ; *Social problems in India (Second Edition)*, Rawat publications, Jaipur-2007 .

#### **Exercise:**

1. How social problems, in general, can be solved?
2. What is an organized action
3. How can we check violence against women?
4. What measures do you suggest to control communalism and terrorism?

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## Political Philosophy

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### BASIC POLITICAL CONCEPTS

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#### Structure

Objectives

Meaning and definitions of the term liberty

John Stuart Mill's concept of liberty [1806—1873]

Kinds of liberty

Threats to liberty

Criticism

Conclusion

Glossary

Questions

Suggested readings and references

#### **4.1 Objectives**

To acquaint the student with the meaning of the term liberty

To introduce to them the concept of liberty as given by J. S. Mill

To discuss the concept in detail so as to make them understand it clearly

## 4.2 Meaning and definitions of the term liberty

Liberty is one of the most desirable ideals of the modern times. Men all over the world have laid down their lives to attain and safeguard it. The term liberty is difficult to define. However in its absolute sense liberty means the power to do as one pleases. Lieber holds that as per the absolute meaning only God is free. It is impossible for all citizens of a state to enjoy liberty in the absolute sense. Every concept of liberty, therefore, implies a certain measure of social restraint.

Herbert Spencer says, 'Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man.'

M. Kechnie writes: 'Freedom is not the absence of all restraints but rather the substitution of rational ones for irrational.'

## 4.3 John Stuart Mill's concept of liberty

John Stuart Mill was a staunch proponent of individual liberty. His essay *On Liberty* is one of the finest works on the idea of freedom. Liberty for him is the life and breath of society. The key concept in '*On Liberty*' is the idea that liberty is essential to ensure subsequent progress; both of the individual and society, particularly when society becomes more important than the state. This state of affairs would be attained in a representative democracy in which the opposition between the rulers and the ruled disappears. Mill says that when society becomes free of the constraints of government, it begins to promote the interests of few powerful people which threaten individual liberty in a new way.

Mill envisions a society's progress in such a way so as to prevent the suppression of the individual by the majority. Social progress can only take place if limits are placed on individual liberty, but it also necessitates the freeing of the individual from such limits.

Mill in his essay '*On Liberty*' holds that: 'The principle is that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any other member, is self protection. . . over himself, his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.'

Society does not have an interest in those aspects of life that affect no one but the person acting. Mill wanted that such behavior should be both legally permitted and socially accepted. People should encourage others to make full use of their faculties.

#### **4.4 Kinds of Liberty**

*Mill identifies two kinds of liberty: Negative and Positive.*

In its negative sense liberty means non-restriction in the activities of the individual. It means that every man should be free to do that which he wills provided he does not infringe the equal freedom of others. The freedom of other men is the limit of the liberty of an individual. The state should not interfere in the matters of the individual. It implies that Mill promoted the doctrine of laissez faire and individualism.

In its positive sense liberty means that a man should enjoy the opportunities which are essential for the development of his personality. In other words liberty means the eager maintenance of that atmosphere in which men have the opportunity to be their best selves. The more people want to be free, the more they would have to work under restraints.

*Difference between Self-regarding and other-regarding sections:*

Mill says that in case of a conflict between an individual's opinions with that of the community, the individual will be the ultimate judge unless the community can convince him without threat to violence or force.

Moreover, Mill also differentiates between Self-regarding and Other-regarding actions. In the former, the individual enjoys absolute freedom and in the latter, the state puts restriction on the actions of the individual. Mill favored complete freedom of conduct for the individual in the sphere of Self-regarding actions unless it was dangerous to him. With respect to Other-regarding actions, Mill upholds the right of the community to force the individual if his conduct was contrary to the welfare of the community.

In the words of Mill: '...to individuality should belong the part of life in which it is chiefly the individual that is interested, to society, the part which chiefly interests the society.' Mill describes civilization as a struggle between society and individual about which society should have control over the individual's actions.

#### **4.5 Threats to Liberty**

Mill says that state laws and society, which expresses the general but unorganized opinion, pose threat to individual liberty. But he accepts reasonable interference in individual liberty to prevent harm to other people.

Mill divides the sphere of human liberty into three categories:

1. Liberty of individual thought and opinion.
2. There is planning one's own life i.e. the liberty of tastes and pursuits.
3. There is the liberty to unite with other consenting individuals for any purpose that does not harm others.

These liberties reflect the idea that true freedom means pursuing one's own good in one's own way, as long as it does not prevent others from doing the same. He argues that the state has no right to suppress the independent thinking of an individual because the truth develops after a detailed discussion. Mill asserts that freedom of thought and expression proves helpful in creativity also. And creativity helps in the development of a human, civilized and moral person. But customs and mass opinion are the greatest obstacles in the way of freedom of thought and expression.

#### **4.6 Criticism**

Mill's theory has been criticised on the following grounds:

1. The individual liberty promotes inequality among individual.

2. Matthew Arnold holds that Mill's concept of liberty left the door open for barbarism.
3. Nigel Warburton says that Mill appears unclear about what constitutes harm.
4. Barker criticizes Mill as 'the prophet of an empty liberty and an abstract individual.'
5. Mill makes clear that he only considers adults in his writings, failing to account for how children, ought to be treated.

#### 4.7 Conclusion

To conclude it can be said that inspite of the criticism of Mill's concept of liberty, his contribution in the field cannot be ignored. He has championed the cause of individual liberty, one of its kind.

#### 4.8 Glossary

**Representative democracy:** It is a type of democracy founded on the principle of elected officials representating a group of people. It can also be defined as a system of government in which all eligible citizens vote on representatives to pass laws for them. A perfect example is the U.S., where we people elect a president and members of the Congress.

**Laissez faire:** It is the practice or doctrine of noninterference in the affairs of others, especially with reference to individual conduct or freedom of action.

#### 4.9 Questions

- Define Liberty. What are different kinds of liberty?
- Differentiate between self-regarding and others-regarding actions.
- What are the threats to individual liberty?
- What is Mill's concept of liberty? Discuss in detail.

#### **4.10 Suggested Readings and references**

- On Liberty by John Stuart Mill
- Wikipedia, the encyclopedia of Philosophy
- Four Essays on Liberty, OUP, 1969.

**Concept of Equality by Jean Jacques Rousseau**

**Structure**

- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Introduction to the concept
- 4.3 Concept of equality by Rousseau [1712—1778]
- 4.4 The Idea of General Will
- 4.5 Drawbacks
- 4.6 Conclusion
- 4.7 Glossary
- 4.8 Questions
- 4.9 Suggested reading and references

**4.1 Objectives**

To familiarize the student with the concept of equality

To make them understand the concept in depth with differing notions about it

**4.2 Introduction to the concept**

Equality is a highly contested political ideal. The term has been used in different senses by different thinkers. The Greek philosophers of the Stoic school believed that nature made all men equal as all are rational. Christianity held that all men are equal as all are children of God. Cicero opined that in the possession of reason and in their psychological makeup, all men are equal. The eighteenth century European thinkers said that nature had made all men equal. The American Declaration of Independence also stated that all men are created

equal. Also the National Assembly of France declared that all men have equal rights. The term Equality is a suitable political slogan on account of its positive connotation. Since the French Revolution, it has served as one of the leading ideals of the body politic. The American English definition of equality is the state of being equal, especially in having the same rights, status, and opportunities.

### **4.3 Concept of equality by Jean Jacques Rousseau**

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was one of the most influential thinkers during the Enlightenment in eighteenth century Europe. Rousseau remains an important figure in the history of philosophy, both because of his contributions to political philosophy and moral psychology and because of his influence on later thinkers. Rousseau believes that the co-existence of human beings in relations of equality and freedom is possible but he is pessimistic about the fact that humanity will escape from oppression. His major works are: *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences*, *Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality among Men*, *Discourse on Political Economy*, *Emile or On Education* etc.

In his work *Discourse on Inequality*, Rousseau uses Hobbes's concept of the state of nature but describes it in a different manner.

Whereas Hobbes described the state of nature as a state of constant war populated by violent and selfish man, Rousseau holds that the state of nature is generally a peaceful, happy place made up of free and independent men. He says the kind of war Hobbes describes is not reached until man *leaves* the state of nature and enters civil society, when property and law create a conflict among men. He held: 'the first man who, having fenced a piece of land, said 'This is mine', found people naïve enough to believe him, that man was the true founder of civil society. . . the fruits of the earth belong to us all, and the earth itself to nobody. '

Rousseau says that the flawed Social Contract of Hobbes, which led to the emergence of modern state, was made at the suggestion of the rich and powerful, who befooled the general population into surrendering their liberties to them and made inequality as a fundamental feature of human society. Rousseau's Social Contract is different form of association in which each person will enjoy the

protection of the common force while remaining as free as they were in the state of nature.

Rousseau states that, society's negative influence on men centers on its transformation of *amour de soi*, a positive self-love, into *amour-propre*, or pride. *Amour de soi* represents the instinctive human desire for self-preservation. While *amour-propre* [pride] encourages man to compare himself to others, thus creating fear and allowing men to take pleasure in the pain or weakness of others. Rousseau states that with the development of *amour propre* [pride] and more complex human societies, private property is invented, and the labor necessary for human survival is divided among different individuals to provide for the whole.

Thus the division of labor and the beginning of private property allow the property owners and non laborers to dominate and exploit the poor. Rousseau observes that poor will oppose this and will naturally seek war against the rich to end their unfair domination. When the rich recognize this fact, they cheat the poor and ask them to join a political society that assures to grant them the equality they want. But instead of granting equality, it promotes their oppression.

#### **4.4 The Idea of the General Will**

However this oppression can be brought to an end by the Idea of the General Will: General Will is the collective will of the citizens taken as a whole. The general will is the source of law and is willed by each and every citizen. In obeying the law each citizen is thus obeying his or her own will, and hence, according to Rousseau, remains free. Rousseau argues that in order for the general will to be truly general it must come from all and apply to all. The general will is therefore both a property of the collective and a property of the individual. In a well-ordered society, there is no tension between private and general will.

However, Rousseau believes that many societies will fail to have this well-ordered character where the political community is divided into factions and where one faction can impose its collective will on the state as a whole.

Thus *The Social Contract* of Rousseau outlines the basis for a legitimate political order. Its opening lines, “Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains. Those who think themselves the masters of others are indeed greater slaves than they” convey this very correctly. According to Rousseau, by joining together into civil society through the social contract and giving up their claims of natural right, individuals can both preserve themselves and remain free. This is because submission to the authority of the general will of the people as a whole guarantees individuals against being subordinated to the wills of others and also ensures that they obey themselves because they are, collectively, the makers of the law.

Nevertheless in his work *Discourse*, Rousseau says that the only natural inequality among men is the inequality that results from differences in physical strength, for this is the only kind of inequality that exists in the state of nature. However, in modern societies the creation of laws and property have corrupted natural men and created new forms of inequality that are not in accordance with natural law. Rousseau calls these unjustifiable forms of inequality moral inequality.

#### **4.5 Drawbacks**

There are many drawbacks in this theory as:

1. The general will can never coincide with a particular will.
2. The expression of the general will ultimately takes the shape of law. Law must be made by the people as a whole (i. e. made by the sovereign) and applicable to the whole. But how can the people, especially a large number of them, jointly create a set of laws?
3. The general criteria for how laws ought to be made depend on circumstances that differ from people to people and place to place.
4. The most obvious problem in Rousseau’s argument is the question of how the general will is to be determined. In a world with no gods and only men, there is no ultimate arbiter of truth and justice.

## 4.6 Conclusion

In spite of drawbacks Rousseau's thinking has had a profound influence on later philosophers and political theorists. However, in their own way, both critics and admirers have served to underscore the significance of Rousseau. But those who have evaluated him with fairness have agreed that he was the finest thinker of his time on the question of civilization.

## 4.7 Glossary

**General Will:** Merriam Webster dictionary defines general will as the collective will of a community that is the embodiment or expression of its common interest. The general will (French: *volonté générale*) is the will of the people as a whole. The term was made famous by 18<sup>th</sup> century French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau.

**Stoic school:** The term "stoic" was taken from the "stoa poikile" (meaning "painted porch" or "colonnade") where Zeno of Citium used to teach. In modern usage, the word refers to someone who is unemotional or indifferent to pain, pleasure, grief or joy. The philosophy of stoic school is called as stoicism. Stoicism is an ancient Greek philosophy [developed by Zeno of Citium around 300 B.C] that teaches the development of self-control and fortitude as a means of overcoming destructive emotions. It enables a person to develop inner calm and freedom from suffering.

## 4..8 Questions

- Define Equality.
- Elucidate the meaning of General Will.
- Discuss Rousseau's concept of Equality.
- What is the difference between amour de soi and amour propre?

#### 4.9 Suggested readings and references

- *Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1754), "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality, part two", The Basic Political Writings, Hackett.*
- Bertram, C., 2004, *Rousseau and The Social Contract*, London: Routledge.
- Roger Masters, 1968. *The Political Philosophy of Rousseau*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press
- *Williams, David Lay (2014), Rousseau's 'Social Contract': An Introduction, Cambridge University Press.*
- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

## Concept of Justice by John Rawls

### Structure

- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Introduction to the concept
- 4.3 Rawls concept of justice [1921—2002]
- 4.4 Criticism
- 4.5 Conclusion
- 4.6 Glossary
- 4.7 Questions
- 4.8 Suggested reading and references

#### **4.1 Objectives**

To acquaint the student with the concept of justice

To know the meaning and divergent notions of the concept

To make an attempt to understand Rawlsian concept of justice

#### **4.2 Introduction to the concept**

Justice is one of the most important moral and political concepts. The word comes from the Latin *jus*, meaning right or law. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the “just” person as one who typically “does what is morally right” and is disposed to “giving everyone his or her due.” However going beyond etymology and dictionary definitions, different thinkers and philosophers have interpreted the word differently to consider the nature of justice as both a moral virtue of character and a desirable quality of political society and how it applies to ethical and social decision-making.

As for Plato, justice is a virtue establishing rational order, with each part performing its role and not interfering with the proper functioning of other parts. Aristotle says justice consists in what is lawful and fair [[equitable distributions](#)]. For Augustine, the cardinal virtue of justice requires that we try to give all people their due; for Aquinas, justice is that rational mean between opposite sorts of injustice, involving proportional distribution. Hobbes believed justice is an artificial virtue, necessary for civil society; for Hume, justice essentially serves public utility by protecting property. For Kant, it is a virtue whereby we respect others' freedom, autonomy, and dignity by not interfering with their voluntary actions, so long as those do not violate others' rights; Mill said justice is a collective name for the most important social utilities required to protect human liberty. Rawls analyzed justice in terms of maximum equal liberty regarding basic rights and duties for all members of society, with socio-economic inequalities requiring moral justification.

### **4.3 John Rawls' Conception of Justice**

John Rawls offered a conception of justice as an alternative to the doctrine of utilitarianism in his 1971 book *A Theory of Justice*. Rawls's views on justice are embodied in his conception of political life and the formation of government.

Justice as fairness is Rawl's theory of justice for a liberal society. It revived the social contract theory criticized by utilitarians and pragmatists. Rawls says that his theory, which he calls "justice as fairness," assumes a Kantian view of persons as "free and equal," morally autonomous, rational agents, who are not necessarily egoists.

He asks to imagine persons in a hypothetical "initial situation" which he calls "the original position" [corresponding to the "state of nature"] characterized by what Rawls calls "the veil of ignorance": 'the veil of ignorance' is a device designed to minimize the influence of selfishness in an attempt to determine what would be Just.

If one has to decide on what kind of society one could commit oneself to and were not allowed to influence in specific knowledge about oneself—such as one's gender, race, ethnic identity, level of intelligence, physical strength, quickness and stamina,

and so forth—then one would exercise the rational choice to make the society as fair for everyone as possible. Rawls believes that in such a “purely hypothetical” situation, we would rationally adopt two basic principles of justice for our society:

“**The first** requires equality in the assignment of basic rights and duties, while

**The second** holds that social and economic inequalities, for example inequalities of wealth and authority, are just only if they result in compensating benefits for everyone, and in particular for the least advantaged members of society.”

Rawls takes justice as the primary social virtue which requires equal basic liberties for all citizens and a presumption of equality even regarding socio-economic goods.

**The first** principle of justice, which requires maximum equality of rights and duties for all members of society, is prior to the second, which specifies how socio-economic inequalities can be justified. Justice is not reducible to utility or pragmatic desirability. Thus, for example, if enslaving a few members of society generated more benefits for the majority than losses for them, such a deal would be considered as unjust.

Rawls reformulates the first principle in terms of maximum equal liberty that “each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others.”

The basic liberties imply such civil rights as are protected in our Constitution—free speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of conscience, the right to private property, the rights to vote and hold public office, freedom from arbitrary arrest and seizure, etc.

**Rawls restates his second principle to maintain that**

“social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone’s advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all.”

Thus socio-economic inequalities can be justified, but only if both conditions are met. The first condition (a) is “the difference principle” and takes seriously the

idea that every socio-economic difference separating one member of society from others must be beneficial to all, including the person of lowest rank. The second condition (b) is one of “fair equality of opportunity,” in that socio-economic advantages must be connected to positions to which all members of society could have access.

For example, the office of the Presidency [in America] has greater social prestige and income than is available to most of the people. But is that just? It can be just because as citizen, one could achieve that office with its compensations *and* that even those who are at the bottom of the socio-economic scale benefit from intelligent and talented people who accept the responsibilities of that office.

Just as the first principle must be prior to the second, Rawls also maintains that “fair opportunity is prior to the difference principle.” Thus, if we have to choose between equal opportunity for all and socio-economically benefiting, and “the least advantaged” members of society, the former has priority over the latter.

#### **4.4 Criticism**

However Rawls’ theory has been criticised as:

1. Rawls’ theory of “justice as fairness” gets attacked by socialists such as Nielsen for sacrificing equality for the sake of liberty.
2. It was criticized by libertarians such as Nozick for giving up too much liberty for the sake of equality.
3. Some thinkers have criticized Rawls on the ground that the norms of justice differ with each community.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

However, inspite of the criticism, Rawls theory of justice is a work of its own kind. He himself suggests that his theory of justice as fairness might be applied to international relations, in general, and to just war theory, in particular.

## 4.6 Glossary

**Utilitarianism:** It is an ethical philosophy in which the happiness of the greatest number of people in the society is considered the greatest good. According to this philosophy, an action is morally right if its consequences lead to happiness (absence of pain), and wrong if it ends in unhappiness (pain). It was proposed by the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) in his 1789 book *Principles of Morals and Legislation* and it was developed by the English philosopher John Stuart Mill (1806-73) in his 1863 book *Utilitarianism*.

**Pragmatist:** A person who is guided more by practical considerations than by ideals. **Pragmatism:** It is an American movement in philosophy founded by C. S. Peirce and William James. It is the doctrine which holds that practical consequence are criteria of knowledge and meaning; and that truth is preeminently to be tested by the practice.

## 4.7 Questions

Discuss John Rawl's concept of justice.

## 4.8 Suggested reading and references

- John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (called "*Theory*"). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971
- Stanford encyclopedia of Philosophy
- Wikipedia encyclopedia of Philosophy

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## Social Pathology

### **Meaning and causes of crime; Means to prevent crime**

#### **Structure**

**Objectives**

**Introduction**

**Meaning of crime**

**Causes of crime**

**Means to prevent crime**

**Conclusion**

#### **5 OBJECTIVES :**

The main objective of this lesson is to familiarise students about the innumerable problems which result from complexity of social life and interaction of individuals in a complex social system. Crime or criminal behaviour is not something which can be called spontaneous. Criminal activities such as theft, murder or violent behaviour are not common tendency of all human beings. Only very small percentage of people in any society indulges in such undesirable actions. Our students should know the conditions in which human reason gets blocked and sheer emotional outburst leads to anti-social actions.

#### **5 INTRODUCTION:**

It is interesting to note two inborn tendencies in human nature. On the one hand man is social animal and no human being is happy outside and away from society. To be in company of other human beings is due to gregarious instinct. Man feels secure and happy in the society and frustrated, unhappy when isolated from others. But on the other hand man is essentially a fighting animal like all other animals. Thus, while he cannot live alone and must have company; when in company men are bound to have differences of opinion, tastes, and motives. These differences become the causes of social conflict and fighting. In the process of social evolution human society grew more and more complex. The

heterogeneity of human character and differences of interests became the cause of anti-social activities. Crime is the special feature of complex industrial society of modern age. In simple life of villages criminal behaviour of men and women is seldom observed. This phenomena needs to be studied in its entire dimension.

### **5.1 MEANING OF CRIME:**

Human society is the constitution of individual members and institutions. Social conformity facilitates the smooth functioning of social institutions. Conformity of behaviour and diversity based on religion, custom, language etc. are the traits of all societies of the world. Crime is related with conformity and diversity.

Crime is also linked with social norms. It is a failure or refusal to live up to the standard of conduct deemed binding on the community. Crime is not vice or a sin. It is not offence against God. It is prejudicial to society. It is action forbidden by laws under the pain of punishment. It is an offence against the state.

In passing way we may also consider the concept of sin and its relation with crime. Sin is a transgression against a divine law or scriptural commandment. It is basically a religious concept. The concept of sin and virtue pertains to religion and religious beliefs. Crime is a violation of a law of the state and punishable by the process of law. Though there is a violent part in man, he is not a criminal by instinct. Crime is wilful violation of social law or state law with a motive or purpose. Since it is voluntary, crime is punishable. The cognizable crimes are assault, murder, cheating, theft, robbery, rape, bribery etc. The practice of untouchability was socially approved in ancient India but since 1955, it is a violation of penal code and is now punishable by law and hence considered as a crime.

It is necessary to understand the difference between the crimes committed by adults and those by juveniles - children and youth. The crimes committed by children and youth in the age group seven to sixteen are classified as juvenile crimes. The juveniles who commit crimes are classified as delinquents and not as criminals. The difference is only on the basis of age and the sense of maturity and responsibility. While the criminal, that is adult, is punished, the delinquent is given proper education and training so that he might conform to the legal and social norms.

In all civilized societies of the world there is an elaborate process of social control to regulate behaviour of their members. The rules or laws thus framed are necessarily binding on each and every member of the society. Whosoever breaks the law or goes

against such laws is punished keeping in view the degree of offence. For example, it is the duty of the state to protect life and property of each and every member of the society. If somebody chooses to harm a fellow member, the society gives punishment to him through law enforcing agencies. Through the mechanism of police and judicial system crime is established against the offender of law and proper punishment is awarded.

Thus we can say that crime is an anti social act. It is violation of the rules which all are to observe and follow. Whatever may be the motive, society does not permit anybody to act against the interests of its members. When a criminal decides to go against the norms of the society, there is no other way than to isolate the offender and award punishment according to the type of crime. Why a normal human being decides to commit crime? What can be the possible causes? This is answered in the next part.

### **5.1.2 CAUSES OF CRIME:**

Rousseau, the great French philosopher and naturalist emphatically said that all men were born good; it was only environment, social conditions that turned them evil and criminal. We often say man is carved in the image of God, he is manifestation of divinity. What is that which turns a normal human being into offender of law?

Two wrong notions are being entertained regarding crime in many societies of Asia. One is that criminal tendencies in an individual are looked upon as being due to evil deeds in past lives. By this reasoning, many criminals are able to get away without being punished since it is assumed that such persons will be born again to reap consequences. But our study of social behaviour has shown that social behaviour is learnt behaviour. There is nothing inborn. Only the basic needs arising out of the physiological status of the body may be labelled as inborn.

The second associated notion is based on the hypothesis of heredity. While the first assumption makes the acts of the individual in past life responsible for his present actions, the heredity assumption claims that crime is biologically transmitted by the genes in particular groups or families. The criminal parents are assumed to bring forth criminal children.

Both these two popular assumptions to find out causes of criminal behaviour are dangerous and misleading. Sociologists have found out various factors which develop criminal traits in normal individuals based on their detailed study and research of the phenomena of crime.

### **1. The socio-economic factor**

Poverty and unemployment are often looked upon as factors leading to crime. Although this is not the sole factor which prompts criminal behaviour, none the less it is an important factor. In spite of the fact that all poor do not turn out to be criminal and crime flourishes even in rich countries, persons deprived of basic necessities are more likely to express revolt against the society. The gap between a few rich and innumerable poor causing social and economic injustice leads to revolt against the system. Majority of those convicted of crime come from lower economic levels. It is not poverty, but the character of these people and lack of social responsibility that makes them indulge in crime. Social disparities on account of caste and economic status may also induce criminal actions. Hunger and poverty do not normally drive a man to crime; it is his emotional instability which prefers him to accept crime as justifiable for personal assertion and achievement. Industrialisation and development of large slums in big cities also become breeding ground of crime.

### **2. Lack of education and proper social environment**

Education is the most important factor of socialization. But due to poverty and many social factors millions of children are deprived of education. Due to lack of education they do not have social sense and concept of social responsibility. Besides this, illiterate people many a time do not get employment and tend to adopt unlawful means of earning. Social consciousness is the result of proper social environment. Economically backward and under privileged children try to find undesirable ways and means of earning. Pick-pocketing, cheating and theft are common crimes committed by such children. With the passage of time these children grow into hardened criminals. For this reason all civilized societies lay great emphasis on education and training for all regardless of caste, creed and sex.

### **3. Family Background**

It is noticed that children of people with criminal background and life remain deprived of training in social life. They watch their parents doing undesirable activities and try to copy them. In India there are criminal tribes whose profession is earning through unlawful acts. Apparently they do small manual work and move from place to place, indulging in criminal activities on finding opportunity. Society has to settle them and provide them some kind of useful training for respectable living.

#### **4. Cinema and cheap means of entertainment**

Cinema and movies centred on violence and unlawful acts have played havoc with the young generation during the past several decades. Day light robberies and heroes moving with firearms is nothing but reflection of desire of adventurism in young generation who can try to copy events watched on the screen. While cinema could be a great source of social education besides healthy entertainment, many producers fill their movies with violence and low grade actions to attract more and more audience. Society must check such creations through very effective censure.

#### **5. Physical factors**

It is noticed that persons with low intelligence or physical deficiency are unable to cope with normal social life in which there is competition. The law of the survival of the fittest plays and men and women with physical or mental deficiency get isolated. Sometime out of sense of inferiority and jealousy with others many children develop abnormal traits. With the passage of time such traits become the source of criminal behaviour.

#### **6. Bad Company**

Man is known by the company he keeps. Children who are deprived of parental care and control often fall in company of undesirable persons. Such children develop a taste for alcohol, gambling and other such undesirable habits. By the time their parents become conscious of such developments, it becomes too late to make changes. The age group between ten and twenty is extremely vulnerable and proper control and discipline is essential for children at that period.

Thus we can say that there can be many factors which may develop criminal traits in normal human beings.

## **5.2 MEANS TO PREVENT CRIME:**

Crime is a social evil. Criminal people are engaged in activities detrimental to the interests of society. There is always need to put a check to such activities and control the criminals. Even in advanced and affluent societies the phenomenon of crime is prevalent. In spite of the elaborate mechanisms of law and law enforcing agencies, criminals move about harming society and threatening life of common people. Sociologists have suggested measures to prevent development of criminal tendencies in people. It is better to prevent development of crime than punish the criminal. We may discuss some such measures to prevent crime:

### **1. Fear and respect of law**

Human nature is very complex. Man is essentially an instinctual being and only incidentally a rational animal. Emotions play very important part in the life of every man. Therefore proper check and control of human behaviour is always desirable. The duty of every state and every society is not only to frame social and legal codes of conduct but also to see that laws are enforced and people respect them. Fear of law is essential to check animal in man which comes out whenever there is no fear. We come across instances in Indian history when there was almost no crime under the rule of Chandra Gupta and Samudra Gupta. No one dared to commit crime as punishment for theft and murder was too severe. There was fear of law and respect of law was made a habit for people. In modern democracies liberty is misused because legal process is too elaborate and cumbersome. There are always chances to escape punishment after committing a crime. Sometimes our political leaders themselves patronise criminals and use them for their own purpose. In such conditions it appears extremely difficult to check crime and establish fear of law. Crime is assuming dangerous proportion in modern societies. It is a very serious problem which needs attention of social and political leaders.

### **2. Effectiveness of Social Institutions**

For the prevention of crime in a complex society social institutions have to play a very important role. As a matter of fact evolution of such organisations and institutions has been for the purpose of social harmony and peace. Institutions aim to provide out-let for different kinds of activities and redirection of human mind for the betterment of society. An

increase in crime means that social institutions are not performing their functions properly. Institutions like religion, education, family and social and cultural organisations need to remain watchful over the activities of individuals. If these institutions are effective, criminal tendencies can be minimized.

### **3. Control on mass media of Communication**

Press, radio and T.V. have very great role in the process of informal education and consequent prevention of crime. Effective social and state control on means of communication can promote peace and harmony and check violence. But unfortunately commercialisation of these agencies is harming social interests. Press, Radio and T. V. are really the agencies of education and these should perform their role. It is for the state to control and regulate their work.

### **4. Education**

Education is very important factor for generating social awareness and sense of responsibility. Among criminals the large percentage is of illiterates who cannot get jobs easily. They indulge in crimes and short cut methods of earning money. State should strengthen formal and non-formal agencies for spreading education. Apart from knowledge the purpose of education is to create social consciousness. Education can do what the law enforcing agencies cannot do. Therefore process of education must be kept under constant assessment.

These are some of the important means by which crimes can be effectively checked in the society. Crimes increase due to negligence of various social agencies. In the larger interest of society more effectiveness of such agencies is desirable.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Thus we see that the social problem of crime has many dimensions in the complex modern society. There is no one cause of it, nor can it be checked and prevented by the state only. Society as a whole has to rise unitedly against growth of crime. Crime creates fear in the minds of common people and is threat to the whole society. Therefore it deserves much greater attention of social leaders. Even if crimes cannot be eliminated altogether, a lot can be done to check their growth.

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## **Theories of Punishment**

### **Structure**

**Objective**

**Introduction**

**Theories of Punishment**

**Conclusion**

### **5.1 OBJECTIVES :**

After understanding the problem of crime the next question is how to deal with the phenomenon of crime. This section will describe variety of approaches to deal with the problem of crime. Since total prevention or total elimination of crime seems near impossible, what should society do with the criminals? The aim of this chapter is to acquaint students with methods of dealing with criminals.

### **5.2 INTRODUCTION:**

A criminal is an anti-social person who decides to inflict harm to the society in one way or other. His bent of mind, thinking and approach to life is charged with evil intension. It never comes to his mind that he is also a member of the society and therefore he has some duty towards the society. Due to abnormal thinking he justifies all his criminal acts. Socrates said that every man is good by nature but when he does wrong he thinks it right. We come across cases when men knowingly and willingly indulge in crime just for their own good or just to satisfy their animal instincts. In such a situation it becomes the foremost duty of state to check the activities of criminals by either isolating them from rest of the society or to award severe punishment to them. Views regarding type of punishment assumed the form of different theories. A student of social philosophy must know all such views or theories for his own understanding. Students of today are guardians of future society, therefore such information and knowledge is quite relevant for them. The lesson will discuss views and theories related to crime and punishment with objective and critical approach. The search is for the most acceptable theory to deal with crime and criminals keeping in view the magnitude of crime and its degree of effect on the society.

## **THEORIES OF PUNISHMENT:**

Of the different opinions and theories related to crime and punishment, three most important ones are retributive, preventive and reformatory theories.

### **5.3.1 Retributive theory**

According to the retributive theory the aim of punishment is justice by seeking revenge of the act of crime - an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth explain the implications of this theory. As a good deed deserves reward, so the act of crime deserves negative reward. The punishment which the society confers upon the offender of law gives him only that which he has earned through his action. Punishment is not for the sake of punishment, it is the reward of the violation of social laws. Thus the supreme objective of punishment is to vindicate the authority of law. Bosanquet has given two features of this theory. First, it is personal revenge of the offending act. Secondly, it has been recognised in this theory that the punishment is quantitatively equal to the crime. The retributive theory has two forms - rigorist and liberal. According to the first the criminal should be punished severely for a serious crime. The liberal retributive theory suggests that while awarding punishment to a criminal, magnitude of crime and the circumstances of the crime must be kept in consideration. Therefore punishment should not be more than what the offender deserves. According to Mackenzie, "If the aim of punishment is to vindicate the authority of law, this will be partly done in so far as the offender is reformed and in so far as similar acts are prevented. And indeed neither reformation nor prevention is likely to be effected by punishment unless it is recognised that the punishment is a vindication of law."

There is no doubt that this theory is in practice in many parts of the world. But punishment so given does not reform the criminal, often, after first case of punishment a criminal becomes worse and more hardened. Usually, however, this method of punishment brings no reform in criminals nor does it ensure prevention of crime in future. Thus the basic purpose of punishment is not achieved through retributive theory.

### **5.3.2 Preventive Theory**

According to the preventive theory the aim of punishment is not only to punish the offender of law but also to set an example so that others are prevented from following the path of crime. The theory suggests that punishment should be so severe that it becomes a

factor of preventing growth of criminals in the society. During the golden rule of the past hands were cut off for theft and killer was hanged in public. Even in our age there are societies where punishment by stoning, chopping of head and public execution is prevalent for rape, murder and revolt against the state. The state in these cases shows no mercy to the offenders of law. But the main defect in this theory is that it uses criminal as a means for reforming the society which is unethical. While the criminal gets no chance of improvement, he is used as means to reform others. Thus from practical point of view and from moral perspective the preventive theory is not sound. To punish a man in order to convey a lesson to others is improper and inhuman. In stable democratic societies this theory is not accepted.

### **5.3.3 The Reformatory Theory**

According to the reformatory theory the aim of punishment is improvement of the offender himself. Modern age seems generally to favour and apply this theory. There are enumerable factors and conditions which induce and motivate an individual to take up the path of crime. Such factors are present in the social and economic conditions. Therefore society must improve the conditions of life on the one hand and reform the criminal on the other, so that he is led towards more socially approved means of life, on the other. In modern jails we come across educational and training centres where jailed people are prepared for a respectable life.

Modern criminal anthropology propounds that crime is a disease. Therefore it is necessary to treat a criminal instead of punishing him. Criminal sociology emphasises the responsibility of social circumstances for crime. Thus it is reasonable to introduce improvement in social and economic conditions to remove inequalities and injustice which can reduce the occurrence of crime, than to resort to punishment. Similarly psychoanalysts suggest education for prevention of crimes in the society.

On objective evaluation and assessment of all these three theories of punishment we discover that the preventive and retributive theories ignore important facts of circumstantial conditions and human nature. These are one sided and hence not acceptable to the modern man. The reformatory theory is more balanced approach to the serious problem of crime. This is effective in all respects and keeps in view all such conditions in which the criminal commits crime. Reform of criminals is very desirable but a criminal who

wilfully violates social laws is an abnormal person. His reform is not so easy. In some cases punishment becomes necessary but in many cases reformative measures such as education and training for useful professions certainly helps in reforming the criminals. The reformative theory suggests very humanitarian approach to the problem of crime and criminals. The aim is to eliminate the causes of crime in the society.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Thus we come to the conclusion that crime is a very serious problem of all societies. Man by nature is not criminal yet he is led to a situation where crime becomes his habit. Therefore the problem must be viewed in totality. There are positive factors in all the theories and we cannot outrightly reject any of them. Yet we have to take a more balanced and reasonable approach to deal with such a serious social issue as crime. Of all the three major theories of punishment, the reformative theory is most suited for modern civilised societies.

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