

**DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL**

**MASTER OF ARTS-POLITICAL SCIENCES
SEMESTER -III**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
SOFT CORE 303
BLOCK-1**

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

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FOREWORD

The Self Learning Material (SLM) is written with the aim of providing simple and organized study content to all the learners. The SLMs are prepared on the framework of being mutually cohesive, internally consistent and structured as per the university's syllabi. It is a humble attempt to give glimpses of the various approaches and dimensions to the topic of study and to kindle the learner's interest to the subject

We have tried to put together information from various sources into this book that has been written in an engaging style with interesting and relevant examples. It introduces you to the insights of subject concepts and theories and presents them in a way that is easy to understand and comprehend.

We always believe in continuous improvement and would periodically update the content in the very interest of the learners. It may be added that despite enormous efforts and coordination, there is every possibility for some omission or inadequacy in few areas or topics, which would definitely be rectified in future.

We hope you enjoy learning from this book and the experience truly enrich your learning and help you to advance in your career and future endeavours.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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BLOCK 1 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction to the Block

Unit 1 deals with Contending perspective of social science research It also deals with the Brief Outline of the statistical importance in social science research.

Unit 2 deals with Positivism. Positivism means the doctrine and movement founded by the French philosopher Auguste Comte in the nineteenth century and also the general philosophical view of knowledge.

Unit 3 deals with Positivism and its Critique where we are going to discuss positivism, a method of enquiry that sought to give immense cognitive prestige to the discipline, and wanted to convince its adherents that sociology too could be a science and follow the scientific methodological principles of empirical observation.

Unit 4 deals with Marxism as a method. Karl Marx was a great social revolutionary as well as a social scientist. His influence continues to be felt not only in social sciences, philosophy and literature, but also through revolutions in countries like Russia, China and Vietnam.

Unit 5 deals with Post-structuralism and Poststructuralists often point out in their various writings that meaning in language is diverse and open to many different interpretations.

Unit 6 deals with Two strands of research: Quantitative and Qualitative debates

Unit 7 deals with Quantative Research methods: Sampling.

UNIT 1: CONTENDING PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH (BRIEF OUTLINE)

STRUCTURE

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Meaning
- 1.3 Objectives of Social Science Research
- 1.4 Motivating Factors of Social Science Research
- 1.5 Social Science Vs Physical Sciences
- 1.6 Basic Assumptions of Social Research
- 1.7 Subject Matter
- 1.8 Sources of Data
- 1.9 Difficulties of Social Science Research
- 1.10 Let us sum up
- 1.11 Key Words
- 1.12 Questions for Review
- 1.13 Suggested readings and references
- 1.14 Answers to Check Your Progress

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to understand

- the nature of social science research;
- the difficulties a researcher faces in social science research;
- the various sources of data in social science research.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of knowledge is one of the prime driving forces of intellectual man. Research is as old as man's intellectual consciousness and the desire to seek. Research is also as old as the academic consciousness of human mind. Man has all along tried to look back at his

history for better understanding of the evolutionary process leading to the present stage of mankind. He has also endeavoured to re-examine and, wherever possible to reinterpret the things he has already gone through. Present has its roots in the past and the seeds of future are sown in the present itself. Man's urge to understand the present has obviously induced him to look into his past more carefully and present his interpretations more scientifically in order to give purposeful direction to his intellectual efforts in pursuit of diverse ends to which the human activities are devoted. This urge of human brain to re-examine and to re-understand things may rightly be called research, at least, to begin with. The concept of research is thus closely linked with human endeavour for better understanding of his evolution, environment and growth through diverse stages of human history. It is understandable that research, therefore, has been an integral part of academic pursuits in the past. It has served twofold purpose of intellectual sharpening and evolving new theories to explain diverse phenomena through which mankind has survived to its present form. It may not only be for academic interest but also more for human enlightenment that one should study history to understand the dimensional development of mankind. Perhaps it would not be easy to guess that man, in his early stages, did have no idea of economic, social, cultural, political, and anthropological aspects of his existence. As he marched ahead, his awareness also grew and his curiosity led him to understand his environment through different angles. Slowly and steadily this awareness of man manifested itself in a process, now rightly known as research.

1.2 MEANING

Social research has been defined by P.V. Young in the following words – ‘We may define social research as the systematic method of discovering new facts or verifying old facts, their sequences, interrelationship, causal explanations and the natural laws which govern them.’ On the basis of the above definition the following characteristics of social research may be deduced. 1. Social research deals with the social phenomena. It studies behaviour of human beings-as members of society, and their feeling, responses, attitudes under different circumstances. 2. Social

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research is carried on both for discovering new facts and verification of the old ones. The object of every science of course, is the discovery of new facts, new relationship, and new laws governing the phenomena. But constant verification of the old concepts is also needed, especially in case of dynamic sciences. Verification is needed because of two reasons. Firstly, there may be an improvement in the technique of research and it is necessary to test the old concepts by this improved technique. Secondly, the phenomena under study might have undergone a change and it may be required to test the validity of old concepts in the changed circumstances. In Social sciences a lot of research is being carried on for both purposes and has resulted in the discovery of new facts as well as modification of old concepts. 3. Social research tries to establish causal connection between various human activities. It is really very interesting to note whether various complex human activities, are being performed only at random without any sequence, law or system behind them. At the first causal look at varied human behaviour attitudes, moods and temperaments, the presence of any system may appear to be an impossibility, but a close and patient study of different cases, their scientific analysis and comparison and logical interpretation is bound to disclose the truth, that most of them are not merely haphazard -as they appear but motivated by definite rules perfect system and universal laws. The main purpose of social research is therefore, to discover these laws, so that they may be used in the guided growth of human society. Redman Peter says that social research is “systematised effort to gain new knowledge.” Stephenson is of the view that “social research is manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalising to extend correct and ‘verifying knowledge, whether that knowledge aids in the construction of a theory or in the practice of an art.” Another definition of social research has been given by F.A. Ogg: “Research may or may not come to success; it may or may not add anything to what is already known. It is sufficient that its objectives be new knowledge or at least a new mode or orientation of knowledge.” Clifford Moody has said about research that “It comprises defining and redefining problems; formulating hypotheses or suggested solutions; collecting, analyzing and evaluating data; making deductions and making

conclusions; and at last carefully testing the conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulated hypothesis.” In this way it will be observed that every definition focusses on the point namely that social research aims at adding to knowledge of human beings about the problems which face the society. In Webster’s International Dictionary, Research has been defined as “a careful and critical enquiry or examination in seeking facts or principles, diligent investigation in order to ascertain something.” Social research in other words discovers new facts and verifies the old ones. It does not aim at finding the ultimate truths but helps in understanding and classifying the behaviour of individuals in society.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

The objectives of social science research may be classified into two parts- firstly, academic, and secondly, utilitarian objectives. The academic purpose of social research, as of any other research is the acquisition of knowledge. The thirst for knowledge has been responsible for a vast variety of research work even when no material incentive was present. Thus, the primary object of social research is to get true knowledge of human society and its functioning, to know and understand the laws that are operating behind various social activities of man. The other purpose of social research is utilitarian in nature. According to P.V. Young, “The primary goal of research immediate or distant-is to understand social life and thereby gain a greater measure of control over social behaviour.” Human society suffers from a number of social evils like murders, suicides, thefts, robberies, quarrels and wars etc. It is now conclusively proved that all these evils or at least most of them have their root in the organisation of human society and its working. They are not simply casual or stray cases. A thief, a robber, a murderer is not simply born. He is created and as such if those grounds where these evils germinate are destroyed, the society will be cured of evils and an ever lasting human happiness might be secured. Social researches have now proved that no amount of remedial measure or a make shift arrangement

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can cure the society of its evils. In spite of the jails, police and the punishment the crimes have continued and would continue unabated. There is need for going into the root cause of these evils and destroy those grounds where the germs of crime are born and flourish. All this requires a perfect understanding of human society and its various activities. More and more social research is being directed to this purpose. One thing should be made clear at this stage. The utilitarian view should not lead us to conclude that the purpose of social research is to find a remedy for all social evils. The caution given by P.V. Young is worth noting in this respect. She says, "Social research is concerned with pathological problems only insofar as they throw light on the fundamental social processes on human behaviour and the development or disorganisation of personality." She further remarks that "Social research is not concerned with practical and immediate social planning or social engineering, nor with ameliorative and therapeutic measure, it is not concerned with administrative changes and refinements administrative procedures nor with social reform." There may be some confusion over the two contradictory opinions expressed above. A close analysis will make the things clear. The cause of social disorganisation may be classified into two types. Firstly, those which are influenced by human nature or fundamental social processes, and secondly, those that are caused by faulty social planning or defective administration, this only the first type of causes that form the subject matter of social research. The second type of causes are dealt by what is known as social surveys. A concrete example will make the point clear. The attention of the government may be drawn to growing delinquency among the school children. A survey may reveal them to be caused by mismanagement of schools, ill treatment of the teachers or guardians or a bad company. Administrative reforms may be undertaken and the prevalence of delinquency may be reduced. But it cannot be stopped altogether. A closer study may reveal its cause to be deeper rooted, e.g., psychological frustration, or temptation to evil. Social research tries to explore these fundamental traits of human nature so that an attempt may be made to destroy these evils root and branch.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Discuss the Meaning.

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2. Discuss the Objectives of Social Science Research.

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1.4 MOTIVATING FACTORS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

P.V. Young has mentioned four motivating factors of social research.

1. Curiosity About Unknown In her own words, “Curiosity is an intrinsic trait of human mind and a compelling drive in the exploration of man’s surroundings.” It is a natural instinct in the mankind. Even a small child is curious about the unknown objects that he notices around him and tries to understand them in his own ways. The same curiosity drives a scientist to explore unknown factors working behind the social phenomena. When he observes various social activities of man so complex and varied, he simply marvels at their nature and tries to understand them in their true significance.

2. Desire to Understand the Cause and Effect of Widespread Social Problems According to P.V. Young, “The search for cause and effect

relationship has been more relentless than almost any other scientific effort upon which human energies have been spent.” More and more research is undertaken to dispel doubts and uncertainties which result from inadequate conceptions of underlying factors shaping social processes. People want not only an account of events but also want to know how they happened.

3. Appearance of Novel and Unanticipated Situations Man is often faced with many acute and difficult social problems. An ordinary person reacts emotionally to these, but a social scientist sets down dispassionately to find out their cause and thus evolves a lasting solution to such intricate problems. In quite a large number of cases such problems have inspired the social scientist to go into their detail and study the basic factors causing these problems.

4. Desire to Discover New and Test Old Scientific Procedure as an Efficient Way to Gain Useful and Fundamental Knowledge Such research is not in fact a research in social phenomena, but a research in techniques or methods used in social research. A number of such researches have been made to evolve better and most refined techniques for dealing with social problems. Of late there has been growing emphasis upon the use of quantitative or statistical methods in the social research in order to make it more definite and mathematically precise.

1.5 SOCIAL SCIENCE VS PHYSICAL SCIENCES

In the beginning it must be clearly understood that nature of social research is quite different from research in physical sciences. In so far as pure sciences are concerned, it is possible to have controlled laboratory situation upon. Secondly, it is also possible to find out cause and effect situation in the case of physical sciences. Still another important factor to be borne in mind is that as in so far physical sciences are concerned it is possible to know with certainty the characteristics as well as behaviour of the products on which experiment is to be carried. On the other hand nature of social sciences in this regard is quite different. They deal with

human beings who have no dependable temperament. The behaviour, habits, outlooks and approaches not only differ from place to place, society to society but also from individual to individual. Thus it becomes very difficult to derive any uniform conclusions and approaches. In social research, therefore, different methods and approaches are to be followed. Nowadays it is being argued out that in spite of complexity of human behaviour there is some social order and some pattern, which means that some reasonable predictions in human behaviour are possible. It is also said that social phenomenon are complex because our knowledge about them is not very developed. As our knowledge develops, this complexity will also become somewhat simple.

In the words of G. A. Lundberg, “As our knowledge of variable increases and we are able to judge the effects of various variables involved, it will be possible for us to predict social events with much greater accuracy.” Then, another factor of social research is that whereas in natural sciences, there is no effect of group behaviour, in social research group behaviour very much effects. As we know, individual behaves quite differently when he is outside group situation and when he is in group situation. Group increases his power of suggestibility. A researcher therefore will have to study group behaviour very seriously and also the leadership pattern as well as the way in which individuals who compose the group behave. Still another difference is that a social phenomenon proposed to be studied is only indirectly known e.g. through traditions, customs and values, which have great subjectivity and less objectivity. All these values have different expressions with different people and it is really difficult to have uniform standards for measuring the placement of these values in society. In society there is always considerable heterogeneity, as compared with natural sciences where there is much of homogeneity in the articles to be experimented. Then, we come to controlled laboratory situation which is possible in the natural sciences, but which is impossible in the case of social sciences. A social researcher will have to be very much careful in this regard. In the case of social research it is difficult to separate cause from effect. In fact both cause and effect must go hand in hand and one is responsible for the other e.g. unemployment

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and poverty. But in the case of pure sciences it is very easy to find out the cause and effect in a particular situation. It will thus be observed that the nature of social research is quite different from physical science researches. Both have their own problems which are quite different from each other. From the nature of social research it will be quite appealing to say that difficulties are great and real. But these are at least not insurmountable. As our knowledge about individual and group behaviour will increase and our tools of research will develop, with that our familiarity with problems, methods and techniques will also develop. Today physical sciences have got better precision but tomorrow social research can also achieve that precision. With the passage of time more social theories might develop.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Discuss the Motivating Factors of Social Science Research.

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2. Write about Social Science Vs Physical Sciences.

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1.6 BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

The application of scientific methods to social research is based upon certain assumptions which may be classified as below.

1. Existence of cause and effect relationship – It has to be accepted as a basis of social research that there exists cause and effect relationship between various social activities. These causes always produce similar results and therefore, if they are known they can be used effectively in checking the evils resulting from them. For example, social crime may be caused by poverty and frustration. In other words wherever there is poverty and frustration it will result in social crime. Therefore, poverty and frustration have to be eliminated first in order to eliminate crimes.

2. Existence of sequence or law in social activities – Another assumption is that various social activities do not occur in a haphazard way. There is some system behind them. If this trend or system is located, it is possible to predict the future course of social phenomena. For example, if it is proved that population of country increases by some specific rate, then the population of the place in any future year can safely be predicted.

3. Possibility of detached study –Although man is a part of the society which he is investigating, yet it is possible for him to study it apart from him. His own feeling and emotions would not be reflected in the study. Although it is a very difficult task, it is not impossible.

4. Existence of ideal types – In society every one is not entirely different from each other. People may be grouped into fairly homogeneous classes known as ‘ideal type’. The deduction drawn from the study of the group may be made applicable to the whole type, wherever it may exist. Thus migrated persons may form an ideal type. All of them show similar tendencies e.g. clinging to their own culture and tradition, greater tendency towards unity among themselves etc.

5. Possibility of a representative sample- The assumption is similar to the previous one. It is generally assumed that a sample, representative of the group may be drawn and the deduction from the study of the sample may

be made applicable to the whole group. Human society is very vast and study of each and every individual is a practical impossibility. The social researcher has, therefore, to rely upon the sampling technique under the assumption that a sample may be representative of the whole group.

1.7 SUBJECT MATTER

The subject matter of Social research is co-extensive with the society itself and in any investigation concerning the working of society, its institution forms the part of social research. On the whole, the subject matter of social research may be classified into following three parts.

- Fundamental Research
- Applied Social Research
- Quasi Social Research Fundamental Research

These researches deal with the fundamental principles of social sciences. They may be conducted either for the verification of some old theory or the establishment of a new one. Need for such a research arises with the emergence of new problems and new situations in the society, the question that the old theories fail to answer satisfactorily. The dynamic character of social phenomena require that old theories should constantly be tested in the light of new situation and necessary modifications be made in them in order to make them more perfect. Emergence of new theories is also made possible by the improvement in the methods of research and its tools of analysis. With more accurate and reliable tools of research, the discovery of new fundamental facts regarding organisation and working of social institutions is possible. Applied Research Applied research deals with the possibilities of application of the result of fundamental research to social problems.

It, therefore, deals with social therapy or social engineering. For example study of the pattern of leadership in a rural community, social customs in a particular tribe or a study of health conditions, social mobility etc, may

be cited as some of the illustrations of applied research. Applied research generally takes the form of social surveys. The major difference between an applied and fundamental research is that whereas the latter deals with the fundamental principles guiding the working of human society, the former pertains to more immediate problems. Fundamental principles have a much wider application while the scope of applied research is narrower. Fundamental research provides the basis upon which the whole super-structure of applied research is built up. Quasi Social Research Social sciences have many common boundaries among them. Naturally there are a large number of problems, which we may call as border line problems. An applied research in all these problems may be termed as Quasi-Social research; Social-economic, Social psychological and Socio-anthropological researches comes under this category. The distinction between a pure applied social research and quasi-social research is thus dependent upon subject matter and not on the use of tools or fundamental principles.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.
ii) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

- 1. Discuss Basic Assumptions of Social Research.

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- 2. Write about the Subject Matter.

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1.8 SOURCES OF DATA

Data required for social research can be made available from various sources. P.V. Young has classified them into two groups: (1) documentary sources, and (2) field sources.

Documentary sources include material already collected whether published or unpublished. Field resources may include living persons, scholars, scientists, research workers, leaderspeople who have worked with the social groups or have studied the problem. These persons may be consulted to find their opinions, experiences and ideas about the research problem. Among documentary sources the first place may be given to the books written by different experts. These books are of two types. In the first category the books which deal with some specific theory e.g. Darwin's Origin of Species are included; in the second category are included such books as concern the description of the phenomena. The purpose is a mere description of phenomena and not the criticism or support of any theory. Books of history, travel and autobiographies come under this category. Reports of official and unofficial survey and data published by various agencies also come under this group. The first types of books have theoretical importance while those of the second category have greater information value. Published data has very little importance in the specific research. Generally, the type of information required is not available. Even if it is available it may be partial, outdated or discontinuous. The researcher must, therefore, collect his own information. Direct information may be collected from many sources. If the observation of the phenomena is possible, then it must be resorted to as the most reliable source. Some of the phenomena are not available for observation either because they cannot be observed, e.g., a man's opinion, his preference, etc., or because the social consideration does not permit observation by outsider, e.g., marriage relationship. In all such cases information has to be gathered from the person concerned by means of direct interview or questionnaire

filled by the informant. If the field of enquiry is limited, the information may be collected by the researcher himself but if a wider field is to be covered the help of the field worker has to be taken. Various sources of information are as follows.

(1) Documentary Sources

1. Books Different thinkers have described their ideas and theories in the books written by them. A study of all such books is essential for the researcher in order to know what has been said on the subject by people who conducted a similar research earlier. A study of all such work brings greater clarity and avoids duplication of effort. In the absence of such knowledge a researcher might be wasting his time upon a subject upon which much has already been said.

2. Report of Surveys Various surveys pertaining to social problems are undertaken from time to time by government and non-government agencies. Their reports provide a very useful material to the social researcher. Before using this data, the reliability of the institution, the time of research and their suitability for the present purpose must be kept in view.

3. Memoirs Memoirs, autobiographies, life histories and letters at times provide useful information on many social subjects. Diaries maintained by important people are sources of revealing information on many problems. Such documents have both social and psychological importance.

4. Accounts of Travels

Accounts of travels are especially important in Anthropology. The travellers to Africa and other less frequented parts of the world have given vivid description of native societies and their customs and these can provide useful material in Anthropological studies.

5 Historical Accounts

A good deal of material for social research can be available from history. A historical account is of two types, (i) the general history, and (ii) the history of the particular phenomena. To quote- Like Comte himself the early British social scientists leaned heavily on historical or documentary evidence. If we accept social institution as product of evolution these historical accounts of advanced societies can help in throwing light upon the future or less developed ones.

6. Official Published Data

A large variety of data on social problems are regularly published by government in most of the countries. These data pertain to health, population, education, employment, crime, etc. They can be used by social scientists for their own purpose. The data thus released are very much valued for their coverage, regularity and reliability of government as collecting agency both due to its resources and unbiased nature.

7. Other Unpublished Record

There is a lot of other unpublished material that lies buried in the Official fields or personal records. If the same can be available to any person it can serve very useful purpose. Availability of such data and their suitability for the present purpose are two important aspects that must be taken note of in this respect. (2) Field Sources Besides the indirect sources of data described above there are following direct sources also.

1. Direct Observation

According to this method, the researcher himself collects necessary information by observing the phenomena. Observation may be carried on in the natural field setting or in the form of an experiment. If the scope of enquiry is small, the researcher himself would undertake the work of observation, but if the nature of subject is such as to demand a wider

field enquiry, help of the field workers may be taken. In the latter case, standardisation of the system and proper supervision of the field workers is essential.

2. Information from the Informants

If the phenomena is such as cannot be observed or if the presence of the observer is not possible, the only way to get information is through interview. Information by means of interview can be had either by contacting the informant directly or asking him to reply a set of questions by post. Direct interview can also be either in the form of story like narrative or in the form of answers to specific questions.

3. Information from Witness

This method is used by committees and commissions. Under this method the committee does not contact the persons about whom the enquiry is being conducted but those persons who are thought to possess sufficient knowledge of the subject. These persons, so interviewed are known as witness. Thus, for example, in case an enquiry about labour we may contact labour leaders, employees and labour experts. In case of social service a contact with the social workers may yield much useful data.

Social science disciplines

Social science covers a broad range of disciplines.

Demography and social statistics, methods and computing

- **Demography** is the study of populations and population changes and trends, using resources such as statistics of births, deaths and disease.
- **Social statistics, methods and computing** involves the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative social science data.

Development studies, human geography and environmental planning

- **Development studies** is a multidisciplinary branch of the social sciences which addresses a range of social and economic issues related to developing or low-income countries.
- **Human geography** studies the world, its people, communities and cultures, and differs from physical geography mainly in that it focuses on human activities and their impact - for instance on environmental change.
- **Environmental planning** explores the decision-making processes for managing relationships within and between human systems and natural systems, in order to manage these processes in an effective, transparent and equitable manner.

Economics, management and business studies

- **Economics** seeks to understand how individuals interact within the social structure, to address key questions about the production and exchange of goods and services.
- **Management and business studies** explores a wide range of aspects relating to the activities and management of business, such as strategic and operational management, organisational psychology, employment relations, marketing, accounting, finance and logistics.

Education, social anthropology, and linguistics

- **Education** is one of the most important social sciences, exploring how people learn and develop.
- **Social anthropology** is the study of how human societies and social structures are organised and understood.
- **Linguistics** focuses on language and how people communicate through spoken sounds and words.

Law, economic and social history

- **Law** focuses on the rules created by governments and people to ensure a more orderly society.

- **Economic and social history** looks at past events to learn from history and better understand the processes of contemporary society.

Politics and international relations

- **Politics** focuses on democracy and the relationship between people and policy, at all levels up from the individual to a national and international level.
- **International relations** is the study of relationships between countries, including the roles of other organisations.

Psychology and sociology

- **Psychology** studies the human mind and try to understand how people and groups experience the world through various emotions, ideas, and conscious states.
- **Sociology** involves groups of people, rather than individuals, and attempts to understand the way people relate to each other and function as a society or social sub-groups.

Science and technology studies

- **Science and technology studies** is concerned with what scientists do, what their role is in our society, the history and culture of science, and the policies and debates that shape our modern scientific and technological world.

Social policy and social work

- **Social policy** is an interdisciplinary and applied subject concerned with the analysis of societies' responses to social need, focusing on aspects of society, economy and policy that are necessary to human existence, and how these can be provided.
- **Social work** focuses on social change, problem-solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance social justice.

1.9 DIFFICULTIES OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Social problems are very complex and if the society is really to progress it is very essential that these problems should be properly identified. But the problem is not so easy as prima facie it appears to be. There are several difficulties in the way of social research. Some such difficulties are:

1. Problem of Finding Good Investigators. No research can be a success unless the investigator is sincere. In social research it is really very difficult to find out good social researcher. A good researcher should have the qualities of both head and heart. He should not allow his prejudices to enter the research. He must be devoted to the cause which he has undertaken upon -himself. In fact the greatest difficulty is that it is difficult, to find out researchers who can work with missionary zeal. It is a usual complaint that the social research investigators cook the material, 'do not take the trouble of going to the field for getting first hand information'.

2. Problem of Collecting Information. Another difficulty is that of collecting information. An investigator is to collect information from human beings. Usually the people are not prepared to co-operate with researchers. They have no interest either in the interest or the research. They find no justification in divulging the secrets. A researcher can be mistaken as a Government servant who could misuse the information once supplied to him. In many cases the people in whom he is interested may not be available for supplying information. Since as human being he has his own prejudices, he might give either suppressed or exaggerated information and both will not serve his purpose.

3. Dependence on others. Dependence on others poses another problem in social research. A researcher cannot do everything by himself. He is required to employ the investigators. Similarly he is to collect information from others who may not be prepared to give information and least willing to co-operate. He may not be prepared to spare any time

for the researcher, and might not be prepared to take the investigator as seriously as the investigator and researcher might take. Similarly he is required to depend for tabulating, analysing and interpreting data. Thus seriousness of researcher alone does not serve the purpose.

4. **Problem of Analysing Data.** When the Data has been collected, the problem of social researcher does not end. Findings of the researcher would always depend on the interpretation of data. Usually it is seen that data is analysed by the analyses in such a way that that suits his convenience and attitudes. It is usually difficult to find out such analyst who does not introduce bias while interpreting and analysing data.

5. **Problem of Questionnaire.** If the investigator is investigating a problem with the help of a questionnaire, then the problem of constructing a questionnaire arises. The researcher is expected to formulate a questionnaire for which the reply is either in the positive or negative. In the questionnaire such phrases should not be used which provide communication gap between what is intended, find what is communicated. Similarly a difficulty arises, when a questionnaire is not structured with a view on interpretation and analysis or data to be collected with its help.

6. **Temptation for Generalisation.** Usually difficulty arises on account of temptation of investigator and researcher to generalise research findings forgetting that there is vast variation in the habits of the people, social conditions, environments, not only from society to society but also from investigator to investigator.

Social science research investigates human behavior. This lesson defines social science research, explains the methods used and the topics studied within the field.

What is Social Science Research

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Have you ever wondered why people behave in certain ways? How about the way someone thinks or approaches a new situation? Well, **social science research** works to answer many of the questions we have about human behavior. Through scientific study, social science research seeks to understand the hows and whys of human behavior.

Methods

Social science researchers follow the five steps of the **scientific method** to conduct their research.

Step 1

The scientific method begins with a question or curiosity. An example of a research question might be the following: Does texting while driving increase the rate of car accidents?

Step 2

After a research question is determined, social science researchers must form a hypothesis. A **hypothesis** is an educated guess regarding what the researchers expect to find. Usually, social science researchers base their hypotheses on previous research in the field. In the case of our texting and driving example, researchers might hypothesize that texting while driving increases car accidents because previous research determined this.

Step 3

The third step that social science researchers take is to test the hypothesis through empirical research. **Empirical research** is the process of collecting and analyzing data. This can be done through descriptive research, experimental research, or correlational research. **Descriptive research** describes a behavior. In our example, descriptive research

might describe commonalities among those who are most likely to text and drive.

Experimental research manipulates variables to measure changes in other variables. More specifically, social science researchers manipulate the independent variable to see how that manipulation changes the dependent variable. For our example, experimental research might compare accident rates in those who text and drive versus those who do not text and drive. The behavior of texting and driving would be the independent variable while the outcome (accident or no accident) would be the dependent variable.

Correlational research examines the relationships, if any, between variables. For our example, we might find that younger drivers have an increased rate of accidents while texting and driving. This would show a correlation between age and rate of accidents.

Step 4

The fourth step followed by social science researchers is to draw conclusions based on their data. In our example, we might conclude that texting while driving increases the rate of car accidents.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.
ii) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

- 1. What are the Sources of Data.
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- 2. Discuss Difficulties of Social Science Research.

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1.10 LET US SUM UP

The idea that all research should provide the basis for new beginning seems especially appropriate as a guideline in concluding this introductory unit. Social science research has a wide field and scope which becomes still more important in a developing country like India. But social research can deliver the good only if there are good researchers, who fully realise the need and necessity of work being done by them.

Social Science Research papers consider the principles of effective design of social science research projects with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. They contribute to a number of specialist subject areas within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Social Science Research papers begin at 200 level.

A competent social researcher has a critical appreciation of contemporary society and social issues based on a sound foundation of social theory and research methodology. Researchers need a critical understanding of a range of social research methods and styles. Social research design encompasses not only theoretical and methodological but also ethical considerations relating to respect for the rights and welfare of all parties involved in the research.

1.11 KEY WORDS

Social Science Research: Social research is a method of research used to gather information about people and societies. Researchers can use either quantitative or qualitative methods as well as primary or secondary methods to begin their findings.

Data: Data are individual units of information. A datum describes a single quality or quantity of some object or phenomenon. In analytical

processes, data are represented by variables. Although the terms "data", "information" and "knowledge" are often used interchangeably, each of these terms has a distinct meaning.

1.12 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Critically examine the nature of Social Science Research.
2. What are the difficulties a researcher faces in Social Science Research?
3. Discuss the various sources of data in Social Science Research.
4. Discuss the Meaning
5. Discuss the Objectives of Social Science Research
6. Discuss the Motivating Factors of Social Science Research
7. Write about Social Science Vs Physical Sciences
8. Discuss Basic Assumptions of Social Research
9. Write about the Subject Matter
10. What are the Sources of Data
11. Discuss Difficulties of Social Science Research

1.13 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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1.14 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

3. See Section 1.2
4. See Section 1.3

Check Your Progress 2

1. See Section 1.4
2. See Section 1.5

Check Your Progress 3

1. See Section 1.6
2. See Section 1.7

Check Your Progress 4

1. See Section 1.8
2. See Section 1.9

UNIT 2: POSITIVISM

STRUCTURE

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Comte's Life and Works
- 2.3 Comte's Concern and Aim.
- 2.4 Philosophy of Comte
- 2.5 The Classification of the Sciences
- 2.6 Sociology of Comte
- 2.7 Religion of Humanity
- 2.8 Later Developments of Positivism
- 2.9 Let us sum up
- 2.10 Key Words
- 2.11 Questions for Review
- 2.12 Suggested readings and references
- 2.13 Answers to Check Your Progress

2.0 OBJECTIVES

One of the important philosophical movements which originated in the nineteenth century and shaped the thinking of scientists and scholars in the 20th century also is positivism. The aim of this paper is to make the students acquaint with the background, origin and development of Positivism, especially the contribution of Auguste Comte, the later development of positivism and its continued relevance to the understanding of natural and social sciences today.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Positivism means the doctrine and movement founded by the French philosopher Auguste Comte in the nineteenth century and also the general philosophical view of knowledge proposed by Francis Bacon, John Locke, Isaac Newton and contemporary thinkers like Mortiz Schlick, Ernst Mach, Rudolf Carnap and others which assert that genuine knowledge should be based on observation and advanced by experiment.

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In the social sciences positivism is associated with three assumptions; first that knowledge should be founded on experience alone; secondly the belief that the methods of natural sciences are directly applicable to the social world and on the basis of it laws about social phenomena can be established; and thirdly the axiological principle that normative statements do not have the status of knowledge and maintains a rigid separation between facts and values. Bacon believed that philosophers should not attempt to wander beyond the 'limits of nature'. He held that there are ultimate facts that should be accepted on the basis of experience, and he applied the adjective 'positive' to these inexplicable facts and to the doctrine based on them. Gradually the method of natural sciences which relied on observation and experience came to be termed positive. Saint-Simon applied the term positive in his *Essay on the Science of Man* to the sciences which were based on facts which have been observed and analyzed. Comte believed that the function of theories in science is to co-ordinate observed facts rather than to explain them in terms of causes and to emphasize this view he used the term positive. His *Positive Philosophy* later came to be called Positivism. In the following sections we shall concentrate on the positivism of Comte.

Comte's positivism

Auguste Comte

Auguste Comte (1798–1857) first described the epistemological perspective of positivism in *The Course in Positive Philosophy*, a series of texts published between 1830 and 1842. These texts were followed by the 1844 work, *A General View of Positivism* (published in French 1848, English in 1865). The first three volumes of the *Course* dealt chiefly with the physical sciences already in existence (mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology), whereas the latter two emphasized the inevitable coming of social science. Observing the circular dependence of theory and observation in science, and classifying the sciences in this way, Comte may be regarded as the first philosopher of science in the modern sense of the term. For him, the physical sciences had necessarily

to arrive first, before humanity could adequately channel its efforts into the most challenging and complex "Queen science" of human society itself. His View of Positivism therefore set out to define the empirical goals of sociological method.

The most important thing to determine was the natural order in which the sciences stand—not how they can be made to stand, but how they must stand, irrespective of the wishes of any one. ... This Comte accomplished by taking as the criterion of the position of each the degree of what he called "positivity," which is simply the degree to which the phenomena can be exactly determined. This, as may be readily seen, is also a measure of their relative complexity, since the exactness of a science is in inverse proportion to its complexity. The degree of exactness or positivity is, moreover, that to which it can be subjected to mathematical demonstration, and therefore mathematics, which is not itself a concrete science, is the general gauge by which the position of every science is to be determined. Generalizing thus, Comte found that there were five great groups of phenomena of equal classificatory value but of successively decreasing positivity. To these he gave the names astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, and sociology.

— Lester F. Ward, *The Outlines of Sociology* (1898),

Comte offered an account of social evolution, proposing that society undergoes three phases in its quest for the truth according to a general "law of three stages". The idea bears some similarity to Marx's belief that human society would progress toward a communist peak (see dialectical materialism). This is perhaps unsurprising as both were profoundly influenced by the early Utopian socialist, Henri de Saint-Simon, who was at one time Comte's mentor. Comte intended to develop a secular-scientific ideology in the wake of European secularisation.

Comte's stages were (1) the theological, (2) the metaphysical, and (3) the positive. The theological phase of man was based on whole-hearted belief in all things with reference to God. God, Comte says, had reigned supreme over human existence pre-Enlightenment. Humanity's place in

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society was governed by its association with the divine presences and with the church. The theological phase deals with humankind's accepting the doctrines of the church (or place of worship) rather than relying on its rational powers to explore basic questions about existence. It dealt with the restrictions put in place by the religious organization at the time and the total acceptance of any "fact" adduced for society to believe.

Comte describes the metaphysical phase of humanity as the time since the Enlightenment, a time steeped in logical rationalism, to the time right after the French Revolution. This second phase states that the universal rights of humanity are most important. The central idea is that humanity is invested with certain rights that must be respected. In this phase, democracies and dictators rose and fell in attempts to maintain the innate rights of humanity.

The final stage of the trilogy of Comte's universal law is the scientific, or positive, stage. The central idea of this phase is that individual rights are more important than the rule of any one person. Comte stated that the idea of humanity's ability to govern itself makes this stage inherently different from the rest. There is no higher power governing the masses and the intrigue of any one person can achieve anything based on that individual's free will. The third principle is most important in the positive stage. Comte calls these three phases the universal rule in relation to society and its development. Neither the second nor the third phase can be reached without the completion and understanding of the preceding stage. All stages must be completed in progress.

Comte believed that the appreciation of the past and the ability to build on it towards the future was key in transitioning from the theological and metaphysical phases. The idea of progress was central to Comte's new science, sociology. Sociology would "lead to the historical consideration of every science" because "the history of one science, including pure political history, would make no sense unless it was attached to the study of the general progress of all of humanity". As Comte would say: "from science comes prediction; from prediction comes action." It is a

philosophy of human intellectual development that culminated in science. The irony of this series of phases is that though Comte attempted to prove that human development has to go through these three stages, it seems that the positivist stage is far from becoming a realization. This is due to two truths: The positivist phase requires having a complete understanding of the universe and world around us and requires that society should never know if it is in this positivist phase. Anthony Giddens argues that since humanity constantly uses science to discover and research new things, humanity never progresses beyond the second metaphysical phase.

Positivist temple in Porto Alegre, Brazil

Comte's fame today owes in part to Emile Littré, who founded *The Positivist Review* in 1867. As an approach to the philosophy of history, positivism was appropriated by historians such as Hippolyte Taine. Many of Comte's writings were translated into English by the Whig writer, Harriet Martineau, regarded by some as the first female sociologist. Debates continue to rage as to how much Comte appropriated from the work of his mentor, Saint-Simon. He was nevertheless influential: Brazilian thinkers turned to Comte's ideas about training a scientific elite in order to flourish in the industrialization process. Brazil's national motto, *Ordem e Progresso* ("Order and Progress") was taken from the positivism motto, "Love as principle, order as the basis, progress as the goal", which was also influential in Poland.

In later life, Comte developed a 'religion of humanity' for positivist societies in order to fulfil the cohesive function once held by traditional worship. In 1849, he proposed a calendar reform called the 'positivist calendar'. For close associate John Stuart Mill, it was possible to distinguish between a "good Comte" (the author of the *Course in Positive Philosophy*) and a "bad Comte" (the author of the secular-religious system). The system was unsuccessful but met with the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* to influence the proliferation of various Secular Humanist organizations in the 19th century, especially

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through the work of secularists such as George Holyoake and Richard Congreve. Although Comte's English followers, including George Eliot and Harriet Martineau, for the most part rejected the full gloomy panoply of his system, they liked the idea of a religion of humanity and his injunction to "vivre pour autrui" ("live for others", from which comes the word "altruism").

The early sociology of Herbert Spencer came about broadly as a reaction to Comte; writing after various developments in evolutionary biology, Spencer attempted (in vain) to reformulate the discipline in what we might now describe as socially Darwinistic terms.

Proletarian positivism

Fabien Magnin was the first working class adherent to Comte's ideas. Comte appointed him as his successor as president of the Positive Society in the event of Comte's death. Magnin filled this role from 1857 to 1880, when he resigned. Magnin was in touch with the English positivists Richard Congreve and Edward Spencer Beesly. He established the Cercle des prolétaires positivistes in 1863 which was affiliated to the First International. Eugène Sémérie was a psychiatrist who was also involved in the Positivist movement, setting up a positivist club in Paris after the foundation of the French Third Republic in 1870. "Positivism is not only a philosophical doctrine, it is also a political party which claims to reconcile order—the necessary basis for all social activity—with Progress, which is its goal." he wrote.

Durkheim's positivism

Émile Durkheim

The modern academic discipline of sociology began with the work of Émile Durkheim (1858–1917). While Durkheim rejected much of the details of Comte's philosophy, he retained and refined its method, maintaining that the social sciences are a logical continuation of the

natural ones into the realm of human activity, and insisting that they may retain the same objectivity, rationalism, and approach to causality. Durkheim set up the first European department of sociology at the University of Bordeaux in 1895, publishing his *Rules of the Sociological Method* (1895). In this text he argued: "[o]ur main goal is to extend scientific rationalism to human conduct... What has been called our positivism is but a consequence of this rationalism."

Durkheim's seminal monograph, *Suicide* (1897), a case study of suicide rates amongst Catholic and Protestant populations, distinguished sociological analysis from psychology or philosophy. By carefully examining suicide statistics in different police districts, he attempted to demonstrate that Catholic communities have a lower suicide rate than Protestants, something he attributed to social (as opposed to individual or psychological) causes. He developed the notion of objective *sui generis* "social facts" to delineate a unique empirical object for the science of sociology to study. Through such studies, he posited, sociology would be able to determine whether a given society is 'healthy' or 'pathological', and seek social reform to negate organic breakdown or "social anomie". Durkheim described sociology as the "science of institutions, their genesis and their functioning".

Ashley Ornstein has alleged, in a consumer textbook published by Pearson Education, that accounts of Durkheim's positivism are possibly exaggerated and oversimplified; Comte was the only major sociological thinker to postulate that the social realm may be subject to scientific analysis in exactly the same way as natural science, whereas Durkheim saw a far greater need for a distinctly sociological scientific methodology. His lifework was fundamental in the establishment of practical social research as we know it today—techniques which continue beyond sociology and form the methodological basis of other social sciences, such as political science, as well of market research and other fields.

Antipositivism and critical theory

At the turn of the 20th century, the first wave of German sociologists formally introduced methodological antipositivism, proposing that research should concentrate on human cultural norms, values, symbols, and social processes viewed from a subjective perspective. Max Weber argued that sociology may be loosely described as a 'science' as it is able to identify causal relationships—especially among ideal types, or hypothetical simplifications of complex social phenomena. As a nonpositivist, however, one seeks relationships that are not as "ahistorical, invariant, or generalizable" as those pursued by natural scientists. Weber regarded sociology as the study of social action, using critical analysis and *verstehen* techniques. The sociologists Georg Simmel, Ferdinand Tönnies, George Herbert Mead, and Charles Cooley were also influential in the development of sociological antipositivism, whilst neo-Kantian philosophy, hermeneutics, and phenomenology facilitated the movement in general.

Karl Marx's theory of historical materialism and critical analysis drew upon positivism, a tradition which would continue in the development of critical theory. However, following in the tradition of both Weber and Marx, the critical theorist Jürgen Habermas has critiqued pure instrumental rationality (in its relation to the cultural "rationalisation" of the modern West) as meaning that scientific thinking becomes something akin to ideology itself. Positivism may be espoused by "technocrats" who believe in the inevitability of social progress through science and technology. New movements, such as critical realism, have emerged in order to reconcile postpositivist aims with various so-called 'postmodern' perspectives on the social acquisition of knowledge.

Contemporary positivism

In the original Comtean usage, the term "positivism" roughly meant the use of scientific methods to uncover the laws according to which both physical and human events occur, while "sociology" was the overarching science that would synthesize all such knowledge for the betterment of

society. "Positivism is a way of understanding based on science"; people don't rely on the faith of God but instead of the science behind humanity. "Antipositivism" formally dates back to the start of the twentieth century, and is based on the belief that natural and human sciences are ontologically and epistemologically distinct. Neither of these terms is used any longer in this sense. There are no fewer than twelve distinct epistemologies that are referred to as positivism. Many of these approaches do not self-identify as "positivist", some because they themselves arose in opposition to older forms of positivism, and some because the label has over time become a term of abuse by being mistakenly linked with a theoretical empiricism. The extent of antipositivist criticism has also become broad, with many philosophies broadly rejecting the scientifically based social epistemology and other ones only seeking to amend it to reflect 20th century developments in the philosophy of science. However, positivism (understood as the use of scientific methods for studying society) remains the dominant approach to both the research and the theory construction in contemporary sociology, especially in the United States.

The majority of articles published in leading American sociology and political science journals today are positivist (at least to the extent of being quantitative rather than qualitative). This popularity may be because research utilizing positivist quantitative methodologies holds a greater prestige in the social sciences than qualitative work; quantitative work is easier to justify, as data can be manipulated to answer any question. Such research is generally perceived as being more scientific and more trustworthy, and thus has a greater impact on policy and public opinion (though such judgments are frequently contested by scholars doing non-positivist work).

The role of science in social change

The contestation over positivism is reflected in older (see the Positivism dispute) and current debates over the proper role of science in the public sphere. Public sociology—especially as described by Michael

Burawoy—argues that sociologists should use empirical evidence to display the problems of society so they might be change

2.2 COMTE'S LIFE AND WORKS

Isidore Auguste Marie Francois Xavier Comte, the founder of Positivism was born at Montpellier, France in 1798 to a devout Catholic family with royalist sympathies. However, when he was fourteen he had ceased to believe in God and also abandoned the royalist sympathies of the family. He studied in the Ecole Polytechnique of Paris and later became a teacher there. In 1817 Comte became secretary to the French utopian socialist Saint-Simon, from whom Comte got certain radical ideas of social reform which animated his entire life. In April 1826, Comte began teaching a Course of Positive Philosophy. About this time he had a temporary mental breakdown. After recovering, he was appointed instructor and examiner in mathematics at the Ecole polytechnique. He resumed the Course of Positive Philosophy in 1829. Comte also published an Elementary Treatise on Analytic Geometry (1843), the Philosophical Treatise on Popular Astronomy (1844) and The Discourse on the Positive Spirit. In 1845, Comte met Clothilde de Vaux and fell madly in love with her and married her, but within a short time she died. Following Clothilde's death, an event which brought him close to insanity, Comte began to idolize her. The next year, Comte chose the Evolution of Humanity as the new topic for his public discourse; this was an occasion to lay down the premises of what would become the new Religion of Humanity. In 1848 he founded the Positivist Society, and published the General View of Positivism, as well as the Positivist Calendar. In 1849, he founded the Religion of Humanity. Between the years 1851 and 1854 he published the four-volume System of Positive Polity, and the Catechism of Positive Religion. On Sept 5, 1857, worn out from his intellectual labors and personal tragedies Comte died surrounded by his followers. He was buried in the Père-Lachaise cemetery, where his Brazilian followers erected a statue of Humanity in 1983. The inscription on his tombstone reads 'Love as the Principle, Order as the Means, Progress as the Goal'.

2.3 COMTE’S CONCERN AND AIM.

The point of departure for Comte’s thought was the experience of the internal contradictions of the society of his age. The French revolution had fractured the unity that existed in the French Society. So Comte’s main concern throughout his life was resolving the political social and moral problems caused by the French Revolution. He believed that many of the contradictions were because of the transition that was taking place from the theological-military past in its Catholic feudal form towards an inevitable scientific-industrial type of society. So far the scientific mode of thought has not completely triumphed over its main rivals and so there was intellectual anarchy, which in turn produces social anarchy. Comte believed that the only way to put an end to the crisis was to bring together the ‘positive ideas’ of the time that are scientific, free from the bonds of traditional theology and metaphysics. He believed that a system of scientific ideas should govern the new social order which will provide unity and cohesion to modern society just as the system of theological ideas governed the social order of the past. Comte’s ambition was to found a naturalistic science of society capable of explaining the past of humankind and to predict its future by applying the same methods of enquiry which had proved successful in the study of nature, namely observation, experimentation and comparison. Comte coined the term ‘sociology’ to designate the science which would synthesize all positive knowledge, explain the dynamics of society, and guide the formation of the positivist society.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit

1) What is the meaning of positivism?

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2) What are the important works of Auguste Comte?

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3) What was the main concern and goal of Comte's thinking?

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2.4 PHILOSOPHY OF COMTE

According to Comte in order to understand the true value and character of the positive philosophy, we must take a general view of the progress that human history has made so far. This development has followed a definite pattern and a fundamental law. The law is that each branch of knowledge progresses successively through three different theoretical conditions: the theological, or fictitious; the metaphysical or abstract; and the scientific or positive. These three methods of philosophizing, that is making reality comprehensible are incompatible¹. The necessary starting-point of the development of human understanding is the theological stage. It searches for first and final causes and absolute knowledge. Phenomena are explained by reference to the acts of supernatural agencies. The highest point of development of the theological stage is reached when all phenomena are conceived as the effect of a single deity. Comte divides the theological stage into three: (a) Animism- in which everyday objects were turned into items of religious purpose and worship, with godlike qualities. (b). Polytheism - Explanation of things through the use of many gods. (c). Monotheism - Attributing all to a single, supreme deity. This period started with the beginning of human history and was dominated by priests and the

military and the dominant social unit was the family. In the metaphysical stage the supernatural beings are replaced by abstract forces and underlying entities to which all phenomena are referred. The highest form of development of this stage was when all phenomena were referred to one single entity: Nature. It is a speculative doctrine on the 'essences' and 'causes' of phenomena. The middle ages were predominantly metaphysical; the basic social unit was the state and was dominated by churchmen and lawyers. At the third stage, the positive stage, the human mind recognizes the impossibility of acquiring absolute knowledge concerning the origin and purpose of the universe, and applies itself to the study of the laws of the invariable relations of succession and resemblance of phenomena. This science takes reasoning and observation as the means of knowledge. What is now meant by an explanation of facts is simply the establishment of a connection. This is the modern industrial society and the social unit is the whole of humanity and should be guided by industrial administrators and scientists.

2.5 THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SCIENCES

In The Positive Philosophy Comte examines the different sciences and their logical relations to one another. His position is that the most general and inclusive sciences were required first, as the logically necessary preparation for the more particular ones. Mathematics, as the abstract or fundamental study of the forms of existence common to all things, is presupposed for the successful study of astronomy and physics, and physics is needed for the development of chemistry. Biology, in like manner, depends upon chemistry for its emergence as a lawful science. Biology, though logically depending upon chemistry, has laws of its own because living beings behave very differently from nonliving chemical entities. In the same way, human society is far less general than the biological realm as a whole, though society clearly presupposes and depends on the biological laws. Thus Comte rejected methodological reductionism of higher sciences to the lower, despite the fact that the former presuppose the latter. This means that despite the complete grounding of sociology in biology, the laws of human society will

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inevitably have their own autonomy. The positive scientific study of society is what he calls "sociology," which he believed would be the "final science." Each higher level science adds to the knowledge content of the science or sciences on the levels below, thus enriching this content by successive specialization. This ordering provides first of all for the unity of the sciences, as successive branches from a common stem, and secondly for the recognition of the historical emergence of the distinctive methods of different empirical subjects. According to Comte's classification of the sciences sociology had to wait for the maturing of all prior disciplines to emerge as an independent science. The crowning science, the most complex and consequently the last to emerge as an empirical domain of invariant lawfulness, is sociology. Sociology and positive philosophy finally will provide the much needed reorganization of politics, ethics, and religion. Comte, because of the classification of sciences he makes, could also be considered the founder of philosophy of science in the modern sense. Comte's philosophy of science is based on a systematic difference between method and doctrine. Method is superior to doctrine: scientific doctrines change but the value of science lies in its methods. The positive method of different 5 sciences depends on the nature of the sciences to which it is applied: in astronomy it is observation, in physics experimentation, in biology comparison. Finally, his classification also holds the key to a theory of technology. According to Comte there is a systematic connection between complexity and modifiability: the more complex a phenomenon is, the more modifiable it is. The order of nature is a modifiable order. Human action takes place within the limits fixed by nature and consists in replacing the natural order by an artificial one. Comte's education as an engineer had made him quite aware of the links between science and its applications, which he summarized in an oft-quoted slogan: 'From science comes prevision, from prevision comes action'. "There will be few students of the social sciences now who have even read Comte or know much about him. But the number of those who have absorbed most of the important elements of his system through the intermediation of a few very influential representatives of his tradition is very high indeed.

2.6 SOCIOLOGY OF COMTE

The goal of Comte's intellectual endeavor was to develop a science of society that could explain the past, organize the present and predict the future. Initially, he called this new science social physics, and later, 'sociology.' Comte stressed the necessity of separating facts from values during the course of scientific inquiry and dreamed about the ideal society ruled by scientists with decisions made on the basis of scientific evidence. Comte wanted his new science, sociology, not only be of academic interest, but also something that should benefit society and contribute to the improvement of the quality of life. Comte saw unity of humanity as the fundamental necessity of the time. And the first condition for this unity is the subordination of the intellect to the heart. The desired and required unity requires an objective basis, existing independently in the external world. This basis consists according to him is in the laws or order of the phenomena by which humanity is regulated. As soon as the human intellect is capable of grasping these laws, it becomes possible for the feeling of love to exercise a controlling influence over our discordant tendencies. The order existing in the external world is objective in that it is not an order we can choose; it exists independently of ourselves. In short, realizing the existence of this order as a pre-condition is what enables us to overcome our "discordant tendencies". A purely subjective unity, without any objective basis, would be simply impossible. Self-love is deeply implanted in our nature, and when left to itself is far stronger than feeling for fellow human beings. The social instincts can gain mastery over selfishness only by the factors that exist independently of us in the external world. They exert an influence which at the same time checks the power of the selfish instincts. Comte wanted sociology to be the integrating science of all other sciences that deal with the external nature of human life in society. The possibility of moral unity of individuals and society depends upon the necessity of recognizing our subjection to an external power which can discipline our instincts. The recognition of an external power that limits our possibilities is what makes a society possible. Absolute freedom is anarchy, and it is unworkable. The true path of human progress lies in diminishing the vacillation, inconsistency, and

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discordance of our designs by furnishing external motives for our intellectual, moral and practical powers. An important function of philosophy is to criticize nature in a positive spirit which would help in our struggle to become more perfect.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit

1) Describe Comte's law of three stages

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2) Describe the salient features of Comte's classification of sciences.

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3) Explain the important aspects of Comte's sociology

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2.7 RELIGION OF HUMANITY

At the heart of Auguste Comte's program for resolving the 'crisis' of industrial society was a project for 'positivising' religion by instituting a religion of humanity. There was an urgent need for a fundamental consensus in the post revolutionary industrial society for a new form of

spiritual power with a new ideal as an object of devotion to bind the society together. In other words there was a need for a new religion. Comte believed that the positive religion would provide the scientific-humanist equivalent to the systematic theology of the Middle Ages and could serve as the intellectually unifying basis of the new industrial order. During what he termed as his second career Comte the historian and philosopher of positivism became the high priest of the 'Religion of Humanity'. His passionate love for Clothilde de Vaux and her death had profound influence on his life and gave an insight into the true source of happiness and changed his whole conception of life. The change in his personal life manifested in his desire to transform his philosophy into a new religion. The function of religion is to gather up and organize human life. So it must deal equally with all parts of human nature; namely, thought activity and feeling. Thus religion requires first of all a scheme or synthesis as a basis of belief, i.e. a creed, secondly a set of institutions and principles to discipline and guide one's action, a code of conduct; and thirdly a set of habits to cultivate the emotions and educate the heart, a cult. A creed is a set of beliefs dealing with the meaning, purpose and destiny of human life. The code of conduct obligates the believers to behave in a certain manner because of what they believe. There must be an object of devotion and duty capable of being invoked and worshiped, which can bring forth in the believer feelings of security and providence. The human race itself, real and ideal at the same time, including the past, present and future was Comte's object of worship and devotion. This grand existence, "Grand Etre" as he termed it is capable of invoking devotion. Now if the object of one's worship is humanity itself, Comte believes that this ideal can impel the believer to love and sacrifice for the sake of humanity. Humanity as the great ideal and object of worship needs our help unlike the ideal beings/Being of traditional religions which are omnipotent and thus does not need human beings. We in the present live in close proximity with the great minds of the dead who served humanity and in the company of the great human beings to come whom we shall never meet. When we honor those who have served humankind in extraordinary ways in the past, we realize that we too are working for the same ideals for which they devoted and gave their lives.

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The grand conception, that the whole of humanity lives in communion with all the great human beings who have died and yet to come, has great ennobling power. Comte regards the Grand Etre, Humanity or Mankind as composed solely of those who, in every age and in variety of position have played their part worthily in life. The Grand Etre in its completeness includes not only great human beings but also all sentient beings which have helped and contributed to humanity. For Comte the good of human race is the ultimate standard of right and wrong and moral discipline consists in avoiding all conduct injurious to the general good. In every religion there must be cult, prayer and ritual. Comte advocates 'prayer' as a mere outpouring of feeling; it is not addressed to the Grand Etre or collective humanity. The honor to collective Humanity is reserved for the public celebrations. The objects of private adoration are the mother the wife and the daughter, representing the past, the present and the future and calling to exercise the social sentiments, veneration, attachment, and kindness. The public cult that Comte advocates is meant to honor and glorify Humanity itself; to celebrate the various ties among human beings, and the various stages in the evolution of humankind. He named the months in his calendar after the great benefactors of humanity like Moses, Homer, Aristotle, Archimedes, and Caesar. He also prescribes nine sacraments to mark the different transitions in life like Presentation, initiation, admission, destination, marriage, transformation and incorporation. Death he considers to be a transformation a passage from objective existence on this earth to living in the memory of our fellow humans. The last incorporation into the Grand Etre would come after death following a favorable judgment for those worthy of remembrance. He also envisaged a clergy for the positivist religion who will exercise spiritual power in the positive society. All philosophy and science, all human activity in general should help human beings to live in harmony with the true nature and real conditions of humanity. Hence Religion simply means development on the true lines of the real facts; in other words, Progress on the basis of Order. This is the meaning of Auguste Comte's profound aphorism: "Man grows more and more religious."

Positivism is a philosophical theory stating that certain ("positive") knowledge is based on natural phenomena and their properties and relations. Thus, information derived from sensory experience, interpreted through reason and logic, forms the exclusive source of all certain knowledge. Positivism holds that valid knowledge (certitude or truth) is found only in this a posteriori knowledge.

Verified data (positive facts) received from the senses are known as empirical evidence; thus positivism is based on empiricism.

Positivism also holds that society, like the physical world, operates according to general laws. Introspective and intuitive knowledge is rejected, as are metaphysics and theology because metaphysical and theological claims cannot be verified by sense experience. Although the positivist approach has been a recurrent theme in the history of western thought, the modern approach was formulated by the philosopher Auguste Comte in the early 19th century. Comte argued that, much as the physical world operates according to gravity and other absolute laws, so does society, and further developed positivism into a Religion of Humanity.

Check Your Progress 3

- Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer
- b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit

1) What is the meaning and function of religion according to Comte?

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2) Describe the salient features of Comte’s religion of Humanity.

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2.8 LATER DEVELOPMENTS OF POSITIVISM

Historically speaking Comte's philosophy failed to reform society the way he envisaged because it was too idealistic, and his dream of merging science, morality and government was unrealistic. However positivist ideas continued to influence thinking. The later development of positivism in France is best exemplified in the sociology of Emile Durkheim. Durkheim which extended scientific rationalism to human conduct and proposed a set of methodological principles encapsulated by the famous injunction to 'treat social facts as things'; reject common preconceptions in favor of objective definitions, explain a social fact by another social fact only another social fact, distinguish efficient cause from function and normal from pathological social states, etc. John Stuart Mill, the 19th-century English philosopher could be considered as one of the outstanding Positivists of his century. In his System of Logic he developed a thoroughly empiricist theory of knowledge and of scientific reasoning. British philosopher and sociologist Herbert Spencer is considered the systematizer of Positivism according to the principles of evolution.

LOGICAL POSITIVISM

Positivism later made its reappearance under the title 'logical positivism', which arose during the 1920's mainly in the universities of Vienna in Austria in a group called the Vienna Circle. The Vienna Circle consisted of philosophers, mathematicians and scientists like Mortiz Schlick, Ernst Mach, Rudolf Carnap, Carl Hempel and Otto Neurah. The Logical positivists and Logical Empiricists tried a synthesis of Humean empiricism, Comtean positivism and logical analysis in an effort to get rid of metaphysics for ever. The logical positivists wanted to unify all

science under a framework of physical laws and scientific method for analyzing the world and gaining knowledge. They incorporated David Hume’s argument that there are only two types of meaningful propositions which are either about “relations of ideas” or "matters of fact". This along with Ludwig Wittgenstein’s claim in Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus that a proposition is a picture of reality gave rise to the verifiability principle. According to Positivists the verifiability test would determine whether statements were meaningful or not by judging whether they were factual. 9 The dominance of positivism met with oppositions of two kinds, antipositivist and postpositivist. Antipositivists argue that the natural and the human sciences are ontologically and logically incompatible and so the very idea of an explanatory science of society is impossible. Proponents of hermeneutics, interpretative sociology, postmodernism, deconstruction and Feminism maintain that human practices, institutions and belief are inherently meaningful, meanings constituted by the understandings that participants have of them so causal accounts social behavior cannot be constructed. The task of human studies therefore cannot be to specify universal laws of human behavior but to make the behavior intelligible by interpreting in relation to subjective intentions.

Check Your Progress 4

- Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit

1) What were the drawbacks of Comte’s sociological project?

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2) Explain the later development of Positivism.

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2.9 LET US SUM UP

Today there are not many proponents of the positivism of Comte or who share in his belief that society can be improved through positive science or that all sciences can be unified under the umbrella of what he called sociology. However the methodology of positivism, its reliance on facts and the attempt to explain the how rather than the why are still the guiding principles of contemporary science. In spite of the drawbacks his ideal of the wellbeing of humanity and commitment to altruism is worth preserving today when people seem to be forgetting human solidarity because of sectarian manipulations and private agenda. According to Isaiah Berlin Comte is worthy of commemoration and praise because of the fact that ...he has done his work too well. For Comte's views have affected the categories of our thought more deeply than is commonly supposed. Our view of the natural sciences, of the material basis of cultural evolution, of all that we call progressive, rational, enlightened, Western; our view of the relationship of intuitions and of public symbolism and ceremonial to the emotional life of the individual and societies are consequently our views of history itself, owes a good deal to his teaching and his influence.

2.10 KEY WORDS

Deconstruction is an approach which rigorously pursues the meaning of a text to the point of undoing the oppositions on which it is apparently founded, and to the point of showing that those foundations are irreducibly complex, unstable or impossible. The term was introduced by French philosopher Jacques Derrida.

Feminism: Feminism describes a political, cultural or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women.

2.11 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- 1) What is the meaning and function of religion according to Comte?
- 2) Describe the salient features of Comte's religion of Humanity.
- 3) What were the drawbacks of Comte's sociological project?
- 4) Explain the later development of Positivism.

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2.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answers to Check Your Progress 1

1. Positivism means the doctrine and movement founded in the nineteenth century by the French philosopher Auguste Comte and also the general philosophical view of knowledge proposed by Francis Bacon, John Locke, Isaac Newton and other empirical philosophers which assert that genuine knowledge should be based on observation and advanced by experiment.

2. The Positive Philosophy (6 vols.) The System of Positive Polity (4 vols.) The Catechism of Positive Religion

3. Comte's main concern throughout his life was resolving the political social and moral problems caused by the French Revolution. He believed that many of the contradictions were because of the transition from the theological-military past in its Catholic feudal form towards an inevitable scientific-industrial type of society. Comte believed that the only way to put an end to the crisis was to bring together the 'positive ideas' of the time that are scientific, free from the bonds of traditional theology and metaphysics.

Answers to Check Your Progress 2

The key to understanding Comte's ideas is the law of the three stages.

1. The theological stage. The necessary starting-point of the development of human understanding is the theological stage. During this stage phenomena are explained by reference to the acts of supernatural agencies.

2. The metaphysical stage. In the metaphysical stage the supernatural beings are replaced by abstract forces and underlying entities to which all phenomena are referred.

3. The Positive stage. At the third stage the human mind recognizes the impossibility of acquiring absolute knowledge concerning the origin and purpose of the universe, and applies itself to the study of the laws of the invariable relations of succession and resemblance of phenomena. This science takes reasoning and observation as the means of knowledge.

Answers to Check Your Progress 3

1. In his Positive Philosophy, Comte examines the different sciences and their logical relations to one another. His position is that the most general and inclusive sciences were required first, as the logically necessary preparation for the more particular ones. Mathematics, as the abstract or fundamental study of the forms of existence common to all things, is presupposed for the successful study of astronomy and physics, and physics is needed for the development of chemistry. Biology, in like manner, depends upon chemistry for its emergence as a lawful science. The positive scientific study of society is what he calls "sociology," which he believed would be the "final science."

2. The goal of Comte's intellectual endeavor was to develop a science of society that could explain the past and predict the future. Initially, he called this new science social physics, and, later, 'sociology.' Comte stressed the necessity of separating facts and values during the course of scientific inquiry and dreamed about the ideal society ruled by scientists who would make decisions on the basis of scientific evidence. Comte wanted his new science, sociology, not only be of academic interest, but also something that should benefit society and contribute to the improvement of the quality of life. Comte wanted sociology to be the integrating science of all other sciences that deal with the external nature of human life in society. Following the law of the three stages and his classification of sciences Sociology was the last science to emerge. This crowning science is the most complex and the last to emerge. This will usher in an era of social, political and moral regeneration.

Answers to Check Your Progress 4

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1. The function of religion is to gather up and organize human life. So it must deal equally with all parts of human nature; namely, thought activity and feeling. Thus religion requires first of all a scheme or synthesis as a basis of belief, i.e. a creed, secondly a set of institutions and principles to discipline and guide one's action, a code of conduct; and thirdly a set of habits to cultivate the emotions and educate the heart, a cult. A creed is a set of beliefs dealing with the meaning, purpose and destiny of human life. The code of conduct obligates the believers to behave in a certain manner because of what they believe. There must be an object of devotion capable of being invoked and worshiped, which can bring forth in the believer feelings of security and providence.

2. For Comte the human race, real and ideal at the same time, including the past, present and future is the object of worship and devotion. This grand existence, "Grand Etre" as he termed it is capable of invoking devotion. The Grand Etre in its completeness includes not only great human beings but also all sentient beings which have helped and contributed to humanity. To honor collective Humanity he advocated public celebrations. The objects of private adoration are the mother, the wife and the daughter, calling into active exercise the three social sentiments, veneration, attachment, and kindness. He also prescribes nine sacraments to mark the different transitions in life and also envisaged a priesthood consisting of scientists and scholars.

UNIT 3: POSITIVISM AND ITS CRITIQUE

STRUCTURE

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Heroic Science and Origin of Positivism
- 3.3 Early Positivism
- 3.4 Consolidation of Positivism
- 3.5 Hermeneutics
- 3.6 Critiques of Positivism
- 3.7 Let us sum up
- 3.8 Key Words
- 3.9 Questions for Review
- 3.10 Suggested readings and references
- 3.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit we can able to know:

- To discuss Positivism and its influence on sociology;
- To describe the contributions of Comte and Emile Durkhiem;
- To elaborate on Critiques of positivism; and
- To trace the emergence of reflexive sociology.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

You have already become familiar in Unit 6 with an overview of the philosophy of social science. At this juncture, it would be a good idea for you to focus and concentrate on specific issues and modes of enquiry. In Unit 3 we are going to discuss positivism, a method of enquiry that sought to give immense cognitive prestige to the discipline, and wanted to convince its adherents that sociology too could be a science and follow the scientific methodological principles of empirical observation,

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deductive reasoning, and formulation of laws or universal generalizations (see Box 3.1 for salient features of positivism). As a matter of fact, this self-perception of sociology as a science sought to serve the following three purposes:

- It separated sociology as an empirical science from humanities and philosophy.
- It gave a professional identity to the sociologist who ought to overcome the limiting identities emanating from caste, class and gender, and think in a more objective/ rational/ universal fashion.
- The knowledge it would acquire would help us to reconstruct our society, and create a better world. Section 3.3 traces the origin of positivism and Sections 3.4 and 3.5 discuss the early developments in positivism and its consolidation. Though positivism became a powerful sociological method, it had its critics. In Section 3.6 we show that positivism has now lost much of its appeal.

Box 3.1 Salient Features of Positivism The salient features of positivism can be characterized as follows:

- It believes in the unity of method. Sociology is not different from the natural sciences as far as the method of enquiry is concerned.
- It celebrates objectivity and value neutrality. It, therefore, separates the knower from the known, subjectivity from objectivity, and fact from value.
- Sociology is not commonsense. It rests on explanatory principles, which give a universal character to the discipline.
- Sociology is a formal and organized body of knowledge, characterized by specialized skills and techno-scientific vocabulary.

- Sociology can strive for abstraction and generalization. Human experiences can be explained through law-like generalizations.
- The scientific knowledge of society can be used for social engineering.

3.2 HEROIC SCIENCE AND ORIGIN OF POSITIVISM

Herein lies an important question. Why did positivism grow at a certain juncture of history, and establish itself as the leading voice in the discipline? You already know how modern science was evolving, arousing immense optimism, and becoming hegemonic. The scientific thinking emanating from Bacon, Descartes and Newton, and scientific inventions and discoveries were altering the cultural/intellectual landscape of Europe. And eventually, the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century (see Box3.2), as you have already learnt, was a turning point. It meant celebrating a new age of reason, objectivity and criticality. It was like coming out of the medieval order, religious influences, and asserting that scientific thinking would enable us to create a better world. It was difficult to escape the influence of the age. It was difficult not to be influenced by the spectacular success story of science. Science became knowledge itself: real, objective and foundational! And to survive in such a milieu was to accept science and its ascending power.

Box 3.2 Triumphs of Natural Sciences in the Eighteenth Century The Enlightenment witnessed a period of spectacular triumphs in the natural sciences. Beginning with Isaac Newton (1642-1323) and Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), 4 natural sciences began a conquest of the natural world, which was a staggering success. This success did not go unnoticed in the social sciences. Rather, as many commentators have noted, the social sciences were born in the shadow of these triumphs. Furthermore, the methodological lessons that the natural sciences were teaching seemed to

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be very clear: if the methods of the natural science are strictly adhered to, then the spectacular success of these sciences could be matched in the social sciences. The social sciences had only to await the arrival of their Newton (Hekman1986: 5)

Details in Box 3.2 possibly explain the origin of positivism. The assumption was that the identity of sociology as “true knowledge” could not be established without adopting the method of the natural sciences. There was yet another important factor. The new age characterized by the Industrial Revolution, expanding trade and commerce, and emergent bourgeoisie altered power relations in the West. It was the time that witnessed the assertion of the new elite: technologists, scientists and capitalists. They saw immense possibilities in science, and were strong adherents of a positivistic/ scientific culture and mode of enquiry. Yes, there were dissenting voices, say, the voices emanating from romanticism that critiqued the worship of science and reason, and pleaded for imagination, subjectivity and creativity (as pointed out by Gouldner 1930). But then, the language of science was irresistible. The politico-economic establishment was sustaining it. Science was going to stay, and positivism was its inevitable consequence. The entire phenomenon can be understood better if you reflect on the self-perception of science. For instance, it is argued that science is a radical departure from common sense (Nagel 1961: 1-14). Well, common sense may not necessarily be false. But common sense, unlike science, is seldom accompanied by a search for systematic explanations---the explanations derived from solid factual evidence. For instance, before the advent of modern science people knew the function of the wheel. But it was only modern science that provided us with an explanatory principle like the frictional force to make sense of the operation of wheels.

Likewise, the principles formulated by Newton could explain innumerable facts: the behaviour of the tides, the paths of projectiles, and the moon’s motion. It is also argued that, unlike the indeterminacy of common sense, the language of science is more specific, focused and pointed. It abhors all sorts of vagueness. Even though the poets may

speak of infinite stars, it would be argued, astronomers are interested in calculating and measuring their exact number. Furthermore, science, unlike common sense, is a distant, detached and abstract exercise. Whereas common sense has an intimate relationship with our everyday world, science is essentially neutral. You may enjoy the colour of the sunset: but then, the electromagnetic theory, which provides a systematic account of optical phenomena, retains its remoteness and abstraction. In fact, science deliberately neglects the immediate values of things. That is why it is argued that science is primarily critical in spirit. Whereas common sense tends to take things for granted, science problematizes even our most cherished beliefs. This does not mean that common sense is necessarily false and science is true. What distinguishes science is its critical spirit, its insistence on empirical evidence. Here we quote the words of Nagel (1931: 13). The difference between the cognitive claims of science and common sense, which stems from the fact that the former are the products of the scientific method, does not connote that the former are invariably true. It does follow that while common sense beliefs are usually accepted without a critical evaluation of the evidence available, the evidence for the conclusions of science conforms to standards such that a significant proportion of conclusions supported by similar structured evidence remains in good agreement with additional factual data when fresh data are obtained. Many were articulating this supremacy of science as a more reliable, objective and critical knowledge. For instance in Box 3.3 we bring to you Merton's (1932) four institutional imperatives of science.

Box 3.3 Merton's Four Institutional Imperatives of Science

- Science is universal. The validity of a scientific statement does not depend on any particularistic criterion. It is against all sorts of ethnocentrism. It is valid for all.
- Science implies the communism of knowledge: Scientist, it is argued, want nothing more than esteem and recognition. Scientist's findings and discoveries, far from remaining a private property, become a collective

heritage. It is this shared culture that enables science to evolve, grow and progress dramatically.

- Science demands disinterestedness: a process of rigorous scrutinization and examination of one's findings without any bias.
- Science is organized skepticism that distinguishes it. Everything for science is an object of critical enquiry. There is nothing sacred or profane. Science investigates, examines and problematizes everything. That is the success story of science.

In the self-perception of science as given in Box 3.3, you see a positive story: a positive affirmation of the virtues of science, its ability to construct objective, empirical, critical and universal knowledge, which is free from personal/political bias and prejudice. In a way, it is a heroic notion of science. Positivism was also an affirmation of this positive/heroic science. It was positive because it meant certainties of science. And it also meant a positive attitude towards life: using science for improving our lot.

3.3 EARLY POSITIVISM

Positivism, as you can gather, emerged out of a situation in which there was tremendous optimism centred on the cognitive power of science. As mentioned in Unit 6, you also know that modern sociology evolved at a specific juncture of European history when the entire social landscape altered because of the scientific revolution, the Enlightenment and the French revolution. It was indeed a new age, and sociology as a formal-academic discipline was trying to make sense of it. In fact, the roots of early positivism could be found in the first half of the nineteenth century in France. Imagine the state of post-revolutionary France. There was a significant change in the domain of knowledge. The separation of science and philosophy became inevitable; new scientific journals started appearing, and a close link between science and industry was established. It was felt that there was a single scientific method applicable to all fields of study. Possibly Saint Simon (1360-1825), one of the early

sociologists, articulated this aspiration rather sharply. A scientist, he felt, is one who predicts, and it is this power of prediction that gives him the power. He, therefore, pleaded strongly for extending the scientific outlook from the physical sciences to the study of human beings. It was an urge to create some kind of a social physics so that sociology could accomplish its historical mission: completing the unfinished agenda of the Industrial Revolution. Indeed, this close affinity with science gave birth to positivism. Auguste Comte (1788- 1859), the founder of modern sociology, established positivism, as the most cherished doctrine of sociology.

Yet, like Saint Simon, Comte too was witnessing the revolutionary transformation. In a way, he saw the contradiction between the two social forces: theological/ military and scientific/ industrial. Like a visionary, he felt that this contradiction could be resolved only by the triumph of the scientific/industrial society. Scientists, as he saw all around, were replacing theologians as the moral guardians of the new social order, and industrialists were replacing the warriors. Not solely that. Comte too shared the Enlightenment assertion that it was possible for science to grasp the workings of the world. He believed that positivist or scientific knowledge was the inevitable outcome of the progressive growth of the individual mind as well as the historical development of human knowledge. From 1831 to 1823 Comte and Saint Simon collaborated so closely that it was almost impossible to distinguish the contributions of the two. It was at this juncture that they spoke of social physics, and the need to discover natural and immutable laws of progress which are as necessary as the law of gravity. But then they separated, and eventually Comte emerged as an independent scholar. It was during 1830-1892 that he published six volumes of *Course of Positive Philosophy*. And finally, during 1851-1854, he published four volumes of *System of Positive Politics*. What made Comte immortal in the discipline was his celebrated 'law of three stages'

First, he spoke of the theological stage: a stage in which the mind explains phenomena or mundane occurrences by ascribing them to the

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unfathomable gods. The fact is that without some guide one cannot begin to make systematic observations. And sciences in their infancy could not escape the questions relating to the essences of phenomena and their ultimate origins to which theological answers are most appropriate. Second, he spoke of the metaphysical stage in which abstract forces, powers and essences, rather than spiritual forces, are considered responsible for worldly affairs. And finally, as Comte argued, there was a positive or scientific stage in which we abandon the search for ultimate origins, purposes, or abstract forces, and become more concrete and focused: we observe the relations between phenomena, and arrive at laws because the aim of positive philosophies to consider all phenomena as subject to invariable natural laws (see the example in Box 3.4).

Box 3.4 An Example to Understand the Deeper Meaning of Comte's Law of Three Stages Let us take a simple illustration to comprehend the deeper meaning of these three stages of knowledge. Imagine fire as a phenomenon. It is possible to explain it, as the Vedic hymns suggest, as a manifestation of a powerful deity called Agni. Now Comte would have argued that explaining fire as a manifestation of Agni is a theological explanation. But suppose one goes beyond these Vedic rituals, and enters a higher stage of contemplative/abstract thought, and sees fire as something symbolizing human beings, quest for truth and purity: burning all egotistic passions and impulses. Yes, Comte would have argued that it is a metaphysical explanation. But then, if you argue that fire is just a physico-chemical phenomenon that can be explained in the form of a natural law, Comte would have argued that you have finally arrived at the positive stage. In other words, positivist knowledge is empirical and universal; something that is concrete and demonstrable. Here is a piece of knowledge without a metaphysical/ theological significance. It demystifies the world. So when you see the rains, you need not explain it as Indra's blessing; nor do you see it as a manifestation of man's poetry to overcome the dryness of his being. Instead, the rains you see, in this positivist stage, can be explained in terms of the scientific principles of heat, cloud formation and water cycle!

Not all branches of knowledge, argued Comte, reach the positive stage simultaneously. The „lower“ sciences, like astronomy, mechanics, chemistry and biology, develop fast. These are lower sciences because these are less complex, less dependent on the other sciences, and their distance from human affairs is far greater. But sociology, being more complex, and more near to everyday life, reaches the positive stage quite late. Comte was, however, hopeful that even for sociology the time had finally arrived. It could now project itself as a positive science, analyze social phenomena, and discover the laws governing the relations among them. Sociology, for him, is the queen of the sciences because without the guidance of its laws, the discoveries of the lower sciences could not be utilized to their maximum advantage for humanity. There are two kinds of sciences, namely, analytic and synthetic. Physics and chemistry can be said to be analytic because they establish laws among isolated phenomena. Biology is synthetic because it is impossible to explain an organ apart from the living creature as a whole. Likewise, according to Comte, sociology is synthetic because everything, be it religion or state, has to be studied in the context of the entire society. It is not difficult to draw the implications of positivism. There is no free will in mathematics and physics. Likewise, as Comte thought, there is no free will in sociology. Sociology, Comte believed, could determine what is, what will be, and what should be. In other words, social phenomena are subject to strict determinism. Let us understand what it means. Even a child learning elementary mathematics would tell you that $2+2=4$. If you and I want it to be different, it cannot be altered. In other words, $2+2=4$ is an iron law, say, like the law of gravitation. It prevails irrespective of our subjective states of mind. That is precisely the kind of knowledge positivism is striving for. Suppose as a Marxist you put forward a sociological law that socialism is inevitable because that is the way history progresses. You are arguing like a positivist, and equating Marxism with an invariable natural law like the law of gravitation that exists, no matter what kind of life projects you and I have, and what kind of thoughts we cherish. Yes, Comte was a great proponent of science. He believed in the essential Enlightenment notion of progress and in the arrival of the new age of scientific objectivity. Yet, let us not forget that

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Comte was also a great moralist. He was deeply concerned about social order and its moral foundation. In fact, he sought to use positivist sociology to reconstruct his society. No wonder, positivist sociology, for him, would act like a religion, of course a secular religion for humankind. This led Nisbet(1963:58) to comment that „positive sociology for Comte is simply medievalism minus Christianity“. Look at the state of the French society Comte was confronting. True, the revolution was a turning point. But then, it also led to new problems, which, as he felt, were quite disturbing. For instance, he could not give his consent to the prevalent „anarchy“ leading to exaggerated individualism. It was, for him, a disease of modern civilization. Nor did he give his consent to those who pleaded for divorce rights. His anxiety was that it would lead to the breakdown of the centrality of the family; it would also weaken the community. This moral crisis, or the crisis of order, was something that must be resolved. And it was his conviction that the new positivist sociological knowledge could fulfill the void, and serve the therapeutic function of religion. No wonder, he was equally concerned about social static or restoration of order. In fact, if you think deeply, you would realize that Comte’s positivism conveyed the interesting message that science, despite the progressive role it played, was also an integral component of the Establishment, „an ideology of order“.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Discuss the Heroic Science and Origin of Positivism.

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2. Discuss the Early Positivism.

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3.4 CONSOLIDATION OF POSITIVISM

Auguste Comte provided the intellectual foundation of positivist sociology. And possibly it was this French tradition that gave birth to one of the most distinguished classical sociologists, Emile Durkheim (1858-1913). Durkheim consolidated and elaborated positivist sociology. In a way, the Rules of Sociological Method that he published in 1895 gave a new momentum to the discipline. The subject matter of sociology, he repeatedly emphasized, is the domain of social facts that cannot be comprehended by any other discipline. It is, therefore, important to know how he defined social facts. You can understand it better through an example from your everyday life. Imagine one fine morning you choose to walk barefoot. Nobody has compelled you to do so; it is your free choice, your own decision. But then, imagine one evening you decide to visit a temple, and offer your prayers. Before entering the temple you remove your shoes, wash your 13 hands, and walk barefoot. Do you see a qualitative difference in these two experiences? Yes, there is a significant difference. In the second case you are not really free. Well, you may argue that it is you who have chosen to walk barefoot inside the temple complex. But that is because you have internalized the prevalent practice so well that it looks almost natural and spontaneous. Imagine what would have happened had you tried to enter the temple without removing your shoes. You would have experienced severe constraint and resistance. From the temple authorities to the other devotees: all would object to your act and regard it as an insult to the sacred space. In other words, walking barefoot inside the temple is a fact that exists out there as a thing. It has an independent force that transcends your own will. If you disobey the practice, you would be forced, coerced, isolated or ridiculed.

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Such facts, according to Durkheim, are called social facts. Everybody eats, drinks and sleeps. But not all such facts can be called social. Then, there would be no difference between biological/physiological facts and social facts. In fact, there are some distinctive features of social facts. First, social facts exist outside you. Imagine a tree that you are seeing from your window. It has a reality of its own. Even if you close your eyes and refuse to see it, the tree exists as it is. Likewise, Durkheim (1964: 1) explained that: When I fulfill my obligations as brother, husband, or citizen, when I execute my contracts, I perform duties which are defined, externally to myself, and my acts, in law and in custom. Even if they conform to my sentiments and I feel their reality subjectively, such reality is still objective, for I did not create them; I merely inherited through my education. 14 These facts are indeed different. The currency you use in your economic exchange, the language you speak in the process of communication, the rituals you celebrate as a member of a religious community, all these are social facts. Their existence does not depend on your or my will. As Durkheim (1964: 2) put it, „here are ways of acting, thinking, and feeling that present the noteworthy property of existing outside the individual consciousness“. Second, social facts are endowed with coercive power. True, in our everyday life we do not experience this constraint. The reason is that, because of habit, socialization and internalization, we tend to experience social facts as natural and spontaneous. But then, as Durkheim (1964: 2-3) reminded, if I do not submit to the conventions of my society, if in my dress do not conform to the customs observed in my country and in my class, the ridicule provoke, the social isolation in which I am kept, produce, although in an attenuated form, the same effects as a punishment in the strict sense of the word“. Third, social facts as things need to be distinguished from their individual manifestations. In fact, Durkheim held that social facts acquire a body, a tangible form, and constitute a reality in their own right, quite distinct from the individual facts which produce it“. For example, codified legal and moral rules, or articles of faith wherein religious groups condense their beliefs; none of these can be found entirely reproduced in the applications made of them by individuals. Yet, sociologically it is important to categorize their

tangible, crystallized aspects as social facts, not their individual manifestations. The meaning of „social“ in social facts is, therefore, clear. As Durkheim (1964: 3) stated, „their source is not in the individual, their substratum can be no other than society, either the political society as a whole or someone of the partial groups it includes, such as religious denominations, political, literary, and occupational associations“. To sum up, you can borrow Durkheim's (1964: 13) own words, and conclude:

A social fact is every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint; or again, every way of acting which is general throughout a given society, while at the same time existing in its own right independent of its individual manifestations. You can understand Durkheim's scientific sociology better if you look at the „rules“ he prescribed for studying social facts. One such rule which has often been talked about is that it is absolutely necessary to observe social facts as things. What does it mean? A thing is a thing because its facticity cannot be altered even if you and want it. It is in this sense that external objects like a tree, a table and a chair exist as things. If you wish to observe a thing as it is, you should not confuse it with your own ideas and sentiments. A tree needs to be seen as a tree, even if you hate trees. In other words, almost like Francis Bacon, Durkheim would argue that our ideas and sentiments or „idols“ should not prevent us from seeing a thing as it is. A sociologist must follow this fundamental lesson of scientific objectivity. Take, for instance, marriage as a social fact. As an individual, you may not like the institution of marriage. But when as a sociologist you plan to study marriage as a social fact, retain your objectivity, separate your own likes and dislikes from facts, and see it as a thing codified in marriage laws, religious traditions and social customs. In other words, it is like separating the knower from the known facts from values. It is similar to the way a physicist studies the behaviour of atoms, or a geologist studies the formation of mountains. Durkheim (1964: 30) elaborated further. Social facts.... qualify as things. Law is embodied in codes; the currents of daily life are recorded in statistical figures and historical monuments; fashions are preserved in costumes;

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and taste in works of art. By their very nature they tend towards an independent existence outside the individual consciousness, which they dominate. In order to disclose their character as things, it is unnecessary to manipulate them ingeniously. Likewise, Durkheim recalled Rene Descartes, and reminded us of the need for overcoming all presuppositions. For Durkheim (1964: 32) it is like overcoming „inferior“ faculties like emotions, sentiments and feelings. Only then is it possible for the sociologist to emancipate himself from the fallacious ideas that dominate the mind of the layman. No wonder, Durkheim (1964: 35) pleaded strongly for a scientific vocabulary in the discipline. Sociologists must avoid the indeterminacy of common sense language, and be clear about the specificity of the concept they use. The subject matter of every sociological study should comprise a group of phenomena defined in advance by certain common external characteristics, and all phenomena so defined should be included within this group. It is equally important to avoid all sorts of vagueness while studying/observing an object. The physicist substitutes for the vague impressions of temperature and electricity by the visual representations of the thermometer and the electrometer. Likewise, when a sociologist studies social facts, s/he should not be carried away by their individual manifestations. Instead, it is important to find their expression in tangible and crystallized forms; for example, in legal codes, moral regulations, popular proverbs, statistical figures and religious conventions. Take an example. Suppose you are studying caste as a social phenomenon. It is possible that Ambedkar and Gandhi might have experienced and responded to caste hierarchy in different ways. But if you are practicing Durkheimian positivist sociology, you need not be carried away by these individual manifestations. Instead, your task is to see caste as a thing, a structure rooted in codified laws, religious sanctions and social customs. An important characteristic of science is its explanatory power. As sociology is scientific, it must explain social facts. For Durkheim, sociological explanations are objective and independent and cannot be reduced into psychological terms. It was in this sense that Durkheim (1964: 102) made an interesting point that „a whole is not identical with the sum of its parts“. It acquires an independent character that is

qualitatively different from those of its component parts. Society is, therefore, not identical with the sum of individuals. It is, of course, true that without individuals there is no society. But society transcends the individual. While explaining social facts, it is important to understand the supremacy of the collective over the individual. Durkheim (1964: 104) clarified that The group thinks, feels, and acts quite differently from the way in which its members would were they isolated. If, then, we begin with the individual, we shall be able to understand nothing of what takes place in the group. In a word, there is between psychology and sociology the same break in continuity as between biology and the physiochemical sciences. Consequently every time that a social phenomenon is directly explained by a psychological phenomenon, we could be sure that the explanation is false. 18 It was in this sense that Durkheim, as his other substantial works suggest, provided sociological explanations for social facts like suicide, division of labour and moral education. In fact, as Durkheim (1964: 110) categorically stated, 'the determining cause of a social fact should be sought among the social facts preceding it and not among the states of individual consciousness'. Likewise, the function of a social fact needs to be seen in its relation to some social end. Take, for instance, punishment as a social fact. For Durkheim, its cause is the intensity of the collective sentiments that the crime offends. Likewise, its function is to maintain these very sentiments at the same degree of intensity. No wonder, for him, when the teacher punishes the child its function is not to cause physical suffering to the concerned child but to restore the sanctity of moral order in the classroom. To explain a social phenomenon, as Durkheim argued, is to find its cause as well as its function. And both cause and function are essentially social, not to be reduced to the individual psyche. The craft of scientific sociology that Durkheim constructed gave a new momentum to the discipline. Sociology, he asserted, must come out of the influence of philosophy, and establish itself as a science. The principle of causality, he believed, can be applied to social phenomena. And sociology, as a result, would be free from ideological analysis; it would be neither individualistic, nor socialistic. Instead, sociology would be an objective study of social facts. This objectivity might reduce the „popularity“ of the discipline. But then,

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as if speaking like a prophet, Durkheim (1964: 146) said, We believe, on the contrary, that the time has come for sociology to spurn popular success, so to speak, and to assume the exacting character befitting every science. It will then gain in dignity and authority what it will perhaps lose in popularity ...Assuredly, the time when it will be able to play this role is still far off. However, we must begin to work now, in order to put it in condition to fill this role some day. Let us not forget that Durkheim, despite his strong plea for scientific sociology, was deeply concerned about the moral foundation of society's stability and order. Possibly modern/ industrial societies, and their implicit differentiation, specialization and division of labour made him confront a new problem. Gone are the days of simple societies characterized by 'mechanical solidarity'. But then, can modern societies survive merely through egotistic individualism and selfish interests? No wonder, he evolved a strong critique of utilitarianism and its celebration of the atomized individual trying to maximize one's pleasure. Instead, Durkheim continued to retain his belief in the moral supremacy of the collective, and he saw that the increasing differentiation in a modern society, paradoxically, would lead to more and more mutual dependence and create „organic solidarity“. It was this consistent search for the basis of moral order that led him to explore the domain of religion and of the sacred, and school and moral education. In a way, in both Auguste Comte and Emile Durkheim you are witnessing an endeavour to reconcile positivist sociology with social order and stability. Positivism, it seems, is both an assertion of science as well as a quest for order and stability. Does it mean that science is yet another form of ideology? (See Unit 1, where a similar question has been answered in the affirmative.) Let us now complete the Reflection and Action 3.1 exercise to check our own understanding of Durkheim's idea of social facts

Reflection and Action 3.1 For Durkheim social facts are external and coercive and social facts should be treated as things to be studied through concrete expression in legal codes religious expressions, proverbs, customs etc. Based on the above notion of social facts, write on a separate sheet of paper your answers to the following questions.

3.5 HERMENEUTICS

The application of the hypothetico-deductive method in the case of meaningful material has been proposed as a plausible way to account for the epistemic activity of text interpretation (Føllesdal 1939; Tepe 2003). Hypothetico-deductivism has been originally debated in connection with the philosophical theory of scientific explanation and it has indeed been the case that the main protagonists, Hempel and Popper (Popper 1959/2003; 1963/1989), have portrayed scientific activity as exclusively an explanatory activity—largely aiming at answering “why?”-questions. This influential and, very often, only implicitly shared view that all scientific activity is explanatory need not be followed, however. Moreover, answers to “what was the case?”-questions rather than only to “why?”-questions can be allowed to enter the field of science, appropriately accommodating the activities of all those whose daily work consists in text interpretation. The application of the hypothetico-deductive method is a way to show that the standards currently used when dealing with problems of explanation—intersubjective intelligibility, testability with the use of evidence, rational argumentation and objectivity—can also apply to problems of interpretation. It will be very briefly shown how this method can be applied in five steps (Mantzavinos 2014).

In order to reconstruct the nexus of meaning which is connected with a specific text, interpretative hypotheses need to be established as a first step. The system of propositions that constitutes these interpretative hypotheses is in principle hypothetical, because it is not certain whether it will accomplish its epistemic aim, i.e., the identification of the meaning of the text. In the construction of such hypotheses, diverse hermeneutic principles can be employed like the already discussed “principle of charity” or “principle of humanity”, as presumptive rules that can break down in the light of experience. These interpretative hypotheses can partly consist of not directly observable “theoretical terms”, which could, for example, refer to the intentions of the author. In such cases one can, in a second step, deduce from such interpretative hypotheses, in conjunction with other statements, consequences which

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could be more observable, that is, consequences that could be (more easily) testable. In a third step, these observable consequences can be tested with the help of evidence primarily provided with the help of research techniques from the social sciences and humanities. The evidence can include what the author claims about his or her own work, his or her other works, details of rhyme, rhythm, frequency of occurrence of words, other linguistic or biographical considerations (Nehamas 1981: 145) and so on. In a fourth step, the different interpretative hypotheses are checked against the evidence. A comparative evaluation is necessary here, in order to distinguish good from bad interpretations. Such an evaluation can take place with respect to different values, so that a reconstruction of a nexus of meaning of a text can be oriented towards diverse ideals. One such ideal can be truth, which can be conceptualized as the accurate depiction of the nexus of meaning, and interpretations are hypotheses precisely by virtue of the fact that one searches for reasons for their truth and falsity. Other values, for example aesthetic ones, can also be deemed important, and the comparative evaluation of the offered interpretations can also take place with respect to such values—for example, beauty. In the fifth step of the application of the hypothetico-deductive method, a multi-dimensional evaluation of the same interpretative hypothesis with respect to different values or of a set of hypotheses with respect to one value is possible. Such evaluations do not take place according to any kind of algorithmic procedures. The employment of specific calculi which can supposedly lead to determinate evaluations and choices is not possible either in textual interpretation or, indeed, in scientific explanation. Human choices involving imagination are at work in this kind of cognitive praxis, choices that are bound to be fallible. It is only the institutionalization of the possibility of criticism that can lead to the correction of errors when these evaluations and choices are involved. Our fallible judgments are all what we have here as elsewhere and enabling a critical discussion is the prerequisite of making informed choices.

It is important to stress that the fifth step of this method has the important consequence of impeding a serious problem which has been exhaustively

elaborated in the theory of confirmation. If contingent evidence E confirms hypothesis H given background beliefs B , then E also confirms the conjunction $H \wedge X$ for any arbitrary X consistent with H . This peculiarity can render the confirmation process extremely permissive and so the whole method useless. A substantial critical discussion conducted by arguments among the various interpreters of a text is therefore a *conditio sine qua non* for the fruitfulness of the hypothetico-deductive method. Scholz (2015) has in fact questioned the productivity of this method precisely on these grounds—he calls this “the relevance problem”—, and has suggested that it be solved by employing an inference to the best explanation (Lipton 2004). According to this alternative, the hypothesis that best explains the evidence should be accepted from among the various hypotheses proposed. However, this alternative move is problematic since it is based on the assumption that it is possible to provide necessary and sufficient conditions of what constitutes an explanation and that there is a universal agreement on what counts as “the best explanation”—both assumptions being in fact untenable (Mantzavinos 2013, 2016).

In conclusion, the hypothetico-deductive method can help establish hermeneutic objectivity, ultimately based on a critical discussion among the participants to the discourse on the appropriateness of different interpretations regarding the fulfillment of the diverse aims of interpretation. Intersubjective intelligibility, testability with the use of evidence, rational argumentation and objectivity are, thus, feasible also in the case of text interpretation. A series of examples from diverse disciplines demonstrate this (Føllesdal 1939; Mantzavinos 2005: ch. 6; Detel 2011: 394ff; Detel 2016).

Historically, positivism has been criticized for its reductionism, i.e., for contending that all "processes are reducible to physiological, physical or chemical events," "social processes are reducible to relationships between and actions of individuals," and that "biological organisms are reducible to physical systems."

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Max Horkheimer criticized the classic formulation of positivism on two grounds. First, he claimed that it falsely represented human social action. The first criticism argued that positivism systematically failed to appreciate the extent to which the so-called social facts it yielded did not exist 'out there', in the objective world, but were themselves a product of socially and historically mediated human consciousness. Positivism ignored the role of the 'observer' in the constitution of social reality and thereby failed to consider the historical and social conditions affecting the representation of social ideas. Positivism falsely represented the object of study by reifying social reality as existing objectively and independently of the labour that actually produced those conditions. Secondly, he argued, representation of social reality produced by positivism was inherently and artificially conservative, helping to support the status quo, rather than challenging it. This character may also explain the popularity of positivism in certain political circles. Horkheimer argued, in contrast, that critical theory possessed a reflexive element lacking in the positivistic traditional theory.

Some scholars today hold the beliefs critiqued in Horkheimer's work, but since the time of his writing critiques of positivism, especially from philosophy of science, have led to the development of postpositivism. This philosophy greatly relaxes the epistemological commitments of logical positivism and no longer claims a separation between the knower and the known. Rather than dismissing the scientific project outright, postpositivists seek to transform and amend it, though the exact extent of their affinity for science varies vastly. For example, some postpositivists accept the critique that observation is always value-laden, but argue that the best values to adopt for sociological observation are those of science: skepticism, rigor, and modesty. Just as some critical theorists see their position as a moral commitment to egalitarian values, these postpositivists see their methods as driven by a moral commitment to these scientific values. Such scholars may see themselves as either positivists or antipositivists.

Positivism has also come under fire on religious and philosophical grounds, whose proponents state that truth begins in sense experience, but does not end there. Positivism fails to prove that there are not abstract ideas, laws, and principles, beyond particular observable facts and relationships and necessary principles, or that we cannot know them. Nor does it prove that material and corporeal things constitute the whole order of existing beings, and that our knowledge is limited to them. According to positivism, our abstract concepts or general ideas are mere collective representations of the experimental order—for example; the idea of "man" is a kind of blended image of all the men observed in our experience. This runs contrary to a Platonic or Christian ideal, where an idea can be abstracted from any concrete determination, and may be applied identically to an indefinite number of objects of the same class. From the idea's perspective, Platonism is more precise. Defining an idea as a sum of collective images is imprecise and more or less confused, and becomes more so as the collection represented increases. An idea defined explicitly always remains clear.

Experientialism, which arose with second generation cognitive science, asserts that knowledge begins and ends with experience itself.

Echoes of the "positivist" and "antipositivist" debate persist today, though this conflict is hard to define. Authors writing in different epistemological perspectives do not phrase their disagreements in the same terms and rarely actually speak directly to each other. To complicate the issues further, few practising scholars explicitly state their epistemological commitments, and their epistemological position thus has to be guessed from other sources such as choice of methodology or theory. However, no perfect correspondence between these categories exists, and many scholars critiqued as "positivists" are actually postpositivists. One scholar has described this debate in terms of the social construction of the "other", with each side defining the other by what it is not rather than what it is, and then proceeding to attribute far greater homogeneity to their opponents than actually exists. Thus, it is better to understand this not as a debate but as two different arguments:

the "antipositivist" articulation of a social meta-theory which includes a philosophical critique of scientism, and "positivist" development of a scientific research methodology for sociology with accompanying critiques of the reliability and validity of work that they see as violating such standards.

3.6 CRITIQUES OF POSITIVISM

Yes, in the French sociological tradition you saw the evolution and consolidation of positivism. But then it reached the other parts of the world and became a powerful sociological method. Positivism had its appeal. It sought to give a 'scientific status' to the discipline. The search for precision, objectivity, causality and value neutrality made it acceptable. This positivist social science found its logical culmination in the cult of numbers, in the mathematization of social phenomena, in the urge to reduce qualitative human experiences into quantified statistical figures. And it has also its remarkable achievements. 21 But then, you can guess that not everyone can feel comfortable with positivism. First, it is possible to say that what is applicable in the domain of nature is not necessarily applicable in the domain of human society. Because, unlike nature, society consists of self-reflexive agents who think, argue, contest, and through their practices and actions transform the world. Hence society cannot be subject to abstract/universal generalizations. Positivism, it is alleged, undermines the creativity, reflexivity and agency of social actors: As you have already learnt in Unit 6, interpretative sociology was a refreshing departure from the positivist tradition. Second, it can also be argued that the so-called „ethical neutrality“ of positivism reduces it to a mere technique, separated from moral/political issues. And, paradoxically, it is precisely the politics of positivism. The establishment to legitimize itself often uses its scientific nature. In other words, positivism can prove to be pro-establishment, statusquoist, non-critical and non-reflexive. In the twentieth century this critique of positivism came rather sharply from critical theorists, or the adherents of the Frankfurt School Marxism. What is asserted is that science has lost its emancipatory power. Instead, science itself has become an integral component of the establishment. In fact, the experience of war, large-

scale violence, the growth of fascism, the spread of the “culture industry”, and the emergence of the „authoritarian personality“, in other words, the darkness of the twentieth century led these thinkers to speak of the „dialectic of enlightenment“. No wonder, from Adorno to Horkheimer to Marcuse, the central thrust of their argument was that positivist science was nothing but a form of instrumental rationality leading to domination and manipulation of human and natural resources. They critiqued this instrumental rationality, and pleaded for a more critical, reflexive, qualitative and emancipatory social science.

Third, as you have already learnt in Unit 6, post-modernists deconstruct the very foundation of science. No wonder, for post-modernists, positivism loses its cognitive power and legitimacy. And in a way the distinction between objective science and subjective narrative gets eroded, sociology becomes yet another narrative filled with biographies and life histories, and a non-positivist/post-modern sociology does not look fundamentally different from cultural studies! As you understand, positivism emerged at a time when sociology was trying to establish itself as a science. And positivism continues to have its appeal. But then, with the passage of time, with new experiences leading to disillusionment with the so called 'neutrality' of science, and with new sensitivity to reflexivity and creativity, we see the growing critique of positivism. Positivism has indeed lost much of its appeal. You can understand this changing intellectual milieu if you concentrate on the following two specific critiques of positivism.

A) Reflexive sociology resisting methodological dualism

Reflexive sociology, as put forward by Alvin W. Gouldner (1920-1980), is a meaningful alternative to positivism. Gouldner (1930), an American sociologist, wrote with a high degree of moral sensitivity, and critiqued positivism. He warned us of the methodological dualism implicit in positivism. This dualism separates the knower from the known, subject from object, fact from value. Not solely that. It views that if the sociologist engages politically, emotionally and aesthetically with the

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object of his/her study, the „scientific nature“ of the discipline would suffer. This cold objectivity, as Gouldner (1930: 496) would argue, is essentially an expression of alienation, that is, the alienation of the sociologist from his/her own self. It is like looking at sociological knowledge as just a piece of amoral technique. Methodological Dualism is based upon a fear; but this is a fear not so much of those being studied as of the sociologist's own self. Methodological Dualism is, at bottom, concerned to constitute a strategy for coping with the feared vulnerability of the scholar's self. It strives to free him from disgust, pity, anger, from egoism or moral outrage, from his passions and interest, on the supposition that it is a bloodless and disembodied mind that works best. It also seeks to insulate the scholar from the values and interests of his other roles and commitments, on the dubious assumption that these can be anything but blinders. It assumes that feeling is the blood enemy of intelligence, and that there can be an unfeeling, unsentimental knower. Gouldner (1930: 493), however, pleads for methodological monism, and asserts that the separation between the knower and the known must be overcome, because you cannot know others without knowing yourself. That is why, self-reflexivity is absolutely important. To know others a sociologist cannot simply study them, but must also listen to and confront him/her. Knowing is not an impersonal effort but a personalized effort by whole, embodied men'. Reflexive sociology invites methodological monism, and, therefore, alters the very meaning of knowledge. It does not remain merely a piece of information. Instead, it becomes awareness. It generates self-awareness and new sensitivity. Reflexive sociology, you would appreciate, is heavily demanding. Unlike positivist sociology in which you can remain 'neutral' and apolitical', reflexive sociology demands your moral commitment and ethical engagement. You cannot separate your life from your work. "Gouldner" (1930: 495) wrote, Reflexive Sociology, then, is not characterized by what it studies. It is distinguished neither by the persons and the problems studied nor even by the techniques and 24 instruments used in studying them. It is characterized, rather, by a relationship it establishes between being a sociologist and being a person, between the role and the man performing it. Reflexive sociology embodies a critique of the

conventional conception of segregated scholarly roles and has a vision of an alternative. It aims at transforming the sociologist's relation to his work. Take an example. Suppose you wish to study the phenomenon called „slum culture“. Away of doing it is, of course, a highly positivistic/technical research. You hire research assistants, send them to the particular slum with a questionnaire, and instruct them to distribute copies of it after random sampling. The data you gather get classified and quantified, and you make your conclusions. These are the conclusions derived from 'hard' facts. And never do you feel the need to engage yourself as a person with the slum. In other words, your dispassionate exercise is not different from the way a mathematician solves a puzzle, or a scientist works in a lab. Now Gouldner's reflexive sociology would oppose this kind of research. Instead, it would make you reflect on your own self and your politics and morality. Possibly you are urban, upper class, English speaking and relatively privileged. What does it mean for you to understand the slum culture? Isn't it the fact that their suffering cannot be separated from your privilege? Can you understand them without questioning this asymmetrical power? These questions born out of self-reflexivity would possibly create a new sociology which, far from objectifying the world, tries to create a new one. Possibly new trends in sociological research emanating from feminist and Dalit movements resemble this sort of reflexive sociology. Because in these research trends one sees not just technical objectivity, but essentially a high degree of empathy, an urge to understand suffering, and a striving for an alternative praxis

B) Agency and structure: process of structuration

Another significant critique of positivism has come from Anthony Giddens, a leading sociologist of our time. Giddens' (1984) book, *New Rules of Sociological Method*, is a turning point. It is a text in which he studied the intellectual trajectory of the discipline, and negotiated with interpretative traditions, and reflexed on a set of new rules. It does offer an alternative to positivistic/ scientific sociology. Giddens is categorical about the fact that nature and human society are two different realms of

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enquiry. Nature is not a human production, but society is being perpetually created, renewed and altered by human agents. That is why there are limits to natural science methodology in sociology. In sociology, argues Giddens (1936: 13), „those who still wait for a Newton are not only waiting for a train that won't arrive, they're in the wrong station altogether“. This seems to be the reason why he began his intellectual conversation with phenomenological/ethno methodological traditions, the way these „interpretative“ sociologies seek to understand meanings, that is, the meanings that conscious human actors attach to the world, and construct their knowledge of the everyday world they live in. Although, for Giddens, there are possibilities in these traditions, we need to see beyond. Because the meaning you and I attach to the world has to be situated in a social context, and asymmetrical resources and capabilities often characterize this context. Take an example. Imagine yourself as a student in the classroom. It is, of course, true that you are not a puppet silently performing the prescribed „role“. Instead, you are a creative agent attaching meanings, and creating an inter-subjective world called the classroom. But, then, there is a problem. Your agency/freedom is not unlimited. Because differential/unequal resources might characterize the classroom: teacher versus student. Even a simple site like the classroom is, in fact, a site of conflict and contestation. Giddens (1936), therefore, argues that interpretative sociology alone is not sufficient; it is 26 equally important to be aware of the complex relationship between the agency and structure. This critical/ creative engagement with methodological issues led him to put forward a set of rules which can be summarized as follows. First, sociology is not concerned with a “pre-given” universe of objects. Instead, sociology deals with a world that is constituted or provided by the active doings of subjects. It is in this sense that 'the production and reproduction of society has to be treated as a skilled performance on the part of its members“ (Giddens 1936: 160). Let us understand it. Suppose you are studying a phenomenon called caste. Even a rigid system like caste, you realize, is not pre-given. Instead, human agents are perpetually creating and transforming what we call a caste society. That is why, lower caste movements or Dalit movements or divergent reforms take place, and the

social reality that sociologists study remains perpetually vibrant and alive. It is a skilled performance which is in perpetual flux. Second, although society is a skilled performance, the creativity of the social actor, as you have just learnt, is not unlimited since all of us, irrespective of our creativity, are historically located social actors, working under certain conditions. It is in this context that we ought to be aware of the limits/constraints provided by the social structure. But then, what is interesting about Giddens (1936: 161) is that he is talking about the duality of structure@. „Structure must not be conceptualized as simply placing constraints upon human agency, but as enabling“. An example would make this point clear. Imagine that you are speaking a language. No matter how creative you are, you cannot speak whatever you wish. You have to follow the grammar: a set of rules. But then, it is not just an experience of constraint. Language also enables you to speak. Moreover, a living language is not static; through their linguistic expressions and practices people make changes in the structure of the language. This is what Giddens (1936: 161) regards as the process of structuration and says that for him, „to enquire into the structuration of social practices is to seek to explain how it comes about that structures are constituted through action and, reciprocally, how action is constituted structurally“. In a way, the process of structuration enables him to overcome the duality of structure and agency. Yes, you cannot imagine yourself without the „rules“ that the structure provides. But at the same time, you are not a puppet. You can innovate, experiment, and alter the structure. Third, Giddens asserts that a sociologist cannot escape the language that lay actors use to make sense of their world. That is why; meaningful sociological research requires immersion in the form of life which the sociologist seeks to study. Immersion does not, however, mean that the sociologist has to become a „full member“ of the community. This only means the ability „to participate in it as an ensemble of practices“. And finally, sociological concepts, asserts Giddens, are based on double hermeneutic. The reason is that social actors themselves have already interpreted society as being a skilled performance, and hence the sociologists further reinterpret it within their theoretical schemes mediating ordinary and technical language. You will study hermeneutics

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in Unit 8. These debates and contestations, you need to realize, have enriched the discipline. And it is important that you become aware of these multiple voices within the discipline. Let us at the end of our discussion, complete the Reflection and Action 3.2 exercise

Reflection and Action 3.2 Structures are as much constraining as enabling, people constantly innovate and interpret the given structures. Explain the above statement with an illustration from a contemporary situation and write a short note on the process of structuration. Discuss your note with fellow learners at your Study Centre

* It is a request to the Academic Counsellor to organize an essay competition on this topic and send the top ten essays to the Coordinator of MGS-005. The best essay will have a surprise appearance.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

1. Discuss the Consolidation of Positivism.

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2. Discuss about Hermeneutics.

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3. What about Critiques of Positivism?

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3.7 LET US SUM UP

In Unit 3 we have discussed the antecedents of positivism in the context of tremendous strides made in the sciences and of the general milieu of Enlightenment. Auguste Comte is considered the founder of sociology for he tried to conceive of similar methodology for the social sciences and the study of society. Positivism, as we can see, had a tremendous impact on sociology and in some ways helped establish it as a discipline. The propositions and theories of Comte have, however, been refined especially in the case of Durkheim. He, by far, has been responsible for defining the subject matter of sociology and in laying out the rules to study society. Subsequent thinkers have critiqued his visualization of an overarching coercive society, but Durkheim still lays out a road map for us to follow and be clear in distinguishing individual acts from societal acts. The subsequent methodologies and perspectives in sociology attempted to privilege the agency of the individual. We have discussed Giddens' work as an example of this approach. Another critique that came strongly against positivism came from Gouldner, who felt that positivism with its methodological coldness separates the knower from the known and therefore he pleads for a reflexive sociology. Many in the social sciences, especially in social anthropology, have recommended reflexivity. The issues of who represents whom has come under severe debate not only in anthropology but also in the general debates in the social sciences. With the post-modernist critique of unilinear theories there is an increasing tendency to look for multi-locality. The question that can be asked in this context is what relevance do theories, which support generalizing tendencies, have in the globalizing world?

3.8 KEY WORDS

Positivism: Positivism is a philosophical theory stating that certain knowledge is based on natural phenomena and their properties and relations. Thus, information derived from sensory experience, interpreted through reason and logic, forms the exclusive source of all certain knowledge.

Consolidate: In business, consolidation or amalgamation is the merger and acquisition of many smaller companies into a few much larger ones. In the context of financial accounting, consolidation refers to the

aggregation of financial statements of a group company as consolidated financial statements.

3.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Discuss the Heroic Science and Origin of Positivism
2. Discuss the Early Positivism
3. Discuss the Consolidation of Positivism
4. Discuss about Hermeneutics
5. What about Critiques of Positivism?

3.10 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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3.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 3.2
2. See Section 3.3

Check Your Progress 2

1. See Section 3.4
2. See Section 3.5

UNIT 4: MARXISM AS A METHOD

STRUCTURE

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Rise of Bureaucracy
- 4.3 Role of Bureaucracy
- 4.4 Bureaucratic Power and Military Dictatorship
- 4.5 Characteristics of Bureaucracy
- 4.6 Sharpening of Conflict between Capitalists and Workers
- 4.7 Administration in Marx's Socialist Society
- 4.8 Critical Appraisal
- 4.9 Let us sum up
- 4.10 Key Words
- 4.11 Questions for Review
- 4.12 Suggested readings and references
- 4.13 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit you should be able to:

- To understand the significance of Marx's views on bureaucracy
- To explain the characteristics of bureaucracy identified by Karl Marx, and
- To discuss the criticism of Marx's views on bureaucracy.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Karl Marx was a great social revolutionary as well as a social scientist. His influence continues to be felt not only in social sciences, philosophy and literature, but also through revolutions in countries like Russia, China and Vietnam. His thought is being interpreted and re-interpreted in

different ways by several schools, such as the Frankfurt school, the existentialists, the structuralists, Russian communists. Chinese communists, Trotskyists and so on. The combination of revolutionary thought and action in Marx's work is of special significance for underdeveloped countries where revolutionary movements are growing. Marx was born in Germany in 1818. He did his PhD. In Ancient Greek philosophy. His, revolutionary views prevented his appointment as a university teacher, and led to his exile from country after country. He wrote voluminously but always remained poor, which resulted in much suffering for his family. He participated in the revolutionary movement in France which led to the short-lived Paris Commune in 1870. He died in 1883, leaving most of his works unfinished. Marx's ideas on administration are spread over his numerous works. He has dealt with the rise of bureaucracy, its role in developed and developing countries, its dysfunctions, its destruction in the course of the socialist revolution, and its supersession in the new non-exploitative society. In this Unit, we shall describe Marx's views on bureaucracy and examine the criticism on his views.

4.2 RISE OF BUREAUCRACY

Marx points out that, bureaucracy, arose with capitalism at the nation state in western - Europe around the sixteenth century. The concentration of wealth and power in the hands of merchant capitalists and absolute monarchs led to the need of an instrument for the management of wealth and the exercise of power. This instrument was the bureaucracy. With its help capitalists competed against other capitalists and monarch curbed feudal lords. In medieval society trade that is. Within the village or between nearby villages. The invention of steamships made it possible to trade with distant places. The merchant adventurers, who had to go to these distant places, work however, insecure. Their security could be ensured only through a state which exercised sway over a large area. This need of far -flung trade gave rise to the nation state. It is notable that in earlier times there were either city states or empires. Nation states arose for the first time around the sixteenth century. However the king could not administer such a large area except through a large number of

officials controlled from the center. These officials constitute the bureaucracy. Hence the bureaucracy is associated with capitalism and the nation state. This also suggests that if capitalism and the nation state could be superseded, bureaucracy would also become obsolete.

4.3 ROLE OF BUREAUCRACY

Feudalism continued in part for about two centuries even after the coming into being of the nation state. In France, the Revolution of 1789 did away with some of the relics of feudalism; however, it was only the Revolution of 1830 that led to the transfer of power from the landlords to the capitalists. Similar changes took place in other countries. The dissolution of feudalism and the rise of capitalism may more arid more people were now taking up jobs in factories owned by capitalists. Since handicrafts could not compete with industry, artisans like weavers, shoemakers, blacksmiths, carpenters, and so on, were thrown out of employment, and had to seek jobs in industry. The introduction of, newer and newer technology has always maintained some unemployment. Due to 'unemployment and poverty, workers in a capitalist society can be forced to perform back-breaking labour, for long hours, at low wages. Marx has described in detail how even children were exploited in the factories of England in the nineteenth century. While working conditions in Western countries improved due to the wealth They obtained from \ the colonies, and also due to unionisation of labour, capitalist exploitation can now be seen , , in underdeveloped countries like India. According to Marx, all value is produced, by human labour. The workers receive only a portion of the value produced by them in the form of wages. The other portion, which is retained by the capitalist, constitutes their exploitation. Hence, which can be measured in this way, is always present in capitalist relations of production, the huge profits of capitalists are derived from the exploitation of a large number of workers. A capitalist cannot manage so many workers all alone. He has to employ managers for this purpose. These managers, and officials associated with them, constitute the bureaucracy. Hence, according to Marx, bureaucracy consists of officials who control the workers on behalf of the owners or rulers. Its function is to get work out of the work under the exploitative

conditions of capitalism. The governmental bureaucracy has a similar function in regard to workers employed by the government here are large number of workers in government owned railways, roadways, power stations, and other undertakings. Large numbers of workers are employed by the government in non-industrial occupations also, such as postmen, nurses, teachers, mechanics, and so on. Some of the workers have a higher status than others; thus engineers, doctors, architects and scientists are also involved in productive activity, and hence are workers with a high status. All these workers have to be kept under check. For this Purpose, control is exercised them by the bureaucracy. Bureaucracy consists of administrators and managers who do not perform the productive activity themselves, but only control workers. Thus members of the Indian Administrative Service and also those of State Administrative Services advise ministers and in consultation with them, direct, supervise and control the workers involved in productive activity. In recent days in India, doctors, engineers, teachers, nurses and other workers demonstrated for better working conditions and even went on strikes. Some of them were punished: the punishments were administered by administrative officers, such as a Director or a Secretary to the concerned government. On behalf of the government, if necessary, negotiations with the workers were also conducted, by administrative officers. These administrative officers, then, constitute the bureaucracy: their function is to control the workers on behalf of the government. Another function of the governmental bureaucracy is to help in maintaining capitalist relations of production in the wider society. Thus, if workers in a private firm go on a strike, the capitalist can get the help of the government for keeping them under check. The government provides protection and assistance to private industry and trade in many ways. Thus it protects domestic industrialists from competition by foreign industrialists through the imposition of import duties. It manages the economy through fiscal and monetary policies so as to maintain effective demand for goods produced by industry. It provides means of transport and communication, electric power at cheap rates, and key goods for "industry and agriculture. All these services to the private sector are channelised through governmental bureaucracy. This government

bureaucracy implements labour laws so as to keep the wheels of industry moving and maintain the profits of the capitalists. Thus the governmental bureaucracy performs the important function of maintaining and developing capitalism. According to Marx, the path to socialism lies, mostly, through capitalism. Hence, while on the one hand the development of capitalism accentuates exploitation, on the other hand it prepares the way to socialism.

Bureaucracy or the Civil Service constitutes the permanent and professional part of the executive organ of government. It is usually described as the non-political or politically neutral, permanent, and professionally trained civil service.

It runs the administration of the state according to the policies and laws of the government political executive. Upon the qualities and efficiency of bureaucracy depends the quality and efficiency of the state administration? It, however, works under the leadership and control of the Political Executive.

4.4 BUREAUCRATIC POWER AND MILITARY DICTATORSHIP

In the course of functioning as the instrument administrative capitalism, the bureaucracy acquires power of its own. The basis of its powers detailed, information, particularly secret information. That is why it jealously guards secret information, not only from the people in general, but also from legislators and even from ministers. Ministers are busy with political affairs and have to depend upon the bureaucracy for information and advice. Thus, the bureaucracy comes to save an important role in policy formulation also. If unions and associations of the people, and political parties are weak, they are unable to communicate the needs and grievances of the people to the government. In this situation of political underdevelopment, the bureaucracy becomes the main channel of communication between the government and the people. Since the bureaucracy is better informed about the problems which the people face, than even the so-called representatives of the

people, dependence upon it increases, thus giving it more and more power, Hence, in normal times also, the bureaucracy is quite powerful due to the possession of secret information; its power is' greater in underdeveloped countries due to the weakness of unions of the people and of political parties to these is the factor of the power hunger of the bureaucracy. Marx says that, "The bureaucracy takes itself to be the ultimate purpose of the state.... it comes into conflict everywhere with 'real' objectives, in other words, it attaches more importance to serving its own interests than those people and so 'a body. There are certain special situations in which the bureaucracy itself comes to rule. This is the situation of a military dictatorship. the military is also a bureaucracy. Now –a-days there are military dictatorships in many underdeveloped countries, such as Cuba and Brazil provides an explanation. for such rule by the military bureaucracy, He suggests that when two powerful classes with conflicting interests kotits , bqually balanced in power, they let the bureaucracy rule to avoid continuous warfare between themselves.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.
ii) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

- 1. Mention the causes for the explain the role of bureaucracy as- identified by Karl Marx.

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- 2. Explain the role of bureaucracy.

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3. What is the basic of bureaucratic power?

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4.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF BUREAUCRACY

The terms bureaucracy, civil service, public servants, public service, civil servants, government service, government servants, officials of government, officials, permanent executive and non-political executive are used to describe all such persons who carry out the day to day administration of the state. The terms Bureaucracy’ and ‘Civil Service’ are popularly used as synonyms.

Narrow and Broad uses of the term Bureaucracy:

In a narrow sense the term Bureaucracy is used to denote those important and higher level public servants who occupy top level positions in the state administration. In the broad sense, it refers to all the permanent employees of the government right from the peons and clerks to the top level officials. Presently, we use the term in its broader dimension.

(1) “Bureaucracy means the civil servants, the administrative functionaries who are professionally trained for the public service and who enjoy permanency of tenure, promotion within service-partly by seniority and partly by merit.” -Garner

(2) “In its broad larger sense the term Civil Service is used to describe any personnel system where the employees are classified in a system of

administration composed of a hierarchy, sections, divisions, bureaus, departments and the like.” -Willoughby

(3) “Civil Service/Bureaucracy is a professional body of officials permanent, paid and skilled.” -Finer

Characteristics of a Bureaucracy

A bureaucracy is a system of organization noted for its size and complexity. Everything within a bureaucracy — responsibilities, jobs, and assignments — exists to achieve some goal. Bureaucracies are found at the federal, state, county, and municipal levels of government, and even large private corporations may be bureaucratically organized. People who work for government agencies, from high-level managers and executives to clerical staff, are called **bureaucrats**. The superintendent of a large urban school district is a bureaucrat, as are the teachers, librarians, nurses, and security guards.

The terms *bureaucrat* and *bureaucracy* have negative connotations. They bring to mind long, difficult forms; standing in long lines; and encounters with inflexible and unsympathetic clerks. The simplest requests are tangled in **red tape**, the paperwork that slows down accomplishment of an otherwise simple task. Despite this popular perception, bureaucracy is necessary for big governmental agencies to operate.

All bureaucracies share similar characteristics, including specialization, hierarchical organization, and formal rules. In the best circumstances, these characteristics allow a bureaucracy to function smoothly.

Specialization

Workers in a bureaucracy perform specialized tasks that call for training and expertise. Trained personnel can accomplish their jobs efficiently. The downside of specialization is that bureaucrats often cannot (or refuse

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to) "work out of class" — that is, take on a task that is outside the scope of their job description.

Hierarchical organization

The structure of a bureaucracy is called a *hierarchy*, a succession of tiers from the most menial worker in the organization to the highest executive. Each level has clearly defined authority and responsibilities.

Formal rules

Bureaucracies function under formal rules. These instructions state how all tasks in the organization, or in a particular tier of the hierarchy, are to be performed. The rules are often called *standard operating procedures* (SOP) and are formalized in procedures manuals. By following the rules, bureaucrats waste no time in making appropriate decisions.

There are contradictions in the operation of a bureaucracy, however. The narrow focus on special expertise may blind a bureaucrat to a flaw in the performance of a task. Compounding the problem may be the bureaucrat's inability to recognize the problem if it occurs in an area outside the bureaucrat's expertise. The hierarchical structure also prevents a democratic approach to problem-solving. Lower-level staff find it difficult to question the decisions of supervisors, and executives and managers may be unaware that a problem exists several rungs down the organizational ladder.

Bureaucracy: Main Features:

1. Permanent Character:

The civil servants hold permanent jobs in government departments. They mostly join their services during their youths and continue to work as government servants till the age of retirement which is usually 58 to 60 years.

2. Hierarchical Organisation:

Bureaucracy is hierarchically organised in several levels. Each official is placed at a particular level of hierarchy and he enjoys the privileges and powers which are available to his co-level officials. He is under his immediate higher level officials and is above his immediately lower level officials. The principle of rule of the higher over the lower governs the inter-relations between various levels of bureaucracy.

3. Non-partisan Character:

The members of the Bureaucracy are not directly involved in politics. They cannot join political parties and participate in political movements. They are not affected by the political changes which keep on coming in the political executive. Whichever party may come to power and make the government, the civil servants remain politically neutral and carry out their assigned departmental roles impartially and faithfully.

4. Professional, Trained and Expert Class:

The Bureaucracy constitutes the educated and professionally trained class of persons which helps the political executive in carrying out its functions. The members of civil service are recruited through competitive examinations for appearing in which they have to possess some minimum educational qualifications. Before their appointments, they get special trainings. During the course of their service they attend orientation and refresher courses. They have the knowledge, training and expertise necessary for carrying out their administrative work.

5. Fixed Salaries:

Each member of the Bureaucracy receives a fixed salary. Right at the time of appointment he is allotted a scale of pay, which depends upon the nature and level of his job-responsibility. All the civil servants belonging to a particular class of administrative hierarchy are placed in one scale of pay. Each job also entitles them to some allowances.

6. Bound by Rules and Regulations:

The Bureaucracy always works in accordance with 'rules and regulations'. 'Strict obedience to rules', 'Through Proper Channel', 'Decision-making after satisfying the rules', are the principles which always guide, direct and regulate the working of bureaucracy. Each

official works only within the sphere prescribed for him by the rules of his department.

7. Class Consciousness:

The Civil Servants are highly class conscious. They jealously work to protect and promote the interests of their class of civil servants. They are called the white-collar class because of their faith in their 'superior status' as government officials.

8. Public Service Spirit as the Ideal:

Modern Bureaucracy identifies itself with public service spirit. It always tries to project itself as the civil servants devoted to the promotion of public welfare through the satisfaction of public needs. They are expected to behave as 'officers' responsible for public welfare, with service as their motto.

9. Bound by a Code of Conduct:

The civil servants have to follow a code of conduct. They have to act in a disciplined way. Their rights, duties and privileges stand clearly defined. The procedure of work is definite and settled. They can be punished for misbehavior, incompetence or negligence or for a violation of their conduct rules. In short, Bureaucracy is characterised by political neutrality, professional competence, permanent/ stable tenure, fixed salaries and strict obedience to rules.

Role of Bureaucracy: Functions:

Bureaucracy or Civil Service plays a key role in running the Public Administration e by performing the following functions:

1. Implementation of Governmental Policies and Laws:

It is the responsibility of the bureaucracy to carry out and implement the policies of the government. Good policies and laws can really serve their objectives only when these are efficiently implemented by the civil servants.

2. Role in Policy-Formulation:

Policy-making is the function of the political executive. However, the Bureaucracy plays an active role in this exercise. Civil Servants supply the data needed by the political executive for formulating the policies. In fact, Civil servants formulate several alternative policies and describe the

merits and demerits of each. The Political Executive then selects and adopts one such policy alternative as the governmental policy.

3. Running of Administration:

To run the day to day administration in accordance with the policies, laws, rules, regulations and decisions of the government is also the key responsibility of the Bureaucracy. The political executive simply exercises guiding, controlling and supervising functions.

4. Advisory Function:

One of the important functions of the Bureaucracy is to advise the political executive. The ministers receive all the information and advice regarding the functioning of their respective departments from the civil servants. As amateurs, the ministers have little knowledge about the functions of their departments. They, therefore, depend upon the advice of bureaucracy. As qualified, experienced and expert civil servants working in all government departments, they provide expert and professional advice and information to the ministers.

5. Role in Legislative Work:

The civil servants play an important but indirect role in law-making. They draft the bills which the ministers submit to the legislature for law-making. The ministers provide all the information asked for by the legislature by taking the help of the civil servants.

6. Semi-judicial Work:

The emergence of the system of administrative justice, under which several types of the cases and disputes are decided by the executive, has further been a source of increased semi-judicial work of the bureaucracy. The disputes involving the grant of permits, licences, tax concessions, quotas etc. are now settled by the civil servants.

7. Collection of Taxes and Disbursement of Financial Benefits:

The civil servants play a vitally important role in financial administration. They advise the political executive in respect of all financial planning, tax-structure, tax-administration and the like. They collect taxes and settle disputes involving recovery of taxes. They play a vital role in preparing the budget and taxation proposals. They carry out the function of granting of legally sanctioned financial benefits, tax reliefs, subsidies and other concessions to the people.

8. Record-Keeping:

The Civil Service has the sole responsibility of keeping systematically all government records. They collect, classify and analyse all data pertaining to all activities of the government. They collect and maintain vital socio-economic statistics which are used for the formulation of Public policies and plans.

9. Role in Public Relations:

The era of modern welfare state and democratic politics has made it essential for the government to keep close relations with the people of the state. The need for maintaining active and full public relations is a vital necessity of every state. The civil servants play an active role in this sphere.

They are the main agents who establish direct contacts with the people. They serve as a two way link. On the one hand, they communicate all government decisions to the people, and on the other hand, they communicate to the government the needs, interests and views of the people. Thus, Bureaucracy plays a vigorously active and highly important role in the working of the government.

Control over Bureaucracy:

The rise of modern welfare state and increase in its functions has been a source of big increase in the powers and role of Bureaucracy. It has, therefore, given rise to an additional need for exercising control over bureaucracy. An effective control system has become essential both for preventing the civil servants from abusing their powers as well as for ensuring their active and positive role. In fact, every state maintains a system of internal and external control over Bureaucracy.

(A) Internal Control:

It means control applied from within the organisation i.e. by the administrative machinery. The administrative organisation is hierarchical and is divided into wings, divisions, branches and sections. There are present some internal controls in its every section. The tools of control are budgeting, accounting, auditing, reports, inspections, efficiency surveys, personnel control, code of conduct, and discipline and leadership control.

In particular, regular internal inspections, auditing of accounts and evaluation of the performance of each civil servant as main means of internal control over Bureaucracy Internal control is necessary for keeping the bureaucracy efficient and productive of desired results.

(B) External Control:

External control is that which flows from outside agencies. These agencies are the people, the legislature, the executive and the judiciary.

4.6 SHARPENING OF CONFLICT BETWEEN CAPITALISTS AND WORKERS

Periodically, in the period after the Second World War the economy of the developed capitalist countries has several times passed into a situation of crisis. However until the beginning of the 70s, in the intervals between the cycles, it continued to mark a certain increase of production and a relative decrease of the number of the chronic army of unemployed. Although these phenomena were met only in some of the bigger privileged, capitalist countries and did not constitute a feature of the whole system of the world capitalist economy, the bourgeois ideologists rushed in to circulation with all sorts of theories about the so-called new capitalism which flourishes and develops without crises. Politicians and statesmen from among the ranks of the bourgeoisie took up these theories whenever the situation required it and the occasion presented itself, to deceive the working masses through demagogy, to disguise the policy of oppression, exploitation, aggression and war, pursued by the imperialist powers. Proceeding from these theories, the leaders of the social democratic parties drafted program after program about the so-called "integration of capitalism in socialism", to prove that allegedly now "there are no antagonistic classes and class struggle in bourgeois society, that capitalism has become more progressive, more liberal, more humane".

The economic-financial crisis which has broken out in the capitalist-revisionist world is neither accidental, unexpected nor unforeseen. It is

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an inevitable result of the sharpening of contradictions which are ceaselessly gnawing at the capitalist order in the epoch of its general crisis; it is a natural result of the imperialist policy of aggression, world hegemony, oppression and exploitation of the peoples pursued by US imperialism and Soviet social imperialism.

The modern revisionists in capitalist countries did not lag behind the new theories, either; by trying to prove the “changed nature” of present-day capitalism, they aim to divert the working class from the course of struggle, revolt and violent revolution. In the countries where the modern revisionists are in power too, much speculation began around this question, with a great deal being said, about a "new historical stage" in the development of capitalism; seeking through such theorisations to justify the anti-Marxist thesis of peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism.

Although from the tactical aspect all this confusion of “theoretical” apologia about the development of capitalism without crises and the change in its nature has its own nuances and refinements in the arguments which the bourgeoisie and revisionists use in their “theoretical” thinking, from the strategic aspect it all has the one aim: to extend the life of capitalism, to ensure the state power of the imperialists and revisionist bourgeoisie, to confuse and disarm the working class ideologically, to avert the outbreak of conflicts and the social revolution as long as possible and whenever this can be achieved for the time being.

However, at the very time when the bourgeois-revisionist apologists were in ecstasy, because they thought that with their magic words and miracle working “theories” they had saved capitalism from the evil of economic crises, the capitalist world was seized in the grip of a new economic crisis. After all it became obvious that the capitalist order had remained what in reality is – an order of oppression and exploitation of the peoples, of the toil and sweat of mankind, a warmongering order and murderer of nations, that it had changed only in the imagination of the bourgeois-revisionist ideologists.

Now the world capitalist economy is experiencing the most difficult times it has known in the post-war period. Not a day passes in the capitalist world and the countries where the revisionists are in power, without talk and the publication of news about the economic-financial crisis. The level of industrial production has fallen and is still falling in all the main capitalist countries. Industrial and commercial bankruptcies follow one after another. Inflation, the increase of the prices of mass consumption goods and living costs are racing ahead neck and neck. Stocks of unsold goods increase from one month to the next. The number of unemployed people in the capitalist-revisionist world has reached about 100 million. The bourgeois and revisionist states are up to their necks in internal and foreign debts. The deficits of the budgets and balances of payments have risen to unheard-of sums. Currencies are devalued in chain reactions, causing alarm and panic on the money market. The imperialist and revisionist bourgeoisie has set its state machinery in motion to shift the entire burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the working masses. The two imperialist superpowers are leaving no stone unturned to get out of the crisis at the expense of their partners, at the expense of the countries and peoples who are oppressed and exploited by them. In broad outline such is the situation which the economic-financial crisis has created in the capitalist-revisionist world today.

To deceive the peoples, imperialism, social imperialism, and their ideologists sometimes try to present, the economic-financial crisis as a crisis which allegedly came about simply as a result of the shortage or higher cost of oil. On other occasions they try to present the economic financial crisis simply as a crisis which came about as a result of the growth of inflation on a world scale. This crisis, they allege, can be overcome by reducing the prices of oil and raw materials, as well as by freezing the wages of the workers. But all reasoning of this nature is aimed at camouflaging the situation and its real causes, at hindering the disclosure of the essence of the phenomena.

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In fact the present-day economic-financial crisis is of another nature, it has other causes and dimensions. It is an expression and direct consequence of the sharpening and deepening of the contradiction between the social character of production and its capitalist private appropriation; it is an expression of the sharpening and deepening of the general crisis of the capitalist system.

The temporary revival of the capitalist economy and the intensification of the antagonism between production and consumption

Beginning from the 50's the economy of the principal capitalist countries marked a certain revival. This revival was influenced by such factors as the technical-scientific revolution and, on this basis, the renewal of the fundamental capital, the militarisation of the economy, the external economic expansion, the increase of the level of exploitation of the working people, etc. These factors not only did not lead to the solution and overcoming of the contradictions of the capitalist system, but they sharpened the old contradictions even more and gave rise to new contradictions which brought about the outburst of the present economic-financial crisis.

As a result of the development of the technical-scientific revolution in the post-war period, new branches of industrial production came into being in the main capitalist countries, such as electronics, petrochemistry, etc. The creation of these branches and particularly the development of the mechanical engineering and automobile industry in this period, played the same role in the increase of the total industrial production as the building of railways played before the First World War (1900-1915). Whereas during 20 years (1951-1970) the total industrial production of the capitalist countries increased 92 per cent, over the same period the production of the electronics industry, of the chemical and automobile industries of these same countries increased 200 per cent.

The development of the technical-scientific revolution was accompanied by a mass and simultaneous renewal of the fundamental capital also in the old traditional branches of the economy. This phenomenon occurred

because in most capitalist countries the renewal of the fundamental capital in these branches could not take place in large proportions either after the world crisis of the years 1929-1933 or during the Second World War. Moreover, the mass and simultaneous renewal of the fundamental capital was conditioned also by the need to restore the war-damaged industry in Western Europe and Japan, by the high rates of militarisation of the economy in USA and other imperialist states, as well as by the intensification of the struggle of competition among the monopolies in the capitalist market.

The accelerated renewal of the fundamental capital led temporarily to a rise in the demand for machines, industrial equipment, raw materials, fuels and other commodities of the first subdivision. In this way it stimulated the extension of the production of means of production. As a result of the rise in demand for means of production, the home market began to extend too, for the account of the first subdivision. This whole movement brought about the relative increase of the number of people employed and, together with this, also a certain increase of the volume of the market for mass consumption goods, particularly those of long-term use which were produced for the first time, such as television sets, washing machines, refrigerators, etc. However, the increase of the total demand with purchasing power (effective demand) remained limited and did not follow step by step the rates of increase of production in the first subdivision. This happened because even that rise which was attained in the wages of the workers, thanks to their persistent class struggle, was many times smaller than the increase of their labour productivity. In general the rise in the wages never managed to cover the increase in the cost of living, to cope with the essential minimum means of livelihood for the working people. Likewise, it must be pointed out that the increase of labour productivity was not accompanied with the reduction of prices, but, on the contrary, led to their increase.

In the final analysis, the development of the technical-scientific revolution and the renewal of the fundamental capital on the basis of it, led to the growth of the organic structure of capital and the relative

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reduction of the total effective demand for mass consumption goods. This is confirmed also by the fact that in the post-war period the production of mass consumption goods increased both relatively and absolutely much less than the production of means of production. Thus, for instance, in the USA in 1967, as compared with 1954, the production of the textiles and leather industries increased 9 per cent, the food processing industry 13 per cent, the foot wear and ready-made garments industry 11 per cent, while in the same period the production of electronic industry increased 168 per cent and chemical industry 177 per cent.

Overall, the average volume of consumption per capita in capitalist countries increased very little, so that even today the consumption of foodstuffs and footwear has not surpassed the pre-war level. The phenomenon of selling mass consumption goods on credit, which is widespread in capitalist countries, has its source in the fact that it is impossible for the working masses to cope with the daily needs of their livelihood with their wages. The increase of the volume of these sales is a supplementary means to increase the exploitation of the masses, because the prices of goods which are sold on credit are usually 30-40 per cent higher than the prices of the same goods paid for in cash. It follows from the official figures of the Department of State for Commerce that today the American workers use 40-50 per cent of their annual incomes to pay off debts created by the purchase of goods on credit. Another fact which it is no less important to stress is that the sale of goods on credit is direct evidence that the production of these goods has surpassed the limits of the effective demand of the working masses, it deepens the capitalist overproduction because, from the external aspects, it creates the false appearance that everything is going smoothly with the realisation of the goods produced, whereas this is a forced realisation.

As a result, the factors which conditioned the temporary upsurge of the capitalist economy in the post-war period at the same time also prepared the premises of the present-day economic crisis. They especially

sharpened the antagonistic contradiction between production and consumption, which constitutes the ultimate cause in the series of causes that lead to the outbreak of economic crises in capitalism.

Militarisation and permanent inflation – insurmountable problems of the capitalist-revisionist economy

The policy of world domination, aggression and oppression of the peoples, pursued by imperialism and social imperialism, the operation of the law of maximum profit, as well as the narrowing of the world capitalist market have brought as a result that the capitalist economy is bound like Prometheus to the rock, to the production of the means of death, has taken the road of militarisation.

The militarisation of the economy is not a new phenomenon. From the moment of its birth, imperialism has been distinguished by its tendency towards the militarisation of the economy. But whereas between the two world wars the proportions of the militarisation of the economy were limited and were increased only for the time in which the war was being waged, now the proportions and rates of militarisation have increased beyond all comparison even in times of peace. Today, in the USA alone, the annual military expenditure amounts to 100 billion dollars. The military expenditure for aggression and war in the USSR, too, is at a similar level. The other imperialist states also spend huge sums in this field.

The militarisation of the economy and the armaments race in the post-war period became the sphere most attractive to the monopolies for investments of capital. They became the main source to ensure a sales market guaranteed by the state. The production and sale of arms has become the most profitable field for the monopolies. Today a total of 20 billion dollars worth of arms are sold in the world each year. Of these, 16 billion dollars worth are sold by the two superpowers, the USA and the USSR, alone (about 8 billion dollars worth each). In the present capitalist-revisionist economy it is more profitable to produce death dealing weapons than material blessings for the working masses. The

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fact that US imperialism, Soviet social imperialism, and the other main capitalist countries spend many times more material means and manpower for purposes of destruction than for purposes of creation shows that the capitalist system is definitely on a hopeless course, it demonstrates capitalism's colossal waste of human possibilities, the consequences of which are truly catastrophic. This is the most convincing proof of that great degradation which has encompassed the entire bourgeois-revisionist social order, just as occurred thousands of years ago in the slaveowner society of ancient Greece and later, that of Rome.

The truth is that militarisation influences the capitalist economy in a many-sided, but always contradictory way. The increase of the production of military means on the basis of state orders increases the demand for means of production, stimulates and accelerates the renewal of the fundamental capital which is used for the production of military means. Because of the high rates at which the military technique in general develops, the machines used in the war industry become obsolete, are subject particularly to moral consumption, and drop out of use very much more quickly and on a larger scale than the machines used in other branches of industry. This process brings about the extension of production in all the fields and branches of the first subdivision which are linked with the war industry, and leads to a certain increase of the number of people employed. Thus, in the final analysis, it leads to a certain increase also of the effective demand for goods of broad use, thus extending the limits of their realisation (sale) in the home market. In this sense, the militarisation of the economy is used by the monopolies and the bourgeois state as a temporary means against the outbreak of the economic crisis, mitigating the lag of the purchasing power of the working masses behind production. On the other hand, the militarisation of the economy brings about the non-productive use and the inevitable elimination of a good part of the national income and social production. Today, in the main capitalist and revisionist countries this elimination amounts to 20-24 per cent of the gross national product. Apart from this, the bourgeois-revisionist state draws the monetary means to pay for these

war products from increased taxes on the working people and the increase of inflation. However, the increase of taxes and inflation inevitably leads to the decrease of the incomes of the working people, the further limitation of their purchasing power; hence, it leads to the sharpening of the contradiction between production and consumption. In this way militarisation creates a vicious circle for the capitalist economy. It brings about a temporary extension of the home market, which later must again reduce the effective demand in this market.

The creation of a special and ever growing sector of the production of military means in the contemporary capitalist economy gave rise to a phenomenon typical of the second stage of the general crisis of capitalism. This refers to the permanent chronic monetary inflation as a means to redistribute the national income in favour of increased profits for the monopolies, as a means of additional exploitation of the working people by the monopoly bourgeoisie.

The extension of the production of war means, together with the increase of their prices by the monopolies to secure the greatest possible profits, inevitably leads to the increase of the deficit of the state budget. Today the annual deficit of the state budget in the USA amounts to 76 billion dollars. The increase of the budget deficit is coped with by the state's putting new paper-money into circulation. This leads to a new increase of prices on the part of the monopolies. And thus, the spiral of inflation goes up and up inevitably, bringing about reduction of the real incomes of the working people, a further increase of the level of their exploitation, as well as increased profits for the monopolies. In recent years the average annual rate of inflation in the capitalist countries has been about 7 per cent.

The permanent inflation has brought into sharp relief a problem of the capitalist economy, it has increased the level of chronic non-utilisation of the productive capacities, not only in times of economic crisis, but also in times of the highest level of growth. In the Common Market countries, even before the outbreak of the present economic-financial crisis many

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branches of industry suffered from incomplete utilisation of productive capacities. Such were the steel, automobile, refrigerator, shipyard, sewing machine, synthetic fibre, and other industries.

Neocolonialism in action and the struggle of the peoples for national independence and sovereignty

Immediately after the Second World War the old colonial system of imperialism began to collapse. One after another many of the former colonial countries won and proclaimed their political independence. In these conditions the monopoly bourgeoisie of the metropolises, was compelled to go over from open and direct colonial domination to a secret and indirect neocolonial domination. Consequently, the monopolies managed to preserve their old economic positions almost intact, whereas the countries which proclaimed their independence remained, as before, economically dependent, agrarian appendages and sources of raw materials for the industrial metropolises. Therefore the economic enslavement and exploitation of these countries became even more intensive with the new forms of neocolonialism, which represents a whole system of measures of military, political and economic character. All these measures are aimed at the subjugation of the economically weak countries to the developed capitalist-revisionist countries, the restriction and elimination of their national independence.

Neocolonialism constitutes the main obstacle to the economic and social progress of the underdeveloped countries. The developing capitalist countries, which represent 70 per cent of the population of the earth and where more than 60 per cent of the world's reserves of oil and minerals are concentrated, today have only 30 per cent of the world's income at their disposal. Of the population of these countries, 800 million are illiterate, about 1 billion are suffering from hunger or malnutrition, and 900 million have daily incomes of less than 1/3 of a dollar. The average per capita income in the developing countries is 22 times less than in the developed countries.

Imperialism and social imperialism are not only opposed to the socio-economic progress of the developing countries, but they also pursue a policy of aggression, blackmail and pressure towards those who are striving to take their fate into their own hands. They leave no stone unturned against these countries in order to impose on them political regimes and social and economic structures which will facilitate foreign domination, economic dependence and the neocolonial exploitation. The foreign capitalist-revisionist exploiters are always interested in the raw materials and energy resources of the developing countries, but they do not concern themselves at all about the peoples of these countries, about their fate as a nation, about the development of their economy and culture. Nothing can wipe this historical truth from the minds, hearts, and consciousness of all those peoples who have won their independence and today are fighting to strengthen this independence against the attacks of imperialism and social imperialism, who are fighting to fill the gap in their socio-economic development created by the old and new colonial domination.

Through many sophisticated forms, such as their so-called “aid”, “economic and technical collaboration”, “joint enterprises”, “share in companies”, “division of labour, cooperation and specialisation”, etc. imperialism and social imperialism plunder the developing countries of large quantities of ores, fuel, other industrial materials and agricultural products at minimum prices, while selling these countries finished industrial product at maximum prices.

But the exploitation of the developing countries by the capitalist-revisionist monopolies by means of unfair prices (through non-equivalent exchanges) is not the only form of exploitation imposed on these countries by neocolonialism. There is also the direct plunder of the developing countries by the monopolies, creating such a situation in which the foreign monopolies decide everything concerning the exploitation and use of the riches of the developing countries regardless of the wishes of their true owners.

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In the policy of hegemony, rivalry and division of spheres of influence in the world pursued by the two superpowers lies the main cause also of the shortage of fuel, the energy crisis that has harmed some of the countries of the capitalist-revisionist world. The US and Soviet monopolies, which control the extraction of oil and the market on which it is sold, sounded the alarm and began to challenge the oil producing countries, the Arab countries in particular. Things reached the point that it was publicly claimed that the imperialist metropolises have the right to exercise control in fixing the sale prices of crude oil. Such imperialist countries as West Germany, France, etc., which are in the greatest need of oil, hastened to intensify their penetration into the Arab oil resources. The two superpowers, which want no partners in their hegemony and in the division of spheres of influence in the Middle East, reacted with pressures and promises of “friendship and assistance” for the countries of this area.

The capital of the monopolies is not sent abroad and invested in the economies of the developing countries to assist their progress, but it is taken to them only to draw the maximum profits from the exploitation of the work and sweat of the people, from the plunder of their riches. As long as imperialism, social imperialism and their neocolonial system of exploitation remain in existence they will do their utmost to take back with the one hand many times what they have allegedly given with the other hand. Any illusions about the purposes of the so-called imperialist and social imperialist aid are dangerous for him who nurtures them. The most significant example in this field is the contrast between the USA and Latin America or between the Soviet Union and India. In Latin America, where the so-called American aid exerts its influence in the most extensive proportions, where the peoples live nominally independent, where the earth contains fabulous riches, 140 million are illiterate. The same situation exists in India, too, a country which continues to enjoy “the special privileges of the aid” of Soviet social imperialism.

History has presented the peoples of the developing countries with a favourable opportunity. Taking into consideration the increase of the extraction of raw materials and fuel, as well as the great role they play in the world capitalist economy, the time has come for the peoples of the developing countries to use these assets as a powerful short and long range political and economic weapon; they must use them not only to protect themselves against the hegemony and neocolonialism of the imperialist powers, but also to accelerate their economic and social development. To this end the evil must be rooted right out, and it is the radical who takes things through to the end, who fight to strengthen national sovereignty and independence, which cannot be achieved by begging and are never donated by the imperialists and social imperialists but are won, attained through struggle, relying on one's own efforts.

And the peoples of the developing countries really are fighting against the imperialist powers and monopolies to strengthen their national independence and sovereignty, striving to secure real economic independence. The first step they are taking in this direction is the nationalisation of the riches of the country, which are in the hand of foreigners. Along with this, the peoples of these countries are undertaking courageous initiatives and actions to create and develop a multi-branched and independent economy, on the basis of the principle of self-reliance. These measures are creating the possibility that the exploitation and use of local riches will be done in a sovereign and independent way, beginning from production and the fixing of the selling price, the quantity to be produced, the market on which it should be sold, down to the question of deciding how the income secured should be spent for the industrialisation of the country, the development of its agriculture, culture, etc.

The measures which the peoples of the developing countries are taking to ensure the independent exploitation of their natural assets have been received with the point of bayonet by the imperialist monopolies and powers. And what pressures, blackmail, conspiracies and sabotage, open and underground, have not been concocted to compel these peoples to

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retreat from the course on which they have set out, from their struggle and efforts for a rapid development. The monopolies and the governments which back them up go as far as to proclaim the struggle waged by the peoples of the developing countries to ensure true political and economic independence as the “principal cause” of the difficulties the world capitalist system is experiencing, as a gamble which is allegedly jeopardising the future of mankind! However, the time has gone when the monopolies and imperialist powers can dictate their will to the peoples of the developing countries as they did in the past.

The change of the ratio of forces in the world capitalist market and the intensification of competition

After the end of the Second World War the ratio of forces in the world capitalist market changed. The old British empire and the French colonial system went into decline and collapsed. This greatly weakened the economic potential and the competitive strength of these two powers. Germany, Japan, and Italy, defeated and ruined by the war, temporarily lost any possibility of competing in the world capitalist market. The vacant place left in this market by the other imperialist powers was occupied by US imperialism. The US monopolies penetrated rapidly and in large proportions into the economies of the semi-colonial countries which had recently, proclaimed their political independence. They began to exploit the peoples and plunder the riches of these countries as never before. Just from the differences of the prices of raw materials they bought and the industrial articles they sold in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, the US monopolies began to secure supplementary profits which amounted to more than 10 million dollars in 1951. In later years this sum increased five fold (50 billion in 1960). Now more than half of the exports on the world capitalist market belonged to the US monopolies, as against 13 per cent before the war (in 1938).

This change of the ratio of forces in the world capitalist market allowed the US monopolies to double their economic power. Today the USA, which accounts for only 6 per cent of the population of the world, exploits and uses 60 per cent of the mineral resources of the world

(without counting its own resources). If this factor is not kept in mind many of the phenomena of the present-day economic-financial crisis, cannot be thoroughly understood, it cannot be grasped that the so-called prosperity of the US economy and the economies of the other capitalist countries is founded on the blood, sweat and toil of the peoples of the developing countries and the riches plundered from these countries.

Immediately after the war, and because of the devastation it caused, in the main capitalist countries of Europe a great need arose for foodstuffs, goods of mass consumption, as well as for new up-to-date means of production. This situation gave the US monopolies the possibility to invade and take over the economies even of capitalist metropolises. This time the normal export of goods and capital was accompanied with the extension of neocolonialism to the old industrial metropolises, with the extension of technological colonialism. The inventions and technological advances achieved in the USA, the sale of patents, investments to produce new technical equipment in the countries which needed to effect the renewal of their fundamental capital which was outdated or out of use as a result of the ravages of the war, were the mains forms which were used to spread technological colonialism. The old imperialist powers were temporarily under the control of US imperialism. J. V. Stalin pointed out at that time that “Germany (West), Britain, France, Italy, Japan, which have fallen into the clutches of the USA, carry out the orders of the USA with servility”. (J.V. Stalin, “Economic problems of socialism in the USSR”, Tirana, 1968, p. 39.)

On the other hand, in the struggle against the revolution and socialism, as well as to cope with the rising tide of the liberation movement of the peoples, US imperialism was compelled to help in the economic rebuilding of its two defeated old opponents; German imperialism and Japanese imperialism. On this basis the multinational monopolies, which spread to Europe and other dependent and semi-colonial countries, came into existence. If we add to this circumstance also the policy of US imperialism for world hegemony and its consequent preparations for war, the causes of that extension which inflation assumed in the USA in the

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post-war period can be more clearly understood. However, through the connections created by the US monopolies with the entire system of the world capitalist economy, as well as by exploiting to its own advantage the privileged position given to the dollar as international currency, the inflation which arose in the USA would certainly be exported to the other countries of the capitalist world too, it would become, as it became in reality, an international phenomenon of this world.

The post-war US empire stood on two legs; on the underdeveloped semi-colonial countries and the old capitalist metropolises. It seemed as if these two legs were unbreakable. But history showed that they were only two crutches which sooner or later would collapse, and US imperialism, and together with it the whole world capitalist economy, would be faced with a new reality. The ratio of forces in the capitalist world change, and in fact it did change.

After having recovered themselves, Europe and Japan began to raise their heads against the US monopolies. The European and Japanese monopolies began to penetrate into the world capitalist market and even the US home market by increasing competitive power. Little by little the US dollar began to decline, until at last it was shaken to its foundations and was openly opposed as an international means of payment. The dominant position of the US monopolies and US imperialism in the capitalist world began to waver.

Meanwhile a new factor had appeared in the world scene. The Soviet Union had turned into a social imperialist power, also with open aims and strategy for world hegemony. Its economy was transformed into a capitalist economy and the entire social order was turned into a bourgeois-revisionist order.

In these conditions the most characteristic feature of the capitalist-revisionist world became the collaboration and rivalry between the USA and the USSR to establish their hegemony in the world, to divide the world between them into spheres of influence, economic expansion,

exploitation and plunder. The present-day economic-financial crisis found the capitalist-revisionist world in this situation.

The capitalist-revisionist world in the grip of inevitable class conflicts
The present economic-financial crisis brought to surface the antagonistic political and economic contradictions which had long been gathering in the bosom of the capitalist world.

As long as capitalist private property over the means of production, private appropriation, exploitation, anarchy and competition exist, it will never be possible to use the entirety of the productive forces created by capitalism “normally”. Capitalism will continue to be shaken periodically by even more profound political, economic and social crises, it will continue to bring the working masses increased exploitation, poverty and unemployment, it will continue to sharpen the contradictions, antagonism, and the class struggle.

In order to extend the existence of the capitalist order the bourgeois monopolies and state are seeking to mitigate and get out of the present economic-financial crisis by saddling the working class with the burden of it. To this end, they use all sorts of methods, they freeze the wages of the workers, increase the exploitation of them and the other working masses, intensify inflation, the militarisation of the economy, the policy of aggression and war, raise the prices of goods and services, etc.

The effort of the bourgeoisie to shift the consequences of the grave economic crisis on to the working masses has further increased the antagonistic contradictions between labour and capital, between the working people and the capitalist-revisionist bourgeoisie. This has meant that these recent years have been years of great class clashes. Those taking part in strikes, manifestations and demonstrations of protest are counted in millions. In the first six months of the past year alone, over 2,600 strikes took place in the USA. In Italy the past year began with the strike of 14 million workers and continued with the same intensity over the whole year. In Japan, there have been about 100 strikes every month,

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etc. It is important to note that the proletariat has had beside it and has led, the other working masses of the town and countryside, oppressed and exploited by the monopoly bourgeoisie in increasing numbers.

All these things show that the “class peace”, so loudly and bombastically preached by the bourgeois and modern revisionist ideologists is just a myth which has nothing in common with the reality. At present the class struggle is seething in the capitalist countries which are heading towards new conflicts and struggles, towards the sharpening of antagonisms between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This increases even more the possibility and necessity for all the working people, under the leadership of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist revolutionary party, to unite into a single front to seize the political and economic state power from the bourgeoisie.

In these situations the revisionist parties in the capitalist countries and all the modern revisionists are flocking to the assistance of the bourgeoisie, and they will do this more and more. They try to “persuade” the bourgeoisie to make some economic-political “concession”, to accept some “structural reform”, etc. Thus, the Italian revisionists put forward their “historic compromise” for the purpose of taking part in the government and “running the country together with the bourgeoisie”, the French revisionists put forward “their democratic program of united action” to come to power, while publicly proclaiming that they have given up the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its establishment. The ideas, policy, and actions of the modern revisionists are open betrayal of the proletarian revolution and socialism, open support for the purpose of extending the life span of capitalism and the domination of the bourgeoisie, by seeking to quell the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

But the working class and the other working masses, who suffer the savage exploitation, poverty, misery, unemployment, the higher cost of living and other evils which the capitalist order and its present economic-financial crisis brings on their own backs, will never reconcile

themselves either to the measures the bourgeoisie and its state are taking and will take, to get out of this crisis, or to the social demagogy of the modern revisionists, these traitors to the proletariat, the revolution and socialism. In fact we see that in the capitalist-revisionist world the working class and the working masses have risen in struggle against the bourgeoisie to defend their rights. They are coming out in the streets in demonstrations and declaring strikes against the closing down of factories and the laying off of workers; they are demanding increased wages, reduction of prices and taxes, they are demanding an end to inflation, the militarisation of the economy, the preparations for war and aggression against the peoples. All this shows that, contrary to the will, and plans of the modern revisionists, the working class is not surrendering to the domination of the bourgeoisie and its open and secret lackeys; that it is gathering strength, increasing its consciousness and preparing for new class battles. Today, time is working for the peoples, for the revolution, the victory of which is inevitable. “The road of the development of present day human society”, comrade Enver Hoxha teaches us, “is opened and determined by the revolution” (Enver Hoxha, Report to the 6th Congress of PLA, p. 14).

Since imperialism first emerged, its history has been characterised by the unequal development of the capitalist countries. The present economic-financial crisis and the efforts of each capitalist country to come out of it at the expense of the others will further deepen the unequal development. It is known, however, that the unequal development of the capitalist countries has always led inevitably to the confrontation of the monopolies and imperialist forces to re-divide the spheres of influence, the markets and sources of raw materials. The unequal development leads the political-economic antagonisms between the imperialist powers to such a point that eventually war breaks out to resolve them by means of force. The two world wars which have broken out between the imperialist powers have fully confirmed this Marxist-Leninist thesis.

Analysis of the economic and political situation in the capitalist-revisionist world shows, without any doubt, that US imperialism and

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Soviet social imperialism are more and more intensifying their efforts and plans for hegemony and world domination. It shows likewise that the more the unequal development between the capitalist countries deepens, the more pressure, interference and threats of the USA and the USSR against their partners increase. On this basis confrontations have arisen between US imperialism and Soviet social imperialism, on the one hand, and all the other countries of the world on the other hand; confrontations have arisen between the imperialist forces themselves, as well as between the latter and the peoples. These pressures constitute the principal cause of the tensions which exist in the world and the hotbeds of wars which flare up periodically; they contain the danger, and are leading towards the outbreak of a new world war. "US imperialism and Russian imperialism", says comrade Enver Hoxha, "are leading the world to another world war, more terrible than all the others" (Enver Hoxha, "Our policy is open, a policy of proletarian principles", Pamphlet, p. 32).

US imperialism, Soviet social imperialism and the other imperialist powers are making special efforts to come out of the economic-financial crisis, at the expense of the peoples of the semi-colonial developing countries in particular. As a result, the ruling classes in these countries will be faced even more than up till now, with two pressures: the external pressure of the imperialist powers which want to plunder their riches at low prices, and the internal pressure of the working masses, who demand the strengthening of national independence and sovereignty and that the riches be used to the benefit of the country, of its economic and social progress, by relying on their own forces. The outcome of this clash will be decided by the ratio of forces of the classes inside the country. The unceasing flow of history shows that all these countries and all those peoples who are suffering from monopoly and imperialist oppression and exploitation will, without fail, rise in struggle to defend their national independence and sovereignty. All the colonialists, old and new, fear this struggle and the unity of these peoples more than anything else.

The sharpening of the political, economic and social contradictions in the capitalist-revisionist world is inevitable. US-led imperialism and Soviet

social imperialism are advancing towards new upheavals. Their hegemonistic, enslaving, predatory and warmongering policy is being exposed. All this is intensifying the revolutionary struggle of the peoples for national liberation and is weakening the enemies of the proletarian revolution and socialism.

The predictions of the Party of Labour of Albania, the teachings of comrade Enver Hoxha, based on objective Marxist-Leninist dialectical analyses of the situation in the capitalist-revisionist world, will certainly be vindicated in the future just as in the past. They testify to the correctness and farsightedness of the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist line the Party of Labour of Albania is pursuing.

4.7 ADMINISTRATION II MARX'S SOCIALIST SOCIETY

Marx's concept of socialism follows from his concept of man. It should be clear by now that according to this concept, socialism is not a society of regimented, automatized individuals, regardless of whether there is equality of income or not, and regardless of whether they are well fed and well clad. It is not a society in which the individual is subordinated to the state, to the machine, to the bureaucracy. Even if the state as an "abstract capitalist" were the employer, even if "the entire social capital were united in the hands either of a single capitalist or a single capitalist corporation," this would not be socialism. In fact, as Marx says quite clearly in the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, "communism as such is not the aim of human development." What, then, is the aim?

Quite clearly the aim of socialism is man. It is to create a form of production and an organization of society in which man can overcome alienation from his product, from his work, from his fellow man, from himself and from nature; in which he can return to himself and grasp the world with his own powers, thus becoming one with the world. Socialism for Marx was, as Paul Tillich put it, "a resistance movement against the destruction of love in social reality."

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Marx expressed the aim of socialism with great clarity at the end of the third volume of *Capital*: "In fact, the realm of freedom does not commence until the point is passed where labor under the compulsion of necessity and of external utility is required. In the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of material production in the strict meaning of the term. Just as the savage must wrestle with nature, in order to satisfy his wants, in order to maintain his life and reproduce it, so civilized man has to do it, and he must do it in all forms of society and under all possible modes of production. With his development the realm of natural necessity expands, because his wants increase; but at the same time the forces of production increase, by which these wants are satisfied. The freedom in this field cannot consist of anything else but of the fact that socialized man, the associated producers, regulate their interchange with nature rationally, bring it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by some blind power; they accomplish their task with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most adequate to their human nature and most worthy of it. But it always remains a realm of necessity. Beyond it begins that development of human power, which is its own end, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can flourish only upon that realm of necessity as its basis."

Marx expresses here all essential elements of socialism. First, man produces in an associated, not competitive way; he produces rationally and in an unalienated way, which means that he brings production under his control, instead of being ruled by it as by some blind power. This clearly excludes a concept of socialism in which man is manipulated by a bureaucracy, even if this bureaucracy rules the whole state economy, rather than only a big corporation. It means that the individual participates actively in the planning and in the execution of the plans; it means, in short, the realization of political and industrial democracy. Marx expected that by this new form of an unalienated society man would become independent, stand on his own feet, and would no longer be crippled by the alienated mode of production and consumption; that he would truly be the master and the creator of his life, and hence that he could begin to make living his main business, rather than producing the

means for living. Socialism, for Marx, was never as such the fulfillment of life, but the condition for such fulfillment. When man has built a rational, nonalienated form of society, he will have the chance to begin with what is the aim of life: the "development of human power, which is its own end, the true realm of freedom." Marx, the man who every year read all the works of Aeschylus and Shakespeare, who brought to life in himself the greatest works of human thought, would never have dreamt that his idea of socialism could be interpreted as having as its aim the well-fed and well-clad "welfare" or "workers' " state. Man, in Marx's view, has created in the course of history a culture which he will be free to make his own when he is freed from the chains, not only of economic poverty, but of the spiritual poverty created by alienation. Marx's vision is based on his faith in man, in the inherent and real potentialities of the essence of man which have developed in history. He looked at socialism as the condition of human freedom and creativity, not as in itself constituting the goal of man's life.

For Marx, socialism (or communism) is not flight or abstraction from, or loss of the objective world which men have created by the objectification of their faculties. It is not an impoverished return to unnatural, primitive simplicity. It is rather the first real emergence, the genuine actualization of man's nature as something real. Socialism, for Marx, is a society which permits the actualization of man's essence, by overcoming his alienation. It is nothing less than creating the conditions for the truly free, rational, active and independent man; it is the fulfillment of the prophetic aim: the destruction of the idols.

That Marx could be regarded as an enemy of freedom was made possible only by the fantastic fraud of Stalin in presuming to talk in the name of Marx, combined with the fantastic ignorance about Marx that exists in the Western world. For Marx, the aim of socialism was freedom, but freedom in a much more radical sense than the existing democracy conceives of it—freedom in the sense of independence, which is based on man's standing on his own feet, using his own powers and relating himself to the world productively. "Freedom," said Marx, "is so much the

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essence of man that even its opponents realize it... No man fights freedom; he fights at most the freedom of others. Every kind of freedom has therefore always existed, only at one time as a special privilege, another time as a universal right."

Socialism, for Marx, is a society which serves the needs of man. But, many will ask, is not that exactly what modern capitalism does? Are not our big corporations most eager to serve the needs of man? And are the big advertising companies not reconnaissance parties which, by means of great efforts, from surveys to "motivation analysis," try to find out what the needs of man are? Indeed, one can understand the concept of socialism only if one understands Marx's distinction between the true needs of man, and the synthetic, artificially produced needs of man.

As follows from the whole concept of man, his real needs are rooted in his nature; this distinction between real and false needs is possible only on the basis of a picture of the nature of man and the true human needs rooted in his nature. Man's true needs are those whose fulfillment is necessary for the realization of his essence as a human being. As Marx put it: "The existence of what I truly love is felt by me as a necessity, as a need, without which my essence cannot be fulfilled, satisfied, complete." Only on the basis of a specific concept of man's nature can Marx make the difference between true and false needs of man. Purely subjectively, the false needs are experienced as being as urgent and real as the true needs, and from a purely subjective viewpoint, there could not be a criterion for the distinction. (In modern terminology one might differentiate between neurotic and rational [healthy] needs). Often man is conscious only of his false needs and unconscious of his real ones. The task of the analyst of society is precisely to awaken man so that he can become aware of the illusory false needs and of the reality of his true needs. The principal goal of socialism, for Marx, is the recognition and realization of man's true needs, which will be possible only when production serves man, and capital ceases to create and exploit the false needs of man.

Marx's concept of socialism is a protest, as is all existentialist philosophy, against the alienation of man; if, as Aldous Huxley put it, "our present economic, social and international arrangements are based, in large measure, upon organized lovelessness," then Marx's socialism is a protest against this very lovelessness, against man's exploitation of man, and against his exploitativeness towards nature, the wasting of our natural resources at the expense of the majority of men today, and more so of the generations to come. The unalienated man, who is the goal of socialism as we have shown before, is the man who does not "dominate" nature, but who becomes one with it, who is alive and responsive toward objects, so that objects come to life for him.

Does not all this mean that Marx's socialism is the realization of the deepest religious impulses common to the great humanistic religions of the past? Indeed it does, provided we understand that Marx, like Hegel and like many others, expresses his concern for man's soul, not in theistic, but in philosophical language.

Marx fought against religion exactly because it is alienated, and does not satisfy the true needs of man. Marx's fight against God is, in reality, a fight against the idol that is called God. Already as a young man he wrote as the motto for his dissertation "Not those are godless who have contempt for the gods of the masses but those who attribute the opinions of the masses to the gods." Marx's atheism is the most advanced form of rational mysticism, closer to Meister Eckhart or to Zen Buddhism than are most of those fighters for God and religion who accuse him of "godlessness."

It is hardly possible to talk about Marx's attitude toward religion without mentioning the connection between his philosophy of history, and of socialism, with the Messianic hope of the Old Testament prophets and the spiritual roots of humanism in Greek and Roman thinking. The Messianic hope is, indeed, a feature unique in Occidental thought. The prophets of the Old Testament are not only, like Lao Tzu or Buddha, spiritual leaders; they are also political leaders. They show man a vision

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of how he ought to be, and confront him with the alternatives between which he must choose. Most of the Old Testament prophets share the idea that history has a meaning, that man perfects himself in the process of history, and that he will eventually create a social order of peace and justice. But peace and justice for the prophets do not mean the absence of war and the absence of injustice. Peace and justice are concepts which are rooted in the whole of the Old Testament concept of man. Man, before he has consciousness of himself, that is, before he is human, lives in unity with nature (Adam and Eve in Paradise). The first act of Freedom, which is the capacity to say "no," opens his eyes, and he sees himself as a stranger in the world, beset by conflicts with nature, between man and man, between man and woman. The process of history is the process by which man develops his specifically human qualities, his powers of love and understanding; and once he has achieved full humanity he can return to the lost unity between himself and the world. This new unity, however, is different from the preconscious one which existed before history began. It is the at-onement of man with himself, with nature, and with his fellow man, based on the fact that man has given birth to himself in the historical process. In Old Testament thought, God is revealed in history ("the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob"), and in history, not in a state transcending history, lies the salvation of man. This means that man's spiritual aims are inseparably connected with the transformation of society; politics is basically not a realm that can be divorced from that of moral values and of man's self-realization.

Related thoughts arose in Greek (and Hellenistic) and Roman thinking. From Zeno, the founder of Stoic philosophy, to Seneca and Cicero, the concepts of natural law and of the equality of man exercised a powerful influence on the minds of men and, together with the prophetic tradition, are the foundations of Christian thinking.

While Christianity, especially since Paul, tended to transform the historical concept of salvation into an "other-worldly," purely spiritual one, and while the Church became the substitute for the "good society,"

this transformation was by no means a complete one. The early Church fathers express a radical criticism of the existing state; Christian thought of the late Middle Ages criticizes secular authority and the state from the standpoint of divine and natural law. This viewpoint stresses that society and the state must not be divorced from the spiritual values rooted in revelation and reason ("intellect" in the scholastic meaning of the word). Beyond this, the Messianic idea was expressed even in more radical forms in the Christian sects before the Reformation, and in the thinking of many Christian groups after the Reformation, down to the Society of Friends of the present time.

The mainstream of Messianic thinking after the Reformation, however, was expressed no longer in religious thought, but in philosophical, historical and social thought. It was expressed somewhat obliquely in the great utopias of the Renaissance, in which the new world is not in a distant future, but in a distant place. It was expressed in the thinking of the philosophers of the enlightenment and of the French and English Revolutions. It found its latest and most complete expression in Marx's concept of socialism. Whatever direct influence Old Testament thinking might have had on him through socialists like Moses Hess, no doubt the prophetic Messianic tradition influenced him indirectly through the thought of the enlightenment philosophers and especially through the thought stemming from Spinoza, Goethe, Hegel. What is common to prophetic, thirteenth-century Christian thought, eighteenth-century enlightenment, and nineteenth-century socialism, is the idea that State (society) and spiritual values cannot be divorced from each other; that politics and moral values are indivisible. This idea was attacked by the secular concepts of the Renaissance (Machiavelli) and again by the secularism of the modern state. It seems that Western man, whenever he was under the influence of gigantic material conquests, gave himself unrestrictedly to the new powers he had acquired and, drunk with these new powers, forgot himself. The elite of these societies became obsessed with the wish for power, luxury, and the manipulation of men, and the masses followed them. This happened in the Renaissance with its new science, the discovery of the globe, the prosperous City States of

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Northern Italy; it happened again in the explosive development of the first and the present second industrial revolutions.

But this development has been complicated by the presence of another factor. If the state or the society is meant to serve the realization of certain spiritual values, the danger exists that a supreme authority tells man -and forces him -- to think and behave in a certain way. The incorporation of certain objectively valid values into social life tends to produce authoritarianism. The spiritual authority of the Middle Ages was the Catholic Church. Protestantism fought this authority, at first promising greater independence for the individual, only to make the princely state the undisputed and arbitrary ruler of man's body and soul. The rebellion against princely authority occurred in the name of the nation, and for a while the national state promised to be the representative of freedom. But soon the national state devoted itself to the protection of the material interests of those who owned capital, and could thus exploit the labor of the majority of the population. Certain classes of society protested against this new authoritarianism and insisted on the freedom of the individual from the interference of secular authority. This postulate of liberalism, which tended to protect "freedom from," led, on the other hand, to the insistence that state and society must not attempt to realize "freedom to," that is to say, liberalism had to insist not only on separation from State and Church, but had also to deny that it was the function of the state to help realize certain spiritual and moral values; these values were supposed to be entirely a matter for the individual.

Socialism (in its Marxist and other forms) returned to the idea of the "good society" as the condition for the realization of man's spiritual needs. It was antiauthoritarian, both as far as the Church and the State are concerned, hence it aimed at the eventual disappearance of the state and at the establishment of a society composed of voluntarily cooperating individuals. Its aim was a reconstruction of society in such a way as to make it the basis for man's true return to himself, without the presence of those authoritarian forces which restricted and impoverished man's mind.

Thus, Marxist and other forms of socialism are the heirs of prophetic Messianism, Christian Chiliastic sectarianism, thirteenth-century Thomism, Renaissance Utopianism, and eighteenth-century enlightenment. It is the synthesis of the prophetic-Christian idea of society as the plane of spiritual realization, and of the idea of individual freedom. For this reason, it is opposed to the Church because of its restriction of the mind, and to liberalism because of its separation of society and moral values. It is opposed to Stalinism and Krushchevism, for their authoritarianism as much as their neglect of humanist values.

Socialism is the abolition of human self-alienation, the return of man as a real human being. "It is the definitive resolution of the antagonism between man and nature, and between man and man. It is the true solution of the conflict between existence and essence, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. It is a solution of the riddle of history and knows itself to be this solution". For Marx, socialism meant the social order which permits the return of man to himself, the identity between existence and essence, the overcoming of the separateness and antagonism between subject and object, the humanization of nature; it meant a world in which man is no longer a stranger among strangers, but is in his world, where he is at home.

4.8 CRITICAL APPRAISAL

Criticisms of Marxism have come from various political ideologies and academic disciplines. These include general criticisms about a lack of internal consistency; criticisms related to historical materialism, that it is a type of historical determinism, the necessity of suppression of individual rights, issues with the implementation of communism and economic issues such as the distortion or absence of price signals and reduced incentives. In addition, empirical and epistemological problems are frequently identified.

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Democratic socialists and social democrats reject the idea that socialism can be accomplished only through class conflict and a proletarian revolution. Many anarchists reject the need for a transitory state phase. Some thinkers have rejected the fundamentals of Marxist theory, such as historical materialism and the labour theory of value and gone on to criticise capitalism and advocate socialism using other arguments.

Some contemporary supporters of Marxism argue that many aspects of Marxist thought are viable, but that the corpus is incomplete or somewhat outdated in regards to certain aspects of economic, political or social theory. They may therefore combine some Marxist concepts with the ideas of other theorists such as Max Weber, with the Frankfurt School being one example.

Historian Paul Johnson wrote: "The truth is, even the most superficial inquiry into Marx's use of evidence forces one to treat with skepticism everything he wrote which relies on factual data". For example, Johnson stated: "The whole of the key Chapter Eight of Capital is a deliberate and systematic falsification to prove a thesis which an objective examination of the facts showed was untenable".

Historical materialism

Historical materialism remains one of the intellectual bases of Marxism. It proposes that technological advances in modes of production inevitably lead to changes in the social relations of production. This economic "base" of society supports is reflected by and influences the ideological "superstructure" which encompasses culture, religion, politics, and all other aspects of humanity's social consciousness. It thus looks for the causes of developments and changes in human history in economic, technological and more broadly, material factors as well as the clashes of material interests among tribes, social classes, and nations. Law, politics, the arts, literature, morality and religion are understood by Marx to make up the superstructure as reflections of the economic base of society. Many critics have argued that this is an oversimplification of

the nature of society and claim that the influence of ideas, culture and other aspects of what Marx called the superstructure are just as important as the economic base to the course of society, if not more so. However, Marxism does not claim that the economic base of society is the only determining element in society as demonstrated by the following letter written by Friedrich Engels, Marx's long-time contributor:

According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase.

However, this also creates another problem for Marxism. If the superstructure influences the base then there is no need for Marx's constant assertions that the history of society is one of economic class conflict. This then becomes a classic chicken or the egg argument as to whether the base or the superstructure comes first. Peter Singer proposes that the way to solve this problem is to understand that Marx saw the economic base as ultimately real. Marx believed that humanity's defining characteristic was its means of production and thus the only way for man to free himself from oppression was for him to take control of the means of production. According to Marx, this is the goal of history and the elements of the superstructure act as tools of history. Even if Singer's interpretation of Marx's intuitions on the "goal of history" is faithful to Marx's original intent, that still would not make this viewpoint necessarily true.

Murray Rothbard criticized historical materialism as well, arguing that Marx claimed the "base" of society (its technology and social relations) determined its "consciousness" in the superstructure, yet, and building on the arguments of Ludwig von Mises, Rothbard observes it is human consciousness which drives the development of technology and social relations. Rothbard argues that Marx ignores how the base arises, which

obscures that the true causal path is from the superstructure to the base, as human beings determine the development of technology and the social relations they wish to pursue. Rothbard quotes von Mises, who states "We may summarize the Marxian doctrine in this way: In the beginning there are the 'material productive forces', i.e., the technological equipment of human productive efforts, the tools and machines. No question concerning their origin is permitted; they are, that is all; we must assume that they are dropped from heaven.

4.9 LET US SUM UP

Marx himself presents a simplified explanation in the Appendix to the first German edition of *Das Kapital* published in English translation in *Capital & Class*. The need for this appendix was suggested by Engels and there is an exchange of correspondence concerning its purpose and form.

The two principal components of marxist science are the dialectical method of logical deduction and genetic synthesis and its application to the evolution of real social history. While in each of these areas considered separately there are at least a number of scholarly works, there are few examples of substantial exegesis and fewer still successful applications of marxian method to the fundamental obstacles to class-consciousness today. This is reflected both at the general level of lack of understanding of the social nature of technological change embodied in Marx's theory of the value-form, reflected in widespread ignorance of the detail of the 'rational kernel' of Hegel's dialectic whose the principal 'forms of being' Marx used to structure the whole of the work on 'Capital'. His analytical evolution of the relation between subjective and objective development and their qualitative and quantitatively measured forms and functions which make up the logical skeleton in his presentation are almost universally ignored. Compare Hegel's *Logic* for instance with Marx the value-form.

More than any other twentieth century marxist Lenin selfconsciously assimilated the fundamentals of this methodological approach (to the

careful study of which he returned at the most critical political moments and set about the task of applying it to the 'burning questions of our movement'. His appreciation of the importance of the knowledge of real social movements is apparent from his studies: The development of Capitalism in Russia and his Notebooks on Imperialism.

Lukacs' revolutionary career is made more problematic by his intellectual capitulation to the pressures of Stalinism. The essays from his period of active revolutionary leadership however are of unparalleled importance for their reassertion of Hegel's contribution to marxism. In addition his critical review of Bukharin published as Technology & Social Relations remains of seminal importance as one of the few direct attempts to deal with the problem of the methodological degeneration of communist theory on this question utilising an adequate level of theoretical and historical understanding.

Rubin's 'Essays' shared this appreciation of the weakness of communist theory (as did the work of KORSCH & JAKUBOWSKI) but with the exceptions of Henryk Grossman's work at the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, and Evgeny Preobrazhensky's New Economics, Rubin was in this period almost alone in articulating the central methodological content embodied in Marx's theoretical concepts. Roman Rosdolsky's valuable study The making of Marx's 'Capital' which re-emphasises the importance of use-value in Marx's two-fold analysis, was a result of his discovery of one of the rare copies of Grundrisse Marx's previously unpublished rough draft for 'Capital'.

Whereas Lenin had come to his understanding of the importance of Hegel's Logic by extensive study, Grossman's emphasis grew out of the need to re-articulate the structural method of 'Capital' in dealing with imperialism at the necessary level of theory. Rosdolsky was however able to read Marx directly asserting his enormous debt to Hegel and exploring out-loud the methodological problems of the relation between the investigation and presentation of his 'critique'.

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Lukacs in 1930 had a similar experience in his reading of the then recently deciphered Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 on which he subsequently commented: "the overwhelming effect produced in me by Marx's statement that objectivity was the primary material attribute of all things and relations...that objectification is a natural means by which man masters the world and as such can be either a positive or a negative fact...it became clear to us that even the best and most capable Marxists, like Plekhanov and Mehring, had not had a sufficiently profound grasp of the universal nature of Marxism. They failed, therefore, to understand that Marx confronts us with the necessity of erecting a systematic aesthetics on the foundations of dialectical materialism.". It was in this period that Lukacs began his twin study of *The Young Hegel* and *The Destruction of Reason* on the one hand looking at the contribution Hegel made to the rational scientific basis of dialectical materialism and on the other how in a direct reaction to the development of Marxism the irrationalist elements of Hegel's thought were promoted and the revolutionary critical element dismembered in the process of the degeneration of bourgeois philosophy.

The immediate post-war period produced little that was marxist by these criteria, with perhaps the sole exception of Paul Mattick's essays which defended the orthodox theoretical marxism, particularly on the issue of Marx's theory of crisis, against revisionists such as Paul Sweezy. Mattick's essay *Technology and the Mixed Economy* (1966) was a rare articulation of the limitations and social origin of the drive for labour productivity. Mattick drew substantially on Grossman's 1929 study *The law of accumulation and the breakdown of capitalism* defending its analysis against Sweezy [1942] and other anti-marxists who sought to eradicate the connection between capitalist accumulation and the theory of crises. Mattick argued that despite the appearance of the post-war boom capitalism would continue to retard the development of productive forces and that the limits to capital accumulation would reassert themselves. Until Grossman's work becomes fully available in English, Mattick's *Economic Crisis and Crisis Theory* remains the most readily available articulation of the necessity of revolutionary theory for today's

conditions. The 1970s saw a resurgence of marxist studies which sought to assimilate the theoretical gains which had been lost to working class politics in the middle decades of the twentieth century.

Drawing on these and other forgotten works in the marxist tradition and a renewed study of the methodologically explicit drafts and early writings and correspondence of Marx, a tendency began to emerge which struggled to return theoretically to an authentic "Marx's Marxism" and come to terms with the outstanding problems facing marxist critique of capitalist society in the second half of the twentieth century. Unfortunately the political hiatus caused by the largely unexpected collapse of the Soviet Union, resulted in a widespread fragmentation and demoralisation even amongst those marxist writers who were critical of the stalinist state formations.

The nature of the Soviet Union, the political tenacity and character of stalinism itself, an explanation of the political hold of and contemporary forms of Reformism in the working class and the restatement of the fundamentals of the marxist struggle against the state, and the bourgeois ideological weapons of nationalism, imperialism and the oppression of nations and nationalities, racial and women's oppression and the economic role of the family under capitalism. This tendency has yet to re-articulate Marx's critique of ideological power of the politics of productivity theoretically in challenging the revisionist acceptance of technological mystification.

4.10 KEY WORDS

Bureaucracy: Bureaucracy refers to both a body of non-elected government officials and an administrative policy-making group. Historically, a bureaucracy was a government administration managed by departments staffed with non-elected officials.

Marxism: Marxism is a method of socioeconomic analysis that views class relations and social conflict using a materialist interpretation of historical development and takes a dialectical view of social

transformation. It originates from the works of 19th-century German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

Methodology: Methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. It comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge.

4.11 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Mention the causes for the explain the role of bureaucracy as-identified by Karl Marx.
2. Explain the role of bureaucracy.

4.12 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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- Why Marx is Right? page 34
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4.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1 See Sec. 4.2.

2 See Sec. 4.3.

3 See Sec. 4.4.

UNIT 5: POST-STRUCTURALISM

STRUCTURE

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Post Structural Theories
- 5.3 Discourse Knowledge and Experience
- 5.4 Derrida and Deconstruction
- 5.5 Foucault and the Archaeology of Knowledge
- 5.6 Jameson and Late Capitalism
- 5.7 Baudrillard and Post Modernism
- 5.8 Let us sum up
- 5.9 Key Words
- 5.10 Questions for Review
- 5.11 Suggested readings and references
- 5.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

5.0 OBJECTIVES

After having read this unit you should be able to

- To outline post-structural theories
- To critique structuralism
- To describe deconstruction
- To explain “late capitalism”
- To discuss Baudrillard and postmodern.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

It is the intellectual trend in the ontology of ideas and schools of ideas, that they are constantly superseded. The ideas or ideologies that are superseded recede into the history of ideas. The new theories and ideas then occupy centre stage in the national and international sociological

and social scientific world views. This cycle further repeats itself and though this fact is often lost sight of in the heyday of a theoretical orientation that has become popular. In the essay that follows we will first take up post structuralism and then postmodern theory. We will see how there are several overlaps indeed intermeshes between various strands of these two contemporary approaches to the study of society and culture. Thus what we are dealing with are strands of an overall approach. There is no one view on these approaches and both post structuralism and post modernism are blanket terms containing many strands of thought. Let us turn now to post structuralism first. What does the term indicate? As is clear from the word “post structuralism”, these approaches are those that came after ‘structuralism’. These theories and approaches sought to seek insights into society by critiquing and deconstructing social and cultural processes. The post modernism break with structuralism was the fact that structuralism reduced everything into binary oppositions and the interrelations between them. The structuralisms held they could analyse any phenomena with the help of their methodology. We must emphasize that post structuralism is a number of approaches and not one monolithic theory. However, these approaches have in common their point of departure a critique of “structuralism”.

Critique of Structuralism

Poststructuralists often point out in their various writings that meaning in language is diverse and open to many different interpretations. Yet to get to the meaning of a text it can be deconstructed and is different from its apparent or surface meaning. That is different meanings can be assigned to a single text depending upon the perspective taken. As would be clear by now that post structuralism proceeds as a critique of structuralism which is itself bounded by its own linguistic boundaries. Structuralism, however, was found to be inadequate as an explanation of social process and phenomena. Thus we find that

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- structuralism did not pay heed to historical processes and is a-historical
- applied the rules of linguistics to societal processes which is a questionable procedure
- it is assumed that a work has meaning in itself and this persists even before it is discovered and
- the text is only a conduit between the subject and the structure of rationality.

Thus the structuralists argue that it is language and its structure which itself produces reality and since it is language that is responsible for thought it determines man's perceptions whatever they may be. Further there is the idea that meaning does not come from individuals but the rules of language and the overall 'system' which controls individuals. Therefore, the individual is subordinated and superseded by "the structure." It is the structure which produces meaning not the individual. It is specifically language which is at the base of such domination over the individual.

Post-structuralism denotes a way of theorizing that emerged around the 1950s, predominantly in France, among otherwise extremely diverse intellectuals (although many question this label). Most thinkers termed post-structuralist, as well as the legitimating struggles and heated debates, were prominent until about the 1980s. Beyond this date, the debates died down and many once radical post-structuralist ideas were subsequently absorbed into mainstream disciplines. As the name suggests, a post-structuralist way of thinking is rooted in structuralism, but it also represents a retrospective critique of certain structuralist commitments. Like structuralism, post-structuralism identifies a way of theorizing that belongs equally to literary theory (the systematic study of literary texts), philosophy (especially the study of how thought works, insofar as thinking is carried out in language), and critical theory (emancipatory social science via discourse analysis and ideology critique). The starting points for a post-structural theoretical vision within this enormous terrain of interdisciplinary scholarship are

language, signification, and semiotics. Most post-structuralist thinkers first sought to establish new concepts in this domain to describe their novel way of thinking. Most later turned their attention to philosophical and ethical themes and, consequently, to emancipatory social critique. Of the figures commonly named post-structuralist, some are more closely aligned than others with structuralism. Together, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, Jacques Lacan, and Michel Foucault have been named structuralism's "Gang of Four." However, the latter three, across their diverse domains of concern, ultimately shifted from structuralist to post-structuralist thinking. Lacan, in particular, remains difficult to place since he published "work in progress" that was subject to revision over a span of fifty years, and his texts generate opposing structuralist and post-structuralist readings. The selection of more clearly post-structuralist figures (Umberto Eco, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, and Julia Kristeva) follows the overall flow from concerns with signification, through philosophical and ethical issues, to social critique. A great deal of overlap is found, however, since this trend is also evident in the course of thinking specific to each figure. The "ethical turn" in post-structuralism is marked by an emphasis on subjectivity, authorship, and identity (particularly feminine). This emphasis reflects both an important critique of structuralism (which threatens subjectivity) and the overall shift toward philosophical and ethical concerns that culminates in critical theory. Disagreements among post-structuralists, as well as criticisms of post-structuralism, concern the degree to which "chaos concepts" (such as instability, chance, and ambiguity) should be accommodated when considering issues of meaning, knowledge, subjectivity, and ethics. Although the border between post-structuralism and postmodernism is not clearly drawn, postmodernism can be characterized as an extremist response, which celebrates "chaos" as a replacement for structuralist rigidity. Such extremism has elicited strong criticism. A more rigorously post-structural approach is to resist extremes and adopt a theoretical attitude that accommodates complexity.

The starting point for a post-structural theoretical vision is language and signification. Classic introductions to literary theory, therefore, such as

Culler 2011 and Eagleton 2008, provide essential groundwork for understanding post-structuralism. Along with these two overviews, Belsey 2002, which focuses particularly on post-structuralism, completes a trio of popular and accessible introductions. Written with the insight gained from personal acquaintance, Roudinesco 2008 supplements these more general works with a detailed, particularized account of the intellectual context that gave birth to post-structuralist thinking. More depth and detail for advanced researchers is offered by the selection of essays by major and interesting figures provided in Young 1981. As these texts show, most post-structuralists first sought to establish new linguistic concepts to describe their novel way of thinking and turned later toward articulating a consequent emancipatory critical theory. Norris 1996 examines this link, criticizing extreme forms of post-structuralism that produce a “textualism” leading to overblown skepticism and cultural relativism. In the process, the text provides lucid explanations of structuralism, post-structuralism, and postmodernism, and defends deconstruction as a mode of thinking. Dillet, et al. 2013, an edited collection of essays written by diverse contemporary experts, offers an up-to-date survey of major post-structuralist thinkers and ideas. A similarly contemporary overview and assessment of post-structuralism is provided in Williams 2005, which explains key post-structuralist concepts and considers the extent to which they apply to contemporary issues. Harland 2010 offers an overview that takes the further step of coining a new term, “superstructuralism,” first to coordinate structuralist and post-structuralist theories as the complex components of a larger paradigm and, second, to indicate that this is grounded on a neo-Marxist inversion that prioritizes the superstructure.

5.2 POST STRUCTURAL THEORIES

Post-structuralism emerged in France during the 1960s as a movement critiquing structuralism. According to J. G. Merquior a love-hate relationship with structuralism developed among many leading French thinkers in the 1960s.

In a 1966 lecture "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences", Jacques Derrida presented a thesis on an apparent rupture in intellectual life. Derrida interpreted this event as a "decentering" of the former intellectual cosmos. Instead of progress or divergence from an identified centre, Derrida described this "event" as a kind of "play."

In 1967, Barthes published "The Death of the Author" in which he announced a metaphorical event: the "death" of the author as an authentic source of meaning for a given text. Barthes argued that any literary text has multiple meanings and that the author was not the prime source of the work's semantic content. The "Death of the Author," Barthes maintained, was the "Birth of the Reader," as the source of the proliferation of meanings of the text.

The period was marked by the rebellion of students and workers against the state in May 1968.

As can be seen post structural theories do not agree with the 'structuralists' in several key areas of analysis and understanding. We will now turn to these and see how the two differ. However, before that let us look briefly at the background to post structuralism. By the 1950's the influence of structuralism had set in. Saussure (1857-1913) was of the view that 'meaning' had to be found in the "structure" of the whole language (Guller, 1976). It could not be discovered in individual words, and had to have an overall linguistic setting – that is the language as a whole. We find that around the 1960's the structuralist movement tried to amalgamate the ideas of Marx Freud and Saussure. The structuralists were opposed to the existentialist movement which put the individual and life experience at the centre. By contrast the structuralists opined that the individual is everywhere being conditioned by social psychological and linguistic structures which control and direct him, rather than the individual doing the same.

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As you will have noticed this is an extreme stand and the claim for universality of application of method also drew attention to the fact that such claims of universal application did not necessarily hold true. Also how is it that any two structural analyses of the same field or phenomena would be different? It was because of the short-comings of the structuralist approach that post structuralism was developed by the intellectuals. This post structuralism is based on a number of basic assumptions/positions. These include:

- 1) putting all phenomena under one explanation,
- 2) there is a transcendental reality which overarches all other reality.

Post structuralism is also critical of concept of man as portrayed and developed by Enlightenment thought. The Enlightenment view that the individual is separate and whole and that the mind is the area where values evolve on the other hand the poststructuralists felt that the individual was embedded in social interaction. Such symbolic beings are referred to by the word “subject”. We can then say that the subjects are intertwined with society and culture and occupy some place within them, and sociologically based sites. Further subjects are the actors in everyday reality. In fact it is the subjects that make up society and the activities therein, include work and entertainment. We could add here that the subjects meaning and values are embedded in the identities of groups and the activities which lead them to having an identity. Thus these approaches that we are discussing have often been dubbed “anti-humanist” because post-structuralism is against the divine or transcendental wholeness as was the humanist theories view.

However, ‘antihumanist’ is a misnomer and is actually another way of looking at human beings one that is essentially not against individual persons. Further we find that while structuralism presents reality as relations between binary oppositions post-structuralism’s vision of reality is a fragmented one. Social process and cultural relations are not viewed as neat oppositions – on the other hand social and cultural

processes are seen in bits and pieces and the nature of reality is not seen as being amenable to total understanding of a whole process. Parts of social process can be focused upon and analysed. Poststructuralists are completely opposed to grand narratives and Meta theory feeling these are equivalent to a fiction and not really apprehending reality. Thus post-structural theories are themselves looking at the specific. Further the physical self (the body) is studied in the context of time and history, and brought out of the closet so to speak. Similarly it is the details of discourse and cultural actions that are now looked into. Further the role of language in building social and cultural reality is also evident in the work of the poststructuralists (Godelier, 1972). Thus the fact that society and the individual are “linguistically bound” with each other and the relationship between the two is complex. This stand clearly negates the earlier assumptions of social scientists that language was easy to comprehend and use and that there were no ambiguities regarding language – use. This the post-structural theories negate as an erroneous assumption. In fact “reality” itself is constructed within the social matrix and continues to reproduce itself over time.

5.3 DISCOURSE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

The world of discourse and knowledge set the limits for our experience – and the subject (ego) can only experience or describe what he has experienced. That is to also say that there are experiences for which there is no language or a language is slowly being pieced together, and certain words and concepts gain ground and usage. This includes the usage of metaphor, metonymy and irony. These usages lead by themselves to a concern with ideology which provides an ingress and insight into relations of power and the world-view of the subjects. Again another area in which post structural theories focus upon in their analysis on what are known as cultural codes which themselves provide an understanding of our lives and how they work out within various contexts. However, it needs to be pointed out that it is understood by the post structuralists that construction of meaning implies that some aspects of social process and individual life will be emphasised and others will be relatively reduced in

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importance. In other words “objectivity” as in the case of earlier sociological theory is found to be an illusion. That is the analyses of poststructuralists does not deny its subjective orientation. Yet poststructuralists also hold that meaning in society can be deconstructed to open up new ideas and practices. However, such an exercise leads to an understanding of specifics rather than general constructions. Thus loops of meaning and process of construction reveal more about the specific scaffolding of the subject rather than an understanding of the whole. The world is mediated by discourse, language and ideology all of which structure the experience of the subject. According to post structural thinking it is the text which is the repertoire of meanings and there is no meaning outside the text. Thus meaning resides in the text itself in toto. An understanding resides in social signs and discourses in particular fields of study.

Again almost paradoxically, every text exists only in relation to other texts. However, it needs to be pointed out that man’s ability to perceive reality is not at stake. Nonetheless what we know of reality is known through various processes of discourse symbols and language. Yet it must be understood that discourse itself is very varied in content. It is also a fact that discourse is sometimes sketchy and abrupt. It originates through chance and disappears also through unspecified reasons. Thus according to Foucault there is no question of predicting history through grand theories and Meta narratives (Foucault, 1969). History is thus viewed by poststructuralists as happening by chance. Thus in history the twists, turns, plots, subplots and important events and happenings cannot be pinned down – that is it happens by chance.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Discuss about the Post Structural Theories.

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2. What is meant by discourse Knowledge and Experience?

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5.4 DERRIDA AND DECONSTRUCTION

This brief note on structuralism is important for our understanding of the process of “deconstruction” initiated by Derrida. The basics of this structuralism are: positing of a centre of power or influence which begins and ends all social processes. This could be ‘mind’ or ‘self’ or even ‘God’. all structures are composed of binary pairs or oppositions one of which is more important than the other and often signified thus: +/- . These could be good/evil, god/man and so o Thus post structuralism began with Derrida’s critique of structuralism or rather this ‘deconstruction’ of language society and culture. The structuralists felt that man was chained to structures which controlled him. In contrast, however, Derrida feels that language can be reduced to writing which does not control the subjects. According to him all institutions and structures are nothing but writing and incapable of controlling the individual. The structuralists saw order and stability in language, hence in all structures; the poststructuralists on the other hand saw language as essentially changing and quite unstable. This means that the language structure being itself in flux cannot create structures that constrain, restrain, or punish people, because language itself is disorderly, and the underlying laws of language cannot be ‘discovered’. This is what is the process of deconstruction which as the term suggests is a sort of conceptual dissection of the concept or Post Structuralism and Post

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Modernism 194 process being studied. Derrida who coined the term deconstruction felt that logocentrism has dominated the Western countries. This way of perceiving has meant that writing has always been suppressed historically speaking. This has also meant that the freedom to analyse and think is taken away in a logocentric system. Derrida wants to dismantle this type of approach as it sets writing free from repression. Under these circumstances what takes place in the art form of traditional theatre is a representation of real life. Such a representation is extremely important, in fact a controlled theological theatre.

The Theological Theatre Derrida contrasts 'theatre of cruelty' as against traditional theatre which has representational logic and renders traditional theatre as theological. Derrida writes: the stage is theological for as long as its structure, following the entirety of tradition comports the following elements: an author creator who, absent and from afar, is armed with a text and keeps watch over, assembles, regulates the time or the meaning of representation He lets representation represent him through representatives, directors or actors who represent the thought of the "creator". Finally the theological stage comports a passive, seated public, a public of spectators, of consumers, of enjoyers. (Derrida, 1978, Writing and Difference : p:235).

Derrida's chosen alternative stage is one which will not be controlled by texts and authors but fall short of disorder/anarchy. Thus Derrida wants a fundamental change in traditional theatre/life which would mean a great change from the dominance of the writer (God?) on the stage (theatre) or in societal process as well leading closer towards freedom of the individual. Derrida feels thus that traditional theatre needs to be deconstructed. In this mode of suggestion is included a critique of society itself, which is, as mentioned earlier 'logocentric.' Derrida feels that in theatre it is the writer who puts together the script, and that this influence is so strong that it is akin to a dictatorship. Similarly in social processes the intellectual ideas and formulations are controlled by the intellectual authorities who create discourse. Further we may add that post structuralists believe in the process of decentering because when these is

no specific authoritarian pressure on society it becomes open ended and available for ‘play and difference’. This process is ongoing reflexive and open (Derrida, 1978 :297). Thus the present alone exists and it is the arena where social activity takes place. Thus we should try to find solutions by harking to the past. The future itself cannot be precisely predicted. However, there is no precise solution that Derrida provides except that in the end there is only writing, acting and play with difference. At this point in our presentation it would be instructive to look briefly at an example of post structural ideas and ideology in the case of Michel Foucault one of the major poststructuralists. One critical difference between Foucault and the structuralists is that while linguistics is the main influence for the former, it did not occur exclusively as the domain of ideas that have to be adopted or modified into a poststructuralist schema. That is post structural thinkers use a variety of ideas and influence and are not reduced to examining the relations between binary terms. This variety of sources in presenting an argument is what puts Foucault into the group of the poststructuralists.

5.5 FOUCAULT AND THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

Foucault described his approach/methodology as the “archaeology of knowledge.” Using this approach Foucault studied knowledge and discourse. According to Foucault this approach provides better ingress to understanding society and it is different from history, which he feels is portrayed in a stereotyped linear progression, whereas the reality remains limited and ‘continuous.’

The Archaeology of Knowledge In his early work on methodology, Foucault (1966) is doing an “archaeology of knowledge”. His objects of study are bodies of knowledge, ideas, modes of discourse, he contrasts his archaeology of knowledge to history and the history of ideas, both of which he regards as being too rational and as seeing too much continuity in the history of knowledge.... This highly structural approach in Foucault’s early work was later abandoned for a poststructuralist orientation because it was silent on the issue of power as well as the link

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between knowledge and power. Michel Foucault died in 1984 at the age of 58 as a leading sociologist. Among Foucault's last works was a trilogy of sexual study. These works indicated Foucault's interest in studying sexuality. These books were The History of Sexuality 1976, The Care of the Self 1984, and The Use of Pleasure 1984. (From Ritzer, 1996 Sociological Theory, p:604-5).

Foucault, however, moved away from this structural type of analysis and began studying the 'genealogy of power.' His concern was to find out the facts about governance through knowledge production. The nature of knowledge as power should not be hierarchical and also that the higher the knowledge (e.g. science) the greater the power it wields over the subjects. Thus Foucault studied technique and process in science since this is what exerts power over people through the medium of institutions. This is not to say that the elites are scheming and manipulating power. Again Foucault uses a nonlinear perception of progress in societies from the stage of barbarism to the present civilisation. Thus history is seen instead as shifting patterns of domination. However, knowledge/power is such that it is always opposed and resisted. Thus Foucault's post structural view is that while knowledge/ power are ubiquitous they are certainly not omnipotent and total in their domination but their power/authority is always questioned and opposed. A brief introduction to Foucault's ideas would help us in completing the section on post structuralism (Foucault, 1979). Thus according to Foucault:

- the mad have been misunderstood and mistreated over the course of history, and subjected to moral control
- power/knowledge are implicative of each other
- technologies exert power e.g. the Panopticon a prison with the cells around a large observation tower from which everything that inmates do is visible and observable. Such an institution is metaphoric of total societal control of the prisoners, since it forces even the prisoners or inmates to exercise self-restraint. Thus this is a direct relationship between technology, knowledge and power. Thus the Panopticon is a prototype of societal control

and surveillance and the forerunner of intelligence services and satellite observations over geophysical territories.

Post modernism is not the term for a single type of theory, metanarrative, or grand theory. It is rather the term for an overall approach involving many Post Structuralism and Post Modern 196 similar strands. There is thus no single position in postmodernism, but all the thinkers in this approach share certain common features that separate it from “modernism.” This has been both a feature that separates it from ‘modernism’ and the approaches all indicate that what they are doing is to present, dissect, construct ideas that will be relevant to the postmodern context. A large number of sociologists still tend to think that post modernism is a passing fancy, however, it is now obvious that postmodernism cannot be ignored both as fact and phenomena. However, it cannot be denied that postmodernism is surrounded by diverse positions within the field itself.

It would be proper at this point to distinguish between some common terms that are often confused with each other although they are quite distinct from one another. Thus “post modernity” is the word used for the historical epoch following the modern era. Further ‘post modernism’ itself refers to cultural products which are different/separate from the modern cultural products (in art, architecture etc.). Again ‘postmodern social theory’ refers to a method of ideating that differs from modern social theory. From the above it can be said that the post modern covers:

- 1) a new epoch,
- 2) new cultural products,
- 3) new theories about society.

Further these new realities are getting strengthened and there is a widespread feeling that the modern era is ending and being superseded by another epoch. This was evident in breaking up of buildings which were modern and complete. However, the post modern theories themselves provide ready made solutions in a general sense. However, it

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is questionable whether the birth of the post modern era can be precisely dated though it appears to have transited, from the modern in the 1960's. Post modernism indicates that in the cultural field postmodern cultural products tend to replace modern products. Again postmodern social theory has emerged from and has differences with modern social theory. Thus postmodern theory rejects the notion of 'foundationalism' of the earlier theories but itself tends to be relative, non relational and nihilistic.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Describe the Derrida and Deconstruction theory.

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2. Discuss the Foucault and the Archaeology of Knowledge.

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5.6 JAMESON AND LATE CAPITALISM

Again the postmodern thinkers reject the notion of a grand narrative or meta narrative. For example Lyotard contrasts modern knowledge which has a grand synthesis e.g. the work of Parsons or Marx such narratives are associated with modern science. Thus as Lyotard identifies modern knowledge with metanarratives, then obviously postmodern approaches demand that such theorising should be negated in its completeness. This

is because postmodern scholars such as Lyotard are not afraid to face the differences and challenges of such a viewpoint. Thus post modernism becomes an instrument that welcomes different perspectives under the same broad umbrella. Let us now turn to look at some examples of postmodern theory. A good illustration of the postmodern theory is clearly set out in the work of Fredric Jameson. The point of departure is that modernity and post modernity mark a radical break from each other and are hard to reconcile the two. However, a middle position is taken by Jameson who writes that there are some continuities between the two epochs. According to Jameson capitalism is in its 'late' stages, but continues to be the main form of production the world over. However, this 'late' stage of capitalism has been ushered in with post modernism. Thus while the cultural logic is altered, the underlying structure remains the same as in the incipient forms of capitalism. This is reflective of the Marxian framework. Jameson sees the postmodern situation as possessing both positive and negative aspects of postmodernism. Thus there is progress and chaos side by side. Thus according to Jameson there are three stages in the progress of capitalism. The first is market capitalism typified by national markets. Following this phase comes the imperialist stage which is backed up by a global capitalist network. Then the third phase is 'late capitalism' share capital is used to commodify new areas. The effect of changes in the economic structure automatically create appropriate cultural changes. Thus Jameson points out that we can see that:

- realist culture is associated with market capitalism
- modernist culture is associated with monopoly capitalism
- postmodern culture and multinational capitalism.

Late Capitalismaesthetic production today has become integrated into commodity production generally the frantic economic urgency of producing fresh waves of ever more morel seeming goods (from clothing to airplanes), at ever greater rates of turnover, now assigns an increasingly essential structural function and position to aesthetic innovation and experimentation. Such economic necessities then find

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recognition in the institutional support of all kinds available for art, from foundation and grants to museums and other forms of patronage. (from Frederic Jameson, 1984 "Post-Modernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism". New Left Review, p:57

. Jameson's perspective, works mainly within a base and superstructure model. According to Jameson postmodern society has some characteristics: firstly there is superficiality, in the sense the cultural products keep to superficiality and do not enquire deeply into the situation e.g. the soup cans and portrait of Marolyn Munroe – both of which are simulacra as they are a "copy of a copy." Both paintings were painted from a copy of the photographs. Thus the pictures are simulacrum – in which one cannot distinguish the original from the copy (Jameson, 1984:86). These paintings are simulacrum and lack in depth, and covers the surface meanings only. Further emotion or emotionality is hardly to be found in the postmodern societies. Thus alienation has been supplanted by fragmentation, which results in the impersonalization of interaction. Again, and thirdly historicity is set aside and it is clear that all that can be known about the past is textual and can spawn intertextuality at the most. What this implies is that the postmodernists do not restrict themselves to a single linear past but pick and choose from among the available styles. That is to say there is a strong element of pastiche. This implies that 'truth' about past history, is that we have no way of knowing what happened. The historians then have to be satisfied with a pastiche which in itself may not reflect much of past reality and there is no such thing as linear historical development. Finally postmodernism has a new technology available to it especially the computer and other electronic machines not present earlier. What we can say then is that the post modern societies are in deep flux and great confusion and many symptoms of this have appeared especially with regard to certain kinds of affliction. Thus whole new breeds of psychiatrists are busy trying to undo the stress and Post Structuralism and Post Modern 198 tension that post modernism is clearly associated with. Thus there is a problem of chaotic and disturbing trends of late capitalism. It is difficult to cope with multinational economy and the

according cultural impact of consumerism. Jameson feels that cognitive maps are needed to deal with postmodern realities. The maps can be put together by artists novelists and working people. Thus Jameson's schema tries to build bridges between Marxian theory and post-modernism, but ended up antagonising both Marxists and postmodernists. This was to be expected because despite Jameson's efforts to synthesise it was clear that a grand theory/metanarrative was unlikely to bend backwards, and therefore, Jameson uses mainly its base/ superstructure dichotomy. Jameson's postmodernism does try to maintain some basic/tenous link with Marxian theory despite the fact that Marxism is a grand narrative. However, in the case of Jean Baudrillard postmodernism is presented as a maverick social theory of contemporary times. Thus Baudrillard journey of ideas commences in the 1960's, when he started out as a Marxist critique of consumer society he was influenced by both linguistics and semiotics. However, he soon left this orientation behind him and abandoned both Marxism and structuralism.

5.7 BAUDRILLARD AND POST MODERNISM

In the 1970's Baudrillard alleged that Marxists and their detractors both had a similar beorgeoisie orientation which was conservative. He felt that an alternative explanation was necessary. Thus Baudrillard put forward the notion of "symbolic exchange" as an alternative to economic exchange. Symbolic exchange itself involves a continuous process of a gift giving and gift taking. It is clear that symbolic exchange was beyond and opposed to the logic of late capitalism. Such symbolic exchange implied the creation of a society based on the same, but Baudrillard chose to be a-political. He studied contemporary society, and saw that it is not production but the electronic media that characterises it e.g. TV, computers, satellites. We have moved from societies under different modes of production to a society that is more involved with the code of production. Exploitation and profit motives have given way to a domination by the signs/systems that produce them. Again signs referred to something else but in postmodern society they become self referential and characterised by "simulations" and 'simulacra' which are

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representations of any aspect of consumption (Baudrillard, 1973). For Baudrillard the postmodern world is “hyper reality.” Thus media becomes more real than the reality itself, and provides news, views and events in an exaggerated, skewed, and even ideological manner – thus the term hyper reality. This is not without consequences as the real tends to be buried in the hyper real and may ultimately be banished altogether.

Catastrophe Management In short, there is such distortion between North and South, to the symbolic advantage of the South.....that one day everything will break down. One day, the west will break down if we are not soon washed clean of this shame, if an international congress of the poor countries does not very quickly decide to share out this symbolic privilege of misery and catastrophe. (Jean Baudrillard, The Illusion of the End, p:69).

For Baudrillard culture is undergoing a very deep change which makes the masses more and more passive, rather than increasingly rebellious. Thus the masses encounter these changes with seeming ease absorbing each new cultural idea or artifact. Thus for Baudrillard masses are not seen to be the products of media. Rather it is the media which is observed to provide these wants to the masses (for objects and entertainment). For Baudrillard society is in throes of a ‘death culture.’ Thus it is death anxiety that pushes people to try and lose this anxiety by using and abusing the consumerist culture. There is no revolutionary silver lining to Baudrillard’s theory and the problem is also that symbolic exchange societies may exist but how to bring them about is not addressed to by Baudrillard. All in all Baudrillard’s brilliant and unusual ideas make it a clear breakaway from the ideas and artifacts of modernism. Baudrillard in deconstructing contemporary society shows just how much sociological theory has moved forward and away from classical thought. Thus we can see post modernism does display certain characteristics and we can see below just what these are. The first of these characteristics is that in postmodernism that is a multiplicity of views, meanings and so on. Secondly the postmodernists are looking for polysemic and alternative meanings. Thirdly there is a distrust of

metanarratives and grand narratives as found in classical sociological theory. It also holds that since there is a multiplicity of perspectives there will always be many truths. Thus postmodernists regard concepts and ideas as texts which are open to interpretation. They also look for binary oppositions in the text. Further, these binary oppositions are themselves shown to be false or at least not necessarily true. Finally the postmodernist identifies texts, groups which are absent or omitted. This is regarded as important to any 'deconstruction.' Now postmodernism is reflected in almost all areas of life including film, TV, literature etc. which are deeply influenced by postmodern viewpoints. Let us now turn to some postmodern aspects visible in other fields. Thus in language words and forms are used and the concept of 'play' is basic to it. Thus 'play' implies altering the frame which connects ideas – allowing the troping of a metaphor. Thus the 'text' has a meaning which is understood or interpreted by the reader and not the author. This 'play' or exercise is the way that the author gains some significance in the consciousness of the reader. The problem with this postmodern view about language is very difficult to understand and is against the basis of communication where the author communicates to the reader in as lucid a manner as possible. In literature it is found that postmodern works are not so much opposed to modernist literature. Instead it tends to extend it stylistically. Some postmodern literatures include David Foster Wallace and Thomas Pynchon both of whom are critical of the vast system building of the Enlightenment modernity. As you would have noticed post-structuralism and postmodernism do have an intermeshing quality. Indeed some authors straddle both fields e.g. Francois Lyotard. Further structuralism tries to build models seeking out factors and patterns that are stable, which is anathema to postmodernists and rejected outright as a futile manoeuvre. Thus postmodernism has retained the cultural dimension of structuralism but has rejected the claims to its scientificity. Again post-structuralism is a position in philosophy, it is not the name of an era whereas postmodernism is associated with the postmodern epoch.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Discuss Jameson and Late Capitalism.

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2. Write about Baudrillard and Post Modernism.

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5.8 LET US SUM UP

Post-Structuralism is a late 20th Century movement in philosophy and literary criticism, which is difficult to summarize but which generally defines itself in its opposition to the popular Structuralism movement which preceded it in 1950s and 1960s France. It is closely related to Post-Modernism, although the two concepts are not synonymous.

In the Post-Structuralist approach to textual analysis, the reader replaces the author as the primary subject of inquiry and, without a central fixation on the author, Post-Structuralists examine other sources for meaning (e.g., readers, cultural norms, other literature, etc), which are therefore never authoritative, and promise no consistency. A reader's culture and society, then, share at least an equal part in the interpretation of a piece to the cultural and social circumstances of the author.

Some of the key assumptions underlying Post-Structuralism include:

The concept of "self" as a singular and coherent entity is a fictional construct, and an individual rather comprises conflicting tensions and knowledge claims (e.g. gender, class, profession, etc). The interpretation of meaning of a text is therefore dependent on a reader's own personal concept of self.

An author's intended meaning (although the author's own identity as a stable "self" with a single, discernible "intent" is also a fictional construct) is secondary to the meaning that the reader perceives, and a literary text (or, indeed, any situation where a subject perceives a sign) has no single purpose, meaning or existence.

It is necessary to utilize a variety of perspectives to create a multi-faceted interpretation of a text, even if these interpretations conflict with one another.

Post-Structuralism emerged in France during the 1960s, a period of political turmoil, rebellion and disillusionment with traditional values, accompanied by a resurgence of interest in Feminism, Western Marxism, Phenomenology and Nihilism. Many prominent Post-Structuralists (generally labeled as such by others rather than by themselves), such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes (1915 - 1980), were initially Structuralists but later came to explicitly reject most of Structuralism's claims, particularly its notion of the fixity of the relationship between the signifier and the signified, but also the overall grandness of the theory, which seemed to promise everything and yet not quite to deliver.

In his 1966 lecture "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Science", Jacques Derrida (a key figure in the early Post-Structuralist movement, although he later founded the Deconstructionism movement), was one of the first to propose some theoretical limitations to Structuralism, and identified an apparent de-stabilizing or de-centering in intellectual life (referring to the displacement of the author of a text as having greatest effect on a text itself, in favor of the various readers of the text), which came to be known as Post-Structuralism.

Roland Barthes (1915 - 1980), originally a confirmed Structuralist, published his "The Death of the Author" in 1968, in which he argued that any literary text has multiple meanings, and that the author was not the

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prime source of the work's semantic content. In his 1967 work "Elements of Semiology", he also advanced the concept of the metalanguage, a systematized way of talking about concepts like meaning and grammar beyond the constraints of traditional (first-order) language.

Other notable Post-Structuralists include Gilles Deleuze (1925 - 1995), Julia Kristeva (1941 -), Umberto Eco (1932 - 2016), Jean Baudrillard (1929 - 2007) and Judith Butler (1956 -).

What then has postmodernism achieved? The answer is that postmodernism has turned away the shroud over the analysis and demystified both epistemological and ideological constructs. Further a deep look at ethnography has to led to a reexamination and questioning of ethnography itself. Postmodernism and its adherents point out that sociologist should analyse the role of their own culture in the study of culture, and therefore, increase the sensitivity of the subject. Postmodern approaches have been criticised on several grounds. To begin with postmodernists are against theory. This paradoxical since this is itself a theoretical position taken by the postmodernists. Again the postmodernists emphasise the illogical or nonrational aspects of a culture. Further, the postmodern concentrates on the marginal which is itself evaluative. Then again the stress on intertextuality, but do not always follow their own advice and often treat texts as standing alone. Postmodernists also put away all assessment of theory – but this does not mean that there is no means of assessment. Thus according to postmodernists modernism is inconsistent but they themselves exercise it as and which way they want. Finally the postmodernists are self-contradictory when they deny any claims of reality or ‘truth’ in their own writings. Finally there is the issue of postmodernism not having any confidence in the scientific method. But if sociology does follow this position, then it will turn into a study of meanings, rather than causes which influence what it is to be an individual in society.

5.9 KEY WORDS

Structuralism: In sociology, anthropology, and linguistics, structuralism is the methodology that implies elements of human culture must be understood by way of their relationship to a broader, overarching system or structure. It works to uncover the structures that underlie all the things that humans do, think, perceive, and feel.

Post Structuralism: Post-structuralism is either a continuation or a rejection of the intellectual project that preceded it—structuralism.

5.10 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Discuss about the Post Structural Theories.
2. What is meant by discourse Knowledge and Experience?
3. Describe the Derrida and Deconstruction theory.
4. Discuss the Foucault and the Archaeology of Knowledge.
5. Discuss Jameson and Late Capitalism.
6. Write about Baudrillard and Post Modernism.

5.11 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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5.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 5.2
2. See Section 5.3

Check Your Progress 2

1. See Section 5.4
2. See Section 5.5

Check Your Progress 3

1. See Section 5.6
2. See Section 5.7

UNIT 6: TWO STRANDS OF RESEARCH: QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DEBATES

STRUCTURE

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Fundamental, Pure or Theoretical Research
 - 6.2.1 Discovery of a New Theory
 - 6.2.2 Development of the Existing Theory
- 6.3 Applied Research
- 6.4 Various Other Categories of Research
 - 6.4.1 The Ex-post Facto Research
 - 6.4.1.1 Advantages
 - 6.4.1.2 Disadvantages
 - 6.4.2 Laboratory or Experimental Research
 - 6.4.3 Field Investigation Research
 - 6.4.4 Survey Research
 - 6.4.5 Evaluation Research
 - 6.4.6 Action Research
- 6.5 Let us sum up
- 6.6 Key Words
- 6.7 Questions for Review
- 6.8 Suggested readings and references
- 6.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

6.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to understand:

- Different Types of Research.
- The difference between Fundamental and Applied Research.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

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Research is an absorbing, exciting, enjoyable, and, enormously productive activity. Many men and women have devoted the greatest parts of their lives to this kind of extremely rewarding pursuit, and have made great contributions to the knowledge, welfare, and progress of the human race. The names of Einstein, Curie, Darwin, Pasteur, and Newton are outstanding. Countless others, perhaps less famous, have just as devotedly made their contributions to mankind. Without research, our world would be vastly different from the one we know. Yet there are many misconceptions regarding research, particularly what its relationships are with other forms of activity. For example, much is heard about research “versus” theory, especially in the social sciences; many things are labelled research which, in fact, is not research; research on certain kinds of subject matter is said to be impossible, and so on. To understand what research is and how it is done, we must gain an understanding of the relationship between research and intellectual activities. Just as one cannot fully understand and appreciate the meaning and significance of a bit of observed behaviour without a knowledge of the norms and values of the society in which the behaviour takes place, so must the social scientists engaged in research have an understanding of the philosophical assumptions upon which research is based. Research is defined as the careful, diligent, and exhaustive investigation of a specific subject matter, having as its aim the advancement of mankind’s knowledge. Thus it includes a wide variety of activities- the physical scientist in his laboratory, the artist studying in the museum, the archaeologist digging in the ruins, the sociologist observing patterns of marital interaction, management teams competing through computerised business “games,” the physician devising new surgical procedures, the historian or litterateur searching in the library, and the philosopher meditating in his study, to name a few. According to this definition, it is doubtful whether the ordinary undergraduate term paper is properly referred to as a research paper, except insofar as it provides training in doing research. Similarly, an activity undertaken solely for the purpose of personal learning, or growth, or enlightenment, is not research, nor is any casual or perfunctory investigation, regardless of how rewarding and beneficial it may be. But one thing which is definitely implied in this

definition, and which is, in fact, a basic assumption of any research, is that knowledge is desirable and is preferable to ignorance.

6.2 FUNDAMENTAL, PURE OR THEORETICAL RESEARCH

Researches have been classified differently depending upon the approach, the purpose and the nature of a research activity. Broadly speaking, researches can be classified into two categories such as

(1) Fundamental, Pure or Theoretical Research; and

(2) Applied Research.

This type of research is original or basic in character. An imaginative and painstaking research worker, with his qualities of honesty and integrity and his lust for the search of truth, makes persistent and patient efforts to discover something new to enrich the human knowledge in a fundamental fashion. Such research is known as fundamental or pure. Fundamental research can take shape in two different ways:

6.2.1 Discovery of a New Theory

Fundamental Research may be entirely new discovery, the knowledge of which has not existed so far. Such a discovery may follow from the researcher's own idea or imagination. This really depends upon how genius a researcher is. The researcher is often born-genius, has a sharp intellect, is thirsty for knowledge and eventually has an ocean of knowledge in his possession and from this ocean emerges a jewel that enlightens the world. This discovery may have nothing to do with an existing theory. Galileo's or Newton's contributions are fundamental in character as these depended upon their own imagination and scholarship. Since these fundamental contributions form the basis of different theories, it may not be wrong to call such a research theoretical as well.

6.2.2 Development of the Existing Theory

These days, this type of research is also held to take the shape of an improvement in the existing theory by relaxing some of its assumptions or by reinterpreting it or by developing a new theory with the existing one as its basis. Since theory is always based on assumptions, there often exists enormous scope for altering or formulating new set of assumptions and adding new dimensions to the existing theory. There also exist the possibilities of re-interpretation of the theory that has already been developed. A researcher may as well take off from the existing theories and come out with a new one of his own. The assumptions of a theory should always be well defined and plausible. Relaxing assumptions, altering them or making new ones altogether depends upon how a researcher views the existing theory.

In a dynamic society a scholar may ascertain that earlier assumptions have become obsolete or have been inadequately defined. Thus the theory in its existing form may appear to be outdated and implausible with the prevailing conditions. For example, Malthusian population theory became almost useless in his own country owing to new developments invalidating the assumptions of his theory. Naturally, therefore, by dropping out the invalid assumptions, researchers came out with new theories on population behaviour. There have also been attempts by other researchers to reinterpret the Malthusian doctrine and thus seek to retain its validity character even now. By questioning some of the assumptions of Keynesian theory, Friedman came out with new interpretations of the monetary phenomenon. Theories developed in capitalist countries have often been challenged by the researchers of the socialist block and they have often either re-interpreted or developed new theories akin to those already existing. It is also possible that an entirely new theory may be developed.

6.3 APPLIED RESEARCH

This type of research is based on the application of known theories and models to the actual operational fields or populations. The applied research is conducted to test the empirical content or the basic assumptions or the very validity of theory under given conditions. For example, Lewis's growth model for labour surplus economics assumes that real wage rate of labour shall remain constant till the surplus labour is completely wiped out; it may be of interest to a researcher to investigate if it so happens in every labour surplus economy. Researcher may accordingly apply Lewis' model to an economy if the real wage rate does remain constant. This may or may not happen. The model may accordingly hold or not in case of that economy. In case of a theory or model not holding good, the researcher's interest may further be stimulated to know why a given model does not apply and what modifications would be required to make the model operational in that situation. Inoperation of a model may also form a basis for developing an alternative strategy. In brief, applied research contributes to social science (i) by providing the kind of convincing evidence of the usefulness to society which is necessary to continuing support; (2) by utilising and developing techniques which can also be made to serve so-called basic research; and (3) by providing data and ideas which may speed up the process of generalisation. Applied research has practical utility in the developing countries. Instead of spending lavishly on fundamental or pure research, a less developed country may benefit by applying the existing theories and seek plausible explanations of socio-economic behaviour. Though fundamental or pure research is a luxury, it does not mean that less developed countries should not indulge in it. There is, however, great scope in applying the already developed theories or models in the less developed countries so as to develop and adopt useful strategy of growth suggested by theory and held operational in a given situation. Developing countries may benefit by the discoveries, scientific and otherwise, that have already been made, either by direct application or by making some modifications wherever necessary. Applied research often takes the form of a field investigation and aims at collecting the basic data for verifying the applicability of existing theories and models in given situation. Naturally, therefore, the adequacy

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and accuracy of data will have considerable impact on the way in which the applicability of a model can be tested. The knowledge of research methods has considerably increased in the recent years and given caution and patience, a researcher can comfortably test the reliability of his data before embarking upon the task of testing the applicability of a given doctrine. Not only should his data be reliable, but must also be very objective, scientific and sharp in identifying the field of application for a given theory. If a field selected is not properly identified as a case fit for the application, the results are bound to give wrong interpretations and a judgement, on whether or not a theory is applicable to a given situation, may not be revealing.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Discuss the different types of Research.

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2. What is the difference between Fundamental and Applied Research?

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6.4 VARIOUS OTHER CATEGORIES OF RESEARCH

The present view of categorising research is somewhat different. The research these days is categorised as

- (i) Ex-post facto research;
- (ii) Laboratory or experimental research;
- (iii) field investigation research;
- (iv) Survey research;
- (v) Evaluation research; and
- (vi) Action research.

6.4.1 The Ex-post Facto Research

The study is made of the independent variable or variables that have already occurred. The investigator observes the condition or position of the dependent variable, the event and then retrospectively studies the independent variables for their possible effects on the dependent variable. The term ex-post facto was evolved by Professor F. Stuart Chapin. It means that the experiment has already taken place. The consequence is immediately knowable, and the problem is to determine the antecedents. It means that the manipulation of variables by others, than the social scientist, has already taken place. A time dimension is certainly present and if any relation between the manipulated variable and the consequence can be discerned, the argument is more than merely that of association (Chapin, 1947, pp.73-74). The experimental research design and the ex-post facto research design differ sharply, yet they share the structural and design features. In both the study designs, to provide the test of a causal hypothesis, it is essential to provide grounds for making inferences about causality and safe-guard against unwarranted inferences. However, non-experimental studies cannot provide safeguards as adequate as those in experiment. Like the experiment in the ex-post facto research design as also for the inference of causal relationship, the fulfillment of the three types of evidences, i.e. evidence of concomitant variation, evidence of time order and evidence of control of variance are essential. The steps followed in experimental research to fulfill each of those evidences respectively, are;

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- a. manipulation of variables, and
- b. assignment of subjects to experimental and control groups by random or matching method, and
- c. pre-test. While experimenting, one can take measures to control the effects of extraneous variables that might occur during the course of the experiment.

To substitute the manipulation of the experimental variable, the steps would include comparison of people who have been exposed to contrasting experience. Since here it is not possible to assign the individuals to experimental and control groups the researcher selects the individuals who have gone through a particular experience and can be called as the experimental group. For example, to study the effect of smoking on cancer he would select those persons who smoked and have suffered from cancer. To study the relationship between slum condition and delinquency one would select persons living in slum and assess the percentage of delinquents among them. To study the effect of occupancy pattern upon inter-racial, inter-religious or inter-caste relation one will have to select persons who have lived in segregated housing areas. The next phase would be the identification of a control group that would constitute of the persons who have not suffered from cancer or persons who have suffered from cancer but did not smoke. Similarly, one will have to select good housing project areas and see the percentage of delinquents among the people living there. Similarly, one will select persons who have lived and persons who have not lived in integrated housing project areas. The investigator would then make a comparison of the two types of groups. The selection of the groups should be done in a manner that the control groups have to be equable with the experimental group prior to the study. Formally, this means that both groups must be random samples from the same universe. Practically, however, it is not always possible to draw subjects or assign subjects randomly as the events have already occurred. The administrators of housing project areas might use a set of criteria for allotment of houses to the people in different housing areas, such criteria, practically may be defensible but

might be scientifically biased. The administrators might use the criteria of “need”. As a result, only a small portion of the population, of which the control group is a random sample, is taken. Secondly, the possibility of pre-test does not arise in case of the above examples as the experiences with certain situations, like smoking, living in slum condition, or living in integrated or segregated housing projects, have already taken place. So far the control of other events, i.e. the control of variance is concerned; it is possible to a great extent. For example, in study of cancer patients to rule out the possibility of the effect of alcohol or heredity we will have to take only those cancer patients who were not used to taking alcohol and in whose family there was not any previous case of cancer suffering.

A good example of the application of ex-post-facto research is the study by Cook, Havel and Christ (1957). They attempted to study, ‘the effects of summer orientation programmes on adjustments of foreign students visiting Unites States’. They could prepare a list of the students who were selected to study in U.S.A. and which ones from them were going to attend the orientation programme. These students constituted a group which could be identified as the experimental group. The foreign students not selected for orientation programme were equivalent to the units of a control group. The members of the two groups were very similar to each other on several characteristics, i.e. they were foreigners in U.S.A., they were sanctioned some scholarship. Moreover, to make the two groups equal and comparable the investigators selected students from the non-orientation list who were roughly matched to those from orientation list on the characteristics of nationality, age, and field of study.

The matching was done on the basis of frequency distribution control method. Like in experiment, pre-test could also be possible. The students could be identified before attending the orientation programme and were given initial tests or measures (the pre-test) to check whether the two groups were originally similar on the dependent variable or not. They were measured again after the orientation camp to examine whether there

was any change in the experimental group. This particular study resembled or approximated highly the before-after experimental research design with one experimental and one control group. In very few cases this much approximating of ex post facto research design to an experimental research design is possible. However, this study also suffered from few defects which could be avoided in purely experimental research design. The students were selected for studying in U.S.A., for grant of scholarship and also for attending or not attending the orientation programme by the administrators and not by the researchers. Therefore, in selection certain factors might have influenced systematically. In ex-post facto design these types of limitations have to be faced often. Besides, sometimes establishing time order relationship becomes difficult. For example, in study of effect of childhood experiences upon a person's marital adjustment it becomes difficult to assure whether the experiences reported as childhood ones were really so. Following are the advantages and disadvantages of ex-post-facto research.

6.4.1.1 Advantages

Many social events are such that they have already occurred and cannot be repeated or replicated. Causes behind many events cannot be created or reproduced. Hence conducting experiment on them is not possible. Ex-post facto research method has proved its usefulness in the study of changes in average weight, height, athletic performance, morbidity, mortality, fertility etc. by comparing the present populations with presumably comparable population that lived in the previous times. It can also be used successfully to study changes in crime rates, in marriage rates, in divorce rates, in schooling, traffic accidents, alcoholism, drug addiction etc. With precautions studies through ex-post facto design can be approximated to those of experiment. In those cases where before comparability can be ascertained, this method is as valid as and as useful as the before-after experimental research design. In some social experiments even if creation of variable becomes possible it takes a long

time for the effect to become evident. For example, we might want to know the effect of better housing conditions on lowering the amount of delinquency. It may take years before the difference is significantly evident.

6.4.1.2 Disadvantages

To fulfill the evidence of concomitant variation it is essential to select one group of people who have gone through a particular experience and another group of people who have not gone through the experience. It is very difficult to assure such distinctions. Mostly it is not possible to give a pre-test before the experience to assess the initial comparability of the two groups and to know their position in relation to the dependent variable.

6.4.2 Laboratory or Experimental Research

By definition, research of this type is confined to laboratory experiments alone. The basic feature of such research is that there exists a possibility of exercising control over independent variables and isolating their influences for plausible explanations. “A laboratory experiment is a research study in which the variance of all or nearly all of the possible influential independent variables not pertinent to the immediate problem of the investigation is kept at a minimum. This is done by isolating the research in a physical situation apart from the routine of ordinary living and by manipulating one or more independent variables under rigorously specified operationalised and controlled conditions”. This type of research has a limited application in social sciences as it is extremely difficult to study social variables in isolation of each other. However, it may, at times be possible to create a situation, wherein a maximum control can be exercised to keep the variations among the independent variables at a minimum. In such cases laboratory experiment type of research may find its applicability in social research as well. According to F. Stuart Chaplin, pioneer and authority on experimental type research, “while it is a true statement when it means that human beings

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are not to be physically manipulated in an autocratic or in an arbitrary manner, this does not prevent observation of human relations under conditions of control” (Ibid, p.120). It is obvious that all programmes of social reform, such as work relief, unemployment, social insurance, low-rent housing, etc. directed to uplift the masses do aim to influence individuals and are experiments in the trial-and-error sense of directing the course of events towards certain desired ends. Such programmes are not passive observation of what happens; on the contrary, they are efforts to see that something desired does happen. It is the merit of experimental designs that they supply the social researcher with a reliable method by which to observe under conditions of control the degrees to which social action programmes achieve their objective. By making use of experimental research we can make out what happens over a period of time to a group of slum families residing in a low-rent public housing project, meanwhile observing also the change in a control group of low income families living in slum dwellings for the same period. To rule out the disturbing effects of differences in family size, income, education patterns, etc. these factors are held constant by matching the experimental group of residents against the control group on these factors. But use of experimental designs in social sciences research is beset with many problems. There are practical difficulties to random sampling, losses of cases and shrinkage in numbers in each group during the period of observation, and limitations connected with applications of probability tests as a means of estimating the significance of the results. Further, most of the laboratory research may be artificial in character and may only help in finding out some explanations to given situations; on the other hand, social situations are real and pragmatic and have very limited scope for artificial research. Since laboratory situations are artificial, possibilities of wrongly interpreting the experimental findings exist and may pose a threat to the internal validity of such investigations. Laboratory experiments usually help to discover relations under pure and contaminated conditions. These are also treated as testifiable from known theories and models and are also held as competent to refine or modify the existing theories and a related hypothesis. For these purposes experimental research is most often carried out in the field of physical

sciences. Social Science theories and models can be verified, refined and redesigned only when field situations are taken into account.

6.4.3 Field Investigation Research

A field experiment is a research study in a realistic situation in which one or more independent variables are manipulated by the experimenter under as carefully controlled conditions as the situation will permit. Where the laboratory experiment has a maximum of control, most field studies must operate with less control, a factor that is often a severe handicap to the experiment. The weaknesses of field experiment, therefore, are of practical nature. The control cannot be held as very tight, the investigator himself works under several influences and may at times be faced with unpleasant situations and the independent variables may get significantly affected by uncontrolled environmental influences. A field experiment is generally credited with a few virtues which are supposed to be unique to this category of research. These virtues may be listed as (i) the variables in a field experiment operate more strongly than those used in laboratory experiment. This is because of the fact that field situation takes stock of realistic natural operations. (2) Secondly field experiments have the advantage of investigating more fruitfully the dynamics of inter-relationships of small groups of variables. (3) Field experimental studies are also ideal to testing of the theory and to the solution of the real world problems. Field experimental studies, therefore, are important part of the applied research which, at times, play an important role in pointing out the nature and direction of the refinements required for an existing doctrine. A practical difficulty in the field of this research is that of randomisation of units in the given population. Unless the field of operation has been selected in an objective and scientific manner, the investigations may not proceed on the lines desired by the researcher. Many a time the combination of dependent and independent variables may be such that the dependent variables are not responsive to the changes occurring in independent variables. Nevertheless, like other less structure techniques, it tends to be highly suggestive within the context of discovery.

6.4.4 Survey Research

This type of research has become very popular these days as a scientific method for discovering relevant impact and inter-relationships of social and psychological variables from given populations. Survey research studies large and small populations by selecting and studying samples chosen from the populations to discover the relative incidence, distribution and inter-relations of sociological and psychological variables. Populations may be small or large and the survey research can work well by resorting to sampling practices. If survey research is also called as sample survey research, it will not be inappropriate. Survey research has developed as a research activity alongwith the development of sampling theory and its diverse procedures. The advantage of this type of research is that it links sample investigations with populations and thereby offers an easy opportunity of studying population behaviour through sample survey research assessments. Survey research is mostly devoted to the study of characteristics of the populations under investigation. In the field of social sciences, inter-relationships of sociological, psychological and attitudinal variables are framed for purposes of investigation through the social groups from any selected population. As a part thereof the opinions, attitudes and behaviours of individuals are noted and then scientifically studied to examine their impact on the population as a whole. Survey research necessarily is not only meant for sociological and psychological research alone but also its scope can be widened to include variables of economic nature for estimating incidence and distribution of welfare activities from economic point of view. Survey research is approached through the methods of personal interviews, mailed questionnaires and personal discussions besides indirect oral investigation. These days this type of research is held to be significant in making valuable contribution to social sciences research methodology. It has directly helped in the improvement of the sampling procedures and their applicability to real world situations besides also suggesting improvements in resolving the complex situations to unambiguous experimentation with a view to obtaining

research findings. Survey research necessitates a well designed research programme in which objectives are properly framed and the programme of activities is scientifically planned till the final research report is prepared. This type of research has the advantage of greater scope in the sense that a larger volume of information can be controlled from a very large population. Survey research, no doubt, is more expensive but the amount and quality of information that is collected makes such investigation very economical. This information is also accurate, of course, within the range of sampling errors because trained and technically knowledgeable personnel are employed for the job. Survey research, however, suffers from some limitations which could be listed as follows:

λ It is charged that survey information touches only the surface of the research field and does not make a deeper thrust into it.

λ It is also charged with demanding of more time, effort and money.

λ Sometimes if sample information has not been collected very carefully, the magnitude of sampling error may be too large to render the sample results reasonably accurate.

λ Since the sample research is based on the respondents' interviews, the problems of personal inhibitions, indifference and unawareness of the nature and purpose of investigation renders survey information invalid or at least imprecise.

λ Despite the weaknesses mentioned above, survey research holds a greater promise for social researchers in future for exploring socio-economic information in diverse population.

6.4.5 Evaluation Research

Evaluation research is a recent addition to the types of research. It would be appropriate to call this category of research as a product of

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developmental programming which has been adopted on a very large scale in recent years, more particularly after Second World War when most of the Third World Countries emerged on the development scene. This type of research is primarily directed to evaluate the performance of the developmental projects and other economic programmes that have already been implemented, the objective being to realistically assess the impact of any such programmes. Evaluation is held to mean comprehensive concept of measurement and it is because of this definition of evaluation that project evaluations have become frequent in the recent years. The evaluation is carried out with respect to the broader changes and major objectives of a programme. Evaluation does not only aim at the physical achievements of a project but also at the size and direction of variables that the project has resulted in attitudes, interests, thinking patterns, work habits, socio-cultural adaptability and psychodynamics of the population in which or around which the project has been launched. The Evaluation Research is of three types, mainly, (1) Concurrent evaluation (2) Phasic or periodic evaluation and (3) Terminal evaluation. Concurrent Evaluation – Concurrent evaluation is a continuing process of an inspection of the project that has been launched. The word concurrent itself points out to the fact that the evaluation goes on side by side with the implementation of a project. In this manner such type of research not only evaluates the performance but also stimulates it and gives direction and control as and when possible. Phasic or Periodic Evaluation- This type of evaluation takes place at different phases or stages of performance of the project. If, for example, a project has been launched in three different phases, as is sometimes done, in building up an institutional complex or an urban site or a bigger industrial empire, evaluation research is conducted at the completion of each stipulated phase of the project thus launched. It enables us to evaluate the performance of the completed phase and make adjustments in the subsequent phases after keeping in view the failures and successes of the previous phase.

Terminal Evaluation – Terminal evaluation is the evaluation of the final phase of the project. Once the project has been completed, an overall

assessment is made to see how best a project has served the objectives for which it was launched. It is very essential for the conduct of this type of research that the researcher knows very well the objectives of the programmes and the process of its implementation. While carrying out the evaluation research, a researcher can scientifically look into the performance of the project in relation to the objective that has been laid out and in line with the processes that had been recommended for its implementation.

6.4.6 Action Research

Action research is also a recent addition to the categories of research known to a modern social scientist. By its very definition, it is a research through launching of a direct action with the objective of obtaining workable solutions to the given problems. In conducting research through launching of actions, this type of research has the quality of adapting itself to the changes that take place in a given population. Action research is spread over different phases such as a base line survey, where all the possible information of research interest is collected to enable the researcher to acquaint himself with the existing or operational situations. This also aims at collecting information from other sources that have direct or indirect bearing on the research programme. At the second phase, the planned action is practically launched and then at the next phase action research carries out periodical assessment of the project. At a subsequent stage, changes, modifications and other improvements are made in the functional aspect of the project and finally the whole process culminates in the evaluation of the project as a whole. The methods used for this type of research are usually personal interview method and the survey method. Sometimes attitude measurement techniques are also made use of. Some problems associated with action research are the personal values of the individuals, lack of social scientist's interest and exclusive locations with the respondent. Action research in its phasic order may not be much different than merely conducting survey research at different stages. It has, however, the advantages of direct-action oriented solutions to the real world problems and sometimes has the potentialities of suggesting significant

improvements in the existing solutions. Action research warrants a thorough insight into the research problem and an equally effective command over the actions proposed to be launched for research findings. If the collaboration of the researcher with the respondent is not smooth or the relevant field has not been chosen or there exists lack of understanding of the pertinent issues or there is reluctance on the part of two parties to interact their views and opinions, the foundation of action research may become too weak to permit plausible explanations and solutions to the problems for which action research was adopted. However, at times, it may serve useful purpose to launch action research in a bid to prepare some basis for further meaningful research.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Write short notes on the following:

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- (a) Evaluation Research
- (b) Survey Research
- (c) Action Research.

6.5 LET US SUM UP

All types of research are variations of one or more of the above stated approaches, based on either the purpose of research, or the time required to accomplish research, on the environment in which research is done, or on the basis of some other similar factor. To understand what research is and how it is done, we must gain an understanding of the relationship between research and intellectual activities. Just as one cannot fully understand and appreciate the meaning and significance of a bit of observed behavior without a knowledge of the norms and values of the

society in which the behaviour takes place, so must the social scientists engaged in research have an understanding of the philosophical assumptions upon which research is based. In this Unit, the different types of research have been dealt with in detail.

6.6 KEY WORDS

1. Discuss the different types of Research.
2. What is the difference between Fundamental and Applied Research?
3. Write short notes on the following:
 - a. Evaluation Research
 - b. Survey Research
 - c. Action Research.

6.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Action Research: Action research is a philosophy and methodology of research generally applied in the social sciences. It seeks transformative change through the simultaneous process of taking action and doing research, which are linked together by critical reflection.

Applied Research: **Applied research** is a methodology used to solve a specific, practical problem of an individual or group. The study and **research** is used in business, medicine and education in order to find solutions that may cure diseases, solve scientific problems or develop technology.

6.8 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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6.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 6.2
2. See Section 6.2 and 6.3

Check Your Progress 2

1. See Section
 - a. See Sub section 6.4.5
 - b. See Sub section 6.4.4
 - c. See Sub section 6.4.6

UNIT 7: QUANTATIVE RESEARCH METHODS: SAMPLING

STRUCTURE

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Introducing Research Design
 - 7.2.1 Meaning of Research Design
 - 7.2.2 Significance of Research Design
 - 7.2.3 Advantages of Research Design
 - 7.2.4 Designing Feminist Research
- 7.3 Types of Research Design
- 7.4 Sampling
 - 7.4.1 Basic Concepts and Terms
 - 7.4.2 Principles of Sampling
 - 7.4.3 Advantages and Limitations of Sampling
- 7.5 Types of Sampling
 - 7.5.1 Probability Sampling
 - 7.5.2 Non-probability Sampling
- 7.6 Sampling in Qualitative Research
- 7.7 Let us sum up
- 7.8 Key Words
- 7.9 Questions for Review
- 7.10 Suggested readings and references
- 7.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

7.0 OBJECTIVES

On completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the meaning of ‘Research Design.’ and ‘Sampling’;
- Develop a Research Design; and
- Undertake a research study by formulating a research design and applying sampling techniques.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

After going through the earlier unit where you learnt about nuances of quantitative research, in the present unit we will look into the frame work or a blue print that we construct to carry out a research study. This unit discusses ‘why’ and ‘how’ of research design and sampling methods in quantitative research methodology. This understanding will help you in choosing a particular research design and how a sample can be drawn from a given universe so that the research is universal in its finding. Let us look into detail of understanding, formulating, stages and advantages / disadvantage research design. Also, you will read about meaning, types, advantages and limitations of various aspects related to sampling.

7.2 INTRODUCING RESEARCH DESIGN

Let us first understand what is meant by research? Research simply means a search for facts, answers to questions and solution to problems. It is a purposive investigation. It is an ‘organized inquiry’. It seeks to find explanations to unexplained phenomenon. But the task of research is sequential process involving a number of clearly delineated steps. For a scientific social research, research design and sampling are two important stages. Research design consists of series of actions or steps necessary to effectively carry out research and the desired sequencing of these steps. To formulate a specific research problem, constitutes the first step in scientific inquiry. The formidable problem that follows the task of defining research problem is progress in the research work, popularly known as ‘Research design’.

7.2.1 Meaning of Research Design

It is important for you to understand that developing research design is a challenge to the researcher because the success of her/his research work is depended on the research design. Any research is valid when its conclusions are true and verifiable. It is reliable when the findings are repeatable. Reliability and validity of the research require the planning of inquiry, i.e. the detailed strategy of how the research will be conducted.

Decisions regarding what, where, when, how much, by what means concerning an inquiry or a research study constitute a research design. The term 'design' means drawing an outline or planning or arranging details. It is a process of making research related decisions before the situation arises. Research design is planning a strategy of conducting research.

It plans as to:

- what is to be observed,
- how it is to be observed,
- when and where it is to be observed,
- why it is to be observed, how to record observation,
- how to analyses interpret observations, and how to generalize.
- Research design is thus, a detailed plan of how the goals of research will be achieved.

In short, a research design is a logical and systematic plan prepared for directing a research study. It specifies the objectives of the study, the methodology and techniques to be adopted for achieving the objectives. It constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data and provides systematic plan of procedure for the researcher to follow.

7.2.2 Significance of Research Design

- It is a plan that specifies objectives of the study and the hypotheses to be tested.
- It is an outline that specifies the sources and types of information relevant to the research questions.
- It is a blueprint specifying the methods to be adopted for gathering and analyzing the data.

- It facilitates the smooth sailing of the various research operations, thereby making research as efficient as possible yielding maximal information with minimal expenditure of effort, time and money.
- It has great bearing on the reliability of the results arrived at and as such constitutes the firm foundations of the entire edifice of the research work.

7.2.3 Advantages of Research Design

The preparation of a research plan for a study aids in establishing direction to the study and in knowing exactly what has to be done and how and when it has to be done at every stage. Let us look at some more advantages of designing a research.

- It enables the researcher to consider beforehand the various decisions to be made.
- The use of a research design prevents a blind search and indiscriminate gathering of data and guides her/him to proceed in the desired direction.
- A research plan prescribes the boundaries of research activities and enables the researcher to channel the energies in the right work.
- With clear research objectives in view, the researcher can proceed systematically towards their achievement.
- A design also enables the researcher to anticipate potential problems of, operationalization of concepts, data collection measurement etc.
- Research can be conducted in a scientific way as precise guidelines are provided that reduces inaccuracies.
- Wastage of time and money is minimized
- Optimum reliability is achieved.
- Designing helps in giving useful conclusions and theories.

7.2.4 Designing Feminist Research

Researchers categorize research by the kind of data it relies upon, by the kind of analytical tools that are employed upon or by the method of data collection. This is a generalized way of approaching a research. But, feminists argue that this approach is guided by the method rather than the research question. Ackerly and True (2010, p.122) discusses feminist approach to research design that entails:

- Being aware of ways of using different kinds of data, tools for analysis and methodologies of structured inquiry.
- Designing research meaning selecting cases, deciding how to measure or assess the concepts under study, choosing best methods for data collection and data analysis.
- Mapping research plan that is doable (keeping the constraints in mind). • Setting the plan to a reliable schedule.

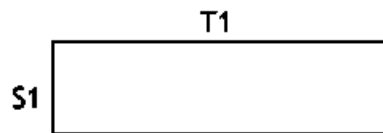
After reading about what is meant by research design, its significance and its advances; and also what is meant by designing feminist research, it is important that you undertake the following exercise to assess your understanding before reading ahead.

In the following section you will read about different types of research designs that are employed in quantitative research.

7.3 TYPES OF RESEARCH DESIGN

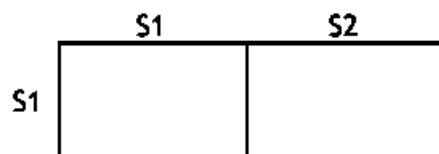
Manheim has pointed out differences in designing three types of research, viz, descriptive, explanatory and exploratory. a) Design for descriptive Research : The major goal of a descriptive research is to describe events, phenomena and situations. Since description is made on the basis of scientific observation, it is expected to be more accurate and precise than causal. Generally in a descriptive research, the data are collected in a single situation (S) Pertaining to single period (t). This is called 'One-Cell Design 'which can be diagrammatically shown as below:

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e.g. studying drug abuse among truck drivers in 2009 in Mumbai.

But the study pertaining to one situation or issue can be made in two time periods also as shown in below:



e.g. studying drug abuse among truck-drivers in 2009 and again in 2010. It is known as 'ex-post facto design.'

b) Design for Explanatory Research: Explanatory or causal research is mainly concerned with causes or 'why' factor about some phenomenon. It does not involve comparison and factors of change. The research design in explanatory study focuses on ascertaining the 'why' aspect of co-relationship. e.g. the study of voting behavior of people in parliamentary elections, held in March 2009 and September 2010, were explanatory studies which explained how people so voted because of caste, language, and political ideology, image of candidate etc.

c) Design for Exploratory Research : Exploratory studies are conducted for the purpose of formulating a problem for more precise investigation or for developing hypotheses. An exploratory study, may however, have another function, e.g. increasing the investigator's familiarity with the phenomena s/he wishes to study in a subsequent, more structured investigation or with the setting in which he plans to carry out such an investigation. Exploratory research is necessary to obtain experience that will be helpful in formulating relevant hypotheses for more definitive investigation. For a general, area of problems about which little knowledge is available, an exploratory study is most appropriate. So, exploratory research is mostly carried when there is not sufficient information available about the issue to be

studied, or in other words, the researcher has either no knowledge or a limited knowledge. e.g., study of effect of TV Programmes on Youth. According to Babbie (2010) exploratory studies are conducted for the following purposes:

- To satisfy the researchers curiosity and desire for better understanding.

- To test the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study.
- To develop the methods to be employed in any subsequent study.

Bryman (2008, p.35) discusses five types of research designs namely, experimental, cross-sectional, case study, longitudinal and comparative research design. In the following section we will read about each of them in detail.

Experimental Design: Experiment per se are not common in social sciences but are carried out in allied fields like social psychology or in reach on social policy where impact of new reforms or policies need to be assessed. Here, it is important to make a distinction between laboratory experiment and field experiment. Laboratory experiments take place in a laboratory or in a contrived setting. On the other hand field experiments occur in real life settings. For example, as in case of assessing impact of a reform or a new policy intervention in a class room or in a community. It is more likely that gender studies research will relate to field experiments than laboratory experiment.

Experimental designs can be further classified as:

- **Classified experimental designs:** These are also referred to as randomized experiments or randomized controlled trial. In this type of research design two groups are formed-one control group and the other is known as experimental or treatment group. This group is subjected to the kind of treatment that needs to be studied whereas the controlled group is kept away from the treatment. The importance of controlled group is to rule out any casual finding from the treatment group. This type of research design gained importance in health related field experiments as it helps in comparing the impact of an intervention with a situation of no intervention or comparing impact of various kinds of interventions.
- **Laboratory Experiments:** Here, the researcher has far greater influence over the experimental arrangements. It is easier to subject the controlled group to different experimental conditions in a laboratory than in real life situations. Therefore, lab experiments can more likely to be replicated than field experiments.

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Quasi-experiments: There are studies that have certain characteristics of experimental designs but don't fulfill all the requirements of validity. As in case of 'natural experiments', entailing manipulation of a social setting as a part of naturally occurring attempt to alter social arrangements. But, in such situations, it is generally not possible to assign subjects randomly to experimental and control groups.

Cross-sectional Design: A cross-sectional design entails the collection of data on more than one case at a single point in time in order to collect a body of quantitative or quantifiable data in connection with two or more variables which are then examined to detect patterns of association. (Bryman, 2008, p.44) Let us examine this definition more closely by discussing various aspects related to cross-sectional design. The first emphasis is 'more than one case', meaning variation is important, for which more than one case is required. Variation may be on account of type of family, caste, religion, income, rural/urban setting etc. This will help the researcher in making finer distinction among cases. Next emphasis is on 'a single point of time'. Here, data collection on different variables of interest is done more or less at one point of time only. That is to say, data collection is completed at one point of time and not in stages or in different time spans. The next point to be emphasized is 'quantifiable data', which is necessary to have a methodical and consistent method for assessing variations leading to reliable point of reference. Lastly, emphasis is on 'pattern of association'. A cross sectional design makes it possible to study connections between any two variables studied and make it possible to establish patterns of association. Cross-sectional design is also referred to as 'survey research' about which we are going to deal in detail in the next unit of this Block (Unit 3)

Longitudinal Designs: In longitudinal research design, a study is carried out at a point of time and is surveyed again, at least one more time at another occasion. It is typically carried out in social sciences disciplines and fields like sociology, social policy and human geography. It is usually an extension of survey research. A longitudinal design allows insight into the time order of variables and therefore let casual inferences to be made. (Bryman, 2008, p.49) Longitudinal researches can be of two types: (1) panel study where a sample is randomly selected on at least

two occasions from different type of cases within the panel framework, may it be people, households, organizations, schools, etc. (2) cohort study where an entire cohort of people or a random sample of them is selected as the focus of data collection. A cohort comprises of respondents having similar characteristics, for example, woman single parent, female head of household, etc. Both panel and cohort studies share some similarities like, data is collected on same variables on the same set of respondents at least two different points of time. Another similarity is that both shed light on social change and casual influence over time. Both panel and cohort studies share similar problems too, like problem of sample attrition on account of death, migration or change of residence. Also, there is evidence whereby respondents of longitudinal study show conditioned behaviour as a result of continued participation.

Case Study Design: This type of research design calls for a comprehensive and exhaustive analysis of a single case. Stakes(1995) observes, case study is concerned with the complexity and particular nature of the case in question. (cited in Bryman, 2008, p.52) Commonly, a case study is taken as a study of a single location, community or organization. Let us now look at what is understood by a case. You have read about it in Unit 2, Block II of this course. It is fairly common to associate case study with qualitative research. But, Bryman (2008) argues that case study can be associated with both quantitative and qualitative studies. He cites studies by Breadsworth and Keil's (1992) where they studied vegetarians as crosssectional design in qualitative research. But, Davies et al.(1994) termed it as 'case study evidence' on the ground that field work was undertaken at a single location.(Bryman, 2008,p.53) Thus, a case here in quantitative research is 'representative or typical case', exemplifying a broader category to which it belongs to providing a suitable context for certain research questions to be answered. It can be a 'revelatory case' the researcher gets opportunity to study a phenomenon that was not accessible to earlier researchers. A very important critique of this research design is that the finding of a case study cannot be generalized.

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Comparative design: Here two or more contrasting or diversified cases are studied using more or less identical methods. It is understood that social phenomena can be better studied when observed and compared in relation to two or more significantly distinction cases or situations. This design is generally employed while studying cross-cultural or cross national research studies.

Hantrais (1996) suggests that such research occurs when individuals or teams set out to examine particular issues or phenomena in two or more countries with the express intention of comparing their manifestations in different socio-cultural settings (institutions, traditions, value systems, life styles, language, thought patterns), using the same research instruments either to carry out secondary analysis of national data or to conduct new empirical work. The aim may be to seek explanations for similarities and differences or to gain a greater awareness and a deeper understanding of social reality in different national contexts. (Cited in Bryman, 2008, p.58).

Check Your Progress 1

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Meaning of Research Design.

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2. Significance of Research Design.

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7.4 SAMPLING

Now we will discuss another important and useful process of and quantitative research study. It is called ‘Sampling’. Sampling is not typical of research only. In a way, we also practice it. In our day to day, we use crude versions of sampling. Housewives for example, judge few grains of boiled rice to see if, it is ready to be served; understandably, it is not feasible to examine each and every grain in the cooking pot. Our day to day experience testifies to the fact that by and large, it is possible to make some kind of general statement about the universe by observing only a few items i.e. a sample. The method of selecting a portion of the universe with a view to draw conclusions about the universe in ‘toto’ is known as ‘Sampling’ Sampling gives meaning and direction to the scientific social research. In this section we will read about what is a sample? What is the technique of selecting a sample? What are types of sampling and lastly what are the limitation and advantages of sampling technique.

7.4.1 Basic Concepts and Terms

In following section we will read about concepts and terms that are important to understand before you proceed to read about the process of sampling.

- Population: the universe of the units from which the sample is to be selected.
- Sample: the segment of the population that is selected for investigation. It is a subset of the population. The method of selection may be based on a probability or a non-probability approach
- Sampling frame: the listing of all units in the population from which the sample will be selected

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- Representative sample: a sample that reflects the population accurately so that it is a microcosm of the population
- Sampling bias: a distortion in the representatives of the sample that arises when some members of the population (or more precisely the sampling frame) stand little or no chance of being selected for inclusion in the sample
- Sampling error: error in the findings deriving from research due to the difference between a sample and the population from which it is selected. This may occur even though a probability sample has been employed
- Non-probability error: error in the findings deriving from research due to the differences between the population and the sample that arise either from deficiencies in the sampling frame or non-response, or from such problems as poor question wording, poor interviewing or flawed processing data.
- Non-response: a source of non-sampling error that is particularly likely to happen when individuals are being sampled. It occurs whenever some members of the sample refuse to cooperate, cannot be contacted, or for some reason cannot supply the required data (for example, because of mental incapacity).
- Census: the enumeration of entire population. Thus, if data are collected in relation to all units in a population, rather than in relation to a sample of units of that population, the data are treated as census data. The phrase 'the census' typically refers to the complete enumeration of all members of the population of a nation state- that is, a national census. This form of enumeration occurs once every ten years in the India.

Sample is the sub-set of the population that is selected for the study. It constitutes of people, events, behaviour or other elements with which to conduct the study. Sample must representative of the entire population. Descriptive attributes of the sample should be specified for homogeneity.

7.4.2 Principles of Sampling

The main principle behind sampling is that we seek knowledge about the total units, by observing a few units and extend out inference about the sample to the entire population. The other important principles of sampling are.

- Sample units must be chosen in a systematic and objective manner.
- Sample units must be clearly defined and easily identifiable.
- Sample units must be independent of each other.
- Same sample units should be used throughout the study.
- The selection process should be based on sound criteria and should avoid errors, bias and distortions.

A.L. Bowley, whose pioneering work on sampling statistics in the realm of social sciences won him academic and official recognition in the early 19th century arrived at certain conclusions by resorting to the method of sampling. According to Wilkinson and Bhandarkar, (1976) Bowley sampled out each group of twenty families for study on family. His conclusions were found, to a considerable extent, consistent with the subsequent findings of Charles Booth and Rowntree who worked on a much more comprehensive canvas. Bowley's work demonstrated very clearly that sampling techniques are effective considerations will regards to economics of time, money and effort. Sampling also afforded worthwhile conclusions. The use of sampling in social science has steadily increased ever since.

7.4.3 Advantages and Limitations of Sampling

Let us now read about what are the advantages of using a sample in quantitative research and how a sample proves to be a limitation in survey research. Advantage of Sampling Method:

- It saves money, efforts and time of the researcher.
- Researcher has to study only the elements from the sample so it is very convenient.
- Sample size is limited. So it is easy to understand the whole sample and possibility of deep study.
- Sample makes it easy to predict reliable conclusions.
- It is easy to collect facts which are based on experience.

Limitation of Sampling Method:

- While researcher is using sampling method for selecting a sample for his/her study, training is required about preparing sampling frame.
- Because of diversity, complexity and changeability, sometimes sample will be prone to errors. Let us now assess how much you have understood after reading the last section of this unit

7.5 TYPES OF SAMPLING

There are basically two types of sampling: probability sampling and non probability sampling. Probability sampling is one in which every unit of population has an equal probability of being selected for the sample. It offers a high degree of representation. However, this method is expensive, time-consuming and relatively complicated since it requires a large samplesize and the units selected are usually widely scattered. Non-probability sampling makes no claim for representativeness. Every unit does not get the change of being selected. It is the researcher who decides in accordance with the objectives of the study that which sample units should be chosen.

7.5.1 Probability Sampling

Probability Sampling today remains the primary method for selecting large, representative samples for social science and business researcher. Probability sampling requires following conditions to be satisfied.

- 1) A complete list of subjects to be studied should be available.
- 2) Size of universe must be known.
- 3) Desired sample size should be specified.
- 4) Each element should have an equal chance of being selected.

Characteristics of Probability Sampling:

- a) Prediction: Statistical determination of possibility of inclusion of unit in sample from the universe is the important characteristic of probability sampling. Suppose there are 500 total respondents in the universe. We are selecting sample of 50 units from it, then the possibility of inclusion of each units in the sample is 10%.
- b) Reliability: Level of reliability depends upon real value of universe and sample value. If deviation between the two is more, then possibility of tentative conclusions being wrong will also increase. If the sample size is more then the deviation will be less.
- c) Accuracy: It is possible to determine accuracy by statistical method. We can use mean, mode and median to reduce errors.
- d) Sample Size: In probability sampling we can predict the possibility of inclusion of units in the sample so the sample in this method is representative.

Advantages of Probability Sampling:

- It is a scientific method.

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- Possibility of statistical determination of inclusion of units in sample from the universe.
- Conclusions are more objective.
- Researcher can avoid biased views. • It saves time and money.
- It increases accuracy of data.
- It is easy to supervise few interviews in the sample.

Limitation of Probability Sampling:

- Researcher should know the characteristics of the whole universe.
- Whenever researcher is using this method for selecting the sample, then researcher should know the of techniques of selecting the sample very well.
- It is difficult to collect the data using probability sampling as it requires more efforts, money and time.

The essential characteristic of probability sampling is that one can specify for each element of the population, the probability that it will be included in the sample i.e. each of the elements has the same probability of being included in the sample. This however is not a necessary condition; what is necessary is that for each element there should be some specifiable probability that it will be included in the sample. Probability sampling is the only approach that makes possible the formulation of representative sampling plans.

Now we shall discuss some major forms of probability sampling. The different types of probability samples are:

1) Simple Random Sample

2) Stratified Sample

3) Cluster Sample

4) Multistage Sample

1) Simple Random Sampling

In this sampling the sample units are selected by means of a number of methods like lottery method, tippet's methods, and Grid method.

i) Lottery This method involves three steps. First step is constructing the sampling frame i.e. list of the units of the target population. e.g. student's list, the electoral role in alphabetical order and numbered accordingly. Second step is writing numbers listed in sampling frame on small pieces of paper and pacing these papers in some jar. Third step is mixing all papers in Jar and taking out one piece of paper from the jar. This process is continued until the required number of respondents is reached.

ii) Tippet's table Method Tippet's has prepared a table of random numbers. These numbers are available in various forms. Size and number combinations in the appendix of the texts on statistics e.g., two hundred teachers employed by seven English medium pre-primary schools in the city apply for attending a two-day Seminar. The sponsors, however only have money to pay for 30 participants. The seminar director, therefore, assign each applicant a number from 001 to 200, using a table of random numbers that he found in a statistics book. He select 30 numbers within the range to 001 to 200. The director decided that this method was easier than picking numbers from the urn.

iii) Grid Method While collecting a sample from the universe spread over a large geographical area, 'Grid Method' is commonly used. Fro example, for studying political opinions of voters in any state, number of

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voters will surely be huge. In this case, voters in the entire state are our universe. To collect samples from this universe, map of the state is taken and squares are drawn on that map. These squares drawn on the map are serially numbered. Few squares are selected amongst them by lottery method. Voters in that area which are selected by above mentioned lottery method are included in the sample. In this manner, sample can be selected from a universe spread over a large geographical area.

Advantage of Simple Random Sampling:

The advantages of simple random sampling are given below.

- All elements have equal chance of being included.
- It is the simplest of all sampling methods and easiest to conduct.
- This method can be used in conjunction with other methods in probability sampling.
- Researcher does not need to know the true composition of the population before hand i.e. he requires minimum knowledge of population in advance.
- Degree of sampling error is low. • Most statistical textbooks have easy to use tables for drawing a random sample.

Disadvantages of Simple Random Sampling:

- It does not make use of knowledge of population which researcher may have.
- It produces greater error in the results than do other sampling methods.
- It cannot be used if the researcher wants to break respondents into sub-groups or strata for comparison purposes.

2) Stratified Sampling

This is the form of sampling in which the population is divided into a number of strata or sub-groups and sample is drawn from each stratum. These sub-samples make up the final sample of the study. It is defined as the method involving dividing the population into homogenous strata and then selecting simple random samples from each of the stratum. The division of the population into homogenous strata is based on one or more criteria e.g., sex, age, class, educational level, residential background, religion, occupation etc.

Advantages of Stratified Sampling:

- Sample chosen can represent various groups and pattern of characteristics in the desired population.
- It can be used for comparing sub-categories.
- It can be more precise than simple random sampling.

Disadvantages of Stratified Sampling:

- 1) It requires more efforts than simple random sampling.
- 2) It needs a larger sample size than simple random sample to produce statistically meaningful results because each stratum must have at least 20 persons of make statistical comparison meaningful.

There are two types of stratified sampling

- (i) Proportionate (ii) disproportionate.

The former is one in which the sample unit is proportionate to the size of the population, while the latter is one in which the sample unit is not

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related to the units of the target population. The advantages of proportionate stratified random sampling are (i) representation is enhanced (ii) sampling error is reduced (iii) comparison of different strata becomes possible. The disadvantages of these methods are : (i) it is some what complex method of determining a sample (ii) it involves more time to obtain elements from each strata (iii) the number of classification errors increases with more strata. A stratified sample is used when the researcher wishes to select a sample with a particular trait or characteristic. That is to say, when the researcher wants to examine the relationship between two variables, a stratified sample is used in research. For example, in a study of women with different levels of income, the researcher selects women randomly with different strata or levels of income. Before randomly selecting the subjects, the researcher divides the population into three levels: low income, middle income and high income. Stratified samples are likely to be more representative on many variables than a simple random sample (Babbie, 1986).

3) Cluster Sampling

The usual sampling procedure is to select one element or subject at a time. This is very time consuming and tedious when a large sample is needed. Further, a researcher must have a complete list of the elements in a population which may not always be available. In order to avoid this problem, a researcher selects the sample in groups or categories. This procedure is called cluster sampling. In cluster sampling, we can divide the state into districts, revenue divisions and villages and select clusters or groups of people from these areas.

4) Multistage Sampling

In nationwide studies where the sample size is large, researchers need to use sampling methods that are more complex than simple random sampling. A form of cluster sampling which is used in more complex survey research designs is called multistage sampling. In this sampling procedure, individuals or households are selected, not groups. For

example, in a study of the health care available to women in South India, a cluster of districts in the states of South India are selected. This cluster is narrowed down by selecting a revenue division or block within a cluster. Next, the households in the area are listed out for the study. The multistage sample is selected by including the third or fifth household as in systematic random sampling. Multistage samples are useful when comparative studies are conducted to understand the population characteristics in a nationwide survey. The cost of sampling can be reduced if clusters are carefully selected.

7.5.2 Non-probability Sampling

In many research situations, particularly those where there is no list of persons to be studied is available e.g. wife battering, migrant workers, alcoholics, etc. probability sampling is difficult and inappropriate to use. In such researches, non-probability sampling is the more appropriate one. We have read about characteristics, advantages and limitations of probability sampling, now we will read about characteristics, advantages and limitation of non-probability sampling.

Characteristics of Non-probability Sampling:

- 1) Non-representative Sample: In non-probability sampling, representation of sample is very less, because sample size and units selected for the sample depend upon researcher's requirements.
- 2) Biased Views: While selecting a sample, researcher may take biased views, which results into inaccurate subjective conclusions.
- 3) Freedom of Selection of Sample: In this method researcher enjoys freedom of selecting sample, so it is non-scientific.

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4) Sample Size: There is no statistical formula of calculating sample size through non-probability sampling. It is totally dependent on researcher's wish.

5) Level of Errors and Accuracy in Conclusion: It is very difficult to determine the level of error and accuracy in conclusion.

6) Convenient and Money Saving Method: Comparatively this method is convenient and money saving for the researcher. Non –probability sampling procedures do not employ the rules of probability theory and also do not claim representativeness, and are usually used for qualitative exploratory studies. Non-probability sampling is of the following types:

a) Convenience Sampling This is also known as 'accidental sampling'. In this sampling, the researcher studies all those persons who are most conveniently available or who accidentally come in his/her contact during a certain period of time in the research. For example, the researcher is engaged in a study of post graduate students might visit the university canteen, library, departments, playgrounds, and interview certain number of students. The most obvious advantage of convenience sample is that it is quick and economical. Its main disadvantage is, it may be a biased sample.

Convenience samples are best utilized for exploratory research when additional research will subsequently be conducted with a probability sample.

b) Purposive Sampling In this sampling, also known as judgmental sampling, the researcher purposely chooses persons, who in his judgment possess appropriate characteristic required of the sample members, are thought to be relevant to the research topic and are easily available to him. For example, suppose, the researcher wants to study beggars. S/he knows three areas in the city where beggars are found in abundance. S/he will visit only these three areas and interview beggars of her/his choice and convenience. c) Quota Sampling In quota sample, the researcher

needs to include a certain proportion of subjects with a specific characteristic or quality. For example, a researcher is interested in finding out how women who have access to internet differ in their television watching habits, may know that only 10 per cent of the total women population have access to internet. Therefore, the sample selected by the researcher may have 10 women who have access to the internet for 100 women selected without access to the internet but watch TV regularly. Surveys to study the incidence of HIV/AIDS among women uses a sample of pregnant women visiting prenatal clinics as this is regarded as the best indicator of infection among the adult population. d) Snowball sampling is used in surveys where the researchers do not have much information about the population. In snowball sampling, the researcher uses the first subject as the connecting link to select the rest of the subjects. For example, in a study of women who had undergone successful family planning operations the researcher contacts a woman who meets this criteria and then identifies other such women from the first subject's contacts. Often this technique is useful when it is hard to locate subjects who meet specific criteria set by the researcher to select a sample. Snowball samples are frequently used in small studies which focus on specific conditions of women's lives such as those with HIV/AIDS, widows or women-headed households who may not be accessible to researchers and are difficult to find.

Advantages of Non Probability Sampling:

- Non-probability sampling is useful whenever probability sampling is difficult to use and there is no alternative.
- It saves money and time.
- It is useful in descriptive and exploratory type of researches.

Limitations of Non-Probability Sampling:

- While selecting a sample, researcher may take biased views.

- Sample selected by non-probability sampling may not be representative.
- Conclusions drawn from the research can be misleading especially while selecting sample by using convenience method. • In this method, it is very difficult to state the level of reliability and accuracy.

7.6 SAMPLING IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative researchers are generally employing purposive sampling as the selections of units (people, organizations, documents etc.) have to have direct reference to the research question. Probability sampling may be used in qualitative research for interview based research rather than in ethnographic studies. Qualitative researcher using probability sampling should keep two criteria in mind. That the results be generalized to wider population and if research questions do not suggest that particular categories of unit of analysis should be sampled, there may be a case for sampling randomly.

Two meaning of 'sample' In statistical research , a sample is a 'portion drawn from a population, the study of which is intended to lead to statistical estimates of the attributes of the whole population' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2008). The social sciences meaning of "sample" is often intended to be an approximation of the scientific statistical sample, that is, to get a "representative" sample. However, in the studies that use one or few cases, the meaning of sample is better captured in the OED's first meaning, "A fact , incident, story or suppositious case, which serves to illustrate, confirm, or render credible some proposition or statement". These general meanings of 'sample' are quite different. From the statistical sample we expect to learn about the other cases in the population. From the illustrative sample we expect to learn about a phenomenon. Both meanings can be found in feminist research. Adopted

from: Doing Feminist Research in Political and Social Sciences. Ackerly and True, 2010, p.127.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

- 1. What are the types of Research Design?

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- 2. What are the Sampling?

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7.7 LET US SUM UP

Research design is a blue print of any research study. It ensures against wasteful expenditure of money, time and energy. To design is to plan, that is, designing is the process of making decisions before the situation arises. It is thus, a process of deliberate anticipation, directed towards bringing an expected situation under control. The task of designing research is a sequential process involving a number of clearly delineated steps. There are some variations in the number of steps, their names and their sequence suggested by different writers but design of research and sampling are the most important aspects and inevitable part of the social research. Sampling is the process of selecting a part of the universe (sample) that represent the whole sampling can be probability sampling where each unit has equal chances of being selected & non probability sample that is not representing the universe in totality. Probability and non-probability sampling are of different types. Type of sampling chosen for any research study depends on the purpose and resources (time, financial and human resources) available with the researcher.

7.8 KEY WORDS

Sampling: In statistics, quality assurance, and survey methodology, sampling is the selection of a subset of individuals from within a statistical population to estimate characteristics of the whole population. Statisticians attempt for the samples to represent the population in question.

Probability: Probability is a measure quantifying the likelihood that events will occur. Probability is a number between 0 and 1, where, roughly speaking, 0 indicates impossibility and 1 indicates certainty. The higher the probability of an event, the more likely it is that the event will occur.

Non-Probability: Sampling is the use of a subset of the population to represent the whole population or to inform about processes that are meaningful beyond the particular cases, individuals or sites studied.

7.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Write in your own words a few lines about the meaning , significance and advantages of a ‘Research Design’.
2. Write a line or two about each of the research designs that you have studied in the last section.
3. Write principles that govern sampling in any research.
4. Write two advantages and two disadvantages of using sampling method.
5. What are the two types of sampling techniques in quantitative research?
6. Write the main features of simple random, stratified, cluster and multi stage sampling techniques.
7. In which sampling method errors are unpredictable? Explain why?
8. Which sampling method is unscientific? Why is it so?
9. In which research design non-probability sampling is useful.

7.10 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

- Ackerly, Brooke and True, Jacqui (2010). Doing Feminist Research in Political and Social Sciences. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
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- Social Sciences, 11th edition. Mumbai: Himalaya Publishing House.

7.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

3. See Section 7.2.1
4. See Section 7.2.2

Check Your Progress 2

2. See Section 7.3
3. See Section 7.4