

Chapter One: Meaning and Nature of Sociology

1.1 Definition

In the early part of the nineteenth century, the study of society was institutionalized through the creation of the discipline of sociology. During this period, the French philosopher and socialist Auguste Comte coined the term “sociology”. Sociology is a new branch of social science, which primarily focused on society (social behavior). The term Sociology comes from the Latin “*socius*” meaning “companionship” and the Greek “*logos*”, meaning “science or study”. Literally, therefore, sociology means the study or the science of human society. Sociology can also be defined as referring to the formal study of how humans behave in groups. Sociology tends to focus on how human groups originate, how they are organized, and how they relate to one another. It is the scientific study of human societies and human behavior in the many groups that make up a society.

Sociology studies human society at three levels: Society as a whole, Groups and associations, and Individuals within the social settings. It is not easy to give a clear and comprehensive definition of sociology since it covers a wide variety of human relationships. Different sociologists have given several definition of sociology, including: 1) “Sociology is a scientific study or science of society or of social phenomenon.” L. F. Ward 2) “It is the study of the relationship between man and his human environment.” H. P. Fairchild 3) “Sociology is the study of human interactions, and interrelations, and their conditions and consequences.” M. Ginsberg 4) “Sociology seeks to discover the principles of cohesion and of order within the social structure.” Mac Iver 5) “Sociology is a systematic study of the origin, growth and development of institution as operated by the physical, mental and moral forces.” A. Giddens

1.2 The Subject Matter of Sociology

The subject matter of sociology is everywhere. This is why people sometimes wrongly believe that sociology just explains the obvious. But sociologists bring a unique subject matter and perspective to understanding social behavior and social change. In general, there are three paths that are available for delineating the subject matter of sociology:

- 1. The historical path:** whereby we seek through study of the classical sociological writings to find the central traditional concerns and interests of sociology as an intellectual discipline. The historical path offers us the opportunity to benefit from the wisdom of the past. In brief, we ask, “What did the founding fathers say?”
- 2. The empirical path:** whereby we study current sociological work to discover those subjects to which the discipline gives most attention. In other words, we ask, “What are contemporary sociologists doing?” Sociology is an empirical discipline. This means that sociological conclusions are based on careful and systematic observations. In this way, sociology is very different from ordinary common sense.

3. **The analytical path:** whereby we arbitrarily divide and delineate some larger subject matter and allocate it among different disciplines. Sociology is a scientific way of thinking about society and its influence on human groups. Observation, reasoning, and logical analysis are the tools of the sociologist, coupled with knowledge of the large body of theoretical and analytical work done by previous sociologists and others. Sociology is inspired by the fascination people have for the thoughts and actions of other people, but it goes far beyond casual observations. It attempts to build on observations that are objective and accurate to create analyses that are reliable and that can be validated by others.

1.3 The Sociological Imagination

Sociologists talk about the connection between learning to understand and then change society as being the sociological imagination. C. Wright Mills (1916–62), a colorful and controversial professor at New York's Columbia University, coined this term. Sociological imagination is an approach to the understanding of human behavior by placing it in its broader social context. To find out why people do what they do, sociologists look at social location, where people are located in history and on a particular society. Sociologists focus on such characteristics of people, as their job, income, education, gender, and race. The center of the sociological perspective lies the question "how people are influenced by society". We usually think and speak of peoples' behavior although it is caused by their sex, or their race, or some other factor transmitted by their genes. According to Mills, the sociological imagination is the ability to see the interrelationships between biography and history, or the connections between our individual lives and larger social forces at work shaping our lives (e.g., racism or political agendas). Mills urged us to understand that our own personal fortunes or troubles (e.g., gain/loss of a job, divorce) must be understood in terms of larger public issues (e.g., the health of the economy, societal changes in the institution of marriage). They cannot be fully understood outside of this social context.

The sociological perspective helps us to escape from this narrow personal view by exposing the broader social context that underlies human behavior. It helps us to see the links between what people do and the social setting (social structure) that shapes their behavior.

Mills felt that developing a sociological imagination will help us to avoid becoming "victims" of social forces and better control our own lives. By understanding how social mechanisms operate, we can better work to bring about change and influence history. Hence, as we learn to use the sociological imagination, we readily apply it to our daily lives. In doing so, it provides us four general benefits, including:

- a. The sociological perspective becomes a way of thinking a 'form of consciousness' that challenges familiar understandings of ourselves and of others, so that we can critically assess the truth of commonly assumptions.
- b. The sociological perspective enables us to assess both opportunities and the constraints that characterize lives. Sociological thinking leads us to see that, better or worse, our society operates in a

particular way. It helps us to see the pattern and order found in all societies. Moreover, in the game of we may decide how to play our cards, but it is society that deals us the hand. The more we understand the game, then, the more effective players we will be. Sociology helps us to understand what we are likely and unlikely to accomplish for ourselves and how we can pursue our goals most effectively.

- c. The sociological perspective empowers us to be active participants in our society. Without an awareness of how society operates, we are likely to accept the status quo. We might just think that this is how all societies are, or how all people behave 'naturally'. But the greater our understanding of the operation of society, the more we can take an active part in shaping social life.
- d. The sociological perspective helps us to recognize human differences and human suffering and to confront the challenges of living in a diverse world.

1.4 Significance of Sociology

Some of significances of sociology, including the following (Indrani, 2003: 5-6):

- Sociology as a scientific study of society is of great importance or a clear understanding and planning of society. Sociological knowledge is necessary to understand the diverse social experiences of a large variety of institutions and organizations as well as policies, for social betterments are made on that basis.
- It provides knowledge of individual's relation to society and such knowledge is necessary for every individual's relation to fellow beings. Human understanding between individuals and different cultural groups is obtained by the scientific study of society. Sociology has changed our outlook with regard to the problems of deviance and crime, etc through the science of deviance, criminology, penology and criminal justice system.
- Sociology has made great contribution to enrich human culture. Culture has been made richer by the contribution of sociology. Sociology has given a training to have rational approach to the questions concerning oneself, one's religion, customs, moral and institutions. Sociology studies role of the institutions in the development of the individual. It is through sociology that scientific study of the great fundamental social institutions; the relation of the individual and society, the home and family, the school and education, the church and religion, the state and government, industry and work, etc is being made.
- Sociology is useful as a teaching subject. It is being accorded as important place in the curriculum of colleges and universities because it keeps us up-to-date on modern situations; contributes in making good citizens; contributes to the solution of community problems; adds to the knowledge of the society; helps the individual to find his relations to society; and Identifies good government within the community.

1.5 The Scope of Sociology

Macro and Micro sociology

Some sociologists concentrate on the study of small groups and the patterns and processes of human social relations, i.e. face to face interactions between humans. This part of sociology is known as Micro sociology. Other most sociologists concentrate on large groups, events or societies as a whole. This large scope sociology is known as macro sociology. Macro sociologists attempt to explain the fundamental patterns and processes of large-scale social relations.

1.6 The Relationship of Sociology with Other Disciplines

There are different sciences dealing with different aspects of nature and human experience. The classification of knowledge into various sciences is broadly under three categories, including: the physical sciences, the material sciences and the social sciences. There are other social sciences also in addition to sociology which study society. Among them are Psychology, Anthropology, History, Economics, Political Science, and Philosophy, etc. As one of the social sciences, sociology shares the basic common element that all the social sciences attempt to understand human behavior. Accordingly, in the modern era, no sociologists can deny the utility of the other social sciences. In so doing, the social science may use each other's methodology to understand human behavior. They differ from one another, however, in their unique approach, the concepts they use, the questions they pose, and the solutions they reach and suggest. For instance, if the social problem to be investigated is the problem of low productivity, the economist may suggest the improvement of the machinery, where as the sociologist may suggest the creation of good working conditions as solutions to the problem.

In general, we can see as sociology has many similarities to the other social sciences. Like political scientists, sociologists study how people govern one another, especially the impact of various forms of government on people's lives. Like economists, sociologists are concerned with what happens to the goods and services of a society; however, sociologists focus on the social consequences of production and distribution. Like anthropologists, sociologists study culture; they have a particular interest in the social consequences of material goods, group structure, and belief systems, as well as in how people communicate with one another. Like psychologists, sociologists are also concerned with how people adjust to the difficulties of life. Given these overall similarities, then, what distinguishes sociology from the other social sciences? Unlike political scientists and economists, sociologists do not concentrate on a single social institution. Unlike anthropologists, sociologists focus primarily on industrialized societies. And unlike psychologists, sociologists stress factors external to the individual to determine what influences.

Chapter Two: Origin and Development of Sociology

2.1 Early Origins and Development of Sociology

Sociology is specifically the offspring of the 18th and the 19th century philosophy and has been viewed as a reaction against the frequently non-scientific approaches of classical philosophy to social phenomenon. Today's sociology is not something, which has been raised like a phoenix from its ashes, rather it has undergone through several stages of developments. Different philosophers and religious authorities of ancient and medieval societies made countless observations about human behaviors. However, they do not test or verify these observations scientifically, even though these observations often became the bases for moral codes of that time. Sociology, as a distinctive way of thinking about society, was concurrent with the rise of modernity; partly, means the rise of scientific way of thinking. The idea of modernity originated as an account of the kind of institutions, ideas and behavior that grew out of the decline of medieval society in Europe. In the most basic sense, modernity is the mode of our time (here and now). It is also an attitude of critical reflection on the past and critical distance from the future. Therefore, modernity evokes the idea of radically changing time.

2.2 Factors That Contributed To the Development of Sociology

There are various social currents that put momentum in the development of sociology in the 19th Century, including:

a) Political Revolution

One of the most influences behind the emergence of sociological thought was the political modernity (the rise of the national law and democracy), following different revolutionary movements, starting with the French revolution in 1789. This revolution was quite different from rebellions of the previous times. In the French revolution for the first time in history there took place the overall dissolution of social order by the movement guided by secular ideas.

The rise of the state was the leading consideration for numerous legal and political writers in the 17th and 18th centuries. The idea of French philosophers (Voltaire Montesquieu and Rousseau) included the percept (teaching, principle) that “all people are equal before the law and are innocent until proved guilty.” They also argued that illness and misfortune are not symptoms of divine maledictions, but have natural and social causes. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, these ideas led numerous projects to reform and national administration of the institutions of social life, including the foundation of statute, schools, hospitals, prisons, and police force.

B) Socio-economic Modernity: the rise of capitalism, industries, cities, etc.

The industrial revolution was as important as political revolution for the emergence of social thinking (sociological theory), mainly in the 19th and 20th centuries. This industrial revolution was not a single event, but many interrelated developments that culminated in the transformation of the western world from predominantly agricultural to an overwhelmingly industrial system. Majority of the peasant left

their farms behind for the industrial occupation offered by the growing factories. Bureaucracies arose to provide many service needed by industry and the emerging capitalist economic system. It is usually traced to the Great Britain in the late 18th century and spread in the 19th century throughout the Western Europe and the USA. The industrial revolution is sometimes presented as a set of technical innovations. But these technical innovations are only part of the much broader sets of social and economic changes. People began to migrate from the surrounding areas to nearby urban centers. Industrialization and urbanization were at the heart of the transformations that have irreversibly dissolved most traditional forms of society. The impacts of these transformations on many societies were both negative and positive changes. However, what attracted the attention of many early theorists were not the positive consequences but the negative effect of such changes (chaos and disorder especially in France) they were united to restore order of society. This interest in the issue of social order, therefore, became the major concern of early social analysis. Sociology came in to being as though caught up in the initial series of changes brought about by the two great revolutions, and sought to understand the conditions of their emergence and their likely consequences.

The idea of free- market economy emerged. This system profited a few while impoverished the majority who worked for long hours for wage. A reaction against the industrial system and against capitalism in general followed and led the labor movement as well as various radical movements aimed at overthrowing the capitalist system. The industrial revolution, capitalism and the reaction against them all involved an enormous upheaval in western societies. This upheaval affected sociologists greatly. K. Marx, E. Durkheim, and M. Weber spent their lives studying these problems to develop programs that would help to solve them.

c) The Rise of Socialism

K. Marx was an active supporter of the overthrow of capitalist system and its replacement by socialist system. However, Weber and Durkheim were opposing to socialism. They fear socialism more than they did capitalism. In fact, in many cases, the rise of sociological imaginations in the early times was a reaction against socialism.

Generally, processes of industrialization and urbanization, and ideas of democracy and enlightenment were all central considerations for the 18th and 19th century social thinkers.

d) Intellectual Factors

The emergence and development of sociology was speeded up by a large number of intellectual movements and contributions. The movements include the rise of political economy, utilitarianism, liberalism, positivism, Marxism, functionalism, and action theory. The idea of positivism, which was predominantly proposed by A. Comte as a scientific study of social phenomena, was the corner stone of sociological thoughts for the most parts of sociology's early history. The subsequent writers were either expanding on or modifying this idea only.

e) Colonization (exposure to different cultures)

The late 19th century was a period of extensive colonization. Some European countries got colony in North America, Africa, South America, and Asia. This colonialism resulted in cross-cultural contacts among peoples of these different continents of the world. During this time, academic curiosity was increased and many scholars began to study this cross-cultural contact.

f) Secularization

Before the 19th century sacred outlooks dominated western European thinking. This sacred outlook made many aspects of human society; including government believe to have been predetermined by God. However, secularism has become one of the principles of industrial societies and people became to think differently

g) The demand for sociological inquiry in planning

Governments needed to have social policies so as to solve different social problems like homelessness, crime, unemployment, etc. Therefore, governments used the applications of sociological understandings to get rid of the social problems through appropriate social policy formulation.

2.3 Founding Fathers of Sociology

As it has already been noted, philosophers and religious authorities of ancient and medieval societies made countless observations about human behavior. Their observations were not tested or verified scientifically; nevertheless, they often became the foundation of moral codes. In the 19th century European theorists including Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and Karl Marx made pioneering contributions to the development of a science of human behavior, sociology. These classical sociologists profile and major works have been demonstrated in the following pages.

2.3.1 Auguste Comte (1798-1857)

Comte was a French social theorist who lived in a period when France was at a great chaos as a result of the French Revolution. He was the man who coined the word “sociology” from Latin ‘Socius’ and the Greek “Logos” to apply to the science of human behavior.

A Biographical Sketch



Auguste Comte was born in Montpellier, France, on January 19, 1798. His parents were middle class, and his father eventually rose to the position of official local agent for the tax collector. Although a precocious student, Comte never received a college-level degree. He and his whole class were dismissed from the Ecole Poly technique for their rebelliousness and their political ideas. Auguste Comte died on September 5, 1857.

All the sciences, according to him, share an over-all framework of logic and method; all seek to uncover universal laws governing the particular phenomena with which they deal. If we discover the laws governing the human society, Comte believe, we will be able to shape our own destiny in much the same way as science has allowed us to control events in the natural world.

Positive Philosophy is his well-known book and in this book and other of his writings he showed the possibility of the scientific study of society. He advocated positivism in that social phenomena could be studied scientifically and proposed methods of studying it through observation, experimentation, comparison and history. By using positive (scientific) methods, Comte believed, it is possible to study and provide solutions to existing social problems. The collective facts of history and society are subject to laws and not to individual volition (free will), according to Comte.

Comte treated society as divided in to two: social statics and social dynamics. Social statics refers to the investigations of the laws of action and reaction of the different parts of the social system. The parts of the society can't be studied separately as if they had an independent existence. Instead, they must be seen as a mutual relation forming a whole that compels us to treat them in a combination. If social statics is the study of how the parts of the society are interrelated, social dynamics was the focus on the whole societies as the unit of analysis and to show how societies develop and change through time. Comte was convinced that all societies moved through certain fixed stages of development, and they progressed to an ever-increasing perfection. There are three stages of development in laws of human thought: theological, metaphysical, and the positive. These stages characterize the development of both knowledge and society.

The Three Stages in the Laws of Human Development

In 1830, he published the first volume of '*positivism*'. In this book and other his writings he showed the possibility of the scientific study of the society. Comte is the first to create positivism, which is defined as the belief that social phenomena could be treated scientifically; and he proposed methods of observation, comparison, history, and experiment. Positivism is a core idea in his sociology that he named as a queen of sciences. In his positivist explanation, he formulated three stages of the laws of human development. According to his laws of the three stages, Comte made analogy of human evolution with individual evolution as follows:

<u>Individual evolution</u>	<u>human evolution</u>
Childhood-----	theological
Adolescence-----	metaphysical
Adulthood-----	scientific (positivistic)

According to Comte, human race (society) is evolved from the three stages of evolution: theological, metaphysical, and scientific illustrated as:

- *Theological stage (<1300A.D)*: In this stage, all human behavior or social phenomena were attributed to religion. In which people’s view of the world was guided by religious principles. Sociology was regarded as unexpressed. People started to view a society as natural phenomena. There was no critical investigation. Both philosophical speculation and scientific explanation were absent, rather dominated by religious interpretation of social phenomena.
- *Metaphysical stage (1300-1800)*: At this stage, people’s view of the world was by partial religious and partial speculative philosophy. The religious explanation coming from the mid-way explanation that society is not the reflection of the perfection of human beings. Here, all societies centered at finding of causes for social behaviors. It is a bit more revolutionary stage than the theological one.
- *Scientific stage (1800-now)*: According to A. Comte, this stage is the final human intellectual development, which replaced both the theological and metaphysical stages as a whole. During this period, people give emphasis to scientific methods and actions. They become materialistic and individualistic.

It is also Comte’s contribution to explain social dynamic and social static in classifying society. As to him, society is divided in to two: social static and social dynamic.

Limitations of Comte’s three stages of the law of human development

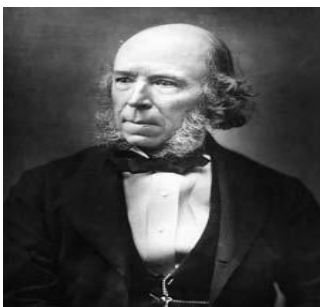
Despite his enormous contribution to the development of sociology as a systematic scientific field of study, his basic ideas suffer from some drawbacks; such as

1. He ignored the coexistence the three stages of social development within a given social system.
2. He was naive that there could be a multidirectional development in a society by advocating only unilinear development.
3. He ignored the existence of both regression as well as progression in change.

2.3.2 Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)

Herbert Spencer was an exponent of evolutionarism and organistic view of society. He defines evolution as “a change from a state of relatively indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a state of relatively definite, coherent heterogeneity”. In 1850, he published his major book ‘Social Statics’.

A Biographical Sketch



Herbert Spencer was born in Derby, England, on April 27, 1820.

Spencer died on December 8, 1903.

The identification of areas of study in sociology such as social control (deviance) politics, religion, the family, stratification, associations, and communities are one of the greatest contributions of Spencer. He believed that society operates according to certain fixed laws. However, his first and foremost concern was with evolutionary changes in social structure and social institutions. He became convinced that societies evolve from lower or barbarian to higher or civilized forms. As generations pass, he said, the most capable and intelligent or the fittest members of the society survive, while the less capable die out. Therefore, over time societies become steadily improved. Spencer called this principle “the survival of the fittest”. Although Spencer coined this phrase, it is usually attributed to his contemporary Charles Darwin, who proposed that living organisms evolve over time as they survive the conditions of their environment. Because of their similarities Spencer’s view of the evolution of societies became known as Social Darwinism.

Growth Structure and Differentiation

Spencer saw society as an organism, where in the various social institutions being its different organs. Both organic and social aggregates are characterized by Spencer according to progressive increase in size “just like living organisms begin as germs societies start from extremely small masses.” Growth may come either through an increase in population-by simple multiplication of units or from the joining of previously unrelated units-union of groups, and again union of groups of groups. Increase in size is accompanied by an increase in the complexity of their structures. The process of growth is a process of integration. And integration must be accompanied by differentiation if the organism or societal unit is to be viable.

In short, Spencer had two important theories about human society in general: the idea of social evolution and the organic view of society as discussed below:

1) **The Idea of Social Evolution:** society moves from simple to more differentiated or complex forms or from homogeneity to heterogeneity. In his book, “The principle of Sociology”, he used the organic analogy to explain social organization and social evolution.

2) **The Organic View of Society:** Spencer conceived that the parts of a society are interdependent and interrelated which implies that the existence of one depends on the existence of another and change in one part implies change in another part, the idea he shared with Comte. But unlike Comte, who tried to prescribe laws to bring about change in the existing society, Spencer opposed to prescription.

His opposition to interference to bring about change made his approach very appealing and popular to many influential people in England and the United States who had vested interest in the status quo and were suspicious of social thinkers who endorsed change. He said that through evolution society moves from structural differentiation to functional differentiation, from simplicity to complexity, from uniformity (homogeneity) to specialization (heterogeneity).

Types of Societies

Spencer classified societies in terms of their evolutionary stage and their degree of structural complexity. He also classified societies as militant and industrial based on the type of internal regulation within the societies.

The types of societies as viewed by Spencer:

1) The Militant: the lowest stage characterized by small bands of people; homogeneous, undifferentiated, dominated by military coercion and rigid rules; compulsory cooperation. In some of such societies chiefs or kings claim to have obtained their authority from divine power (the supernatural). Religion justifies the exercise of military power.

2) The Industrial stage (Society): this is the opposite of the militant stage. Status is replaced by contract. No more rigidity but flexibility; no more despotic but democratic. The dominant sentiment was not patriotism but individualism and development. The greater part of social activity is toward peace, and production for the betterment of life. Human relationship is free, responsive and contractual which demands not compulsory but voluntary cooperation.

3) The Ethical society: the final and perfect stage of societal development. In such type of society, ethics governs; individuals are selfish but responsive to others. Internal moral restraints replace external moral restraints. Time would come when no need of courts, police and the like to govern society. In fact this stage is more of an ideal type (Utopia).

Note: The main characteristic of militant societies is compulsion, forced cooperation whereas; in industrial societies cooperation is voluntary.

Limitations of Spencer's work

Although Spencer contributed many useful concepts and terms many of his ideas had serious flaws. For one thing societies are not the same as biological systems; people are able to create and transform the environment they live in. Moreover, the notion of survival of the fittest easily can be used to justify class, racial-ethnic, and gender inequalities and to rationalize the lack of action to eliminate harmful practices that contribute to such inequalities.

2.3.3 Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)

Durkheim was a French sociologist who, like Comte and Spencer, identified certain basic areas of social investigation such as, religion, politics, the family, law, etc. He took society as the major unit of analysis, and believed, like Spencer, that studying the parts of society independently of each other would result but incomplete facts about society. He viewed society as organic, or he had the organic view. Social groups are the basic unit of analysis and the action of individuals or their psychological makeup are the reflections of group behavior. The following are some of his influential works: 1) the division of labor in society (1893); 2) The Rules of Sociological method (1895); 3) Suicide (1897); and 4) Elementary forms of Religious life (1912).

A Biographical Sketch



Emile Durkheim was born on April 15, 1858, in Epinal, France. He was descended from a long line of rabbis and studied to be a rabbi, but by the time he was in his teens, he had largely disavowed his heritage (Strenski, 1997:4). From that time on, his lifelong interest in religion was more academic than theological (Mestrovic, 1988). Durkheim, as we will see throughout this book, had a profound influence on the development of sociology, but his influence was not restricted to it (Halls, 1996). Much of his impact on other fields came through the journal *L'année sociologique* which he founded in 1898. An intellectual circle arose around the journal with Durkheim at its center. Through it, he and his ideas influenced such fields as anthropology, history (especially the “Annales school” [Nielsen, 2005b]), linguistics, and—somewhat ironically, considering his early attacks on the field—psychology. Durkheim died on November 15, 1917.

Like Spencer and Comte, Durkheim believed in the stages in the development of society and he expressed this view in his book “The division of labor in Society.” In his “Rules of sociological method” he wrote how sociological investigation could be conducted. In “suicide” he showed how the behavior of individuals was influenced by social facts outside of the individual in question. In “Elementary forms of Religious life”, Durkheim showed that the origin of religion is social, not natural, and had a social function, how it affects society. Though religion and science seem incompatible, many sociologists took religion as their area of interest. Durkheim was the founding father of functionalism school of thought (perspective) in sociology.

Functionalism is a perspective that emphasizes the way the parts of a society are structured to maintain its stability. Using functionalism as a perspective Durkheim focused on the role of religion in reinforcing feelings of solidarity and unity within group.

Social facts

Durkheim defined sociology as the study of social facts. According to him a social fact is every way of acting fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint or which is general throughout society and existing in its own right independent of its individual manifestations.

To Durkheim, thus social facts include such phenomena such as the group laws, belief systems, customs, institutions, rules of conduct of society- the facts of the social world. They are ways of acting thinking and feeling that are characteristics of a group in society.

Durkheim selected certain social facts such as suicide as his area of investigation. He refused to accept the belief that suicide was caused by cosmic forces or by inherited tendencies. It could be explained instead, in terms of a variety of social facts affecting individuals.

Suicide is the act of taking one's own life intentionally and voluntarily. The likelihood of suicide was related to:

1. The degree of the integration /involvement of within groups or society. More specifically, suicide is more common or more likely to occur in the extreme circumstances in which individuals lacked adequate integration within groups or society or in instances where individuals were too highly integrated into a group or society within these two type polarities there were various conditions for suicide.
2. Degree of regulation also determines the rate of suicide as well. Suicide could occur when there was:
 - a. Excessive/ oppressive regulation
 - b. Low /lack of regulation. At low/lack of regulation there is no norm that group or society, the individual becomes puzzled either to adjust him to the newly arriving norms or to commit suicide.

Types of suicide

1) *Egoistic Suicide*: a form of self centered suicide which is a result of the individual's lack of full participation together with emotional involvement that participation entails. It's a result of low degree of integration. The individual feels isolation, deprivation and detachment. For Durkheim, this kind of state of mind exists among Protestants than Catholics, among unmarried as opposed to the married, divorced than undivorced.

2. *Anomic suicide*: Anomie is a disjunction between means and ends or a breakdown of societal norms—a state of normlessness. It is the failure to internalize the norms of the society or inability to adjust to changing norms or tension resulted from the conflicting norms themselves. In ability to adjust and choose to commit suicide occurs during economic crisis or when a there occurs a change in government. It is a result of low degree of regulation of norms of the behavior of individuals. It is common in industrial societies.

3. *Altruistic suicide*: it is the result of an extreme integration into a group/society to the point where group norms and goals as the only thing that matter. Social norms or group expectations are strong enough to force the individual to commit suicide. Altruistic suicide is common in “traditional” societies where values, norms, customs and expectations of the group have an extreme influence upon the individual. For example, Chinese society, killing oneself is preferred to surrendering to an enemy. In some Indian societies a widow must accompany her deceased husband by killing herself at his funeral.

4. *Fatalistic suicide*: it occurs when there is excessive or oppressive regulation, the opposite of anomic cases. When the regulation is so oppressive, individuals who see nothing bright in their future become pessimistic due to their feeling of hopelessness, helplessness and forced to commit suicide. For example, suicide committed by slaves in bondage.

Table 2.1: Summary of the Types of Suicide Discussed By Durkheim

	Low	High
Integration	Egoistic	Altruistic
Regulation	Anomic	Fatalistic

Social Solidarity

Durkheim invented the concept of social solidarity to explain the then existing social problems he witnessed as he conducted most of his research where there was much disturbance in France. He used the concept to explain: What links people in society? What is the historical development of society from one stage to another? Hence, the main direction the evolution of society is seen in growing division of labor and differentiation of tasks, duties, occupational roles as society moves forward. This shows that Durkheim was an evolutionist in a certain sense.

Social bond: Social facts that help society live together. Based on the quality of social bond society is divided in to two: 1) Mechanical solidarity 2) Organic solidarity.

1. Mechanical solidarity

- Characteristics of pre-industrial society
- similarity of interest and experience as well as no division of labor and differentiation of tasks.
- The social institutions perform almost all societal functions.
- There were shared values, norms and beliefs all of which help to hold society together.

2. Organic solidarity

- It is the characteristics of industrial societies.
- Division of labor and specialization

Table 2.2: Traits of both Mechanical and Organic Solidarity

Traits	Mechanical solidarity	Organic solidarity
Main social bond	similar, uniform moral and religious consensus	differentiated tasks, complementary and mutual dependence
Position of the Individual	collectivism, focus on group or community	trying to achieve individual interest
Economic structure	Isolation, self sufficient, limited exchange without side group	Division of labor mutual dependence of groups and exchange
Social control	Repressive laws punish offenders (criminal laws)	Restitutive laws, safe guarding contract (civil laws).

2.3.4 Karl Marx (1818–1883)

German political scientist, economist and philosopher Karl Marx (1818-1883) often is regarded as one of the most profound sociological thinkers; his theories combine ideas derived from philosophy, history, and the social sciences. Central to his view was the belief that society should not just be studied but should also be changed, because the status quo (the existing state of society) was resulting in the oppression of most of the population by a small group of wealthy people.

Marxist theory became increasingly influential in sociology during the 1970s. The following account is a simplified version of Marxist theory. Marx's extensive writings have been variously interpreted and, since his death, several schools of Marxism have developed.

A Biographical Sketch



Karl Marx was born in Trier, Prussia, on May 5, 1818 (Beilharz, 2005e). His father, a lawyer, provided the family with a fairly typical middle-class existence. Both parents were from rabbinical families, but for business reasons the father had converted to Lutheranism when Karl was very young. In 1841 Marx received his doctorate in philosophy from the University of Berlin, a school heavily influenced by Hegel and the Young Hegelians, supportive, yet critical, of their master. Marx's doctorate was a dry philosophical treatise, but it did anticipate many of his later ideas. After graduation he became a writer for a liberal-radical newspaper and within ten months had become its editor in chief. However, because of its political positions, the paper was closed shortly thereafter by the government. The early essays published in this period began to reflect a number of the positions that would guide Marx throughout his life. They were liberally sprinkled with democratic principles, humanism, and youthful idealism. He rejected the abstractness of Hegelian philosophy, the naïve dreaming of utopian communists, and those activists who were urging what he considered to be premature political action. In rejecting these activists, Marx laid the groundwork for his own life's work: Practical attempts, even by the masses, can be answered with a cannon as soon as they become

dangerous, but ideas that have overcome our intellect and conquered our conviction, ideas to which reason has riveted our conscience, are chains from which one cannot break loose without breaking one's heart; they are demons that one can only overcome by submitting to them (Marx, 1842/1977:20).

Marx married in 1843 and soon thereafter was forced to leave Germany for the more liberal atmosphere of Paris. There he continued to grapple with the ideas of Hegel and his supporters, but he also encountered two new sets of ideas—French socialism and English political economy. It was the unique way in which he combined Hegelianism, socialism, and political economy that shaped his intellectual orientation. Also of great importance at this point was his meeting the man who was to become his lifelong friend, benefactor, and collaborator—Friedrich Engels (Carver, 1983). The son of a textile manufacturer, Engels had become a socialist critical of the conditions facing the working class. Much of Marx's compassion for the misery of the working class came from his exposure to Engels and his ideas. In 1844 Engels and Marx had a lengthy conversation in a famous café in Paris and laid the groundwork for a lifelong association. Of that conversation Engels said, "Our complete agreement in all theoretical fields became obvious . . . and our joint work dates from that time" (McLellan, 1973:131). In the following year, Engels published a notable work, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. During this period Marx wrote a number of abstruse works (many unpublished in his lifetime), including *The Holy Family* (1845/1956) and *The German Ideology* (1845–1846/1970) (both coauthored with Engels), but he also produced *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (1932/1964), which better foreshadowed his increasing preoccupation with the economic domain.

While Marx and Engels shared a theoretical orientation, there were many differences between the two men. Marx tended to be theoretical, a disorderly intellectual, and very oriented to his family. Engels was a practical thinker, a neat and tidy businessman, and a person who did not believe in the institution of the family. In spite of their differences, Marx and Engels forged a close union in which they collaborated on books and articles and worked together in radical organizations, and Engels even helped support Marx throughout the rest of his life so that Marx could devote himself to his intellectual and political endeavors.

In spite of the close association of the names of Marx and Engels, Engels made it clear that he was the junior partner:

Marx could very well have done without me. What Marx accomplished I would not have achieved. Marx stood higher, saw farther, and took a wider and quicker view than the rest of us. Marx was a genius. (Engels, cited in McLellan, 1973:131–132)

In fact, many believe that Engels failed to understand many of the subtleties of Marx's work (C. Smith, 1997). After Marx's death, Engels became the leading spokesperson for Marxian theory and in various ways distorted and oversimplified it, although he remained faithful to the political perspective he had forged with Marx. Because some of his writings had upset the Prussian government, the French government (at the request of the Prussians) expelled Marx in 1845, and he moved to Brussels. His radicalism was growing, and he had become an active member of the international revolutionary movement. He also associated with the Communist League and was asked to write a document (with Engels) expounding its aims and beliefs. The result was the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 (1848/1948), a work that was characterized by ringing political slogans (for example, "Working men of all countries, unite!"). In 1849 Marx moved to London, and, in light of the failure of the political revolutions of 1848, he began to withdraw from active revolutionary activity and to move into more serious and detailed research on the workings of the capitalist system. In 1852, he began his famous studies in the British Museum of the working conditions in capitalism. These studies ultimately resulted in the three volumes of *Capital*, the first of which was published in 1867; the other two were published posthumously. He lived in poverty during these years, barely managing to survive on a small income from his writings and the support of Engels. In 1864 Marx became reinvolved in political activity by joining the International, an international movement of workers. He soon gained preeminence within the movement and devoted a number of years to it. He began to gain fame both as a leader of the International and as the author of *Capital*. But the disintegration of the International by 1876, the failure of various revolutionary movements, and personal illness took their toll on Marx. His wife died in 1881, a daughter in 1882, and Marx himself on March 14, 1883.

Marx believed that conflict-especially class conflict-is necessary in order to produce social and a better society. For Marx, the most important changes were economic. He concluded that the capitalist economic system was responsible for the overwhelming poverty that he observed in London at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution (Marx and Engels, 1967/1848). In the Marxian framework, class conflict is the struggle between the capitalist class and the working class. The capitalist class, or bourgeoisie, is comprised of those who own and control the means of production. Means of production refers to the tools, land, factories, and money for investment that form the economic basis of a society. The working class, or proletariat, is composed of those who must sell their labor because they have no other means to earn a livelihood. From Marx's viewpoint, the capitalist class controls and exploits the masses of struggling workers by paying less than the value of their labor. This exploitation results in workers' alienation-a feeling of powerlessness and estrangement

from other people and from oneself. Marx predicted that the working class would become aware of its exploitation, overthrow the capitalists, and establish a free and classless society.

2.3.5 Max Weber (1864-1920)

Max Weber was a German scholar who made numerous contributions to sociological thought.

He believed that sociology should be “**value free**” – that political ideas should not enter into social research. He was an influential theorist in the areas of social class, religion, bureaucracy, stratification, political organizations, division of labor, the relationship of religious activities to economic.

A Biographical Sketch



Max Weber was born in Erfurt, Germany, on April 21, 1864, into a decidedly middle-class family. In 1904 and 1905, he published one of his best-known works, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

In one of his influential writings, “The protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism,” he explained protestant religion that came out from the Catholic religion helped for the early development of capitalism in Western Europe. He explored that Protestantism led to investment rather than consumption of profits which in turn encouraged the growth of capitalism. This is in opposition to the Marxian idea that social and cultural change is an outgrowth of changes in the economic system. The connections between early protestant doctrine and the psychology of entrepreneurship may be summarized as follows:

1. Self Discipline and Work: The Calvinist doctrine of predestination held that men were either condemned by God to everlasting hell or chosen to “live in the house of Lord forever.” Because believers in this doctrine were uncertain whether they were among the elect, they were anxious and insecure. Strict self discipline, rejection of worldly pleasures, and righteous success in this world through hard work came to be regarded as signs of grace, evidence that one was in God’s favor. Relief from religious anxiety was this sought. In disciplined effort. To work was to play, and work was regarded as a personal mission or calling.
2. Initiative and Acquisition: Hard work and self discipline won economic advantage over competitors and led to the acquisition of wealth since the Calvinists were supposed to avoid worldly pleasure, be

thrifty, and abhor waste, they could not use wealth in traditional ways. They could, however, use their capital to expand, their business activities. Individual initiative was rewarded, since success in work was interpreted as a sign of God's blessing. Furthermore, continuous work in one's calling alleviated constant anxiety about salvation. No matter what a Calvinist accomplished in this world, he had no guarantee of salvation. Therefore he could not relax.

3. Individualism and competition: Calvinists believed that man is alone before his maker, that he should not trust the friendship of men that only God should be his confidant because even those close to him might be among the damned. Each individual could seek success as the sign of grace, and this striving was consistent with economic competition. He dealt honestly and righteously with other men, but he was ready to take advantage of his opportunities even if that meant out doing his competitors, (Broom and Selznick p.403). These, however, are the indirect, unintended effects of religion on economic development. So capitalism is a latent effect of religion according to the analysis of Max Weber.

Weber and the Theory of Domination

An individual or group of individuals got the right to command others or to be obeyed by others. In other words some people are governors, while most others are governed. Weber tried to interpret the motives behind such obedience and he discussed on domination. He defined domination as the probability that certain (all) commands will be obeyed by a given group of persons because of diverse motives of compliance (affection, custom or tradition, rational calculation of an advantage, material interest) on the part of the obeyed.

Weber made a distinction between power and authority in relation to domination. Power is the ability to do or act. Authority, on the other hand, is socially defined power as appropriate or legitimate, or it is an institutionalized power. It is a power accepted as appropriate or supported by those subjected to it. Accordingly, Weber classified three types of domination/authority.

1. Traditional authority/domination: it is based on established beliefs, traditions and moral habituation to certain powers. The person in power could enjoy authority by virtue of his inherited status. People obey because the authority existed in the past and therefore should continue. No rational consideration of the importance of the existing authority. It is simply taken for granted as essential. In Ethiopia, for instance, authority was inherited by kings such as King Menelik →Zawditu→ Haileselesie.

2. Charismatic Authority: it is rested on devotion to a specific and exceptional (sacredness) of an individual. This exceptional quality could be heroism, exemplary character and of the normative patterns of order revealed or ordained by him. The exceptional (gifted individual could be a religious leader e.g. Jesus Christ of Nazareth or Mohammed of Mecca, or persons such as Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, etc. Here people obey not regulations, traditions but individual personalities and extra ordinary qualities. These qualities could be possessed by magical power. This type of authority of unstable because when the charismatic leader dies his followers disintegrate unless otherwise institutionalized.

3. **The Rational/Legal Authority:** This is based on rational, goal oriented, and consideration of advantages and disadvantages of being obeyed. People subordinate themselves to laws and regulations and individual personality or traditions are not so important. Rational authority is a characteristic of a capitalist society. Modern bureaucracy is the purest and the best type, and it is the most rational form of administration. Individuals hold positions in the hierarchy of bureaucracy based not on heredity/Kinship but on competence. Found in schools, government organizations, and most other institutions. Professional authority is which based on expertise (Knowledge, profession, etc) is also included under rational authority. For example, Medical doctors, architects, etc.

Note: the three types of authorities are not found in pure form, most societies are a blend of two or more of the types. In the United Kingdom, for instance, both traditional (the monarchy) and legal (the executive) authorities are found.

Sociology and Social Action

According to Weber, Sociology is a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects. Social action is all human behavior when and in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it, either overt or purely inward and subjective.

Unlike other sociologists of his time, Weber argued in favor of taking the individual as a basic, starting point of analysis. Unlike matter, humans have consciousness, thoughts and feelings, meaning and intentions or an awareness of being. Because of this human actions are meaningful; they define situations and give meaning to their actions and those actions of other. As a result, they do not simply react to external stimuli or they do not merely behave but they act. The sociologist must, therefore, discover the meanings individuals attach to their actions in order to understand them, Weber argued that the subject matter of the natural sciences and social sciences is fundamentally different. The methods and assumptions of the natural sciences are inappropriate to the study of humans. Since it is not possible to get inside the heads of the actors the discovery of meanings must be based on interpretation and intuition.

Weber thought that it was possible to produce causal explanation of human behavior so long as an understanding of meaning formed part of those explanations. This explanation of authority of Weber is unlike the Marxist idea that the ruled obey the powers of the few because they are deceived by those in power, because of ideology (false consciousness).

On the basis of mode of orientation, Weber identified four typologies of types of social actions, including:

1. *Traditional action:* traditions are the motives that determine the action of the individual in a certain way. They are actions which are carried out due to tradition, because they are always carried out in such a

situation. Some traditional actions can become cultural artifacts. For example, putting on light clothes and relaxing on Sundays.

2. *Affectual action (also known as emotional actions)*: refers the actions or behavior of an individual are determined by certain affectual or impulsive facts such as love, hatred, sympathy or anger. they are taken due to one's emotions, to express personal feelings. For examples, cheering after a victory, crying at a funeral would be emotional actions.
3. *Value oriented rational action*: refers actions which are taken because it leads to a valued goal, but with no thought of its consequences and often without consideration of the appropriateness of the means chosen to achieve them. For example, actions of individuals in response to certain values such as religious or ethical issues.
4. *Goal oriented Rational Action*: it refers an action or mode of orientation as a means to an end. They are planned and taken after evaluating the goal in relation to other goals, and after thorough consideration of various means (and consequences) to achieve it. Example, actions of individuals in economic transaction such as calculating the means and the ends during purchasing stuffs.

According to Weber, the traditional and affectual actions are not rational social actions in proper sense because they are not aiming at achieving certain ends. Value oriented and goal oriented actions are rational actions because an action is rationally oriented when the means, the end, and secondary results are all rationally taken into account and weighed. This involves rational consideration of alternative means to the end, of the relation of the end to other prospective results of employment of any given means, and the relative importance of different possible ends.

Chapter Three: Sociological Theoretical Perspectives

Sociologists depend on theories to help them explain the social world and organize their ideas about how it operates. A theory is the analysis and statement of how and why a set of facts relates to each other. In sociology, theories help us understand how social phenomena relate to each other. Theories help sociologists explain why and how society works. Through the use of theory, they work to answer such questions as “why are things as they are, what conditions produce them, and what conditions change them into something else? If we have such a theory, we will at last be in a position to know what we really *can* do about the shape of our society” (Collins 1988, 119). By understanding the real causes of how and why things operate as they do, we can find ways to address the things that need improvement. However, not all sociologists do have the same view on society (see their different views in the following pages). In sociology, theoretical paradigms differ in how much of society or what aspects of society they focus on at one time. In other words, they differ on how “big” their look at society is. Macro perspectives are “big” perspectives that look at social processes throughout society. Social theorists who take macro perspectives examine the interrelationships of large-scale social structures and

interrelationships (e.g., the economy, the government, and the health-care system). They look at how these facets of society fit together and any troubles or stress within these interrelationships. They are also interested in why and how society changes as a result of these relationships. Conversely, micro perspectives focus on patterns of individual interactions. Social theorists who take a micro perspective focus on the daily interactions we have on an individual level. They are interested in why and how individuals relate to each other, how our day-to-day interactions with each other are shaped by larger society, and how these day-to-day interactions can, in turn, shape larger society.

There are currently three major theoretical paradigms in sociology: the structural-functionalist paradigm, the social-conflict paradigm, and the symbolic-interactionist paradigm (Babbie 1994). No one of these three perspectives is singularly “right” or “wrong”. Each provides a different way to view and analyze society. They can reveal different issues and suggest different answers to tackling any problems they identify. Two of the major paradigms, the structural functionalist and the social-conflict perspective, take a macro perspective on society. The third perspective, symbolic-interactionism, takes a micro perspective.

Chapter Four: The Cultural Context of Society

4.1 Society and Culture

Before continuing the discussion of culture, we should first understand the difference between the concepts of culture and society. Two concepts that are basic to sociology are culture and society. These words are so central to sociology that every book has already used the terms in their chapters. They are also readily used in everyday, non sociological conversation. But exactly what do these terms mean when used by sociologists? Why are they so central to sociology?

While culture refers to way of life of people, society refers to the people who share and engage in that culture. Society is a central component of sociological study and everyday lives. A society consists of people who interact and share a common culture. “Society is indispensable to the individual because it possesses at a given moment an accumulation of values, of plans and materials which the child could never accumulate alone . . . But the individual is also indispensable to society because by his activity and ingenuity he creates all the material values, the whole fund of civilization” (Thomas and Thomas 1928, 233–34).

In general, a Society has a definite geographic location which persists over time. It is relatively self sustaining and independent to individuals, but has organized relationships among the people. A society can be defined broadly or narrowly with respect to the context of speaking. We can talk of the whole web of social relationship (human society in general) society of a given country like the American

Society and different nations and nationalities within a given country like the Amhara Society, the Oromo society, the Gurage society etc.

4.2 Definitions of Culture

Culture is an extremely broadest ethnographic concept which has got several definitions. To sociologists, culture is made up of all of the ideas, beliefs, behaviors, and products common to and defining, a group's way of life. It refers to the shared way of thinking & believing that grow out of group experience & are passed from one generation to the next. It is the way of life of society, the knowledge, beliefs, customs & skills available to its members. Culture encompasses everything humans create and have as they interact together. Culture is the complex system of meaning and behaviour that defines the way of life for a given group or society. It includes ways of thinking as well as patterns of behaviour. Observing culture involves studying what people think, how they interact, and the objects they use.

In general, culture has been given the following two forms of definitions:

Edward Tylor (1871) defined culture as follows:

“Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, custom and other capabilities and habit acquired by man as a member of society”. This definition is from idealistic perspective. Hence, it includes those aspects of culture that take non-physical form and hence are unobservable. It is also defined by Paddington as “Culture is the sum total of material and intellectual equipment where by people satisfy their biological and social needs and adapt themselves to the environment”. This definition includes aspects of culture that have physical existence and hence are observable. And this definition is from materialistic perspective. So, when we look at the above two definitions culture includes both the material resources (manmade physical objects) and non-material (manmade intangible culture traits) of group life. It is important to sociologists to look at the various facets of culture. Every culture is composed of both material and nonmaterial components. Material culture includes all the tangible products created by human interaction. Any physical objects created by humans are part of the material culture. This includes clothing, books, art, buildings, computer software, print and broadcast media, inventions, food, vehicles, tools, and so on. These objects are significant because of the meaning they are given. Nonmaterial culture consists of the intangible creations of human interaction. These exist as our ideas, languages, values, beliefs, behaviors, and social institutions. Culture shapes the way we see the world. It impacts how we think, how we act, what we value, how we talk, the organizations we create, the rituals we hold, the laws we make, how and what we worship, what we eat, what we wear, and what we think of as beautiful or ugly. Culture impacts things that seem to non-sociologists as “scientifically determined” as medical care (e.g. Payer 1988; Snow 1993) and things as “natural” as personality (Cooper and Denner 1994; Cross and Markus 1999; J. G. Miller 1999) and sex (Grailey 1987; Kimmel 2000). Even our emotions (Hochschild 1983; McCarthy 1989) and our choices of many of the foods we eat (Belasco and Scranton 2002) are “cultural acquisitions.”

4.3 Components of culture

For the purpose of analysis, sociologists break down culture into three component parts.

1. *Culture trait (element)*: It is a simplest unit of culture employed in a particular analysis which is irreducible unit, i.e. cannot be further divided into meaningful parts. It can be material (e.g. plough, hoe, chair) or non-material (e.g. idea, belief, skill etc)
2. *Culture complex*: It is any integrated system of culture traits that function as a unit in society. For example, let's take the traditional cultivation system in rural Ethiopia. Tools such as a plough, *mofar*, *kenber*, a pair of oxen and a farmer with a skill to handle the tools are required to cultivate the land and to produce. Thus, the combination of these material and non-material culture traits make up an essential culture complex
3. *Culture pattern*: It is a number of culture complexes combined to function as an integrated whole. For instance, the farming system described above is only a component part of the economic pattern of rural Ethiopia. If we have to adequately and exhaustively describe the rural economic pattern, then we need to include the modern farming methods which employ tractors, harvesters, combines etc; fishing, forestry, pastoralism; industries (large, medium and small). The combination of all these activities constitute the economic pattern of the country and these function as an integrated whole.

4.4 Attributes/Characteristics of culture

Across societies, there are common characteristics of culture, even when the particulars vary. These different characteristics are as follows:

1. *Culture is essentially symbolic*: The significance of culture lies in the meaning it holds for people. Symbols are things or behaviors to which people give meaning; the meaning is not inherent in a symbol but is bestowed by the meaning people give it. Symbols are powerful expressions of human culture. The most frequent form of use of symbols is language. Words are symbols because they stand for something else. The word blackboard, for example, is a symbol because it stands for the idea of a blackboard. So, Culture is found only in human society. This is because human beings can develop and use highly complex systems of symbols. Social life can exist without symbols as it does among other animals. But only humans have culture because only they are able to create symbols.
2. *Culture is acquired*: This implies that culture is learned. Cultural beliefs and practices are usually so well learned that they seem perfectly natural, but they are learned. Nonetheless, how do people come to prefer some foods to others? How is musical taste acquired? Culture may be taught through direct instruction, such as a parent teaching a child how to use silverware or teachers instructing children in songs, myths, and other traditions in school. Culture is also learned indirectly through observation and imitation. A person becomes a member of a culture through both formal and informal transmission of culture. Until the culture is learned, the person will feel like an outsider. The process of learning culture is referred to by sociologists as socialization as it is discussed on chapter five.

3. *Culture is shared:* Culture is a quality or attribute of a group rather than an individual. Culture is collectively experienced and collectively agreed upon. The shared nature of culture is what makes human society possible. The shared basis of culture may be difficult to see in complex societies where groups have different traditions, perspectives, and ways of thinking and behaving. But not all shared things are culture; beyond its shared nature it must be learned. For example, we have black hair naturally, so it cannot be culture. But the hair style is a culture because learning is involved. Eating cannot also be a culture rather how, when and what we eat makes a culture.
4. *Culture is Dynamic:* Culture grows, expands, and develops continually. No culture is totally fixed and static. Cultural growth is a cumulative process because societies add new cultural elements, complexes and patterns. Similarly, societies discard cultural traits, complexes and patterns that have outlived their purposes. So, Cultural growth is a selective process. Culture grows and changes through the process of innovation, diffusion and transmission as illustrated below:
 - a. Innovation: the process of introducing an idea, or object that is new to a culture.
 1. Invention: create new cultural traits which don't exist before.
 2. Discovery of new culture. It could be:
 - a) Primary- Discovery for the 1st time
 - b) Secondary- improvement of those inventions, which already existed.
 - b. Diffusion: is the process of borrowing culture traits, complexes or patterns from other societies. It could be : 1) Direct diffusion through war, trade, migration, etc; and 2) Indirect diffusion through social media such as radio, television, reading materials etc.
 - c. Transmission: cultural transmission is the process by which accumulated knowledge passes from one generation to another orally, in a written form or both

Note: The above three factors for culture change are not mutually exclusive. That is, one or more than one factor can play a role in changing a culture of society simultaneously.

4.5 Cultural Diversity and Uniformity

4.5.1 Cultural Diversity (variability)

It is believed that human beings everywhere have the same biological and mental makeup. But their motivations, customs and beliefs differ enormously. We observe differences in technology, custom, diet, art, religion, government, marriage practices etc from one society to another. We call this cultural variability or diversity. Cultural diversity refers to differences within a specific culture that add to the complexity of the culture & to the rich texture of social life. But why have people developed so different life styles? Sociologists are quite interested in the large amount of diversity that occurs even within particular cultures. Observers of culture in the United States would easily find many differences if they studied Hollywood's celebrity community, a neighborhood in Chicago largely populated by descendants of Eastern European immigrants, a Florida town that is home to many retirees, and a coalmining town in

southwestern Virginia. Although some sociologists have tried to find a common American culture and have often discussed middle-class culture as if that lifestyle applied to everyone, sociologists are increasingly recognizing the importance of studying, or even promoting, cultural differences.

In general, social scientists agree that cultural variability is attributed to the fact that people in different parts of the world have found different ways of life and survival mechanisms for satisfying their basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. Nevertheless, the search for more specific explanations has resulted in the formulation of the following five approaches:

1. *Geographic Factors*: Climatic conditions, topography, vegetation etc are considered to be principal sources of cultural variability. Obviously, these geographic factors have influence on cultural variability since societies adopt behavior in accordance with the natural environment. But if this approach is true one would expect people in more or less similar natural environment would develop more or less similar culture, which is not necessarily true from the available reality.

2. *Racial Determinism*: this approach assumes that culture vary because of differences in races. It was believed that differences in human behavior can be traced in biological characteristics like skin color, shape of the skull hair texture etc. Race-any of the group into which humans can be divided according to their physical characteristics of color of skin, color type of hair, shape of eyes and nose etc. Thus, sociologists reject this approach on the ground that culture is a social inheritance, a form of acquired or learned behavior, rather than a biological inheritance. Besides, there is no substantial evidence in favor of this argument.

3. *Span of interest*: the argument here is that different societies have developed different span of interest emphasizing on different aspect of life. For instance, societies may emphasize on acquisition of wealth, political and economic power, practice of religion (life after death), individual achievement etc. such emphasis difference is thus believed to have contributed to cultural variability.

4. *Demographic factors*: Population size seems to be an important factor in this approach. One factor that influences cultural development is invention. Hence, it is assumed that invention is dependent up on inventors and the number of inventors is directly related to the size of the population.

5. *Historic chance*: the argument here goes that cultural difference is due to mere historic chance or occurrences that happened by accident.

4.5.2 Cultural uniformity (cultural universals)

Despite their great diversity, there is a striking uniformity among the world's cultures. Murdock has listed about 73 elements that are known to all cultures some of which include cooking, division of labor, greetings, music, language, law etc. We call a culture is uniform or universal when the general idea is taken into consideration, but the specific form it takes is different. For instance, all human societies have some kind of language, but we observe different languages throughout the world.

4.6 Basic Cultural Elements and Concepts

4.6.1 Social values

The term value in sociology is both similar to and distinct from its meaning in everyday life. As commonly used value often means price. In sociology, we start from the assumption that as individuals all of us possess a set of values. We have a value scale or a system of value for deciding what is most important in life, for instance, placing a high value on intellectual development, wealth, fame etc. Some of us may value intellectual development very highly and decide to undergo for several years of training to satisfy our objective. For some of us, however, intellectual development may not be a priority or a value we cherish. On the contrary, we may appreciate fame and to satisfy this objective we may be involved in music or sports. In the same way, as individuals, every society possesses its own value system. Values at the level of the society are commonly known as social and/or cultural values.

Social or cultural values, culturally defined ideas about what is important, are central to culture. Values delineate how a culture should be. They are shared assumptions by the members of society as to what is right and wrong, good or bad, important or unimportant, desirable or undesirable. It means that the sociological concept of values hinges on more basic moral issues than the trivialities of price. It involves judging the worth of one thing compared to another where neither of the objects can be assigned a price. Hence, values are widely held beliefs and ideas about what is important to the community's identity or wellbeing, E.g. privacy, equality, freedom etc.

Values are relative and subjective heavily influenced by time and place. It is important to note, however, that although more or less similar sets of social values can be identified across different societies, not all societies do have similar value systems. Kluckhohn defines a value as a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group of the desirable, which influence the selection from available modes, means and ends of action. Values are also dynamic in that they are liable or subject to changes in response to changes in social conditions.

4.6.2 Social Norms

All societies have rules or norms specifying appropriate and inappropriate behavior and individuals are rewarded or punished as they conform to or deviate from the rules it is impossible to imagine a norm less society, because without norms behavior would be unpredictable. Therefore, societies develop norms, which manifest or reflect their social values. Norms are derived from our societal values. Norms are the standards, which should govern behavior in roles; they are the society expectations of what is normal. Sometimes they have to be formalized as law, but most are less formal. Norms constitute the shared rules or expectations specifying appropriate behaviors in various situations. We need norms to maintain a stable social order. Norms can be prescribed and proscribed. Prescribed norms tell us what we should do (wait our turn, pay bills on time, show respect for our elders, etc.). They are things that must be done by which an individual in a given society is obliged to do them. For example, respect others; be on time

in class; obey the law; etc. Proscribed norms, on the other hand, tell us what we should not do (hit our spouse, curse aloud at a church service, run red lights, etc.). They refer to things must not be committed such as don't steal or kill; don't lie; don't disturb, etc.

Norms obviously vary in strength and are classified as mores and folkways according to the intensity of feeling associated with them and the degree of conformity expected. Some norms are defined by individuals and societies as crucial. Based on this assumption, W.G. Sumner broadly divided the norms into two: mores and folkways.

4.6.2.1 Mores

Mores (pronounced *more-ays*) are strongly held norms. They represent deeply held standards of what is right and wrong. Prohibitions on murder, robbery, and assault are all examples of mores across many cultures. Mores are serious social norms upon which society's existence is believed to depend. They are those norms, which must be followed because they are believed essential to group welfare. By this, we mean strong ideas of right and wrong, which require certain acts and forbid others. For example, in modern society all members may be required to wear clothing and to bury their dead. Such "musts" are often labeled mores. In short, mores are very important, strictly enforced and punishable. Laws, within each society, some norms become codified. We call these codified norms, laws. Mores are considered morally significant breaches and are often formalized as laws. For this reason, punishment for violations of mores can be severe, involving sanctions such as arrest or imprisonment. Some mores are so strongly held they have been termed taboos, norms that are so objectionable that they are strictly forbidden. Taboos are often things considered unthinkable in a culture. Common examples include incest taboo and cannibalism.

4.6.2.2 Folk Ways

Compared to mores, folkways are less serious social norms. Folkways are weak norms that are often informally passed down from previous generations. They often deal with everyday behaviors and manners. Feelings about folkways are less intense than feelings about mores and conformity with folkways is largely up to the individual. A person who does not conform to generally accepted norms arouses little reaction in others except on formal occasions or in special situations. E.g. wearing a mini-skirt in church may be highly reacted from the clergymen.

4.6.3 Social Control

A mere existence of social norms does not guarantee the universal observation of the norms. Norms are enforced through a process of internalization. They become part of who we are as individuals and as a culture. However, external social enforcement in the form of both positive and negative sanctions is also critical (Horne 2001). Failure to conform to and/or abide by the norms of society is referred to as non-conformity. Non-conformity is broadly classified into two:

1. *Eccentricity*: it refers to non conformity to folkways. It is usually overlooked by the members of society.

2. *Deviance*: it is non-conformity to mores. It is taken very seriously by members of the society because deviants hold at system of values and norms which conflict with the values and norms of the society at large. E.g. a criminal group.

Thus, a society must have social order if it is to function smoothly. To function effectively, societies establish a system of social control in order to enforce conformity to their norms. Social control means control of the society over an individual.

There are two types of social control:

1. **Informal Social Control**: In simple societies, social control is largely informal. Gossip and other group administered sanctions are sufficient. Everyone knows everyone else. It consists of the techniques where by people who know one another on personal basis accord praise to those who comply with their expectations and show displeasure to those that do not.
2. **Formal social control**: In complex societies, social control is formal; laws are passed and enforcement machinery is created. Written contracts replace oral agreements. At this level & development folkways and mores by themselves are not enough to ensure the general welfare of the society. People well in advance are made aware of the consequences that they will have to face if they transgress social norms. Social control involves the use of sanctions or is accomplished through the applications of sanctions. Sanctions are actions through which we reward conformity to norms and punish non-conformity. Sanctions may be of two types:
 1. **Positive (Reward)** which could be formal positive sanctions include bonuses, medals, promotions, etc OR informal positive sanctions which include exaggerated praise, encouragement, signs of approval, flattery, etc.
 2. **Negative (punishment)** either formal negative sanctions which includes imprisonment, fines, dismissal from job, etc OR informal negative Sanctions which include criticism, ridicule, gossip, Ostracism, stigmatizing, reprimand, etc.

Note: If the societal norms are not enforced, anomie which is a state of confusion, insecurity or normlessness and lawlessness will reign.

4.7 Major Concepts of Culture

4.7.1 Cultural alternatives

Cultural alternatives refer to the activities which the member of society may freely choose to follow or not to follow. Several alternatives are associated with a particular cultural universal thus allowing personal choice. For instance, one widely shared cultural universal by many societies is that people have to work and participate in some labor activity in order to earn a living. But the choice of occupation is left to individuals. Choice is limited by the number of roles & the number of people available to perform them.

4.7.2 Cultural Specialties

Cultural Specialties: refer to the special skills or abilities and behavior associated with the cultural alternative. Generally, the alternatives are limited by the scope of the division of labor in society. Once the alternative is chosen, the skill the alternative demands must be learned.

4.7.3 Culture lag

Material culture, such as technology, may change faster than nonmaterial culture. The result may be a cultural lag, in which a gap occurs as different aspects of culture change at different rates (Ogburn, 1964; Volti, 2001).

4.7.4 Culture Shock

Different cultures exist around the world that also seem “normal” or “better” to their inhabitants. Encountering these different cultures can result in culture shock, confusion that occurs when encountering unfamiliar situations and ways of life. It refers to the psychological maladjustment individuals experience when they come across the society different from their own culture, i.e. first contact. It is a feeling of confusion and anxiety caused by contacts with another culture. Culture shock is the disorientation and frustration of those who find themselves among people who do not share their basic values and beliefs. Usually, disagreements over styles of dress, eating habits and other every day matters can be adjusted to fairly easily. Acute culture shock is most likely when expectations about personal feeling and interactions are violated.

Culture shock is the personal disorientation a person may feel when experiencing an unfamiliar way of life due to immigration or a visit to a new country, or to a move between social environments. One of the most common causes of culture shock involves individuals in a foreign country. The distinct phases of culture shock include Honeymoon, Negotiation, Adjustment, Mastery and the Interdependence, as discussed below:

- *Honeymoon:* During this period, the differences between the old and new culture are seen in a romantic light. For example, in moving to a new country, an individual might love the new food, the pace of life, and the locals' habits. During the first few weeks, most people are fascinated by the new culture. They associate with nationals who speak their language, and who are polite to the foreigners. This period is full of observations and new discoveries. Like most honeymoon periods, this stage eventually ends.
- *Negotiation:* After some time (usually around three months, depending on the individual), differences between the old and new culture become apparent and may create anxiety. Excitement may eventually give way to unpleasant feelings of frustration and anger as one continues to experience unfavorable events that may be perceived as strange and offensive to one's cultural attitude. Language barriers, stark differences in public hygiene, traffic safety, food accessibility and quality may heighten the sense of disconnection from the surroundings. Still, the most important change in the period is

communication: People adjusting to a new culture often feel lonely and homesick because they are not yet used to the new environment and meet people with whom they are not familiar every day. The language barrier may become a major obstacle in creating new relationships: special attention must be paid to one's and others' culture-specific body language signs, linguistic faux pas, conversation tone, linguistic nuances and customs, and false friends.

- *Adjustment:* Again, after some time (usually 6 to 12 months), one grows accustomed to the new culture and develops routines. One knows what to expect in most situations and the host country no longer feels all that new. One becomes concerned with basic living again, and things become more "normal". One starts to develop problem-solving skills for dealing with the culture and begins to accept the culture's ways with a positive attitude. The culture begins to make sense, and negative reactions and responses to the culture are reduced.
- *Mastery:* In the mastery stage assignees are able to participate fully and comfortably in the host culture. Mastery does not mean total conversion; people often keep many traits from their earlier culture, such as accents and languages. It is often referred to as the biculturalism stage.

4.7.5 Multiculturalism

Many groups do claim shared cultural patterns. However, there is an increasing recognition and interest across the United States in multiculturalism— a recognition of and respect for cultural differences. Multiculturalism allows much of the dominant culture to be shared while valuing some traditions of various subgroups. Events such as Black History Month and courses such as Women's Studies acknowledge and embrace multiculturalism.

4.7.6 Xenocentrism

Xenocentrism is the belief that the products, styles or ideas of one's society are inferior to those that originate elsewhere. It is a condition that an individual devastates his own societal ideal and/or materials values. In a sense, it is a reverse ethnocentrism.

4.7.7 Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is a tendency to feel that one's own particular culture or way of life is superior, right and natural and that all other cultures are inferior and often wrong and unnatural. It is basically an inclination to judge other cultures in terms of the values and norms of one's own culture. In short, ethnocentrism is advocating of individuals that my way of life is the best. All people have a tendency to think of their own culture as best. That is why stereotyped thinking may be almost inevitable, but it can at least be reduced, if not eliminated. When studying cultures and cultural variations, sociologists must be aware of ethnocentrism, judging other cultures by the standards of one's own culture. Because we all live within a culture, we tend to see the way our culture does things as "normal" or "natural" and the ways that other cultures do things as "abnormal" or "unnatural." We also tend to judge our own familiar culture's ways of doing things as "better". Some sociologists such as Marvin Harris (1974) show how ethnocentric

views can result in major misunderstanding of other cultures. If these misguided views were used to enact social change, the consequences could be severe.

4.7.8 Cultural Relativism

It is the opposite to that of ethnocentrism. Rather than being ethnocentric, sociologists need to develop cultural relativism. This means they should be careful to judge other cultures by those cultures' own standards. In other words, sociologists try to understand other cultures and why they behave and believe as they do rather than judging them "unnatural" or "wrong". Cultural relativism refers to the notion that each culture should be evaluated from the stand point of its own setting rather than from the stand point of a different culture. In other words, norms, values and beliefs are relative to the particular culture in which they exist and should be judged only from the view point of that culture, The "goodness" or "badness" of values. Practices and beliefs are relative to their cultural setting.

6.7.9 Subculture

As part of their interest in cultural diversity, sociologists study subcultures. A subculture is a smaller culture within a dominant culture that has a way of life distinguished in some important way from that dominant culture. Subcultures form around any number of distinguishing factors. They may form, for example, around hobbies (as with ham-radio operators, custom-car enthusiasts, bingo players, online-game players, hunters, stamp collectors, recreational-vehicle owners), shared interests such as music styles (jazz, hip-hop, rap), other behaviors or interests (cheerleaders, Bible study participants, skydivers, drug users, gamblers, outlaw bikers), occupations (car racing, pilots, police officers), or racial and ethnic backgrounds. Subcultures can also consist of even smaller divisions. For example, although the "teen subculture" may be discussed as if there is little diversity, teens are actually very diverse. They include jocks, hippies, preppies, ravers, skaters, and more. Each of these smaller subcultures has their own beliefs, interests, and means of interaction (Finnegan 1998). Yet members of a subculture share most of the values of the dominant culture. They earn money by having a job, pay bills, and see that their children get an education.

Subculture is a pattern that is distinct in important ways but has much in common with the dominant culture. In other words, a subculture contains some of the dominant cultural values but also values or customs of its own. So, it is a culture with in a culture. Complex societies like that of our own contain not one culture but many ethnic, regional or any other sub-cultures with different values, norms, social relations and life styles. Subcultures are set of beliefs, norms and customs supported by values interpersonal networks of participation in common institutions which exist within a larger social system, E.g. Ethnic subcultures, occupational subcultures, and counterculture.

Every group has some distinctive patterns, but unless they affect the total life of members, patterns do not make up a sub culture. A sub- culture has a general influence on attitudes and life styles and tends to give a person a specific identity. For example, 1) a sub-culture may be based on an occupation if that

occupation is the context of the everyday life of its members. Such occupations as mining, police work, railroading etc are likely to develop sub- cultures. 2) More typical, however, is a sub-culture tends to be with their special shops, churches and schools. Thus they provide a setting for many of the activities of their members.

4.7.10 Counter-culture

Not all smaller cultures within a dominant culture largely share the dominant culture's values. A culture that opposes patterns of the dominant culture is known as a counterculture. Countercultures are often youth-oriented (Spates 1976). In the 1960s, hippies advocated dropping out of the mainstream culture into a communal, peaceful, self-exploration lifestyle. Many hippies have today become, at least largely, part of the dominant culture. Militias and white supremacists are examples of modern-day countercultures.

4.7.11 Acculturation

It is the adoption of new traits or patterns as a result of contact with another culture. Ideally, acculturation is the way one people learn from another as a result of culture contact. Cultural integration or acculturation is also the process by which an outsider, immigrant, or subordinate group becomes indistinguishably integrated into the domain host society.

4.8 The process of social interaction

Human society is a process of social interaction based on human tendencies of co-operation and conflict. It is a continuous process of change subject to the reactions of individuals in relation to environment. Society is moving equilibrium, a changing process, based on the associative (i.e. adjustment, accommodation and assimilation as discussed below) and dissociative (conflict and competition) reactions of individuals as members of social groups.

4.8.1 Adjustment

Adjustment is a process which man deliberately contrives to fit his needs to the environment or environment is his needs. It is highly selective and endlessly variant. When members of a society are unable to adjust with all kinds of environment, it becomes a specialized process. A civilized man, however, is capable of readjustment with the new environment and there is remarkable mobility to the process of adjustment. Readjustment is not an easy affair. It becomes difficult when people belonging to different cultural organizations come together.

4.8.2 Accommodation

Accommodation is a process of harmony with the environment. It is a manner and degree of adjustment of individuals and groups with the social environment. It is less rigid and more flexible in civilized groups than in primitive communities. The recognized forms of accommodation are truce, compromise, arrangements of subordination and superordination, arbitration and toleration. Accommodation is a process of resolving rivalries or conflicting situations. It is a systematic handling of rivalries interaction.

4.8.3 Assimilation

Assimilation is a process of identification or integration of dissimilar individuals or groups in terms of common interest, attitude and outlook. A major issue in the United States, as well as in other cultures, is how much conformity to dominant cultural patterns will be required. America has long been called a melting pot into which others cultures meld into one new culture. The process of a cultural group losing its identity and being absorbed into the dominant culture is known as assimilation. Cultural traits are assimilated by the process of inter-communications.

4.8.4 Conflict and competition

Conflict is a form of rivalry or struggle. It is a social process in which individuals and groups seek their ends by directly challenging the antagonist by violence or the threat of violence. The dictionary of sociology defined as “a process situation in which two or more human beings or groups seek actively to thwart each other’s purposes to prevent each other’s interest, even to the extent of injuring or destroying the other”. Conflict may exist in varying degrees. It may be organized, transitory or enduring, physical, intellectual or spiritual. It could be direct (i.e. quarrel or litigation, etc) and/or indirect (i.e. through a third party as means to attain ends).

Competition, on the other hand, is a modified form of struggle. A competitive endeavor is a basic human drive manifested in procuring the needs of life. There are several forms of competition, absolute and relative. For example, men and women struggle by way of competition to secure social status.

Chapter Five: Socialization

5.1 Meaning of Socialization

As humans, we are social beings who spend our lives interacting with others. Most of us have contact with other humans to some extent every day. Indeed, research shows that isolation from human interaction can be quite damaging. Sociologists and others have studied cases of children who spent their early childhood virtually isolated from all human contact, some literally locked away from human contact by abusive adults. These children lacked basic human responsiveness. Only after focused efforts to teach them social skills did these children begin to develop the social behaviors that are required to interact and live as a social being.

Sociologists study how we learn to live in society and interact with others - in other words, how the world is socially organized. They want to know how we learn social expectations, how we learn that these expectations apply to us, and how these expectations become part of us as individuals. They also want to know how these expectations are developed and perpetuated. Socialization is a key to this social organization. Socialization is a lifelong social process of learning cultural patterns, behaviors, and expectations. Through socialization, we learn cultural values, norms, and roles. We develop a

personality, our unique sense of who we are. We also pass along culture and social patterns to our children through socialization.

Socialization can be looked at from societal and individual points of views:

From societal point of view, socialization is the process of fitting new individuals into an organized way of life and teaching them the society's cultural traditions. Socialization transforms the human animal into a human being, a member of society. Because of that transformation most babies grow up into fully functioning social beings, able to use the language of their parents and competent in their society's culture.

From the individual viewpoint, socialization is the process of developing a self. Through interaction with others, person gains an identity, develops values and aspirations, and under favorable conditions becomes able to make full use of his or her potential. Although intensive socialization takes place during the early child hood, socialization is a never-ending process. It begins from early child hood and ends at the end of the life of an individual. Socialization continues throughout life.

5.2 The Self and Socialization

We all have various perceptions, feelings, and beliefs about who we are and what we are like. But we are not born with these understandings. Building on the work of George Herbert Mead, Sociologists recognize that our concept of who we are, the self, emerges as we interact with others. The self is a distinct identity that sets us apart from others. It is not a static phenomenon, but continues to develop and change throughout our lives.

Sociologists and psychologists alike have expressed interest in how the individual develops and modifies the sense of self as a result of social interaction. What follows is the discussion of sociological and psychological approaches to the self.

5.2.1 Sociological Approaches to the Self

Looking-Glass Self

Charles Horton Cooley (1864–1929) developed the concept of the looking-glass self. According to Cooley, society provides a sort of mirror, or “looking-glass,” that reflects to us who we are. We form our self image on the basis of how we think others see us. This concept (the process of developing a self-identity or self-concept) consists of three major parts or phases:

- i. the imagination of our appearance to the other person [we imagine how we present ourselves to others – to relatives, friends, even strangers on the streets];
- ii. the imagination of the judgment of that appearance [we imagine how others evaluate us (attractive, intelligent, shy, or strange)]; and
- iii. some sort of self-feeling about ourselves, such as pride or mortification, respect or shame.

We come to think of ourselves in terms of how we imagine others see us. If we think that others see us as beautiful or humorous, for example, we come to see ourselves in those terms. If we think they see us negatively, our self-image is likewise negative.

Dramaturgical Analysis

Erving Goffman (1922-1982) developed a dramaturgical analysis in which he compared our everyday social interactions to theatrical performances. According to Goffman, we interact as if we are actors performing roles on a stage. We use these performances to direct and control the impressions we make in others' minds. This is called impression management. Through a "presentation of self," we consciously attempt to influence how other people see us. The campaign literature published by political candidates is an excellent example of this concept in action.

Developing the theater analogy, Goffman divides social interaction into front-stage and back-stage regions. Just like in a play, front-stage behavior is action that occurs for an audience. Back-stage behavior occurs out of sight of any audience. That is where the props and performances are prepared. It is also where we can truly be ourselves. Goffman notes that in our social interactions we are both actor and audience at the same time.

Goffman's work on the self represents a logical progression of sociological studies begun by Cooley and Mead on how personality is acquired through socialization and how we manage the presentation of the self to others. Cooley stressed the process by which we create a self; Mead focused on how the self develops as we learn to interact with others; Goffman emphasized the ways in which we consciously create images of ourselves for others.

Psychological Approaches to the Self

Sociologists have also looked to the field of psychology for insights that help inform their understanding of the socialization process; and psychologists have shared the interests of sociologists in the development of the self. Early work in psychology, such as that of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), stressed the role of in-born drives – among them the drive for sexual gratification – in channeling human behavior.

Much of the work of Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), is both complex and controversial. However, Freud made important contributions to our understanding of socialization. He argued that early socialization is critically important to personality development and to managing natural desires that promote self-interest rather than social interests. He also addressed the importance of internalizing norms and values. Additionally, Freud (1950) moved beyond Cooley's and Mead's focus on conscious perceptions, identifying the importance of the unconscious mind.

Freud (1950) saw personality as divided into three parts: the id, the ego, and the superego. The **id** is made up of our basic biological drives and needs. These are our sexual drives and fundamental needs,

including food. They are self-centered rather than socially centered, and they crave immediate gratification.

The **ego** is our “self,” our personality, which balances the urges of the id with the requirements of a civil society. The desires of the id have to be tempered. Chaos would result if everyone was constantly seeking to gratify all of their own desires. Society would not be able to exist as we know it. Through socialization, which Freud saw as primarily the responsibility of parents, we learn to repress our id and develop the ego.

The **superego** consists of our internalized social controls, culture, values, and norms. It is our conscience. The id and the superego are engaged in a constant struggle, mediated by the ego in a largely unconscious process. If the ego mediates properly, the person will be well socialized and well adjusted. Otherwise, the result will be a personality problem.

5.3 Types of Socialization

Sociologists recognize that the experience of socialization is a lifelong process. It occurs from childhood through adulthood and even into old age. It occurs across our entire life span and, to some extent, across all of our social interactions. People move into, and out of, roles throughout their lives from “getting a driver’s license, high school graduation, marriage, divorce, the first full-time job, retirement, [through] widowhood. In general, each major transition initiates a new socialization experience or situation that has implications for the individual’s self-concept.” At the end of life, socialization processes even help people prepare for death.

Because socialization begins at birth and continues throughout the life cycle, it is a process that takes different forms depending on the stage of life and the special environmental and situational problems that may arise. There are four kinds of socialization:

1. Primary socialization
2. Anticipatory socialization
3. Adult Socialization and
4. Re-Socialization

1. Primary/Childhood Socialization

The most crucial phase of learning for an individual occurs in the first years of life. In the early years of childhood, incredible complex learning must occur, and it occurs relatively quickly. This early childhood socialization is referred to as primary socialization. It is called primary because it supplies the foundation for all other learning and it must come first. Most often the child learns from the family through imitation, conditioning and reward for accomplishing the expected behavior.

In primary socialization, the child must learn the basic skills necessary to function in society. The child must master or begin to master motor skills involving coordination and control of the body such as

walking, grasping, and feeding himself or herself and so on. Language and the understanding of symbols and gestures must be mastered if any further learning is to take place.

2. Anticipatory Socialization

Anticipatory socialization involves learning and adopting the attitudes and behavior of group or category one desires or expects to join (before one joins it). It is useful in helping the upwardly mobile adapt to their new position in society. One way of learning the roles we will play in our lives is to rehearse them. Anticipatory socialization refers to learning roles by practicing those we anticipate playing in the future. In child hood, for example, children play house-boys practice playing the father and husband roles, while girls rehearse the behavior they see in their mothers. Numerous examples of anticipatory socialization can be found at various stages in our lives.

Children, as well, spends hours copying role models from Television. Here, toys and games give children the opportunity to experience, through play, a taste of what they may do in the future. There are, for example, toys for children to practice occupations such as doctor, firefighter, teacher, etc.

Anticipatory socialization is a part of primary socialization, but is not restricted to it. We continue to rehearse though much of our lives because rehearsal functions as a powerful learning tool. It serves as a means of preparation by which people gain some certainty and confidence regarding their performance before others.

3. Adult Socialization

Adult socialization is the learning that builds on and modifies primary socialization and is required all of us as we move into new stages of life and face a changing environment Adult socialization is sometimes called secondary socialization.

4. Re-socialization

A drastic shift that involves giving up one way of life for another that is not only different from it but also incompatible with it.

E.g.: 1. Brainwashing – is rejecting old beliefs and ideas and accepting new ideas.

2. Rehabilitation of criminals

3. Religious conversion of sinners

In all of the above cases, a person breaks with the past and is made over. Re-socialization of adults often takes place in what is called a total institution, an environment that is usually isolated from the community such as religious places, prisons, mental hospitals etc.

Re-socialization is sometimes confused with adult socialization and it is important to distinguish the two processes. It is helpful to think of adult socialization as the learning process required of all of us as we adjust to new stages in our lives. Re-socialization, on the other hand, applies to situations that are more unusual and dramatic. It requires some break with a past way of life because the past way of life no longer works in a radically new situation.

5.4 Agents/Settings of Socialization

Throughout life, people change their attitudes, values and self-images as they take on new roles & undergo new experiences. The lifelong socialization process involves several social forces that influence our lives and alter our self-images. In the study of socialization, sociologists emphasize the following socializing agents as influential in transmitting the culture to the individual and in fostering the individual's personality and social self: the family, school, peer group, mass media and technology, workplace, and religion and the state.

1. The Family

Family is a group of people organized on the basis of natural sympathy and affection. Family is a group of interacting personalities who have definite and specific roles to play, in that group, e.g. the father has to protect, the mother has to nourish, and the child has to obey.

Across all societies, the family is the first and most important location for socialization. The family begins the process of socialization and is the first major setting in which the child interacts. The family provides the earliest human contact for an infant. The family into which we are born provides us social characteristics such as social class, race and ethnicity, and religious background. Our families are our initial teachers of behaviors, language, cultural knowledge, values, and social skills. They are also central to gender role socialization. In other words, they provide our primary socialization.

Older research focused almost exclusively on parents as agents of socialization for children. Newer research examines how children influence parents as well. Researchers are also looking at how changing family structures, such as the increasing number of single-parent families, impact child socialization.

The major functions of family could be summarized as:

1. *Affectual*: The family has to provide care, love and affection
2. *Economic*: Parents have to satisfy the economic needs of the child. They have to provide food, clothing, education and recreation. They have to prepare him for independent economic life. They have to train him for some vocation or occupation in life.
3. *Protection*: The family has to protect the child from threats.
4. *Educational*: Home is the first institution of the child and mother is the first teacher of a child. The child receives earliest knowledge and experience in the family. It lays foundation for the child's character and personality. The lessons he learns in the family may not be planned but they exercise profound influence on his body and mind and moulds his personality.
5. *Religious*: Family has to provide some religious instruction to the child to develop plenty of thoughts, kind heartedness and fellow feelings.
6. *Family status*: The family has to transmit the culture of the community and family traditions and status. Professions, for instance, are usually transmitted from father to sons.

2. School

Like the family, schools have an explicit mandate to socialize people, especially children, into the norms and values of society. In schools, students are exposed to a variety of different experiences. They interact with people of different races, ethnicities, religions, social classes, and value systems, perhaps for the first time. These secondary-group interactions with schoolmates and staff are different than the primary-group interactions they have had with their families. When children enter school, they enter a bureaucracy where they are expected to learn how to be a student. They will be educated not only in academic skills, but also in a hidden curriculum that encourages conformity to the norms, values, and beliefs held by wider society. Students learn to speak with proper grammar, stand in line and wait their turn.

In addition to families, schools also contribute to gender-role socialization. Formal and informal institutional activities such as recess periods and games socialize children into culturally approved gender roles.

3. Peer Group

When you were a 16-year-old, how many times did you complain to your parent(s), “All of my friends are doing so and so. Why can’t I? It isn’t fair!” As this all-too-common example indicates, our friends play a very important role in our lives. This is especially true during adolescence, when peers influence our tastes in music, clothes, and so many other aspects of our lives. But friends are important during other parts of the life course as well. We rely on them for fun, for emotional comfort and support, and for companionship.

When a child grows older, the family becomes somewhat less important in his social development. Instead, peer groups - those of similar age, social class, and interests - increasingly assume the role of Mead’s *significant others* (individuals who are most important in the development of the self). Within the peer group, young people associate with others who are approximately their own age, and who often enjoy a similar social status.

Peer settings allow children to engage in activities outside of parental control and other adult supervision. With their peers, children are able to engage in democratic relationships without the ascribed differences given in the home. Children, for example, quickly learn the power and the pain of ridicule from peers and feel the need to fit in and be like the others. As a result, children are constantly learning new behavior and attitudes from other children.

Interactions within the peer group accomplish much in the establishment of identity and self concept. From other children, they learn how they are perceived by others outside their family. Those perceptions in turn affect how they perceive themselves. For instance, they may entertain the idea whether other children call them skinny or fat, fast or slow, smart or stupid, cute or ugly, friendly or unfriendly, etc.

Peers also provide role models for each other. Today, much of the pressure to wear the right clothes and do certain things stems from the role modeling of peers and the desire to please the peer group becomes especially acute during the adolescent years, when youths often feel a need to break away from the family and parental control.

4. Mass Media and Technology

Mass media, impersonal communications that are directed in a one-way flow to a large audience, are also important in the socialization process. These media innovations are pervasive throughout society. They include newspapers, magazines, recorded music, movies, radio, television and internet. We are exposed to a variety of behaviors, ideas, beliefs, and values through the media. We also obtain many of our views about society and how things are or should be through the mass media. For example, whether or not we have ever met a team of emergency room physicians or observed surgery, we develop expectations about these people and situations based on media portrayals (e.g., televised medical dramas and documentaries about medical procedures).

A number of studies have found that the mass media in various forms including children's books (e.g., Davis 1984; Peterson and Lach 1990), television programming (e.g., Thompson and Zerbinos 1995), and advertising (Kilbourne 2000) perpetuate gender stereotypes and gender role socialization.

The mass media do not always have a negative socializing influence. Television programs and even commercials can introduce young people to unfamiliar lifestyles and cultures. Sociologists and other social scientists are also interested in online friendship networks, like Facebook.

5. Religion

Although religion is arguably less important in people's lives now than it was a few generations ago, it still continues to exert considerable influence on our beliefs, values, and behaviors; and continues to be a powerful agent of socialization. But here, we should distinguish between *religious preference* (e.g., Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish) and *religiosity* (e.g., how often people pray or attend religious services). Both these aspects of religion can affect your values and beliefs on religious and nonreligious issues alike, but their particular effects vary from issue to issue. To illustrate this, consider the emotionally charged issue of abortion. People hold very strong views on abortion, and many of their views stem from their religious beliefs.

Religious instruction contributes greatly to the identities children construct for themselves. Children tend to develop the same religious beliefs as their parents; switching to a religious faith different from the one in and the State which a person is raised is rare. Even those who renounce the religion of their youth are deeply affected by the attitudes, images, and beliefs instilled by early religious training. Very often those who disavow religion return to their original faith at some point in their life, especially if they have strong ties to their family of origin and if they form families of their own.

Religious socialization shapes the beliefs that people develop. An example comes from studies of people who believe in creationism. **Creationism** is a set of beliefs that largely reject the theory of human biological evolution and instead argue that human beings as now exist were created by a central force or God. Those who believe this have generally been taught to believe so over a long period; that is, they have been specifically socialized to believe in the creationist view of the world's origin and to reject scientific explanations, such as the theory of evolution.

Religious socialization also influences a large number of beliefs that guide adults in how they organize their lives, including beliefs about moral development and behavior, the roles of men and women, and sexuality, to name a few.

6. Workplace

The workplace is also a major location for socialization. Workplace socialization requires that we learn to fulfill the role of worker, demonstrating the requisite job skills and norms associated with the position. Nurses, for example, must learn how to transfer the skills and values acquired during training to the work setting. That includes fitting the norms of how nurses interact with physicians, colleagues, and patients, how they dress, and how they present themselves as a “nurse.”

Socialization into an occupation can represent both a harsh reality (“I have to work in order to buy food and pay the rent”) and the realization of an ambition (“I’ve always wanted to be an airplane pilot”).

7. Sports

Most people perhaps think of sports as something that is just for fun and relaxation—or perhaps to provide opportunities for college scholarships and athletic careers—but sports are also an agent of socialization. Through sports, men and women learn concepts of self that stay with them in their later lives.

Sports are also where many ideas about gender differences are formed and reinforced. For men, success or failure as an athlete can be a major part of a man's identity. Even for men who have not been athletes, knowing about and participating in sports is an important source of men's gender socialization. Men learn that being competitive in sports is considered a part of manhood. Indeed, the attitude that “sports builds character” runs deep in the culture. Sports are supposed to pass on values such as competitiveness, the work ethic, fair play, and a winning attitude. Sports are considered to be where one learns to be a man.

Chapter six: Social Interaction and Social Structure

6.1 Introduction

Human society is a system of social interaction that includes both culture and social organization. Within a society, members have a common culture, even though there may also be great diversity within it. Members of a society think of themselves as distinct from other societies, maintain ties of social

interaction, and have a high degree of interdependence. The interaction they have, whether based on harmony or conflict, is one element of society.

Within society, *social interaction* is behavior between two or more people that is given meaning by them. Social interaction is how people relate to each other and form a social bond. It refers to the ways in which people respond to one another, whether face-to-face or over the telephone or on the computer. But few, if any, of the interacting people realize that their behavior is at that moment influenced by *society*—a society whose influence extends into their immediate social relationships, even when the contours of that society—its *social structure*—are likely invisible to them.

Sociologists use the term *social structure* to refer to the organized pattern of social relationships and social institutions that together compose society. It refers to the way in which a society is organized into predictable relationships.

6.2 Elements of Social Structure

All social interaction takes place within a social structure, including those interactions that redefine social reality. Statuses, roles, groups, social networks and social institutions are the major elements of any social structure.

6.2.1. Status

Status is central to social interaction and social structure. To sociologists, status is established social position in a social structure that carries with it a degree of prestige. It is a rank in society. Unlike popular usage of the term, having “status” in sociological terms does not equate to prestige. To sociologists, everyone has status, although some do have higher status than others as judged by society.

Status signifies the numerous social spaces existing in a society. These spaces are independent of the individuals who occupy them; they simply designate the positions necessary to the ongoing functions of a society: student, teacher, bank teller, lawyer, prisoner, mother, husband, etc.

Statuses are obtained in different ways. They can be either achieved or ascribed.

Achieved statuses are those positions acquired through personal effort. Being a sociology student, architect, parent, square dancer, or shoplifter are all achieved statuses. Individuals had to do something to become each of these things.

Ascribed statuses are positions involuntarily acquired through birth. They are occupied from the moment a person is born. Your biological sex is an ascribed status. Being a son, a brother, or ab princess, too are all ascribed statuses. Some achieved statuses may depend at least to some extent on ascribed statuses. For example, because of their sex, women are not currently allowed to achieve positions as submariners in the U.S. navy. Ascribed statuses are those occupied from the moment a person is born.

Collectively, all the statuses a person holds at once comprise his or her **status set**. We often use the term multiple statuses or status set for all the statuses that a person occupies. It refers to complement of a distinct statuses occupied by an individual, each of these in turn having its own role set. Each of the

people in the clinic holds a number of different statuses at the same time. The doctor may also be a daughter, wife, mother, member of the garden club, and civic-league president. This status set changes frequently over a person's lifetime. Continuing with the doctor as an example, her status set changed when she moved from being a medical student to a doctor. It changed when she married and would change again if she were to divorce or be widowed. She could remove or add statuses from her set by resigning from the civic league or running for political office.

Although people occupy many statuses at one time, it is usually the case that one status is dominant, called the master status, overriding all other features of the person's identity. The master status may be imposed by others, or a person may define his or her own master status. It is a very influential status that becomes more socially important than all other statuses. A master status may attach to either positive or negative statuses. The doctor in our example may be defined by her occupation. Whatever else she is, she is first a doctor to those she meets in social settings. Other people may respond to her with the prestige accorded that position. If the doctor were to be convicted of a serious crime such as insurance fraud or selling prescription narcotics, she might find that her master status becomes that of a criminal.

6.2.2. Social roles

By virtue of occupying a particular status, we have social relationships with occupants of other status. These relationships and the norms that govern them are called roles. Roles, like statuses, are also central to social interaction and social structure. The two concepts of status and role go hand in hand. A role is the behavior others expect from a person associated with a particular status. Role can be regarded as bundle of expectations. It is the pattern of behavior associated with or expected of a person or the individual who occupies a status. When one puts the rights and duties which constitute the status into effect, he is performing a role.

As illustrated above, a role is a behavior expected of someone in a particular status. Using the status of the doctor from the examples above, a number of role expectations can be identified. Doctors should come to work. They should examine patients competently and discuss their concerns. They should prescribe medicine lawfully. All of these examples illustrate how we expect doctors to act. These roles together illustrate a role set, all of the roles that go with a single status. Role set is a concept, which indicates the complements of roles associated with a particular status. Therefore, each social status involves not a single associated role but an array or roles.

Each of us simultaneously occupies many statuses and for each status, has several roles. For example, a person who takes a status of a lecturer at Gondar College of Medical Sciences does have several roles to play including giving lecture to students, doing research, sitting at departmental meetings to decide on departmental affairs, taking extra assignments with other government and non-government agencies, etc. another example is also illustrated in below diagram:

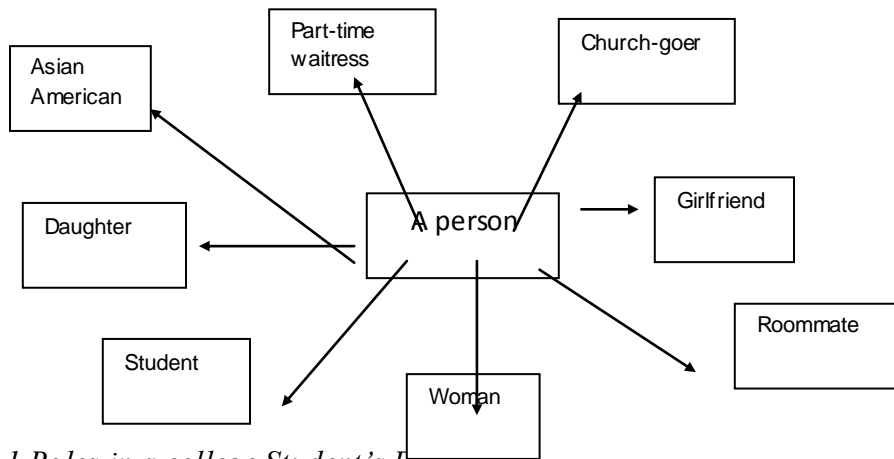


Figure 6.1 Roles in a college Student's Role

All these are complementary roles associated with the person and are referred to as role set. A person may occupy several statuses and roles at one time. A person's **role set** includes all the roles occupied by the person at a given time. Thus, a person can be a teacher, a husband, father and Idir chairman. In this particular case the person has four status positions.

Each status demands a different role. As a result of this, they have multiple roles, a variety or complex of roles related with different statuses which are called multiple roles. It refers to the different roles played by the individual as a result of occupying different status. A doctor, for example, may be at the same time the head of a house hold, a church member, a lecturer etc. Each of these is a different status and demands a different role. Be reminding that multiple roles refer not to the complex of roles associated with a single social status but with the various social statuses (often in differing institutional spheres) in which people find themselves.

The roles for different statuses the person holds may conflict with each other. This is known as role conflict. Role conflict is a situation where a person's roles attached to multiple statuses may clash with each other. Role strain, on the other hand, is the incompatibility of roles attached to a single status. It occurs when two or more roles associated with a single status are in conflict. This requires balancing expectations. For example, being a student, a person may face difficulties in doing things at the same time such as studying, taking class, doing assignments, taking meals, etc.

6.2.3 Groups

At the micro-level, society is made up of many different social groups. Groups play a vital role in a society's social structure. Much of our social interaction takes place within groups and is influenced by their norms and sanctions. At any given moment, each of us is a member of many groups simultaneously, and we are subject to their influence: family, friendship groups, athletic teams, work groups, racial and ethnic groups, and so on. The various types of groups will be discussed in the next chapter.

6.2.4 Social Networks

A social network is a set of links between individuals, between groups, or between other social units, such as bureaucratic organizations or even entire nations. It represents a series of social relationships that links a person directly to others; and through them indirectly to still more people. One could say that any given person belongs simultaneously to several networks. Your group of friends, or all the people on an electronic mailing list to which you subscribe, or all of your Facebook subscribers are social networks.

6.2.5 Social Institutions

A social institution (or simply an institution) is an established and organized system of social behavior with a recognized purpose. The term refers to the broad systems that organize specific functions in society. It is a pattern which has developed around a major social function, goal or need. It is thus a means to an end.

An institution is an organized network of values, norms, folkways and more through which a particular human society organizes itself and directs its members in the performance of its activities to satisfy their needs. Here it should be noted that institutions are universal in nature although they vary considerably in terms of their level of development and the functions they perform.

6.3 Major Institutional Classifications

There are a vast array of institutions each of which having their goals, rules and regulations assisting in the orderly functioning of society. Different scholars have classified social institutions in different ways. However, they generally agree that four major institutional classifications can be defined as follows:-

1. Political institutions – Those institutions dealing with regulating the acquisition and exercise of power by some individuals or groups over others. In doing so, they play a basic role of maintaining peace and order.
2. Economic institutions – are concerned with the production, Distribution, and consumption of goods and services a society requires to meet its needs.
3. Kinship institutions – those institutions of a family that incorporate a wide network of relations due to the consanguinal and affinal relations between communities.
4. Expressive and integrative institutions – deal with educational, health, religions and recreational aspects of society.

NB: It is important to note that social institutions are interrelated and have considerable influence on each other.

Basic Social institutions. There are five basic social institutions, including:

1. The Family

Definition: “family is a socially sanctioned, relatively permanent grouping of people who are united by blood, marriage or adoption ties and who generally live together and cooperate economically.”

Functions: The following are among the more or less universal functions of the family found throughout time and in all societies. However, the family has many other important functions that may vary over time and from one society to another.

1. *Reproduction and regulation of sexual behavior*: reproduction is a prerequisite for the survival of a society. The family provides institutionalized means by which the society's members are replaced from generation to generation. The family also provides for and regulates sexual behavior. E.g. Premarital sex, incest taboo
2. *Care and protection of the young*: Young children through their long period of dependency need care and protection.
3. *Socialization*: the family is virtually the only primary social institution responsible for the early development of personality in the individual.
4. Family also provides the *means by which an individual's social status is initially fixed*. For example, through the family individual members are assigned their ethnic or social status, their initial religious status and their class status.
5. The family also provides the *affection, love and emotional support* that are so vital to human happiness.

Family Structure

1. Nuclear Family: the basic family unit. Consists of a wife, a husband and their children. Common in more developed world.
2. Extended Family: Consists of all those people defined as kin. Kin are people who are related by birth or birth or marriage (blood or affiliation). For example, when young couples marry, they will at times move in with the parents of the bride or groom. The household containing these two generations is an example of extended family.

Patterns of residence

1. Patrilocal residence: a newly married couple that move in with the husband's parents.
2. Matrilocal residence: a newly married couple that move in with the wife's parents.
3. Neolocal residence: here, a young newly married couple is usually expected to set up housekeeping in its own apartment or house. This is most common in advanced countries.

Patterns of Marriage

1. Monogamy: is marriage of one male and one female. It is common among Christians (advanced countries). And it is the most common type of marriage relationships.
2. Polygamy: Plural marriage; it consists of one person of one sex and two or more persons of another sex. It is, thus, of two types:

- Polygyny: marriage of one man to two or more women
- Polyandry: marriage of one woman to two or more men.

Patterns of mate selection

1. Endogamy: is marriage with in specific group whether it is religious, ethnic, class or any other type.
2. Exogamy: Marriage outside of a specific group.

Patterns of Authority

1. Patriarchy: is the authority of the family primarily vested in the husband (father). In this pattern of authority every decision concerning the members of the family is solely made by the husband/older male member of the family.
2. Matriarchy: is when the authority is primarily vested in the wife/older women member of the family.
3. Egalitarian: When the authority is more equally shared or balanced between husband and wife.

Patterns of Descent and Inheritance

1. Matrilineal: Descent and inheritance pass through the female side of the family. The father's relatives are not considered as kin. Property passes only through the female line.
2. Patrilineal: Descent and inheritance pass through the male line (side) of the family. Here, the mother's relatives are not considered as kin and hence are deprived of property rights.
3. Bilineal: Descent and inheritance are traced through both sides of the family. This system considers both the mother's and father's relatives and property passes to both sides.

2. Religious Institution

Sociologists are not generally concerned with whether religious belief is right or wrong. They are mainly interested in the significance of religion in a society.

We find some kind of religion in all societies (universality of religion). The religious institution meets many basic human needs and its function in society can be broadly categorized under three headings.

1. *Individual support*: Religion can provide a source of explanation and meaning for individuals when faced by strains and crisis in their lives such as war, death and natural disasters.
2. *Social integration*: Religion provides unity, cohesiveness and solidarity in a society. Durkheim saw religion as a kind of social glue, binding society together and integrating individuals into it.
3. *Social control*: Religion provides people with ethical principles and a set of guide lines for appropriate and in appropriate behavior.

3. The Economic Institution

The economic institution is universal. Its goal is the meeting of society's economic needs, and it performs the following functions in order to meet them. To meet these functions people have to cooperate with one another and create responsible organization, especially under conditions when there exist extensive division of labor and thus specialization in certain labor activities.

Functions:

1. *Gathering of resources*
2. *The manufacturing of goods and services*

3. *The distribution of goods and services*

4. *The consumption of goods and services*

In less complex societies, non-industrialized countries, economic institutions are merged with families and tribe, and it is difficult to distinguish economic activities from family life, religion, politics and social relations. In more complex societies economic institution is more clearly separated from other social institutions

4. The Polity

The political institution is the complex of norms that regulate the acquisition and exercise of power by some individuals or groups over other within a given territory through social structures claiming a monopoly ultimate authority.

Functions:

1. *Regulating the power of some people over others*: It determines when, how and who should gain power.
2. *Resolving conflicts that exist among various segments of society*.
3. *Institutionalizing and enforcing social norms through laws which are established by governments' legislative body*.
4. *Protecting citizens from outside enemies*.

In general, political institution plays a basic role of maintaining peace and order.

5. Educational Institution

Functions:

1. *Socialization*: Schools are important agencies of secondary socialization which usually beginning in the family. Schools transmit societal values, attitudes, beliefs, norms, specific skills and system of knowledge to young people.
 2. *Recruitment*: The Educational institution recruits, young people for specific roles by sorting out those who are best suited. In short, Educational institution produces labor force with the appropriate skills needed for work.
 3. *Social Control*: Schools act as important agencies of social control, which encourage children to learn and conform to the values and norms expected by society. This is mainly carried out through the hidden curricula as there are no organized course in obedience and conformity.
3. *Preparing for social change*: Beyond encouraging people to accept culture which will lead to stability, schools also prepare students for a rapidly changing industrial society. It promotes technological changes in society by providing the basis of knowledge and skill that enable technological innovation to occur.

Chapter seven: Social Groups and Organizations

7.1 Introduction

The study and understanding of social groups is central to sociology. Social groups and organizations comprise a basic part of virtually every arena of modern life. We live most of our lives within social settings, so sociology is actually a study of our experiences within groups. Thus, in the last six decades or so, sociologists have taken a special interest in studying these scientific phenomena from a scientific point of view.

Sociologists devote much attention to groups of all sizes and characteristics. Much sociological study investigates “how individuals are shaped by their social groups, from families to nations, and how groups are created and maintained by the individuals who compose them.”

7.2 Social Groups

The term *group* has a specific definition in sociology that differs from everyday usage. In everyday language, almost any collection of people might be called a group. However, two or more people being in close physical proximity does not constitute a group in the sociological meaning of the word. Sociologically speaking, a **group** is a collection of people who interact regularly based on some shared interest and who develop some sense of belonging that sets them apart from other gatherings of people. In other words, a group is a collection of individuals who:

- interact and communicate with each other;
- share goals and norms; and,
- have a subjective awareness of themselves as “we,” that is, as a distinct social unit.

To be a group, the social unit in question must possess all three of these characteristics.

People who just happen to be in the same place at the same time are not a group. Rather, they are an **aggregate**. It is a collection of people who are in the same place, but who do not interact or share characteristics. Individuals riding the bus or walking their dogs in a park are examples of aggregates. If these people interact and develop some sort of shared interests or sense of themselves as a group, then they become a group by definition. For example, the individual dog walkers might begin to talk with each other about their pets, start to walk their dogs on the same schedule, and even plan events together, such as an obedience class. Through these shared interests and interactions, the dog walkers may begin to identify themselves as members of a group. They might even adopt some sort of name to identify themselves. Another, albeit tragic, example of an aggregate developing very quickly into a group was on September 11, 2001, when hijackers flew airplanes into the World Trade Center and Pentagon. The passengers on United Airlines Flight 93 that crashed in Pennsylvania started as an aggregate and became a group when they joined together to fight the hijackers.

Another term that is often confused with group is category. A **category** refers to people who share similar characteristics or status. Age, race, gender, income level, religious affiliation, being a musician, owning a pet, or living in an apartment are all categories. People in a category do not necessarily interact or share any sense of belonging, and may not even know each other.

Social categories can become social groups, depending on the amount of “we” feeling the group has. Only when there is this sense of common identity, as defined in the characteristics of groups above, is a collection of people an actual group. For example, all people nationwide watching “*Ye ehad meznagna*” on ETV on Sunday afternoon form a distinct social unit, an *audience*. But they are not a group because they do not interact with one another, nor do they possess an awareness of themselves as “we.”

However, if many of the same viewers were to come together for a large meeting, such as fans of the long-running TV series *Star Trek* (the fans call themselves “Trekkies”) coming together for a convention where they could interact and develop a “we” feeling, then they would constitute a group.

We now know that people do not need to be face-to-face in order to constitute a group. Online communities, for example, are people who interact with each other regularly, share a common identity, and think of themselves as being a distinct social unit. On the Internet community Facebook, for example, you may have a group of “friends,” some of whom you know personally and others whom you only know online. But these friends, as they are known on Facebook, make up a social group that might interact on a regular, indeed, daily basis—possibly even across great distances.

Groups also need not be small or “close-up” and personal. *Formal organizations* are highly structured social groupings that form to pursue a set of goals. Bureaucracies, such as business corporations or municipal governments or associations such as the Parent-Teacher Association (PTcA), are examples of formal organizations.

7.2.1 Types of Groups

Sociologists have made distinctions between different types of groups: primary and secondary groups, in-groups and out-groups, and reference groups.

1. Primary and Secondary Groups

Charles Horton Cooley (1864–1929), a famous sociologist of the Chicago School of sociology, introduced the concept of the **primary groups**, defined as those small groups in which all the members have enduring, intimate face-to-face interaction and relatively long-lasting relationships. In his original formulation, primary was used in the sense of “first.” Examples of primary groups are families, friends, peers, neighbors, classmates, sororities, fraternities, and church members. These groups are marked by primary relationships in which communication is informal. Members of primary groups have strong emotional ties. They also relate to one another as whole and unique individuals.

Primary groups have a powerful influence on an individual’s personality or self-identity. The effect of family on an individual can hardly be overstated. The weight of peer pressure on schoolchildren is particularly notorious. Street gangs are a primary group, and their influence on the individual is significant; in fact, gang members frequently think of themselves as a family. Inmates in prison very frequently become members of a gang—primary groups based mainly upon race—ethnicity—as a matter of their own personal survival. The intense camaraderie formed among Marine Corps units in boot camp and in war, such as the war in Iraq, is another classic example of primary group formation and the resulting intense effect on the individual and upon her or his survival.

In contrast to primary groups are **secondary groups**, those larger groups in which all members do not interact directly and have relationships that are less intimate, less personal or emotional and less long-lasting than those of primary groups. Secondary groups are marked by **secondary relationships** in

which communication is formal. Members of secondary groups may not know each other or may not have much face-to-face interaction. They tend to relate to others only in particular roles and for practical reasons. An example of a secondary relationship is that of a stockbroker and her clients. The stockbroker likely relates to her clients in terms of business only. She probably will not socialize with her clients or hug them. Secondary groups also include all the students at a college or university, all the people in your neighborhood, and all the people in a bureaucracy or corporation.

Primary relationships are most common in small and traditional societies, while secondary relationships are the norm in large and industrial societies. Because secondary relationships often result in loneliness and isolation, some members of society may attempt to create primary relationships through singles' groups, dating services, church groups, and communes, to name a few. This does not mean, however, that secondary relationships are bad. For time and other commitments limit the number of possible primary relationships in modern society, acquaintances and friendships can easily spring forth from secondary relationships.

2. In-groups and Out-groups

When groups have a sense of themselves as "us," they will also have a complementary sense of other groups as "them." The distinction is commonly characterized as *in-groups* versus *out-groups*. The concept was first employed by William Graham Sumner and elaborated by the early sociological theorist W. I. Thomas. **In-groups** represent those groups with which we identify and feel a sense of belonging and loyalty. **Out-groups** are those with which we do not identify or toward which we may even feel animosity/antagonism.

To some extent every social group creates boundaries between itself and other groups, but a cohesive in-group typically has three characteristics:

- Members use titles, external symbols, and dress to distinguish themselves from the out-group. E.g. symbols such as team uniforms; and rituals such as secret handshakes.
- Members tend to clash or compete with members of the out-group. This competition with the other group can also strengthen the unity within each group.
- Members apply positive stereotypes to their in-group and negative stereotypes to the out-group.

We tend to develop a bias in which we favor our in-groups, perceiving them in a better light than those "others." We often prefer our fraternity or sorority, our church, our sports team, or people from our ethnic group, for example, over others for this reason. Conflict with another group(s) can strengthen group solidarity.

3. Reference Groups

Sociologists are also interested in how we use groups to judge ourselves and our attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and actions. Primary and secondary groups are groups to which members belong. Both are

called membership groups. In contrast, **reference groups** are those to which you may or may not belong but use as a standard for evaluating your values, attitudes, and behaviors. Reference groups are those with which we compare ourselves. They are generalized versions of role models. They are not “groups” in the sense that the individual interacts within (or in) them. Do you pattern your behavior on that of sports stars, musicians, military officers, or business executives? If so, those models are reference groups for you.

Any group can become a reference group if we use them to judge something about ourselves. Considering what best friends will think about your new boyfriend or girlfriend or how to dress to fit in with your new colleagues on your first day of work are both ways of using reference groups.

We can also have negative reference groups that we do not want to be like. Dressing in hip-hop, punk, or goth styles sets children apart from their parents and a conservative establishment. Reference groups do not even have to be real. Girls and women who judge their bodies against the apparently flawless, thin, air-brushed models shown on the cover of women’s magazines or advertisements are measuring themselves against a fictional, and unattainable, reference group. Children who compare their parents to parents on television sitcoms are making a similar fictional reference-group comparison.

7.3 Formal Organizations and Bureaucracies

Groups, as we have seen, are capable of greatly influencing individuals. The study of groups and their effects on the individual represent an example of *micro-level analysis*. In contrast, the study of formal organizations and bureaucracies, a subject to which we now turn, represents an example of *macro-level analysis*. The focus on groups drew our attention to the relatively small and less complex, whereas the focus on organizations draws our attention to the relatively large and structurally more complex.

Many of the social collectivities discussed earlier in this chapter take the form of **informal organizations**, because they do not involve formalized or rigorous rules, roles, and responsibilities. They may occur spontaneously and involve personal relationships. They are not especially designed for efficiency, but they work well in informal settings. This informal organizational structure, however, does not work well in many areas of our lives. Governmental or corporate organizations require a different form. These entities are formal organizations.

Formal organizations represent large, secondary social collectivities that are highly organized and regulated for purposes of efficiency by structured procedures. They are organized to accomplish a complex task or tasks and to achieve goals efficiently. Many of us belong to various formal organizations: work organizations, schools, and political parties, to name a few. Organizations are formed to accomplish particular tasks and are characterized by their relatively large size, compared with a small group such as a family or a friendship circle. Often organizations consist of an array of other organizations. The federal government is a huge organization comprising numerous other organizations, most of which are also vast. Each organization within the federal government is also designed to

accomplish specific tasks, be it collecting your taxes, educating the nation's children, or regulating the nation's transportation system and national parks.

7.3.1 Bureaucracy

As formal organizations develop, many become a **bureaucracy**, which, according to Randall Collins, is organizational control achieved by explicit rules and regulations and by specifying responsibilities for action in written records. Max Weber was the first sociologist to examine bureaucracies (1946). He noted that modern Western society has necessitated a certain type of formal organization: **bureaucracy**. His interests included the structure and operation of large-scale enterprises such as governments, religions, and economies. Weber believed that bureaucracy is the most efficient form of organization possible. He analyzed the classic characteristics of the bureaucracy. These characteristics represent what he called the *ideal type bureaucracy*—a model rarely seen in reality but that defines the principal characteristics of a social form. The characteristics of bureaucracies described as an ideal type are:

- **Hierarchy of authority:** In bureaucracies, positions are arranged in a hierarchy so that each is under the supervision of a higher position. Such hierarchies are often represented in an *organization chart*, a diagram in the shape of a pyramid that shows the relative rank of each position plus the lines of authority between each. These lines of authority are often called the “chain of command,” and they show not only who has authority, but also who is responsible to whom and how many positions are responsible to a given position.
- **Formal rules and regulations:** Written rules and regulations govern administration and conduct. These rules and regulations ensure consistency, standardization, and that people within the bureaucracy do not make up rules as they go along.
- **Written documentation:** This documentation (the “files”) encompasses the policies that are to be followed in the organization.
- **High degree of division of labor and specialization:** The notion of the specialist embodies this criterion. Bureaucracies ideally employ specialists in the various positions and occupations, and these specialists are responsible for a specific set of duties. Sociologist Charles Perrow notes that many modern bureaucracies have hierarchical authority structures and an elaborate division of labor.
- **Technical knowledge:** Members of a bureaucracy should meet all the required qualifications to competently fulfill the duties of their position. By fitting skill sets to positions, rather than designing positions to fit the skills of individual workers, bureaucracies create a situation in which members who leave a position can be replaced by someone with the same qualifications and the organization can continue to operate.
- **Impersonal relationships/Impersonality:** Social interaction in the (ideal) bureaucracy is supposed to be guided by *instrumental* criteria, such as the organization's rules, rather than by *expressive needs*, such

as personal attractions or likes and dislikes. The ideal is that the objective application of rules will minimize matters such as personal favoritism—giving someone a promotion simply because you like him or her or firing someone because you do not like him or her. Of course, as we will see, sociologists have pointed out that bureaucracy has “another face”—the *informal* social interaction that keeps the bureaucracy working and often involves interpersonal friendships and social ties, typically among people taken for granted in these organizations, such as the support staff.

- **Career ladders:** Candidates for the various positions in the bureaucracy are supposed to be selected on the basis of specific criteria, such as education, experience, and standardized examinations. The idea is that advancement through the organization becomes a career for the individual. Some organizations, such as some universities and some law firms, have a policy of **tenure**—a guarantee of continued employment until one’s retirement from the organization.
- **Salaried positions:** Compensation for work performed is assigned on the basis of the position. It is not determined by personal factors (for example, how physically attractive a worker is or how much the supervisor enjoys his or her jokes).
- **Separation of “official” and “private” income and duties:** The “office” is separate from the sphere of private life. Official monies and property of the organization are not intermingled with members’ private funds or interests.
- **Efficiency:** Bureaucracies are designed to coordinate the activities of many people in pursuit of organizational goals. Ideally, all activities have been designed to maximize this efficiency. The whole system is intended to keep social–emotional relations and interactions at a minimum and instrumental interaction at a maximum.

7.3.1. 1 Bureaucracy’s Other Face

All the characteristics of Weber’s “ideal type” are general defining characteristics. Rarely do actual bureaucracies meet this exact description. A bureaucracy has, in addition to the ideal characteristics of structure, an *informal structure*. This includes social interactions, even network connections, in bureaucratic settings that ignore, change, or otherwise bypass the formal structure and rules of the organization. This informal structure often develops among those who are taken for granted in organizations, such as secretaries and administrative assistants—who are most often women. Sociologist Charles Page (1946) coined the phrase *bureaucracy’s other face* to describe this condition.

This other face is informal culture. It has evolved over time as a reaction to the formality and impersonality of the bureaucracy. Thus, administrative assistants and secretaries will sometimes “bend the rules a bit” when asked to do something more quickly than usual for a boss they like and bend the rules in another direction for a boss they do not like by slowing down or otherwise sabotaging the boss’s work. Researchers have noted, for example, that secretaries and assistants have more authority than their

job titles and salaries suggest. As a way around the cumbersome formal communication channels within the organization, the informal network, or “grapevine,” often works better, faster, and sometimes even more accurately than the formal channels. As with any culture, the informal culture in the bureaucracy has its own norms or rules. One is not supposed to “stab friends in the back,” such as by “ratting on” them to a boss or spreading a rumor about them that is intended to get them fired. Yet, just as with any norms, there is deviation from the norms, and “back-stabbing” and “ratting” does happen.

Bureaucracy’s other face can also be seen in the workplace subcultures that develop, even in the largest bureaucracies. Some sociologists interpret the subcultures that develop within bureaucracies as people’s attempts to humanize an otherwise impersonal organization. Keeping photographs of family and loved ones in the office, placing personal decorations on one’s desk (if you are allowed), and organizing office parties are some ways people resist the impersonal culture of bureaucracies.

Chapter Eight: Social Stratification and Social Mobility

8.1 Introduction

Social stratification is one of the most basic concepts in sociology. **Social stratification** refers to the unequal distribution around the world of the three Ps: **property, power, and prestige**. The term represents a system of structured social inequality; or structured hierarchy/social strata that exist in a society. (Social inequality is the degree of disparity of the distribution of valued resources within society.) This stratification forms the basis of the divisions of society and categorizations of people.

Sociologists use a geological metaphor to explain how groups of people are divided into social rankings similar to the layers, or strata, in the Earth’s surface; and *social stratification* is a term that they use to describe this division of people into layers.

8.2 Types of Stratification Systems

Stratification systems can be broadly categorized into three types: estate systems, caste systems, and class systems.

1. Estate System

In an **estate system** of stratification, the ownership of property and the exercise of power is monopolized by an elite who have total control over societal resources. Historically, such societies were feudal systems where classes were differentiated into three basic groups—the nobles, the priesthood, and the commoners. Commoners included peasants (usually the largest class group), small merchants, artisans, domestic workers, and traders. The nobles controlled the land and the resources used to cultivate the land, as well as all the resources resulting from peasant labor.

Estate systems of stratification are most common in agricultural societies. Although such societies have been largely supplanted by industrialization, there are still examples of societies that have a small but powerful landholding class ruling over a population that works mainly in agricultural production. Unlike the feudal societies of the European Middle Ages, however, contemporary estate systems of stratification

display the influence of international capitalism. The “noble class” comprises not knights who conquered lands in war, but international capitalists or local elites who control the labor of a vast and impoverished group of people, such as in some South American societies where landholding elites maintain a dictatorship over peasants who labor in agricultural fields.

2. Caste System

In a **caste system**, one’s place in the stratification system is an *ascribed status*, meaning it is a quality given to an individual by circumstances of birth. The hierarchy of classes is rigid in caste systems and is often preserved through formal law and cultural practices that prevent free association and movement between classes. The system of *apartheid* in South Africa was a stark example of a caste system. Under apartheid, the travel, employment, associations, and place of residence of Black South Africans were severely restricted. Segregation was enforced using a pass system in which Black South Africans could not be in White areas unless for purposes of employment; those found without passes were arrested, often sent to prison without ever seeing their families again. Interracial marriage was illegal. Black South Africans were prohibited from voting; the system was one of total social control where anyone who protested was imprisoned. The apartheid system was overthrown in 1994 when Nelson Mandela, held prisoner for 27 years of his life, was elected president of the new nation of South Africa; a new national constitution guaranteeing equal rights to all was ratified in 1996.

3. Class System

In **class systems**, stratification exists, but a person’s placement in the class system can change according to personal achievements; that is, class depends to some degree on *achieved status*, defined as status that is earned by the acquisition of resources and power, regardless of one’s origins. Class systems are more open than caste systems because position does not depend strictly on birth, and classes are less rigidly defined than castes because the divisions are blurred by those who move between one class and the next. Despite the potential for movement from one class to another, in the class system found in the United States, class placement still depends heavily on one’s social background. Although ascription (the designation of ascribed status according to birth) is not the basis for social stratification in the United States, the class a person is born into has major consequences for that person’s life. Patterns of inheritance; access to exclusive educational resources; the financial, political, and social influence of one’s family; and similar factors all shape one’s likelihood of achievement. Although there is no formal obstacle to movement through the class system, individual achievement is very much shaped by an individual’s class of origin.

8.3 Types of Social classes of People

Social class (or *class*) is the social structural position groups hold relative to the economic, social, political, and cultural resources of society. It refers to a group of people with similar levels of wealth,

influence, and status. *Class is not just an attribute of individuals; it is a feature of society.* Sociologists typically use three methods to determine social class:

- The **objective method** measures and analyzes “hard” facts.
- The **subjective method** asks people what they think of themselves.
- The **reputational method** asks what people think of others.

1. The Lower Class

The lower class is typified by poverty, homelessness, and unemployment. People of this class, few of whom have finished high school, suffer from lack of medical care, adequate housing and food, decent clothing, safety, and vocational training. The media often stigmatize the lower class as “the underclass,” inaccurately characterizing poor people as welfare mothers who abuse the system by having more and more babies, welfare fathers who are able to work but do not, drug abusers, criminals, and societal “trash.”

2. The Working Class

The working class are those minimally educated people who engage in “manual labor” with little or no prestige. Unskilled workers in the class—dishwashers, cashiers, maids, and waitresses—usually are underpaid and have no opportunity for career advancement. They are often called the **working poor**. Skilled workers in this class—carpenters, plumbers, and electricians—are often called **blue collar workers**. They may make more money than workers in the middle class—secretaries, teachers, and computer technicians; however, their jobs are usually more physically taxing, and in some cases quite dangerous.

3. The Middle Class

The middle class are the “sandwich” class. These **white collar workers** have more money than those below them on the “social ladder,” but less than those above them. They divide into two levels according to wealth, education, and prestige. The **lower middle class** is often made up of less educated people with lower incomes, such as managers, small business owners, teachers, and secretaries. The **upper middle class** is often made up of highly educated business and professional people with high incomes, such as doctors, lawyers, stockbrokers, and CEOs.

4. The Upper Class

Comprising only 1 to 3 percent of the United States population, the upper class holds more than 25 percent of the nation’s wealth. This class divides into two groups: *lower-upper* and *upper-upper*. The **lower-upper class** includes those with “new money,” or money made from investments, business ventures, and so forth. The **upper-upper class** includes those aristocratic and “high-society” families with “old money” who have been rich for generations. These extremely wealthy people live off the income from their inherited riches. The upper-upper class is more prestigious than the lower-upper class.

Wherever their money comes from, both segments of the upper class are exceptionally rich. Both groups have more money than they could possibly spend, which leaves them with much leisure time for cultivating a variety of interests. They live in exclusive neighborhoods, gather at expensive social clubs, and send their children to the finest schools. As might be expected, they also exercise a great deal of influence and power both nationally and globally.

8. 4 Social Mobility

Sociologists interested in stratification also focus on social mobility, movement within the stratification system from one position, or strata, to another. All of us begin life with a social heritage that includes class membership. In some societies (*open society*) moving up in the social ladder or hierarchy is possible. An individual can move up and down the class structure, and shift or alter his class level or status position over time through his individual efforts. Such movement in the class structure of society is referred to as *social mobility*.

In a *closed society* with a *caste system*, however, mobility can be difficult or impossible. Social position in a caste system is decided by assignment rather than attainment. This means people are either born into or marry within their family's caste; changing caste systems is very rare. An example of the rigid segregation of caste systems occurs today in India, where people born into the lowest caste (the "untouchables") and can never become members of a higher caste. South Africa also has a caste system.

8.4.1 Patterns of social mobility

Several patterns of social mobility are possible:

- **Horizontal mobility** involves moving within the same status category. Horizontal mobility does not involve status change. An example of this is a nurse who leaves one hospital to take a position as a nurse at another hospital.
- **Vertical mobility**, in contrast, involves moving from one social level to another. **Upward (ascending) mobility** takes place when status position rises up in the social structure. E.g. A promotion in rank in the Army. **Downward (descending) mobility** takes place when status position goes down in the social hierarchy E.g. Demotion in rank.
- **Intragenerational mobility**, also termed **career mobility**, refers to a change in an individual's social standing, especially in the workforce, such as occurs when an individual works his way up the corporate ladder.
- **Intergenerational mobility** refers to a change in social standing across generations, such as occurs when a person from a lower-class family graduates from medical school.

8.4.2 Structural mobility and individual mobility

Major upheavals and changes in society can enhance large numbers of people's opportunities to move up the social ladder at the same time. This form of mobility is termed **structural mobility**. Industrialization,

increases in education, and postindustrial computerization have allowed large groups of Americans since 1900 to improve their social status and find higher-level jobs than did their parents. Nevertheless, not everyone moves into higher-status positions. Individual characteristics—such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, level of education, occupation, place of residence, health, and so on—determine **individual mobility**. In the United States, being a member of a racial minority, female, or a disabled person have traditionally limited the opportunities for upward mobility.

Chapter Nine: Understanding Deviance and Crime

9.1 Definition of deviance

The term deviance has different definitions as it is seen from the point of view of different scholars of different fields of studies. It is obvious that a biologist's or a psychologist's definition of deviance could not be one and the same with that of a sociologist's definition.

In the broadest sense, deviance refers to behavior that violates the folkways, mores and laws of a particular group. In the sociological definition, deviance can be defined as any behavior, belief, or condition that violates significant social norms in the society or group within which it occurs (Kendall, 2003). Thus, deviance encompasses a wide range of abnormal or anti-social behavior. Criminal behaviors which are the violation of mores are the most significant type of deviant behavior. Deviance cannot be uniformly defined throughout the world rather it is a relative concept.

9.2 The Relativity of Deviance

Deviance cannot always be treated in this way since it is a relative social behavior which differs in its from one society to others, from social groups to social groups, from time to time, from social situation to social situation, and from one place to the other. Thus, we can see that it is not possible to isolate a certain acts and find them universally condemned by all societies as deviant acts. These aspects of the relativity of deviance are discussed as follows:

1. The relevance of audience: For most of the sociologists, deviance is not absolute, universal, statistical, power-based, or labeled; but it is reacted with a particular social audience. As a result, deviance is always defined by some particular social audience. This, in turn, shows that it is advisable to take the society, social structure, social stratification, social norms, social control and social behaviors into consideration when we treat social deviance. An audience includes anyone who witnessed the act or was aware of the act. Audiences may be strangers on the street, a family, a jury, a group of neighbors or the public in general.
2. The relevance of time: It is obvious that society is dynamic in its nature. It changes across time. Hence, social norms also change along with this societal change. In other words, as far as society changes across time, norms and value (which are basic elements of a given culture) also change. This, in turn, reveals that the change in norms across time brings about the changes in the attitude towards these norms. Thus, deviance varies. For example, termination of marital life (divorce) regardless of adultery

was a serious deviant act at some few decades ago in our country; but, today it becomes a normal act that can be ended up without any problem.

3. Deviance varies from place to place. This means that the place where an act has been taken place determines whether the act is deviant or normal. For example, killing a person is usually a wrong act. But, it will be renounable if it is taken place at the battle field. Still, it can be a serious crime if it occurs at someone's home for the purpose of revenge. Another more relevant example is that fighting in classroom is absolutely a deviant act; but it is non-deviant if it is happened within the boxing ring.
4. The relevance of social groups: Social groups within a society have their own distinctive norms. For example, having two or more wives is a prescribed deed in those Muslim communities of the world. However, this is a serious and intolerable behavior in those Orthodox Christians of the world. Do you know the reason why? It is due to the fact that the norms and values that govern the behavior of Muslims are directly different from that of the Orthodox Christians.
5. The relevance of social status: people are perceived differently according to their social characteristics. Generally, higher status individuals are less likely to be labeled deviant or to receive harsh treatment than are lower status individuals.
6. The relevance of the situation: The situational context is often as important as the act itself in determining whether an act will be defined as deviant. As an example you might argue that killing another human being (murder) is the ultimate deviant act. But there are many times when people are not labeled as deviants or murderers just because he/she has killed someone. We ask whether the person killed in self defense, in war, whether the individual is considered legally insane or incapable of knowing right from wrong, etc. In each case, the act was the same - a person killed another person. The situations leading to the killings, however, were defined in a number of different ways. The definition of a particular situation, in turn, determined how people labeled the individuals involved.

9.3 Functions and Dysfunctions of Deviance

According to functionalist school, deviance is both functional and dysfunctional to the social system within which it occurs. Let us begin or discussion with the dysfunction it brings to the society at large.

9.3.1 Dysfunctions of Deviance

Dysfunctions of deviance, as to sociologists, are the negative or disruptive consequences of deviance. Obviously, several societies can tolerate a good deal of deviance without serious results. However, resistant and intensive deviance can impair and even seriously belittle organized social life. As all we know, organized social life is a product of the coordinated actions of many different peoples. "Should some people fail to perform their actions at the proper time in accordance with accepted expectations, institutional life may be threatened." (Vander, 1990: 2005). The writer further argued that if a parent deserts a family, it commonly complicates the task of child care and child rearing. If in the midst of the

battle a squad of soldiers fails to obey and run away, the entire army with no doubt becomes overwhelmed and defeated.

Second important dysfunction is that deviance undermines our willingness to discharge our responsibilities and obligations. It reduces our effort to play our roles and to contribute to the larger social enterprises. If we realize that some people get rewards (even disproportionate rewards) without playing by the rule, we develop resentment and bitterness. Our morale, self-confidence and loyalty suffer ((Vander, 1990). Suppose that you have known that a number of students from your class got a grade in the course *sociology of deviance* illegally through either by cheating, favour made for a course instructor, or other forms of evil deeds. What would your reaction be? Undoubtedly, your motivation to struggle with the materials (books) and to study long hours would very likely be undermined and totally discouraged. Similarly, in a society with a higher degree of corruption, like Ethiopia, the situation will really discourage people who are engaging in acceptable ways of getting money; and most portion of members of the society become willing to internalize this illegal mechanism of getting money which later on can be seen a natural and common ways of being affluent.

Deviance also reduces our trust to other members of our social lives. We know that our social lives indicate that we trust one another. No trust to others in the social organization means there is no organized social life. Thus, we must have confidence that other will play by the rules and regulations constructed around our social lives in committing ourselves to collective enterprise, we allocate some resources, forgo some alternatives, and make some investment in the future. We do so because we assume that other people will do the same, but, would other not reciprocate our trust, we felt that our own efforts are pointless, wasted, and foolish. Subsequently, we remain less motivated and willing to play by the rules of our social lives.

9.3.2 The Functions of Deviance

We commonly believe that deviance is a result of moral erosion and that the consequences of deviant acts are very negative. However, sociologists recognize that deviance is not always harmful to the group or to society.

One of the founding fathers of sociology, Emile Durkheim argued that deviance is in fact normal and universal in human societies. Generally, Durkheim has identified the following four functions of deviance:

- a. Deviance affirms cultural values and norms. Culture, as to Macionis (1997), involves moral choices: people must prefer some attitudes and behaviours to others, for the write, conceptions of what is morally right exists only in opposition to notions of what is morally wrong “just as there can be no righteousness without evil; there can be no justice without crime.” (ibid: 211). In short deviance is inseparable from the process of generating and sustaining morality in a society or social group.

- b. Responding to the deviance clarifies moral boundaries by labeling or publicly evaluating people as deviants, a society or social group sets the boundary between wrong and right. For example, by imposing disciplinary procedures on those who commit plagiarism, a university marks a line between academic honesty and cheating.
- c. Responding to deviance promotes social unity. People typically react to serious deviance with collective outrage. In doing so, they reaffirm the normal ties that bind them (Macionis, 1997). A shared enemy arouses common sentiments and elements of feeling of integration and solidarity. Thus, when deviant behaviour is seen as a threat to group solidarity and people unite in opposition to that behaviour, their loyalties to society are reinforced. For example, currently, several houses in Gondar Town are being burgled. As a result, dwellers of several kebeles discussed the problem and established a jointly paid village guard so as to keep those burglars at a distant. This example clearly shows that people of some villages become united and remained loyal one another in struggles against burglars.
- d. Deviance encourages social change. Russ Long (2008) explains that deviance is an important element of social change since it offers alternative definitions to what is right. Sometimes the alternatives become acceptable and it may even become the dominant view. As it is clearly stated in Macionis (1997), Durkheim claimed that today's deviance might well become tomorrow's morality. Therefore, deviance brings about social change either through revolutionary actions against or amendment on the existing more rules of a society. Deviance is, thus, a catalyst for a social change. A repeated deviance indicating that the existing social system is not functioning properly. This, in turn, forces social change to be realized.
- e. Deviance also provides job opportunities. It is due to the persistence of deviant behaviours within a given society that forced people to establish several social controlling institutions and organizations, no guard will stand by the gate of a bank if there are no deviants in a society.

9.4 Deviant Statuses

Deviant status, as a social position, can be two types: achieved and ascribed deviant statuses. People cast into the deviant realm for their behaviors have an achieved status: they have gained the deviant label through something they have done. People regarded as deviant due to the fact that their conditions often have an ascribed deviant status. It is involuntarily acquired from birth. This category, according to Adler, et. al, (2000), would include having deviant social, economic, cultural and political statuses, such as being a deviant racial status, a congenital physical handicapped, or a height deviants (too tall or too short).

People with ascribed deviant status have nothing to become deviant and nothing they can do to repair the deviant status, whereas people with achieved deviant status have done something that exposed them to be seen a deviant.

9.5 Deviance and Crime

Deviance is generally referred to as the violation of social norms whereas crime is the infraction from written rules and regulations, especially criminal law of a given society or social group. In most cases, crime involves victims. Criminal acts such as murder, arson, robbery, burglary, and larceny are totally unacceptable and condemnable simply because they involve victims. We label these acts crime, meaning that their violation of the public order is so severe that they must be handled punitively and coercively by social institutions, like the police, the courts, and prisons (Adler, et. al., 2002). Most of these and other unmentioned criminal acts are considered deviant behaviours. However, there are many cases in which criminal acts cannot be taken as deviant behaviours due to several reasons. Thus, the argument 'crime is not always a subset of deviance, is sound. For example, white-collar crimes are commonly regarded as merely aggressive business practices.

In the analysis of the relationship between deviance and crime, we can have the following three possible dimensions: First, the overlap between deviance and crime is extensive with those crimes of violence, crimes of harm, and theft of personal properties. These behaviours, according to Kelly, et. al., (2002), are both illegal and deviant. Secondly, in the actual sense, much deviance is considered non-criminal. Some of the examples of such category include obesity, stuttering, physical handicaps, interracial marriage, unwed pregnancy, and so on. Finally, we can also have another dimension, different from the above two, of the relationship between crime and deviance. Here, we can see that there are some criminal behaviours which do not violate norms and values of a society, for example, white-collar crimes – crimes which need a higher status to be committed – and forms of civil disobedience, where people break laws to protest against them. Besides of these dimensions, there is still another area of difference between deviance and crime. As we have tried to mention earlier, deviance includes those deviations from the normal to the positive direction; but crime never include those positive deviant behaviour.

Therefore, it is possible to conclude that crime is not a subset of deviance. They can be overlapping categories only in a single independent dimension (see the first dimension above).

9.6 Sociological Theories of Deviance

Many theories have been developed to explain the cause of deviance. They have tried to explain the reason for the prevalence of deviations from the normal way of behaving in given societies. These theories are different from one another as they are very much influenced by the ideological backgrounds of their proponents. For example, an explanation forwarded by a religious man is not expected to be the same as those explanations given by social thinkers. The whole theories of deviance can, generally, be classified into categories such as demonological theories, biological, psychological and sociological theories.

Sociologists have made considerable efforts in both theory and research regarding deviance. All sociological theories of crime and deviance have in common which is an emphasis on social forces and

conditions, as opposed to psychological or biological factors. They see the deviation from the normal behavior as being caused by the existing social structure. There are many social conditions which influence individual member's behavior. Among others, the most three important groups of sociological theories regarding deviant behavior are reviewed as follows:

9.6.1 Anomie theories of deviance

Both Emile Durkheim and Robert K. Merton are the two most important structural-functional theorists who are related with the analysis of anomie. It is, however, worthwhile keeping in mind that Durkheim's anomie is different from that of Merton's. For Durkheim, anomie is the state of normlessness, a condition occurred within a given society when norms are absent or nonfunctional. On the other hand, Merton defined anomie as a social condition of an individual which occurred due the mismatch between societal goals and socially approved means by which goals are attained.

As to Durkheim, after social upheavals such as war, traditional norms of behavior no longer work, thus causing societal normlessness. Several deviant acts like suicide, crime, and other crises exist in societies that do not develop effective norms. Therefore, anomie, for Durkheim, refers to a broad breakdown of norms in society, or a disconnecting of an individual from the norms of his society's contemporary values. According to Durkheim, deviance or crime is inevitable and normal aspect of social life. It is an integral part of all healthy societies. Thus, it is impossible to have a society totally devoid of deviance and/or crime (Williams, 2004). Thus, deviance is inevitable due to the fact that not every member of society can be equally committed to the collective sentiments, the shared values and moral beliefs of society.

Robert Merton's Strain theory, on the other hand, focuses on the idea that people feel strain when they are exposed to cultural goals that they are unable to obtain because they do not have access to culturally approved ways of achieving those goals. Merton posited that the greater society encourages its members to use acceptable means of achieving acceptable goals. In the United States, acceptable means include hard work, prudent saving, and higher education. Acceptable goals, on the other hand, comprise comfort, leisure time, social status, and wealth (Martin, 2005). However, acceptable means are not evenly distributed among members of the society though societal goals do. In other words, not all members of a society have equal availability of resources to achieve society's recognized goals, thus creating strain for those with less empowered members. "Strain is manifested at the desire to achieve these [socially approved] goals; and one's inability to acquire the legitimate means to achieve them." (ibid: 83). This implies that those without resources may become criminals or delinquents simply because of using illegal means to achieve comfort, leisure, prestige, and wealth. Here, the idea of Merton's individual adaptation comes. Individuals will respond to anomic condition in different ways. Merton outlined four types of deviant responses or adaptations to this condition of anomie.

- a. Innovation: The innovator accepts the socially approved goal, wants money and success but uses deviant means such as stealing or cheating to achieve it. For example, if too much emphasis is put on diplomas and grades without a corresponding emphasis on achieving grades honestly, college students who are not doing well might cheat to get better grades.
- b. Ritualism: This response occurs when an individual has lost sight of his or her goals altogether and becomes obsessed with doing things the right way. Imagine a college football coach who continually loses every game but does not seem disturbed as long as the team follows the rules of the game.
- c. Retreatism: Occurs when individuals simply give up any hope of achieving the goals set out by society. Retreatists feel that they cannot make it. Many students who drop out of school have given up on reaching graduation. They have retreated. People can retreat into alcoholism and drug addiction. Perhaps, the ultimate type of retreatism is suicide.
- d. Rebellion: This deviant adaptation occurs when individuals want to change the structure of society by challenging the system. Rebels want to institute new social goals and means for achieving them. For example, revolutionaries often violate laws in an attempt to institute a different political system.

9.6.2 Differential Association and Cultural Transmission Theories

These two similar theories emphasize the role of the immediate environment and social learning experienced by a deviant person. Criminologist Edwin Sutherland was responsible for developing the theory of differential association. It focused on the process through which people learn norms, values, motivations, priorities, techniques and rationalization, which encourage deviance. People learn these through their interactions and associations with others.

If an individual has been exposed to deviant orientations with greater intensity and frequency, and for a longer period of time than he or she has been exposed to conformist orientation, then the individual is likely to engage in deviance.

The implication of differential association theory is that the family, environment, neighborhood peer group, school and other socializing agents can teach a child deviant behavior just prostitutes tend to enter their profession because they have friend, a group or a pimp who encourages them to sell themselves. If one grows up admiring and identifying with those who have succeeded through crime or deviance, if one has close friends and associates who endorse deviant behavior, if one interacts more frequently and satisfactorily with deviant individuals, then one is likely to learn various deviant adaptations including prostitution, drug use and embezzlement. In other words, deviance like any other behavior is transmitted through the culture and environment.

9.6.3 Labeling Theory

Labeling theory does not attempt to explain the origins of deviant behavior. It only assumes that every one commits deviant acts at some point in life. It focuses on the perpetuation of deviance as a result of being singled out and given the stigma of a deviant status. So, this theory emphasizes on the power of

society to label people as deviants. Here, Social control agencies play a major part in assigning deviant labels. Howard Becker, a labeling theorist, argued that an act by itself is not a deviant rather a societal reaction matters most. A self-fulfilling prophecy can inflict deviant and criminal behaviours. Edwin Lemert also postulates primary and secondary deviation to show how labeling of individual contributes to deviance amplification.

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