Basic Institutions of Society

SOW202

University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre
Open and Distance Learning Course Series Development

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General Editor: Prof.Bayo Okunade

University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre
University of Ibadan,
Nigeria

Telex: 31128NG

Tel: +234 (80775935727)
E-mail: ssu@dlc.ui.edu.ng
Website: www.dlc.ui.edu.ng

Vice-Chancellor's Message

The Distance Learning Centre is building on a solid tradition of over two decades of service in the provision of External Studies Programme and now Distance Learning Education in Nigeria and beyond. The Distance Learning mode to which we are committed is providing access to many deserving Nigerians in having access to higher education especially those who by the nature of their engagement do not have the luxury of full time education. Recently, it is contributing in no small measure to providing places for teeming Nigerian youths who for one reason or the other could not get admission into the conventional universities.

These course materials have been written by writers specially trained in ODL course delivery. The writers have made great efforts to provide up to date information, knowledge and skills in the different disciplines and ensure that the materials are user-friendly.

In addition to provision of course materials in print and e-format, a lot of Information Technology input has also gone into the deployment of course materials. Most of them can be downloaded from the DLC website and are available in audio format which you can also download into your mobile phones, IPod, MP3 among other devices to allow you listen to the audio study sessions. Some of the study session materials have been scripted and are being broadcast on the university's Diamond Radio FM 101.1, while others have been delivered and captured in audio-visual format in a classroom environment for use by our students. Detailed information on availability and access is available on the website. We will continue in our efforts to provide and review course materials for our courses.

However, for you to take advantage of these formats, you will need to improve on your I.T. skills and develop requisite distance learning Culture. It is well known that, for efficient and effective provision of Distance learning education, availability of appropriate and relevant course materials is a *sine qua non*. So also, is the availability of multiple plat form for the convenience of our students. It is in fulfilment of this, that series of course materials are being written to enable our students study at their own pace and convenience.

It is our hope that you will put these course materials to the best use.

Prof. Abel Idowu Olayinka

Vice-Chancellor

Foreword

As part of its vision of providing education for "Liberty and Development" for Nigerians and the International Community, the University of Ibadan, Distance Learning Centre has recently embarked on a vigorous repositioning agenda which aimed at embracing a holistic and all encompassing approach to the delivery of its Open Distance Learning (ODL) programmes. Thus we are committed to global best practices in distance learning provision. Apart from providing an efficient administrative and academic support for our students, we are committed to providing educational resource materials for the use of our students. We are convinced that, without an up-to-date, learner-friendly and distance learning compliant course materials, there cannot be any basis to lay claim to being a provider of distance learning education. Indeed, availability of appropriate course materials in multiple formats is the hub of any distance learning provision worldwide.

In view of the above, we are vigorously pursuing as a matter of priority, the provision of credible, learner-friendly and interactive course materials for all our courses. We commissioned the authoring of, and review of course materials to teams of experts and their outputs were subjected to rigorous peer review to ensure standard. The approach not only emphasizes cognitive knowledge, but also skills and humane values which are at the core of education, even in an ICT age.

The development of the materials which is on-going also had input from experienced editors and illustrators who have ensured that they are accurate, current and learner-friendly. They are specially written with distance learners in mind. This is very important because, distance learning involves non-residential students who can often feel isolated from the community of learners.

It is important to note that, for a distance learner to excel there is the need to source and read relevant materials apart from this course material. Therefore, adequate supplementary reading materials as well as other information sources are suggested in the course materials.

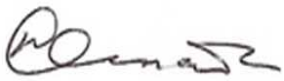
Apart from the responsibility for you to read this course material with others, you are also advised to seek assistance from your course facilitators especially academic advisors during your study even before the interactive session which is by design for revision. Your academic advisors will assist you using convenient technology including Google Hang Out, You Tube, Talk Fusion, etc. but you have to take advantage of these. It is also going to be of immense advantage if you complete assignments as at when due so as to have necessary feedbacks as a guide.

The implication of the above is that, a distance learner has a responsibility to develop requisite distance learning culture which includes diligent and disciplined self-study, seeking available administrative and academic support and acquisition of basic information technology skills. This is why you are encouraged to develop your computer skills by availing yourself the opportunity of training that the Centre's provide and put these into use.

In conclusion, it is envisaged that the course materials would also be useful for the regular students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria who are faced with a dearth of high quality textbooks. We are therefore, delighted to present these titles to both our distance learning students and the university's regular students. We are confident that the materials will be an invaluable resource to all.

We would like to thank all our authors, reviewers and production staff for the high quality of work.

Best wishes.



Professor Bayo Okunade

Director

Course Development Team

Course Writer	T.G. Adegoke, Ph.D.
Content Editor	Prof. Remi Raji-Oyelade
Production Editor	Dr. Gloria O. Adedoja
Learning Design & Technologist	FolajimiOlamboFakoya
Managing Editor	OgunmefunOladeleAbiodun
General Editor	Prof.BayoOkunade

Contents

About this course manual

Basic Institutions of SocietySOW202 has been produced by University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre. All course manuals produced by University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centreare structured in the same way, as outlined below.

How this course manual is structured

The course overview

The course overview gives you a general introduction to the course. Information contained in the course overview will help you determine:

- If the course is suitable for you.
- What you will already need to know.
- What you can expect from the course.
- How much time you will need to invest to complete the course.

The overview also provides guidance on:

- Study skills.
- Where to get help.
- Course assignments and assessments.
- Margin icons.

We strongly recommend that you read the overview *carefully* before starting your study.

The course content

The course is broken down into Study Sessions. Each Study Session comprises:

- An introduction to the Study Session content.
- Study Session outcomes.
- Core content of the Study Session with a variety of learning activities.

- A Study Session summary.
- Assignments and/or assessments, as applicable.
- Bibliography

Your comments

After completing Basic Institutions of Society we would appreciate it if you would take a few moments to give us your feedback on any aspect of this course. Your feedback might include comments on:

- Course content and structure.
- Course reading materials and resources.
- Course assignments.
- Course assessments.
- Course duration.
- Course support (assigned tutors, technical help, etc.)

Your constructive feedback will help us to improve and enhance this course.

Course Overview

Welcome to Basic Institutions of SocietySOW202

The processes of instructional change are endless and often complex, but increasingly they can be understood and even predicted through the application of sociological concepts and research.

The course (SOW 202) considers sociological analyses of major basic or social institutions of society, such as the family, religion, education, politics, the economy, the military, and the health care system. Social institutions are organised patterns of beliefs and behaviour centred on basic social needs.

Course outcomes

Outcomes

Upon completion of Basic Institutions of SocietySOW202 you will be able to:

- *describe* the nature and concepts of the family.
- *present* the functions, and theoretical analysis of the family as it affects the basic human needs in the society.
- *discuss* the elements, forms and functions, organizations and behaviour of religion.
- *explain* the nature, functions, and theories of education.
- *appraise* the industrial revolution, markets, and economic systems.
- *explain* the nature of politics, as well as discussing the theoretical models on the exercise of political power in society.
- *present* the military as a social institution.
- *analyse* the relationships between health and society.

Timeframe

How long?

This is a 15 week course. It requires a formal study time of 45 hours. The formal study times are scheduled around online discussions / chats with your course facilitator / academic advisor to facilitate your learning. Kindly see course calendar on your course website for scheduled dates. You will still require independent/personal study time particularly in studying your course materials.

How to be successful in this course

As an open and distance learner your approach to learning will be different to that from your school days, where you had onsite education. You will now choose what you want to study, you will have professional and/or personal motivation for doing so and you will most likely be fitting your study activities around other professional or domestic responsibilities.

Essentially you will be taking control of your learning environment. As a consequence, you will need to consider performance issues related to time management, goal setting, stress management, etc. Perhaps you will also need to reacquaint yourself in areas such as essay planning, coping with exams and using the web as a learning resource.

We recommend that you take time now—before starting your self-study—to familiarize yourself with these issues. There are a number of excellent resources on the web. A few suggested links are:

- http://www.dlc.ui.edu.ng/resources/studyskill.pdf

  This is a resource of the UIDLC pilot course module. You will find sections on building study skills, time scheduling, basic concentration techniques, control of the study environment, note taking, how to read essays for analysis and memory skills ("remembering").
- http://www.ivywise.com/newsletter_march13_how_to_self_study.html

  This site provides how to master self-studying, with bias to emerging technologies.
- http://www.howtostudy.org/resources.php

  Another "How to study" web site with useful links to time management, efficient reading, questioning/listening/observing skills, getting the most out of doing ("hands-on" learning), memory building, tips for staying motivated, developing a learning plan.

The above links are our suggestions to start you on your way. At the time of writing these web links were active. If you want

to look for more, go to www.google.com and type "self-study basics", "self-study tips", "self-study skills" or similar phrases.

Need help?

Help

As earlier noted, this course manual complements and supplements SOW202 at UI Mobile Class as an online course.

You may contact any of the following units for information, learning resources and library services.

Distance Learning Centre (DLC)
University of Ibadan, Nigeria
Tel: (+234) 08077593551 – 55 (Student Support Officers)
Email: ssu@dlc.ui.edu.ng

Head Office
Morohundiya Complex, Ibadan-Ilorin Expressway, Idi-Ose, Ibadan.

Information Centre
20 Awolowo Road, Bodija,
Ibadan.

For technical issues (computer problems, web access, and etcetera), please visit: www.learnersupport.dlc.ui.edu.ng for live support; or send mail to webmaster@dlc.ui.edu.ng.

Academic Support

Help

A course facilitator is commissioned for this course. You have also been assigned an academic advisor to provide learning support. The contacts of your course facilitator and academic advisor for this course are available at onlineacademicsupport@dlc.ui.edu.ng

Activities

Activities

This manual features "Activities," which may present material that is NOT extensively covered in the Study Sessions. When completing these activities, you will demonstrate your understanding of basic material (by answering questions) before you learn more advanced concepts. You will be provided with answers to every activity question. Therefore, your emphasis when working the activities should be on understanding your answers. It is more important that you understand why every answer is correct.

Assessments

Assessments

There are three basic forms of assessment in this course: in-text questions (ITQs) and self assessment questions (SAQs), and tutor marked assessment (TMAs). This manual is essentially filled with ITQs and SAQs. Feedbacks to the ITQs are placed immediately after the questions, while the feedbacks to SAQs are at the back of manual. You will receive your TMAs as part of online class activities at the UI Mobile Class. Feedbacks to TMAs will be provided by your tutor in not more than 2 weeks expected duration.
Schedule dates for submitting assignments and engaging in course / class activities is available on the course website. Kindly visit your course website often for updates.

Bibliography

Readings

For those interested in learning more on this subject, we provide you with a list of additional resources at the end of this course manual; these may be books, articles or websites.

Getting around this course manual

Margin icons

While working through this course manual you will notice the frequent use of margin icons. These icons serve to "signpost" a particular piece of text, a new task or change in activity; they have been included to help you to find your way around this course manual.

A complete icon set is shown below. We suggest that you familiarize yourself with the icons and their meaning before starting your study.

 **Activity**	 **Assessment**	 **Assignment**	 **Case study**
 **Discussion**	 **Group Activity**	 **Help**	 **Outcomes**
 **Note**	 **Reflection**	 **Reading**	 **Study skills**
 **Summary**	 **Terminology**	 **Time**	 **Tip**

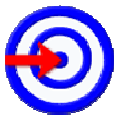
Study Session 1

Concept and the Nature of the Family

Introduction

In this Study Session will present the family as an institution. We will also examine the definition and the main concepts used in understanding the family and functions of the family as well.

Learning Outcomes



When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

1.1 *present* the family as an institution.
1.2 *discuss* the family as an institution.
1.3 *explain* the main concepts used in relation to the family.
1.4 *discuss* the functions of the family.

1.1 Family as an Institution

The **family** is a central institution in all human societies; though, it may take many different forms. A family is a group of people related by blood, marriage, or adoption. Blood relations are often called "consanguineous attachment". Relations between adult persons living together, according to the norms of marriage or other intimate relationship, are called "conjugal relations" (Kornblum, 1997).

However, neither blood ties nor marriage nor adoption adequately describes the increasingly common relationship between unmarried people who consider themselves as a couple or a family. In a more broader sense, a family is defined as two or more persons who share resources, share responsibility for decisions, share values and goals, and have a commitment to one another over time (Aldous and Dumon, 1991).

As an institution, is the family characterised by the following

identified by Kornblum (1997):

1. The family as a social institution comprises a set of statuses, roles, norms, and values devoted to achieving important social goals. Those goals include the social control of reproduction, the socialisation of new generations, and the "social placement" of children in the institutions of the larger society, such as colleges, business forms, and so forth.
2. In many societies, especially peasant societies, the family performs almost all the functions necessary to meet the basic needs of its members. These basic needs include the communication among members, production and distribution of goods and services, protection and defence, replacement of members and control of members. However, in the contemporary era, most of the functions that were traditionally performed by the family are now performed by either partly or wholly by other social institutions that are specially adapted to performing those functions.
3. The ability of the family to meet its socially expected goals society expects it to meet is often complicated by rapid social change. For example, many families in industrial communities were quite good at preparing their children for blue-collar manufacturing jobs, but as those jobs have been eliminated owing to globalisation of the economy, it is no longer clear how families can equip their offsprings to compete in the new job market.
4. When there are major changes in other social institutions, such as economic institutions, families must adapt to those changes. Similarly, when the family changes, other social institutions will be affected. However, the effect of these changes make the family to be an institution.
5. Changes in the institutions in one area of social life can place tremendous pressure on those in other sectors. This is especially true in the case of the family. All these aforementioned characteristics make the family an institution.

1.2 Types of Family

All societies recognize families, although the precise shape

and character of kinship arrangements vary (Murdock, 1965). An important distinction is whether family systems are extended or nuclear. These concepts refer to the whole system of family relationships and whether the family resides in extended or relatively small household units.

1.2.1 Extended Families

Extended families are the whole network of parents, children, and other relatives who form a family unit. Sometimes, extended families, or part thereof, live together, sharing their labour and economic resources to survive. For example, extended families are common among the urban poor because they develop a cooperative system of social and economic support. Kin, in such a context, may refer to those who are intimately involved in the family support system, and are considered part of the family (Stack, 1974; Collins, 1990 and Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

One general pattern is that pre-industrial societies attach great importance to the extended family, a family unit including parents and children, but also other kins. Extended families are also called consanguine families. This means that they include everyone with "shared blood". Extended family systems are common among Caribbean, Latin American, and African Societies. Studies of African societies show, for example, that the extended family is a pervasive and durable family form that enables members to adapt to changing circumstances, including migration, upward mobility, and economic hardship (Bacazin and Eitzen, 2000).

According to Bacazin and Eitzen (2002), extended families are also found at the very top of the socio-economic scale. Among elite, extended family systems preserve inherited wealth, whereas among the poor, extended family systems contribute to economic survival. In sum, extended families provide a means of adaptation to economic conditions that require great cooperation within families.

1.2.2 Nuclear Families

The nuclear family is comprised of one married couple that resides together with their children. Like extended families, nuclear families developed in response to economic and social conditions. The outset of industrialisation, which sparked both geographic and social mobility, gave rise to the nuclear family, a family unit composed of one or two parents and their

children. The nuclear family is known as the "conjugal family" because it is based on marriage. Although, many members of our society lived in extended families in the past, the nuclear family has become the predominant form in our contemporary societies (Macionis, 1995; and Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

1.3Effects of Industrialization on Families

According to Anderson and Taylor (2004), the following are the effect of industrialisation

1. The origin of the nuclear family in the Western society is tied to industrialisation. Before industrialisation, families were the basic economic unit of society, and large household units produced and distributed goods. With the industrialization, the transition to wage-paying created an economy based on cash instead of domestic production. For example, families, especially nuclear families became, dependent on the wages that workers brought home rather than on goods they were able to produce at home.
2. With industrialisation, single women were among the first to be employed in the factories, the shift to wage labour was accompanied by a patriarchal assumption that men should earn the "family wage", that is, provide for dependents. Thus, men worked, and women became more economically dependent on men. The family wage system has persisted and it is reflected in the unequal wages paid to men and women today.
3. Another result of industrialisation was the separation of the family and the workplace. For instance, paid labour was performed in factories and public market places. The shift to factory production moved workers out of the households, and this soon created dual roles for women as paid labourers and unpaid wives. Moreover, the invisibility of women's labour in the home eventually diminished their perceived status.
4. Employers apparently thought that they had better control over labourers if their families were typically not there to distract them. So, families were typically prohibited from living with worker. As a result, prostitution camps, were developed, which followed

workers from place to place.

5. Migration to new lands and exposure to new customs and needs also disrupt traditional family values. For instance, immigrant women who enter the labour force often change their expectations about their gender role, but they also usually find that they must continue to perform traditional household tasks.

1.4Kinship Systems

Families are part of what are more broadly considered to be kinship systems. A kinship system is the pattern of relationships that define people's family relationships to one another. Kinship systems vary enormously across cultures and at different times. The families as social units are, in turn, built on kinship, a social bond, based on blood, marriage, or adoption, that joins individuals into families (Groll, 1995; Macionis, 1995; Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

Kinship implies ties of blood (biological kinships), descent (jural or legal kinship) and marriage (affiliation). People descended from a common ancestor are referred to as "cognatic Kin" or cognate; those who become kin through marriage are "affinal kin" or affine. For example, people who claim to be cognatic kinsmen may trace their common descent in one of several ways. In patrilineal or agnatic descent, links are traced and rights and duties follow the male line; in matrilineal or uterine descent, they follow the female line (Peil, 1977).

A society with unilineal descent may trace rights and duties in one line and inheritance in some other way. For example, in a patrilineal society, women may have some inheritance from their mothers, and in a basically matrilineal society, children may inherent some goods or position from their fathers. In other words, many supposedly unilineal systems have some double descent aspects (Bohannan, 1969; Peil, 1977). At the heart of all these diverse family patterns are the social norms and structures associated with kinship systems.

1.5Marriage Patterns

All cultures have norms that specify whether a person brought up in that culture may marry within or outside the cultural group. This mate selection can be categorised into two:

endogamy and exogamy. Cultural norms, and often laws, identify people as desirable or unsuitable for marriage. Some of these norms promote “endogamy”, marriage between people of the same social category. Endogamy norms, for instances, constrain marriage prospects to other people of the same age, religion, race or ethnic groups or social class. Other norms encourage “exogamy”, marriage between people of different social categories. Throughout the world, societies pressure people to marry someone of the same social background but of the other sex. The logic of endogamy is that people of similar social position pass along their standing to offspring, thereby maintaining traditional social patterns. Exogamy, by contrast, helps to forge useful alliances and encourages cultural diffusion (Murdock, 1965; Macionis, 1995).

The other types of marriage patterns among people are monogamy, polygamy, and polyandry.

1.5.1Monogamous Marriage

Monogamy is a form of marriage involving two partners. This is the practice of sexually exclusive marriage with one spouse. It is a common form of marriage in Western/industrialised nations. Monogamous marriage is not only a cultural ideal; it also prescribed through law and promoted through religious teachings. Lifelong monogamy is not always realised, however, as evidenced by the high rate of divorce and extramarital affairs (Lamanna and Rieldman, 2003).

1.5.2Polygamous Marriage

Polygamy is the practice of men or women having multiple marriage partners. This usually involves one man having more than one wife technically referred to as **polygyny**. It may also involve a relationship of one woman that is married many husbands, that is **polyandry**.

Polygynous Marriage

Polygyny is a type of marriage uniting one male and two or more females. Although polygyny is commonly associated with Mormons, Old Testament patriarchs also had plural wives. Other groups have practiced this form of marriage in Muslim societies, although mostly among elites (Mernissi, 1987; Anderson and Taylor, 2004). Polygyny was also historically linked to high prestige among Muslim men

because men with the most wives usually held the highest social status.

Polygyny also has economic functions. It provides wealthy men who can afford multiple wives with a source of cheap labour – their wives. As a result, polygyny has been most common in agrarian societies where a large and inexpensive labour is needed.

Polyandrous Marriage

Polyandry is a type of marriage joining one female with two or more males. This pattern appears only rarely; one example is among Tibetan Buddhists. In places where agriculture is difficult, polyandry discourages the division of land into percels too small to support a family and divides the costs among many men. Polyandry also appears in societies that engage in the aborting of female fetuses or killing of female infants – so that the female population drops, forcing men to share women (Murdock, 1965; Macionis, 1995).

1.6Residential Patterns

Just as societies regulate mate selection, so they designate where a couple resides. Residential patterns are also shaped by kinship system. For instance, newly married couples are expected to establish independent household if they can afford to do so. In pre-industrial societies, for example, most newly weds live with one set of parents, gaining economic assistance and security in the process. Thus, the following residential patterns are identified by Ember and Ember (1991); Macionis (1995) and Anderson and Taylor (2003):

1.6.1Patrilocal Kinship Systems

In patrilocal kinship systems, after marriage, a woman is separated from her own kinship group and resides with the husband or his kinship group. In other words, patrilocality is a residential pattern that encourages a married couple to live with or near the husband's family.

1.6.2Matrilocal Kinship Systems

In matrilocal kinship systems, a woman continues to live with her family of origin. The husband resides with the wife and her family; though, he does not give up membership of his own group. In other words, matrilocality is a residential pattern that encourages a married couple to live with or near

the wife's family. A society's inclination towards one variant or the other often corresponds to military or economic patterns. For instance, societies that engage in frequent local warfare tend towards patrilocality since families need their sons to stay close in order to come to their protection in times of war. On the other hand, societies that engage in distant warfare present a mixed picture, favouring patrilocality or matrilocality depending on whether sons or daughters have greater economic importance.

1.6.3Neo-Local Residence

Neolocal residence is the practice of the new couple establishing their own residence. In most matrilocal societies, the husband retains his importance in the group of his birth and may exercise authority over his sisters and their children. In essence, neo-locality is a residential pattern in which a married couple lives apart from the parents of both spouses.

1.7Patterns of Descent

Descent is a matter of defining relatives or, more formally, the system by which members of a society trace kinship over generations. Most pre-industrial societies trace kinship only through one side of the family – the father or the mother.

The following patterns of descent are identified by Havilland (1985); Macionis(1995), and Anderson and Taylor (2004):

1.7.1 Patrilineal Descent

Patrilineal descent is a system that emphasised tracing kinship through males. That is, in patrilineal kinship systems, family lineage (or ancestry) is traced through the family of the father. Offsprings in patrilineal systems are typically given the name of the father. Practically speaking, patrilineal kinship directs fathers to pass on the property to their sons. Patrilineal descent is common to pastoral and agrarian societies, in which men produce the most valued resources.

1.7.2 Matrilineal Descent

Matrilineal descent is a system that emphasised tracing kinship through females. Here, people define only the mother's side as kin, and daughters inherit property from their mothers. Matrilineal descent is often found in horticultural societies where women are the primary food producers.

1.7.3 Bilateral Descent

Bilateral descent is a system that emphasises tracing kinship through both females and males. In a bilateral society, children are linked by kinship to the families of both parents. In bilateral kinship, there is a patrilineal bias in that children commonly take the name of the father. The practice of children taking the father's name is also changing, as more women are keeping their names. Children's name may be hyphenated with both parent's names, taken from the mother only. It should also be noted that, even when the mother and father have different names, children are most typically given the name of the father.

1.8Function of the Family

The family fulfils a number of functions, such as providing religious training, education, and recreational outlets. This section will focus on the functions of the family.

Reflection

Do we really need the family?

The answer to the above question borders on the significance of the family. To this extent Ogburn (1964) and Schaefer and Lamm (1997) have identified six paramount functions performed by the family. They are as follows:

1.8.1Reproduction

For a society to maintain itself, it must replace the dying members of the society. In this case, the family contributes to human survival through its function of reproduction. For instance, the family provides a socially approved context for childbearing and childcare. It creates a stable mating relationship that supports the mother during pregnancy and the children at infancy.

1.8.2 Protection

Unlike the young of animal species, human infants need constant care and economic security. Infants and children experience an extremely long period of dependency which places special demands on older family members. In all cultures, it is the family that assumes ultimate responsibility

for the protection and upbringing of children.

1.8.3 Socialisation

The family socializes the young. It is from the family that the child learns to talk, think or follows the customs, behaviour and values of his society. The influence of the home on the life of every individual cannot be over-emphasized. Whatever a child becomes in his later life is determined by the nature of the home in which he was brought up. During the formative years, children need to be given proper upbringing in order to grow up to become good and useful citizens of their country. In ideal terms, parents help their children learn to be well-integrated and contributing members of the society (Parsons and Bales, 1955).

However, parents and other kins monitor a child's behaviour and transmit the norms, values, and language of a culture to the child. Of course, as conflict theorists point out, the social class of couples and their children significantly influence the socialisation experiences to which they are exposed and the protection they receive.

1.8.4 Regulation of Sexual Behaviour

The family creates condition for mutual affections among its members as well as for the satisfactory and control of the sexual needs of its adults.

One universal regulation is the incest taboo, a cultural norm forbidding sexual relations or marriage between certain kins. This prohibitions or regulation varies from one culture to another. For example, the family prohibits sex between the father and daughter, mother and son, brother and sister. However, in some countries like Ghana, among the Ashanti, sexual intercourse between brother and sister does not generate any horror, whereas among the Talasi of Ghana, it does. Similarly, marriage between a sister and a brother (exogamy) is prohibited in some societies (e.g. among the Yoruba). Both incest and exogamy help in regulating the sexual behaviour of members of a family.

1.8.5 Affection and Companionship

Ideally, the family provides members with warm and intimate relationships and helps them feel satisfied and secure. Of course, a family member may find such rewards outside the family-from peers, in school, at work – and may perceive the

home as an unpleasant place. Nevertheless, unlike other institutions, the family is obligated to serve the emotional needs of its members.

1.8.6 Provisions of Social Status

We inherit a social position because of the "family background" and reputation of our parents and siblings. The family unit presents the new-born child with ascribed status of race and ethnicity, that is, a factor in determining his or her place within a society's system of stratification. Moreover, family resources affect children's ability to pursue certain opportunities such as higher education and specialised lessons.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we discussed the concept of family as an institution. Moreover, we highlighted and explained the types of families: the nuclear family, extended family, kinship systems, marriage patterns, residential patterns and patterns of descent the main concepts of family. Also the characteristics of these concepts were also described as they affect family settings in the society.

We also examined the six paramount functions performed by the family; these are: reproduction, protection, and socialisation, regulation of sexual behaviour, affection and companionship and provision of social status. All these show that the family has a great role to play in integrating its members into the society.

Assessment

Assignment

1. How will you define the family?
2. What are the main functions of the family?
3. Given the diversity in family forms, how do sociologists define the family?
4. What are the different kinship systems that exist in societies?
5. What are the effects of industrialisation on families, especially the nuclear family?

Study Session 2

Theoretical Analysis of the Family

Introduction

The complexity of family patterns makes it impossible to understand the family from any singular perspective. Is the family a source of stability or change in society? Are families organised around harmonious interests, or are they sources of conflict and differential power? How do new family forms emerge, and how do people negotiate the changes that affect families? These and other questions guide sociological theories of the family (Anderson and Taylor, 2004). A variety of theories have been propounded to answer the foregoing questions. This Study Session will discuss the four main theories of the families.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

2.1 *analyse* the main assumptions of each of the sociological theories of the family.

2.1 Sociological Theories of the Family

Several theoretical approaches offer a range of insights about the family such as the ones explained by Glenn (1987), Thorne (1993), Bray and Kelly (1999), Eitzen and Bacazinn (2000), Anderson and Taylor (2004) and Schaefer and Smith (2005). It is therefore pertinent to explain the four main theoretical approaches given by the theorists above in this section.

2.1.1 Functionalist Theory

According to the functionalist theory, all social institutions are organised to provide the needs of society. Functionalism also emphasizes that institutions are based on shared values among members of the society. Functionalist theorists interpret the

family as filling particular societal needs, including socialising the young, regulating sexual activity and procreation, providing physical care for family members, assigning identity to people, and giving psychological support and emotional security to individuals. According to functionalism, families exist to meet these needs. Functionalists also see the family as providing care for children, who are also taught the values that the family and the general society promote.

Functionalists see that, when societies experience disruption and change, institutions such as the family become disorganised, weakening the social consensus around which they have formed. Therefore, functionalists have noted that overtime; other institutions have begun to take on some functions originally performed solely by the family. For example, as children now attend school early in life and stay in school for longer periods of the day, schools have taken on some functions of physical care and socialisation originally reserved for the family.

However, the functionalist explanation of these changes is that as the division of labour becomes more complex and as new, more specialised institutions arise, the family too must become a more specialised institution. Thus, modern families no longer perform certain functions that used to be within their domain, but they still do play an increasingly vital part in early-childhood socialisation, in the emotional links of their members, and in preparing older children for adult roles in the economic institutions of industrial societies.

2.1.2 Conflict Theory

The Conflict theory makes different assumptions about the family as an institution, interpreting the family as a system of power relations that reinforces and reflects the inequalities in society. Conflict theorists are especially interested in how families are affected by class, race, and gender inequality. This perspective sees families as the units through which the privileges and the disadvantages of race, class and gender are acquired.

The conflict perspective also emphasizes that families in society are vital to capitalism because the family produces the workers that capitalism needs. Accordingly, within families, personalities are shaped by adapting to the needs of a capitalist system. Thus, families socialise children to become obedient, sub-ordinate to authority, and good consumers. Those who learn these traits become the workers and

consumers that capitalism wants. Families also serve capitalism in other ways, for example, giving a child an allowance teaches the child capitalist habits for earning money.

In comparing the functionalist theory with the conflict theory, one must note that the functionalist theory conceptualizes the family as integrative institution; it has the function of maintaining social stability. On the other hand, conflict theorists depict the family as an institution subject to the same conflicts and tensions that characterise the rest of society. Families are not isolated from the problems facing society as a whole.

Conflict theorists, however, view the family as an economic unit that contributes to societal injustice. The family is the basis for transforming power, property, and privilege from one generation to the next. As conflict theorists point out, the social class of the parents of the children significantly influences children's socialisation experiences and the protection they receive. This means that the socio-economic status of a child's family will have a marked influence on his or her nutrition, health care, housing, educational opportunities, and, in many respect, life chances of an adult. For that reason, conflict theorists argue that the family helps to maintain inequality.

2.1.3 Symbolic Interactionist Theory

Sociologists have also used the symbolic interactionist theory to examine the concept of the family. Interactionists focus on the micro level of the family and other intimate relationships. They are interested in how individuals interact with one another, whether they are co-habiting partners, long-time married couples, or gay and lesbian couples. For example, studies have shown that it is the nature of family interactions and quality of the relationship (such as parental conflict, parenting stress, love between parents and for children), rather than the parents' sexual orientation, that strongly predict children's behavioural adjustment.

Interactions within the family cover a wide range of emotions and may take different forms in different families. Families laugh and play together, work together, argue and bicker, and so on. All these aspects of family interaction are important, but frequently it is the arguing and bickering that drive family members apart. Therefore, studies of family interaction often

focus on the sources of tension and conflict within the family.

The symbolic interactionist perspective emphasizes the construction of meaning within families. Roles within families are not fixed but will evolve as participants define and re-define their behaviour towards each other. This perspective is especially helpful in understanding changes in the family because it supplies a basis for analysing new meaning systems and the evolution of new family forms over time. Each theoretical perspective used to analyse families illuminates different features of the. It is noteworthy that some feminists have responded negatively to sociological theories used to analyse and explore the concept of the family in particular, feminist scholars have criticized the work of the noted theorist, Talcott Parsons (1951a), for his analysis of the role of men and women in the family. Parsons (1951a) wrote that men played "instrumental role" in the family, and women played "expressive roles" that is, those associated with affection, nurturing, and emotional support. These observations from Parsons (1951a) were considered to be biased by some Feminist theorists.

Furthermore, Fichler (2001), a Canadian feminist theorist, argues that the way in which sociologists have traditionally studied the family often contains biases. To buttress her position, she, names seven ways in which research on the family has been biased:

Monolithic Bias

This is a tendency to assume that the family is uniform, the same, rather than recognising its diversity.

Conservative Bias

This treats recent changes in the family (including new forms of family) as fleeting. This also leads to ignoring or viewing some of the more ugly sides of family as rare (e.g. family violence).

Ageist Bias

This regards children and the aged only as passive members of families.

Sexist Bias

This is exhibited in patterns such as double standards for female and male members of the family, as well as gender insensitivity in that all members are treated the same and

assumed to experience family in the same way.

Microstructural Bias

This emphasizes micro level variables, failing to see how the institution of the family fits into society, and how it is affected by other social structures.

Racist Bias

This explicitly or implicitly assumes the superiority of the family form of the dominant group, and ignores race or racism when relevant.

Heterosexist Bias

This either ignores same – sex families or treats them as problematic and deviant.

In sum, research from all the major sociological perspectives supports the view that the family is a resilient institution; it adapts changing economic conditions and changing values. But the strength of the family, as an institution, does not mean that the divorce rate will decrease rapidly or families that experience severe stress due to unemployment, ill health, and the like have an easier time remaining intact (Kornblum, 1997).

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we examined the theoretical analysis of the family. Specifically, we discussed sociological theories used to analyse and explain the family, such as the functionalist theory, the conflict theory, the symbolic interactions theory and the feminist's theory; the feminist's theory is essentially a critical response to the earlier theoretical approaches.

Assessment

Assignment

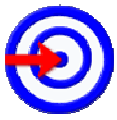
1. Briefly explain the main reasons why family is significantly important in the society?
2. How does the family socialise the young to meet their needs of the society?

Study Session3

Religion as a Social Institution

Introduction

Religion, one of the oldest human institutions in society, is also among the most changeable and complex. On the one hand, religion expresses our deepest yearnings for spiritual enlightenment and understanding; on the other, conflicts over religious beliefs and practices have given rise to persecution, wars, and much human suffering, as can be seen. This Study Session will, therefore, discuss religion as a social institution. Specifically, we will look into the definition and the elements of religion as a socio-spiritual phenomenon.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

3.1 *define* religion.
3.2 *describe* religion as a social institution.

3.1 Frameworks of Religion

Religion is not easy to define. One could begin with a definition that has a concept of God as its core, but many religions do not have a clear concept of God. One could define religion in terms of the emotions of spirituality, oneness with nature, awe, mystery, and many other feelings, but that would not be a very helpful definition. This is because all the foregoing are extremely difficult to capture in words. Looking at it from another dimension, one might think in terms of organised religion such as churches, congregations, ministers, and so on, but clearly the organisational aspect of religion is just one of its many dimensions. It is therefore, frustrating to define religion in a definite manner. However, without a good working definition of religion, it is impossible to compare different religions or refer to particular aspects of religion (Kornblum, 1997).

In this Study, we can approach a working definition of religion in the following perspectives as explained by Glock and Stack (1965), Johnstone (1992), McGruise (1997) and Anderson and Taylor (2004). They developed the elements of definition of religion in the following ways:

3.1.1 Religion is institutionalised

Religion is more than just beliefs. It is a pattern of social action organised around a set of beliefs, practices, and symbols that people develop in order to grasp the meaning of existence. As an institution, religion presents itself as larger than any individual. It persists over time and has an organisational structure into which members are socialised.

3.1.2 Religion as a Support for Identity

Religion is built around a community of people with similar beliefs. It is a cohesive force among believers because it is a basis for group identity and gives people a sense of belonging to a community or organisation. Religious groups can be formally organised, as in the case of large, bureaucratic churches, or they may be more informally organised, ranging from prayer groups to cults. Some religious communities are extremely close-knit, as in convents. Others are diffuse, such as people who identify themselves as Protestants but attend church services only on Easter.

3.1.3 Religions are basedon Avowedly Scared Beliefs

The sacred is that which is set apart from ordinary activity; it is seen as holy, and protected by special rights and rituals. Religions define that which is sacred. Most religions have sacred objects and sacred symbols. The holy symbols are infused with special religious meaning that inspires are awe reverence.

A “totem” is an object or living thing that a religious group regards with special awe and reverence. A totem is important not for what it is, but for what it represents. There is nothing inherent in these objects or events that define them as sacred. Instead, the significance of a token derives from the sacred meaning that is socially attributed to the object. To a Christian taking communion, a piece of bread is defined as the flesh of Jesus. Eating the bread unites the communicant mystically with Christ. To a non-believer, a piece of bread is simply an ordinary thing.

However, because religious beliefs are held so strongly, sacred religious symbols have enormous power and generate strong emotional responses. Certain behaviours can inspire, offend, or anger people, depending on the religious meaning

of the behaviour.

3.1.4 Religion is a System of Moral Values and Proscriptions

A proscription is a constraint imposed by external forces. Religion typically establishes proscriptions for the behaviour of believers, and some of these are quite strict. For example, the Catholic Church defines living together as sexual partners outside marriage as a sin. The lifestyle is condemned as immoral "selfishness" and an "unwillingness to make a lifelong commitment" through marriage. Often religious believers come to see such moral proscriptions as simply "right" and behave accordingly. Other times, individuals may consciously reject moral proscriptions, although they may still feel guilty when they engage in a forbidden practice.

3.1.5 Religion is a System of Behaviour

Religious beliefs establish social norms about how the faithful should behave in certain situations. Worshippers may be expected to cover their heads in a temple, mosque or cathedral, or wear certain clothes. Such behavioural expectations may be very strong.

3.1.6 Religion as an Answer to the Question of Ultimate Meaning

The ordinary beliefs of daily life, secular beliefs, may be institutionalised, but they are specifically not religious. Science, for example, generates secular beliefs based on particular ways of thinking – logic and empirical observations are at the root of scientific beliefs. Religious beliefs often have a supernatural element. They emerge from spiritual needs and may provide answers to questions that cannot be probed with the tools of science and reason.

In sum, according to Kornblum (1997), religion is any set of coherent answers to the dilemmas of human existence that makes the world meaningful. From this point of view, religion is how human beings express their feelings about such ultimate concerns as sickness or death or the meaning of human life. Almost all religions involve their adherents in a system of beliefs and practices that express devotion to the supernatural and foster deep feelings of spirituality. In this sense, we say that religion functions to meet the spiritual needs of individuals.

3.2 Religion as an Institution

As an institution, religion is characterised by the following features, identified by Piazza and Glock (1979), Tabb (1986) and Kornblum (1997):

1. Religion is a major social institution because it carries out important social functions and encompasses a great variety of organisations (e.g. churches, congregations, charities) each with its own statuses and roles (e.g. ministers, priests, rabbis, parishioners, fund-raisers) and specific sets of norms and values (e.g. the Ten Commandments, the Golden rules, the Koranic rules). As an institution, religion performs the function of helping people express their feeling of spirituality and faith. Religion is often said to be a cultural institution because it guides a society's mental life, especially its ideas about morality, goodness and evil. Of course, religion is not alone in performing these functions, but it remains a powerful source of moral precepts.
2. Religion also serves to confer legitimacy on a society's norms and values. Families seek the "blessing of holy matrimony" in weddings, baptisms, confirmations, and other religious ceremonies mark the passage of children through their developmental stages. They also provide occasions for statements about proper behaviour and good conduct. Swearing with a Holy Bible is common in courtrooms and on other occasions when norms of truth and fairness are being enforced.
3. Our society insists on the separation of the influence of religion from the laws of government. There is always controversy; however, over how much legitimacy religions can confer on political behaviour. Fundamentalist Muslims may deny women rights that would be thought routine in our own culture (such as the right to drive a car); Christian fundamentalists may claim that God does not favour political candidates who support abortion or homosexual rights. But these claims that religion legitimises particular norms and that God does not condone their transgression by political leaders usually clash with more secular interpretations of the society's norms. The debates over the role of religion in the political process can become extremely controversial.

4. Until comparatively recent times, religion dominated the cultural life of human societies. Activities that are now performed by other cultural institutions, particularly education, arts, and the media, used to be the province of religious leaders and organisations. In hunting-and-gathering bands and in many tribal societies, the holy person was also the teachers and communicator of the society's belief and values. In early agrarian societies, the priesthood was a powerful force; only the priest were literate and, hence, able to interpret and preserve the society's sacred texts, which represented the cultural most strongly held values and norms. For example, in ancient Egypt, where the Pharaoh was worshipped as a god, his organisation of regional and local priests controlled the entire society.
5. At the same time, through religion is a source of division and conflict, it can also be a force for healing social problems and moving the mass of the people towards greater insight into their common humanity. This occurs at the micro level of interactions. For example, in groups the alcoholic anonymous, in which spirituality is an essential part of the recovery programme. At the macro level, the power of faith can be seen in impoverished rural and urban communities throughout Latin America (African communities are inclusive). In those communities, Catholic Church leaders, parish priests, and lay parishioners have embraced the ideals of a "social gospel" that seek the liberation of believers from poverty and oppression. These "base Christian communities", as they are often called, have become a powerful force in the movement for social justice and other far-reaching changes in their societies.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session,weexamined religion as a social institution; we discussed its basic elements in society.

Assessment

Assignment

1. What is your view about religion?
2. Briefly describe the type of religion you belong to.

Study Session4

Forms and Functions of Religion

Introduction

In this Study Session, we will discuss the variety of religious forms which is reduced to a more manageable list consisting of five major types: Simple supernaturalism, animism, theism, abstract ideals, and civil religion.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

4.1 *describe* the forms of religion.

4.2 *explain*the basic functions of religion.

4.1 Forms of Religion

Religions can be categorised in different ways, according to the specific characteristics of faiths and how religious groups are organized. Kornblum (1997) and Anderson and Taylor (2004), therefore, identified five major forms of religions. They are as follows discussed below

4.1.1 Simple Supernaturalism

This is a form of religion in which there is no discontinuity between the world of sense experience and the world of the supernatural. According to this thinking, all natural phenomena are part of a single force. For instance, in less complex and rather isolated societies, like those from South Pacific Island cultures and Eskimo tribes, people may believe in a great force or spirit, but they may not have a well-defined concept of God or a set or rituals involving God. That is, they believe strongly in the power of a supernatural force but do not attempt to embody that force in a visualised conception of God.

4.1.2 Animism

This is a form of religion in which all forms of life and all aspect of the earth are inhabited by gods or supernatural powers. This form of religion is most common among hunting-and-gathering societies. It is also common in Native American cultures, and some African tribal cultures. Traces of animism can also be seen in the religious beliefs of the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans.

4.1.3 Theism

This is a form of religion in which gods are conceived of as separate from humans and from other living things on the earth, although the gods are in some way responsible for the creation of humans and for their fate. Theism is sub-divided into two: polytheism and monotheism.

Polytheism

This is a form of theism in which there are numerous gods, all of whom occupy themselves with some of the universe and of human life. Many ancient religions were “polytheism”, as evidenced in the pantheon of gods of the ancient Greeks and Romans. A similar polytheistic religion could be found among the gods of the Celtic tribes of Gaul and Britain.

Monotheism

This is a form of theism that is centred on a belief in a single, all-powerful God who determines human fate and destiny and can be addressed through prayers. The ancient Hebrew was among the first of the world’s peoples to evolve “monotheistic religion”. This belief is expressed in the central creed of the Jews. “Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord of One”. Jewish monotheism is based on the central idea of a covenant between God and the Jewish people.

Christianity and Islam are also monotheistic religions. For instance, the Roman Catholic versions God as embodied in a Holy Trinity consisting of God, which has the ability to inspire the human spirit the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the same vein, the fundamental beliefs of Islam centre on the worship of one God, Allah according to Mohammed, and the great prophet of the Muslim faith. The fundamental aim of Islam is to serve God as he demands to be served in the Quran.

4.1.4 Abstract Ideals

This is a form of religion that centres on an abstract ideal of spiritual and human behaviour. This is common among the Chinese, Japanese and other societies of the Far East, and can be categorised into two: “Buddhism” and “Confucianism”.

The central belief of **Buddhism**, perhaps the more important of these religions, is embedded in the thoughts of Siddhartha Gautama, the **Buddha**:

Life is journey

Death is a return to the earth

The universe is like an inn

The passing years are like dust

Like all of the world’s great religions, Buddhism has many branches. The ideal that unifies them all, however, is the teaching that worship is not a matter of prayer to God but a quest for the experience of godliness within oneself through meditation and awareness.

Confucianism is another religion based on abstract ideals, which are derived from the teachings of the philosopher Confucius (551-479 B.C.). The central belief of Confucianism is that one must learn and practice the wisdom of the ancients. That is, "he that that is really good," Confucius taught, "can never be unhappy. He that is really wise can never be perplexed. He that is really brave can never be afraid." In Confucianism, the central goal of the individual is to become a good ruler or a good and loyal follower, and this to carry out the "tao" of his or her position. Tao is an untranslatable word that refers to the practice of virtues that make a person excellent at his or her discipline.

4.1.5 Civil Religion

This is a collection of beliefs, and rituals for communicating those beliefs that exist outside religious institutions. For instance, in the former Soviet communist societies, civil religions were attached to the institutions of the state. Regarding this, Marxist-Leninism can be thought of as a civil religion, symbolised by the reverence once paid to Lenin's tomb. Central to communism as a civil religion is the idea that private property is evil while property held in common by all members of the society is good. The struggle against private property results in the creation of Soviet personality, which values all human lives and devalues excessive emphasis on individual success, especially, success measured by the accumulation of property.

4.2 Functions of Religion

Since religion is a cultural universal, it is not surprising that it fulfills several basic functions within human societies. Schaefer and Lamm (1997) therefore identified some functions of religion. These functions are examined below:

4.2.1 Integrative Function of Religion

Religion, whether it is Buddhism, Christianity, or Judaism, offers people meaning and purpose for their lives. It gives them certain ultimate values and ends to hold in common. Although subjective and not always fully accepted, these values and ends help a society to function as an integrated social system. For example, the Christian ritual of communion not only celebrates a historical event in the life of Jesus (the last super) but also represents collective participation in a

ceremony with scared social significance. Similarly, funerals, weddings, and confirmations serve to integrate people into larger communities by providing shared beliefs and values about the ultimate questions of life.

Although, the integrative impact of religion has been emphasized here, it should be noted that religion is not the dominant force maintaining social cohesion in contemporary industrial societies. People are also bound together by patterns of consumption, laws, nationalistic feelings, and other forces. Moreover, in some instances, religious loyalties are dysfunctional; they contribute to tension and even conflict between groups or nations.

In modern times, for example, nations such as Lebanon Muslims versus Christians), North Ireland (Roman Catholics versus Protestants), and Indiana (Hindus Versus Muslims) have been torn by clashes that are in part based on religion.

4.2.2 Social Control Function of Religion

Karl Marx acknowledged that religion plays an important role in legitimating the existing social structure. The values of religion, reinforce other social institutions and the thus strengthen social order as a whole. From Marx's perspective, religion promotes stability within society and therefore helps to perpetuate patterns of social inequality. To him in a society with several religious faiths, the dominant religion will represent the ruling economic and political class.

Marx agreed with Durkheim's emphasis on collective and socially shared nature of religious behaviour. At the same time, he was concerned that religion would reinforce social control within an oppressive society. Marx argued that religion's focus on otherworldly concerns diverted attention from earthly problems and from needless suffering created by unequal distribution of valued resources. Therefore, Marx and later conflict theorists stated that religion is not necessarily a beneficial of admirable force for social control. For example, contemporary Christianity, like the Hindu faith, reinforces traditional patterns of behaviour that call for the subordination of the powerless. Therefore, conflict theorists argue that since religion actually does influence social behaviour, it reinforces existing patterns of dominance and inequality.

4.2.3 Social Support Function of Religion

Most of us find it difficult to accept the stressful events of life, such as, death of a loved one, serious injury, bankruptcy, divorce, and so forth. This is especially true when something "senseless" happens. Through its emphasis on the divine and the supernatural, religion allows us to "do something" about the calamities we face. In some faith, adherents can offer sacrifices or pray to a deity in the belief that such acts will change their unwelcome earthly conditions.

At a more basic level, religion encourages us to view our personal misfortunes as relatively unimportant in the broader perspective of human history, or even as part of an undisclosed divine purpose. Friends and relatives of a beloved one who died may see this death as being "God's will" and as having some ultimate benefit that they cannot understand. This perspective may be much more comforting than the terrifying feeling that any of us can die senselessly at any movement.

Moreover, religion offers consolation to oppressed peoples by giving them a hope that they can achieve salvation and eternal happiness in an afterlife. Similarly, during times of national tragedy (assassinations, invasions, and natural disasters), people attend religious services as a means of coping with the problems that demand political and technological as well as spiritual solutions. On a more micro level, the clergy are often the first source of aid sought by people faced with a crisis. Thisapply shows that religion provides spiritual succour to the people in one form of distress or another.

4.2.4 Social Change Function of Religion

Max Weber (1958a, original edition, 1904) carefully examined the connection between religious allegiance and the development of capitalism. His findings appeared in his *Pioneering of Capitalism*, first published in 1904.

Weber noted that European nations with both Protestant and Catholic citizens, have an overwhelming number of business leaders, owners of capital, and skilled workers. Weber pointed out that the followers of John Calvin (1509-1564), a leader of the Protestant Reformation, believed that God had preordained that some people would live their afterlife in heaven, some in hell, and it was impossible to know in which group one was. To alleviate their anxiety, they searched for

signs of favour from God. One of those signs of divine blessings was prosperity. Thus, there was a drive towards a disciplined work ethic, which should lead to accumulation of wealth that could be reinvested to increase that prosperity.

Thus, the wealth was not to be used frivolously, for self-indulgence, and it was also to be shared with those who had less, because poverty was a sign of God's displeasure of those in that condition. This rational orientation to life has become known as the "Protestant Ethic" and it fits very well into a capitalist mode of thinking, that is, work hard, accumulate profits, be thrifty, and don't waste. This "spirit of capitalism", to use Weber's phrase, contrasted with the moderate work hours, leisurely work habits, and lack of ambition that he saw as typical of the times.

The primary disagreement between Max Weber and Karl Max was not the origins of capitalism but its future. Unlike Marx, Weber believed capitalism could endure indefinitely as an economic system. He added, however, that the decline of religion as an overriding force in society opened the way for workers to express their discontent more vocally

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we discussed the forms and functions of religion which include; simple supernaturalism, animism, theism (polytheism and monotheism), abstract ideals and civil religion. The characteristics of these forms of religions were discussed with various examples given

Assessment

Assignment

1. Why is religion an institution?
2. Briefly describe six elements of definition of religion.

Study Session5

Religious Organizations and Religious Behaviour

Introduction

In this Study Session, we will examine the various forms of religious organizations in the society. We will also describe the three dimensions of religious behaviour.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

5.1 *describe* the forms of religious organizations that you know.

5.2 *explain* the patterns of religious behaviour.

5.1 Religious Organizations

The collective nature of religion has led to many forms of religious association. In modern societies, religion has become increasingly formalised. Specific structures such as churches, temples, and synagogues are constructed for religious worship. Sociologists, therefore, find it useful in distinguishing among four basic forms of religious organisations: the ecclesia (church), the denomination, the sect, and the new religious movement or cult. We can see differences among these types of religious organisations in terms of size, power, degrees of commitment expected from members, and historical ties to other faiths.

5.1.1 Churches (Ecclesiae)

Churches are formal organisations that tend to see themselves, and are seen by society, as primary and legitimate religious institutions. They tend to be integrated into the secular world to a degree that sects and cult are not. They are sometimes closely tied to the state. Churches are organised as complex bureaucracies with division of labour and different roles for

groups within. Generally, churches employ a professional, full-time clergy who has been formally ordained following a specialised education. Church membership is renewed as the children of existing members are brought up in the church. Churches may also actively recruit converts. Churches are less exclusive than cults and sects because they see all in society as potential members (Johnstone, 1992; Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

5.1.2Sects

A sect can be defined as a relatively small religious group that has broken away from some other religious organization in order to renew what it views as the original vision of the faith. Many sects such as, that led by Martin Luther, during the Reformation, claim to be the "true church" because they seek to cleanse the established faith of what they regard as innovative believes and rituals (Stark and Bainbridge, 1985; Schaefer and Lamm, 1997).

Sects are fundamentally at odds with society and do not seek to become established national religions. Unlike ecclesiae and denominations, sects require intensive commitments and demonstrations of belief by members. Partly owing to their "outsider" status in society, sects frequently exhibit a higher degree of religious fervour and loyalty among their members than more established religious groups do. Recruitment focuses mainly on adults, and acceptance comes through conversion. One current-day sect is called the "People of the Church" a movement within the Roman Catholic Church that began in Vienna, Austria. This sect is called for reforms of Catholism, such as the ordination of women, local election of bishops, and optional celibacy for priests (Religion Watch, 1995; Schaefer and Smith, 2005).

Sects are often short-lived. But those that are able to survive may over time become less antagonistic to society and begin to resemble denominations. In a few instances, sects have been able to endure over several generations while remaining fairly separate from society (Schaefer and Smith, 2005).

5.1.3Denominations

A denomination is a large, organised religion that is not officially linked with the state or government. Like an ecclesia, it tends to have an explicit set of beliefs, a defined system of authority, and a generally respected position in

society (Doress and Porter, 1977). Denominations cannot accept among their members the denominations of their parents and they also give little thought to membership in other faiths. Denominations also resemble ecclesiae in that few demands are made on members. However, there is a critical difference between these two forms of religious organisations. Although the denomination is considered respectable and is not viewed as a challenge to the secular government, it lacks the official recognition and power held by an ecclesia (Doress and Porter, 1977).

However, no nation of the world has more denominations than the United States of America. This is so because many settlers in the "New World" brought with them the religious commitments native to their homelands. Denominations of Christianity found in the United States, such as those of the Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, and Lutherans, were the outgrowth of ecclesiae established in Europe. In addition, new Christian denominations emerged, including the Mormons and Christian Scientists (Barrett, 1995; Bedell, 1995 and Schaefer and Lamm, 1997). Canada is also marked by greater diversity in religious denominations than most countries in the world. This is so because Canada is a country of immigrants and religious diversity reflects patterns of multiculturalism, immigration, and population change.

In the past 20 years, some distinctions among denominations were considerably blurred. This is so because certain faiths have even allowed members of other faiths to participate in some of their most sacred rituals, such as communion. Even more dramatic has been the appearance of "megachurches", which is a large congregation that often lack direct ties to a worldwide denomination (Schaefer and Smith, 2005).

5.1.4 Cults

Cults, like sects in their intensity, are religious groups devoted to a specific cause or leaders with great "charisma", a quality attributed to individuals believed by their followers to have special powers. Typically, followers are convinced that the charismatic leader has received a unique revelation or possesses supernatural gifts. Cult leaders are usually men, probably because men are more likely to be seen as having the aggressive and charismatic characteristics associated with heroic leadership (Johnstone, 1992).

It is difficult to distinguish sects from cults. A cult is a

generally small, secretive religious group that represents either a new religion or a major innovation from existing faith. Cults are similar to sects in that they tend to be small and are often viewed as less respectable than more established faiths. The term 'cult' is also used to refer to a quasi-religious organisation, often dominated by a single charismatic individual. A good example was the Heaven's Gate Cult, where ninety members committed group suicide in Rancho Santa Fe, California, in 1977, believing they were going away on spacecrafts that would lead them to a new world (Balch, 1995; Schaefer and Lamm, 1997; and Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

Many mainstream religious groups began as cults. Christian Science Church is an example of a now well-established religious organisation that first evolved as a cult. As cults are developing, it is for common to exist between cults and the society around them. This is because cults tend to exist out of the mainstream of society, arising when believers think that society is not satisfying their spiritual needs. As is true of sects, cults may undergo transformation over time into other types of religious organisations. An example is the Christian Science Church, which began as a cult under the leadership of Mary Barker Eddy. Today, this church exhibits the characteristics of a denomination (Johnstone, 1988; Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

5.2Religious Behaviour

The three dimensions of religious behaviour were identified by Hoxie (1996), Solomon and Stonechild (1999), and Schaefer and Smith (2005). These three dimensions of religious behaviour will now be examined:

5.2.1 Religious Beliefs

Religious beliefs are statements to which members of a particular religion adhere. For instance, some people believe in life after death, in supreme beings with unlimited powers, or in supernatural forces. These views can vary dramatically from religion to religion.

A typical example of religious behaviour is the Adam and Eve account of creation found in Genesis, the first book of the Old Testament. Many people in our society strongly adhere to this biblical explanation of creation. It is believed that this social

arrangement was prescribed by God after Eve tempted Adam with the Apple, thus leading him into sin. The people who believe in creation are known as "Creationists". They are worried by the secularisation of society and oppose teaching that directly or indirectly questions the Holy Scripture.

5.2.2Religious Rituals

Religious rituals are practices required or expected of the members of a faith. Rituals usually honour the divine power (or powers) worshipped by believers; they also remind adherents of their religious duties and responsibilities. Rituals and beliefs can be interdependent; rituals generally involve the affirmation of beliefs, as in a public or private statement confessing a sin (Roberts, 1995). Like any social institution, religion develops distinctive normative patterns to structure people's behaviour. Moreover, there are sanctions attached to religious rituals, whether rewards or penalties (expulsion from a religious institution for violation of norms).

In Canada and any other parts of the world, rituals may be very simple, such as saying grace at a meal or observing a moment of silence to commemorate someone's death. Yet, certain rituals, such as the process of canonising a saint, are quite elaborate. Most religious rituals in our culture focus on services conducted at houses of worship. Thus, attendance at a service, silent and spoken reading of prayers, and singing of hymns and chants are common forms of ritual behaviour that generally take place in group settings.

For Muslims, a very important ritual is the "hajj", a pilgrimage to the Grand Mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Every Muslim who is physically and financially able is expected to make this trip at least once. Muslims from all over the world make the "hajj", where many tours are arranged to facilitate this ritual. Similarly, devout believers, such as those who practise the Pentecostal Christian ritual of "speaking in tongues", can reach a state of ecstasy simply through spiritual passion.

5.2.3 Religious Experience

In sociological study of religion, the terms "religious experience" refers to the feeling or perception of being in direct contact with the ultimate reality, such as a divine being, or of being overcome with religious emotion. A religious experience may be rather slight, such as the feeling of

exaltation a person receives from, for example, hearing a choir sing “Hallelujah chorus”. But many religious experiences are more profound, such as Muslim’s experience on a “hajj”.

Still another profound religious experience is being “born again” – that is, to reach a turning point in one’s life making a personal commitment to Jesus as Lord and Saviour. For example, in one 1999 national survey in United States, about 46 per cent of people in the United States claimed that they had a born-again Christian experience at some time in their lives. An earlier survey found that Baptists about 61 per cent were the most likely to report such experiences. This report of being born-again is common almost in all denominations of religion all over the world. The beliefs and rituals of a particular faith can create an atmosphere either friendly or hostile to this type of religious experience.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we examined the forms of religious organizations which include churches (ecclesiae), sects, cults and denominations. Wediscussed their various characteristics and contrasted them with one another.

Assessment

Assignment

1. clearly define what you understand as religious leadership
2. discuss the categorization of religious organisation

Study Session6

Nature, Functions and Theories of Education

Introduction

In this Study Session, we will examine the nature and function of schooling. We will also discuss the theories of education.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

6.1 *describe* the nature of schooling.
6.2 *discuss* the functions of schooling.
6.3 *explain* the theories of education.

6.1 Nature of Schools

Education is the process by which a society transmits knowledge, values, norms, and ideologies and, in so doing, prepares young people for adult roles and adults for new roles. It is accomplished by specific institutions outside the family, especially schools and colleges (Ballantine, 1993; Kornblum, 1997).

Educational institutions are viewed in various ways. These views are examined below:

1. Educational institutions affect not only the surroundings but also the daily lives of millions of people, such as children and their parents, college and university students, teachers and professors. Hence, education is a major focus of social-scientific research. To the sociologist, the most common educational institution, the school, is a specialised structure with a special function: preparing children for active participation in adult activities. Schools are sometimes compared with total institutions, in which a large group of voluntary "client" is serviced by a small group of staff members. The staff of such institutions tends to

emphasize the maintenance of order and control, and this often leads to the development of elaborate sets of rules and monitoring systems. In fact, sociologists often see schools as an example of bureaucratic organisation (Boocock, 1980; Parelius and Parelius, 1987; Mulkey, 1993; and Kornblum, 1997).

2. A more interactionist viewpoint sees the school as a set of behaviours; that is, the central feature of the school is not its bureaucratic structure but the kinds of interactions and patterns of socialisation that occur in schools. The basic feature of schools is "the behaviour of a large number of actors organised into groups that are joined together by an authority structure and by a network of relationships through which information, resources, and partially finished projects flow from one group to another". In other words, school-related behaviour (e.g. doing home-work or grading papers) is part of the school as a social system, whether or not it takes place in the school building. So, too, is the involvement of parents in schools and in the school careers of their children (Bates and Murray, 1975; Boocock, 1980; and Kornblum, 1997).
3. Conflict theorists, by contrast, view education in modern societies as serving to justifying and maintain the status quo. For example, education was not about equality, but inequality, and could be achieved only by preparing most kids for an unequal future, and by insuring their personal underdevelopment (Willis, 1983; Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985; and Kornblum, 1997).

However, the critical perspective challenges the more popular view that education is the main route to social mobility and that it can offset inequalities in family background. When sociologists analyse the impact of educational institutions on society, they generally conclude that the benefits of education are unequally distributed and tend to reproduce the existing stratification system (Bell, 1973; Fullan, 1993).

6.2 Functions of Schooling

Structural-functional analysis directs attention to ways in which formal education enhances the operation and stability of society. Central to the socialisation process,

schoollingserves as a cultural lifeline, linking when generations. Hence, the following functions are now examined as identified by Hurn (1985) and Macionis (1995):

6.2.1 Socialisation

Technologically, simple societies transmit their ways of life informally from generation to generation through the family. As societies become more complex technologically, however, kin can no longer stay abreast of rapidly expanding information and skills; therefore, schooling gradually utilised specially trained personal to efficiently convey a wide range of knowledge. For instance, at primary school level, children learn basic language and mathematical skills. Secondary school builds on this foundation, and, for many, college allows further specialisation.

Schools also transmit cultural values and norms. Civil classes, for example, provide students with explicit instruction in different ways of life. Sometimes, important cultural lessons are learnt in subtle ways, as students experience the operation of the classroom itself. Teachers give children in schools a great deal of individuals responsibility; spelling bees and classroom drills also develop a keen sense of competitive individualism, enhance respect for authority, and establish norms of fair play.

6.2.2 Cultural Innovation

Educational systems create as well as transmit culture. Schools stimulate intellectual inquiry and critical thinking, and this exercise sparks off the development of new ideas. Today, for example, many college or university professors not only teach but engage in research that yields discoveries and innovations. Research in the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences is changing attitudes and behaviour throughout world. Medical research, carried on mainly in major universities, has served to increase life expectancy, just as research by sociologists and psychologists help us to take advantage of this longevity.

6.2.3 Social Integration

Schooling works to forge a mass of people into a unified whole. This function is especially important in nations with pronounced social diversity, where various cultures are indifferent or even hostile to one another. For instance,

societies in the Americas, Africa, and Asia encompassing hundreds of ethnic categories all strive to foster social integration. Schools meet this challenge, first, by establishing a common language that encourages broad communication and forges a national identity.

Despite resistance to schooling on the part of some, the striking cultural diversity of modern societies makes formal education a key path to social integration. Even today, formal educations plays a major role in integrating disparate cultures by blend their traditions and thus form a cultural mix.

6.2.4 Social Placement

Formal education helps young people assume culturally approved statuses and perform roles that contribute to the ongoing life of society. To accomplish this, schooling operates to identify and develop people's various aptitudes and abilities. Ideally, schools evaluate students' performance in terms of achievement while downplaying their disparate social backgrounds. In principle, teachers encourage the "best and the brightest" to pursue the most challenging and advanced studies, while guiding students of more ordinary abilities into educational programmes suited to their talents. In short schooling, enhances meritocracy, linking social position to personal merit and fuelling what our society holds to be desirable social mobility.

6.2.5 Latent Functions of Schooling

Apart from the foregoing purposeful, manifest functions of formal education, this is a number of latent functions that are performed by schools. One is "child care". As the number of one-parent families and two-career couples rises, schools have become vital to relieving parents of some child care duties. Furthermore, among teenagers, schooling consumes much time and considerable energy. It encourages in many cases, fostering at a time of life when likelihood of unlawful behaviour is high. Because many students attend schools well into their twenties, education usefully engages thousands of young people for whom few jobs may be available.

Another latent function of schools is establishing relationships and networks. In the social circles of the high schools, colleges and university, many people meet their future spouses. Affiliation with a particular school also forms the basis of "social ties" that provide not only friendship but also

valuable career opportunities later in life.

6.3 Theories of Education

Education has become a vast and complex social institution throughout the world. It prepares citizens for the various roles demanded by other social institutions, such as the family, government, and the economy. The functionalist, conflict, interactionist, and feminist perspectives offer distinctive ways of examining education as basic or social institution. These will now be examined as being identified by Anderson and Taylor (2004) and Schaefer and Smith (2005):

1. The Functionalist View of Education
2. The Conflicts View of Education
3. The Interactionist View of Education
4. The Feminist View of Education

6.3.1Functionalist View of Education

Why does an education institution exist in the first place? What does it do for society? The functionalist theory in sociology answers these questions by arguing that education accomplishes certain consequences, or functions, for a society. These can be viewed in the following perspectives: socialisation, occupational training and social control. Socialisation is brought about as the cultural heritage is passed on from one generation to another. This heritage includes much more than “book knowledge”. It also includes moral values, ethics, politics, religious beliefs, habits, and norms, which are elements of culture. Schools strive to teach a variety of skills and knowledge, from history, literature, and mathematics to handcrafts and social skills, while also inculcating values, such as school loyalty and punctuality.

Occupational training is another function of education, especially, in an industrialised society such as the United States. In the less complex society of the United States, prior to the 19th century, jobs and training were passed on from father to son or, more rarely, from father or mother to daughter. A significant number of occupations and professions today still pass on from parents to their offsprings, particularly, among the upper classes (such as a father passing on a law practice to his son) and also among certain highly skilled occupations, such as plumbers, ironworkers, and electricians, who pass on both training and union

memberships. In essence, most jobs today require at least a high school education, and many professions require a graduate degree.

Social control is also a function of education; though, a less obvious one. Such indirect, non-obvious consequences emerging from the activities of institutions are called "latent-functions". Increased urbanisation and immigration, beginning in the late 19th century were accompanied by rises in crimes, overcrowding, homelessness, and other urban ills. Consequently, one perceived benefit of compulsory education was that it keeps young people off the streets and out of trouble. The more obvious consequences, or function, of education is job training. The latent function is the social control of deviant behaviour (Katz, 1987).

6.3.2 Conflict View of Education

In contrast with the functionalist theory that emphasizes how education unifies and stabilizes society the conflict theory emphasizes the disintegrative aspects of education. The conflict theory focuses on the competition between groups for power, income, and social status, giving special attention to the prevailing importance of institutions in the conflict. One intersection of education with group and class competition is shown in the significant correlation between education and class, race, and gender. The unequal distribution of education separates groups. The higher the educational attainment of a person, the more likely that person will make towards the middle or upper class.

Conflict theorists argue that educational level can be used as tool for discrimination via the mechanisms of "credentialism", the insistence upon educational credentials for their own sake, even if the credentials bear little relationship to the intended job (Collins, 1979; Marshall, 1997). This device can be used by potential employers to discriminate against minorities, working-class people, or women; that is, those who are often have less education. Those people are less likely to have educational credentials because discriminatory practices within the educational system have limited their opportunities for educational achievement.

Although functionalists argue that jobs are becoming more technical and thus require workers with greater education, conflict theorists argue that the reverse is true – most new opportunities appearing today are in categories such as

assembly-line work, jobs that are becoming less complex and less technical and, therefore, require less traditional education or training. Nonetheless, potential employers will insist on a particular degree for the job; even though, there should be little expectation that education level will affect job performance. Thus education is used as a discriminatory barrier.

6.3.3 Interactionist View of Education

Symbolic interaction focuses on what arises from the operation of the interaction process during the schooling experience. Through interaction between the student and the teacher, certain expectations arise on the part of both. As a result, the teacher begins to expect or anticipate certain behaviours, good or bad, from the student. Through the operation of the "expectancy effect", the expectations a teacher has for a student can create the very behaviour in question. Thus, the behaviour is caused by the expectation, instead of being simply anticipated by it. For example, if a White teacher expects Black boys to perform below average on mathematics test, relative to White students, over time the teacher may unconsciously act in ways that encourage the Black boys to score below average on tests. The teacher might provoke increased stress among Blacks, thus increasing test anxiety, resulting in decreased performance.

Therefore, teachers' expectations can affect actual test performance in addition to the effects of students' aptitudes or abilities. However, further studies are needed to clarify the relationship between teacher expectations and actual student performance. Nevertheless, interactionists emphasize that ability alone may not be so completely predictive of academic success as one might think (Brint, 1998).

6.3.4 Feminist View of Education

Woolf (1977) advocated the value of educational reform so that a female student could "live and write her poverty". She contended that even if one had to struggle in "poverty and obscurity" to bring about educational reform on behalf of females, it was worthwhile. Although, contemporary feminist perspectives on education are diverse, many share the view that educational institutions must attempt to resolve the gendered inequality found in society, and prevent it from being perpetuated in the classroom.

In cultures where traditional gender roles remain as social norms, women's education suffers appreciably. For example, in rural China, a school with several hundred students often has only a handful of girls. Although the central government is attempting to address such inequality, the typical five-or six-year-old girl in a Chinese village is engaged in farm work rather than schoolwork (Tyler, 1995).

The same gender disparities can be seen in other countries (including Nigeria). Worldwide, illiteracy is generally below 30 percent of the adult population, except in Africa, the Arab states, and Southern Asia. Yet, women account for more than 60 percent of illiterate adults in every region except Latin America/Caribbean and North/South America (UNESCO, 1999).

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we examined the nature, functions and theories of education. In the first instance, we discussed the nature of schools generally. Secondly, we looked at the varied functions of schools. Lastly, we delved into some theories of education from the perspectives of functionalists, conflict theory, interactionists, and feminists.

Assessment

Assignment

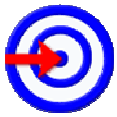
1. Why is education important in the society?
2. Differentiate between education and schooling.
3. Why do you consider education as one of the agents of socialisation?

Study Session7

Bureaucratisation and Problems of Schools

Introduction

In this Study Session will examine the bureaucratic nature of schools. We will alsoexamine the problems in schools.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

7.1 *define* bureaucracy and bureaucratisation as a process.
7.2 *describe* the five basic characteristics of bureaucracy.
7.3 *explain* the main problems in the schools.

7.1 What is Bureaucracy?

A bureaucracy is a component of formal organisation in which rules and hierarchical ranking are used to achieve efficiency. Weber (1947) described bureaucracies as organisations with an efficient division of labour, an authority hierarchy, rules, impersonal relationships, and career ladders. Bureaucratic rigidities often result in organisation problems, such as ritualism, which may have been at least partly responsible for the space shuttle “Challenger” explosion in 1986 in the United States of America. Hence, rigid adherence to rules is ritualism, and it can produce a slavish following of them, which may not accomplish the purpose for which rules were originally designed. The rules become an end in themselves rather means to an end.

Weber, however, saw bureaucracy as a form of organisation quite different from the family-run business. For analytical purposes, he developed an “ideal type” of bureaucracy that would reflect the most characteristics aspects of all human organisations. By ideal type, Weber meant a construct or model that could serve as a point of reference against which

specific cases could be evaluated. In reality, perfect bureaucracies do not exist; no real-world organisation corresponds exactly to Weber's ideal type (Lonworth, 1993; Schaefer and Smith, 2005).

Weber proposed that whatever the purpose of bureaucracy whether or not to run a church, a school, a corporation, or an army, the ideal bureaucracy displays five basic characteristics. A discussion of those characteristics will be described under bureaucratisation of schools in this lecture later.

7.1.1 Bureaucratisation as a Process

Sociologists have used the term "bureaucratisation" to refer to the process of which a group, organisation, or social movement becomes increasingly, bureaucratic. Normally, we think of bureaucratisation in terms of large organisations. Interestingly, though, bureaucratisation also takes place within small-group settings. Children organising a school club may elect as many officers as there are club members and may develop various rules for meetings (Schaefer and Lamn, 2004).

7.2 Bureaucratization of Schools

Max Weber noted five basic characteristics of bureaucracy, which he considered the "ideal type", all of which are evident in the vast majority of schools, whether at the elementary, secondary, or even university level. The five basic characteristics are discussed below:

7.2.1 Division of Labour

The specialised experts teach particular age levels of students and specific subjects. Public elementary or primary and secondary schools now employ instructors or teachers whose responsibility is to work with children with learning disabilities or physical impairments. In the Sociology department of a University for example, one professor or lecturer may specialise in sociology of religion, another in sociology of marriage and family, and a third in industrial sociology.

7.2.2 Hierarchy of Authority

Each employee of a school system is responsible to a higher authority. Teachers must report to principals and assistant

principals, and may also be supervised by department heads. Principals are answerable to a superintendent of schools or teaching service commission and the superintendent is hired and fired by a board of education. Even the students are hierarchically organised by grade and within clubs and organisations.

7.2.3 Written Rules and Regulations

Teachers and administrators must conform to numerous rules and regulations in the performance of their duties. This bureaucratic trait can become dysfunctional; the time invested in completing required forms could instead be spent in preparing lessons or conferring with students.

7.2.4 Impersonality

It is noteworthy that university has been portrayed as a giant, faceless bureaucracy that cares little for the uniqueness of the individuals. As class sizes have swelled at schools and universities, it has become more difficult for teachers to treat all pupils and students that have distinctive personalities and learning needs.

7.2.5 Employment Based on Technical Qualifications

At least in theory, the hiring of teachers and professors is based on professional competence and expertise. Promotional exercise is to follow written personnel policies. People who excel may be granted lifelong job security through tenure. Teachers have achieved these protections partly because of the bargaining power of unions (Borman and Spring, 1984; Tyler, 1985).

Having considered these five characteristics of bureaucracy in line with Weber's view; the functionalists take a generally positive view of the bureaucratisation of education. Teachers can master the skills needed to work with specialised clientele, since they are no longer expected to cover a broad range of instructions. The chain of command within schools is clear; students are presumably treated in an unbiased fashion because of uniformly applied rules. Finally, security of position protects teachers from unjustified dismissal. In general, then, functionalists observe that bureaucratisation of education increases the likelihood that teachers, students, administrators will be dealt with fairly, that is, on the basis of

rational and equitable criteria (Borman and Spring, 1984; Tyler, 1985).

By contrast, the conflict theorists argue that the trend towards more centralised education has harmful consequences for disadvantaged people. The standardisation of educational curricula, including textbooks, will generally reflect the values, interests, and lifestyles of the most powerful groups in our society and may ignore those of racial and ethnic minorities. In addition, the disadvantaged, more so than the affluent, will find it difficult to sort through complex educational bureaucracies and to organise effective lobbying groups. Therefore, in the view of conflict theorists, low-income and minority parents will have even less influence over citywide and regional educational administrators than they have over local school officials (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Katz, 1971; Schaefer and Smith, 2005).

7.3 Problems in the School

More generally, students display little interest in learning; and the record indicates that the trend in academic performance is downwards. It is therefore, pertinent to discuss the problems in the schools, as identified by Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore (1981) McGrath (1984), Owen (1985), Suroc (1990), Elam, Rose, and Gallup (1991), and Macionis (1997).

The problems of schools identified are discussed below:

7.3.1 School discipline

While almost everyone agrees that schools should teach personal discipline, many suspect that the job is not being done. This suspicion is supported by some disturbing facts. The government estimates that several hundred thousand students and at least one thousand teachers are physically assaulted on school grounds every year. About one-fourth of students attending school in cities voice fear of being attacked in or around the school. For a school to have discipline, it must demonstrate the power of education to bring constructive change to even the most disadvantaged students. The key to success appears to lie in commitment to teaching, firm disciplinary policies, and ability of school officials to garner support from parents and the wider community.

7.3.2 Student Passivity

If some schools are plagued by violence, many more are afflicted by passive, bored students. Some of the responsibility for failing to take advantage of educational opportunity can be placed on unrestricted television viewing (which now consumes more of young people's time than school does), and on students themselves. But schools, too, must share the blame, since our educational system has long generated student passivity.

7.3.3 Dropping out

If many students are passive in class, others are not there at all. The problem of dropping out-quitting school before earning a high school certificate – leaves young people (many of whom are disadvantaged to begin with) ill equipped for the world of labour and at high risk of poverty.

The reasons for dropping out extend beyond problems with language as a medium of expression. The problems to include pregnancy among young women and the need to work among those whose families are poor. The dropout rate among children growing up in the bottom 20 percent of households ranked by income (27 percent) is ten times higher than that for youngsters whose households fall in the top 20 percent by income (National Centre for Education Statistics, 1992). These data point to the fact that many dropouts are young people whose parents also have little schoolling and therefore provide little encouragement to continue. This low educational achievement often takes the form of a multigenerational cycle of disadvantage.

For young people who drop out of school in a credential society, the risks of unemployment or becoming stuck in a low-paying job are easy to imagine. Faced with this reality, approximately one-third of those who leave school return to the classroom at a later time.

7.3.4 Academic Standards

Perhaps, the most serious educational issue confronting our society involves the quality of schoolling. Declining academic standards are reflected in today's lower average scores on achievement tests and the functional literacy of a significant proportion of high school leavers. For instance, scores on the "Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)" have declined since the

early 1960s. Then, median scores for students were 500 on the mathematics test and 480 on the verbal test; some of this decline may stem from the growing share of students taking the standardised test, not all of whom are well prepared. In the same vein, roughly one in eight children in the United States completes secondary school without learning to read or write very well (African countries, like Nigeria are worst affected).

However, based on the decline in standard of education worldwide, various recommendations have made for drastic reform:

First, there are calls for schools to require all students to complete several years of English, Mathematics, Social Studies, general science, and computer science courses. Second, schools should cease pushing along failing students, keeping them in the classroom as long as necessary to teach basic skills. Third, teacher training must improve and teachers' salaries should rise to attract requisite talents into the profession.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we examined bureaucratization and problems of schools,we defined bureaucracy and bureaucratisation as a process,we noted that the bureaucratisation of schools is characterized by division of labour, hierarchy of authority, written rules and regulations, impersonality, and employment based on technical qualifications. Furthermore, we dealt with problems facing the schools such as: school discipline, student passivity, dropping out, and the academic standards.

Assessment

Assignment

1. clearly explain the concept of bureaucracy
2. how does bureaucracy causes problems in schools?

Study Session8

Industrial Revolution, Markets and Economic Systems

Introduction

In this Study Session, we will explain the industrial revolution in relation to agricultural, industrial, and post-industrialsocieties. Wewill examine the three major economic systems practised in the world today. These are: capitalism, socialism, and communism.We will also discuss the markets and the concept of division of labour.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

8.1 *Define*economy, and examine the three industrial revolutions.
8.2 *describe* the nature of markets.
8.3 *discuss* the division of labour in the economic

8.1 What is Economy?

The word “economy” is the social institution that organizes the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. To say that the economy is institutionalised implies that it operates in an established manner that is predictable, at least in its general outline. Goods are commodities ranging from necessities (such as food, clothing, and shelter), to luxury items (such as automobiles, swimming pools, etc.). Services refer to valued activities that benefit others (including the work of religious leaders, physicians, police officers, and telephone operators). We have goods and services because they ensure survival or because they make life easier, more interesting, and more aesthetically pleasing. The things we produce and consume are important to the formation of our self-concept and social identity. How goods

and services are distributed, then, shape the lives of everyone in basic ways (Macionis, 1995).

8.1.1 Industrial Revolution

A significant change was, first, the development of agricultural societies and, the wide-ranging impact of the industrial revolution. Now, the industrial revolution is giving way to the growth of post-industrial societies – a development in the economic system with far-reaching consequences for how society is organized (Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

8.1.2 Agricultural Revolution

Members of the earliest human societies relied on hunting and gathering activities to live. In these technologically simple societies, there was no distinct economy; rather, production, distribution, and consumption of goods were all dimensions of family life. The development of agriculture about five thousand years ago brought about a revolutionary change in those societies. Agriculture emerged as people harnessed manual power to plow, increasing the productive power of hunting and gathering more than ten-fold. The resulting surplus meant that not everyone had to be engaged in food production. Some people began to adopt specialised economic roles, forging crafts, designing tools, raising animals, and constructing dwellings (Macionis, 1995).

With the development of agriculture underway, towns emerged, soon to be linked by networks of traders dealing in food, animals, and other goods (Jacobs, 1970). These four factors – agricultural technology, productive specialisation, permanent settlements, and trade – were the keys to a revolutionary expansion of the economy. Agricultural production remains a vast part of the world economy, although now it has been changed by the processes of industrialisation – probably the most significant historical development affecting the social organisation of work.

8.1.3 Industrial Revolution

The industrial revolution that is usually pinpointed as beginning in the middle of 18th century Europe, soon thereafter spread into other parts of the world, and this has led to numerous social changes. The creation of factories separated work and family by relocating the place where labour was performed. The Industrial Revolution also

transformed the consumption of energy and natural resources with the large-scale use of coal, steam, and later electric power, the basis for running the machinery needed for production. Industries became highly specialised; workers would repeat the same action many times over the course of a working day – involved in only one step of the production, not the total process.

Another economic change of the Industrial Revolution was the creation of cash-based economy: Labourers were paid in cash and goods were sold, not for exchange, but for their cash value. In all, the social relation created by the Industrial Revolution was hard fundamental.

8.1.4 Post-Industrial Societies

We still live in a society that is largely industrial, but quickly giving way to a new kind of social organisation: Post-industrial society. Where industrial societies are primarily organised around the production of goods, "post-industrial societies" are organised around the provision of services. For instance, the United States has moved from being a manufacturing-based economy to a "service-based economy". The provision of services pertains to a wide range of economic activities now common in the labour market, including, for example, banking and finance, retail sales, hotel and restaurant work, and health care, to mention but a few.

The service economy also includes parts of the vastly expanded information technology industry, primarily software design and the exchange of information (through publishing, video production, and the like), not the assembly of electronics. Information technology forms the core of a post-industrial society (also described as "the Information Revolution") because it is the mechanism through which most services are delivered and organised. Whereas the Industrial Revolution was once seen as the source for broad-scale social change, now the "Information Revolution" will probably be one of the greatest sources for social and economic change in the future.

8.2 Nature of Markets

Most nations encompass capitalist markets, subsistence economies, and elements of socialism as well. Nevertheless, the market is an increasingly dominant economic institution

throughout the world. The nature of markets can be seen in the following dimensions (Kornblum, 1997):

1. Markets are economic institutions that regulate exchange behaviour. In a market, different values or prices are established for a particular good and services, values that vary according to changing levels of supply and demand and are usually expressed in terms of a common measure of exchange, or currency.
2. A market is not the same thing as a marketplace. As an economic institution, a market governs exchanges of particular good and services throughout a society. This is what we mean when we speak of the "housing market", for example: A marketplace, on the other hand, is an actual location where buyers and sellers make business/commercial exchanges. Buyers and sellers of jewelry, for example, like to be able to gather in a single place to examine the goods to be exchanged. The same is true for many other goods, such as clothing and automobiles.
3. Market transactions are governed by agreements or contracts in which a seller agrees to supply a particular item and a buyer agrees to pay for it. Exchanges based on contracts are a significant factor in the development of modern markets.
4. The use of contracts "makes impersonal relations possible: it neutralizes the relevance of the other roles of the participants", such as kinship and other personal relationships, that govern exchanges in non-market situations. In contractual relations, for example, the fact that people are friends or kin does not, in principle, change the terms of their agreement and the need to repay debts.
5. Among hunting and gathering peoples and in relatively isolated agrarian societies before this century, markets in the modern sense of the term did not exist. In social-scientific terms, a society cannot be said to have a fully developed market economy if many of the commodities it produces are not exchanged for a common currency at prices determined by the forces of supply and demand.

6. The spread of markets into non-market societies has been accelerated by political conquest and colonialism as well as by the desire among tribal and peasant peoples to obtain the goods produced by industrial societies. To illustrate this point and to show what happens as a small-scale society becomes integrated into world markets; consider the case of the Tiv, a tribal society in Benue State of Nigeria.

8.3 Economic Systems

The three major economic systems that have evolved in the world are capitalism, socialism, and communism. The descriptions that follow are of ideal types; that is, many societies have a mix of economic systems, but each type is distinct in its principles and organisation. These economic systems are discussed.

8.3.1Capitalism

This is an economic system that is based on the principles of market competition, private property, and the pursuit of profit. Under the system of capitalism, the means of production are privately owned. The "means of production" refers to the system by which goods are produced and distributed. To say that in capitalist societies some people own the means of production does not simply mean that people own property; it means that some people control the natural resources and own the industries in which goods are produced and sold.

Within capitalist societies, stockholders together own corporations – each owning a share of the corporation's wealth. Under capitalism, owners keep the profit from the revenue that is generated. Profit is created by selling a product at a price more than the cost of creating it. Thus, owners pay workers less than the value of what they produce. Under capitalism, workers produce the goods and provide the services, whereas owners disproportionately consume goods and reap the profits. This class relationship is what defines the system of capitalism.

The capitalist basis of society in the United State, and any other parts of the world shapes the character of the nation's other institutions. Health care institutions, for example, are administered on a profit-based system. In other industrialised societies, health care is regarded as human right that is paid

for and administered by state agencies – a more socialist model. Other institutions are also shaped by capitalism. Even public school systems in some cities are now being run by private companies.

8.3.2 Socialism

Socialism is an economic institution characterised by state ownership and management of the basic industries, that is, the means of production are the property of the state. In many nations, the global forces of capitalism mix with socialist principles. Many European nations, for example, have strong elements of socialism. Sweden supports numerous state-run social services, such as health care, education, and social welfare programmes, but its industry is essentially capitalist. Likewise, the State in the Great Britain has historically owned the basic industries of the country, such as railroads, mine, and communications industry; must other industrial entities are privately owned. Mix economy, like that of Sweden, operates in developing countries, like Nigeria, where numerous state-run social services, such as health care, education, and social welfare programmes are supported by the government.

Other nations are more strongly socialist; though, they are not immune from the penetrating influence of global capitalism. The People's Republic of China, formerly a strongly socialist society, is currently undergoing transformation to a mix of socialist and capitalist principles. This change occurs with state encouragement of a market-based economy, the introduction of privately owned industries, and increased engagement in the international capitalist economy. Many developing nations have pledged socialist principles, but socialism in the developing world has frequently met with considerable hostility from the capitalist world powers.

8.3.3 Communism

Communism is sometimes described as socialism in its purest form. In pure communism, industry cannot be the private property of owners. Instead, the state is the sole owner of the means of production. A critical feature of communist economic has been the centralisation of the economy in which administrators declare prices, quotas, and production goals for the entire country. This is perhaps the most striking difference between communism and capitalism. Under capitalism,

market forces are permitted to dictate these decisions.

Communist philosophy argues that capitalism is fundamentally unjust because powerful owners take more from labourers (and society) than they give and use their power to maintain the inequalities between workers and owners. As a result of this, Karl Marx thought that capitalism would inevitably be overthrown when workers worldwide united against the system that exploited them. Class divisions were supposed to be erased at that time, along with private property and all forms of inequalities.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we discussed how the industrial revolution of Europe was established and its features,we also examined the concept of the economic system laying more emphasis on the three economic systems that have evolved over the ages; the capitalist economic system, the socialist economic system, and the communist economic systems.

Assessment

Assignment

1. What is economy?
2. List the three main industrial revolutions that gave way to the development of economic systems.

Study Session9

Theoretical Perspective on Work

Introduction

Theoretical perspectives of sociology provide frameworks for understanding the social structural forces that are transforming work. In this Study Sessiontherefore, we will discuss the theoretical perspectives on work,which includes: the conflict theory, functionalist theory and the symbolic-Interactions theory .

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

9.1 *explain* at least two theoretical perspectives on work.

9.1Conflict Theory

Conflict theorists view the transformations taking place in the workplace as a result of inherent tensions in the social systems, tensions that arise from the power differences between groups vying for social and economic resources. Class conflict is then a major element of the social structure of work, and conflict theorists see class inequality as the source of unequal rewards that workers receive for work.

In addition, conflict theorists emphasize the fact that some forms of work are more highly valued than others, both because of how the work is perceived by society and how it is rewarded. For instance, mental labour has been more highly valued than manual labour. Also, work performed outside the home is typically judged to be more valuable than work performed inside the home. Given the stratifications based on class, race, gender, and age in the society, generally speaking, the work most highly valued has been that done by white, middle-class, and old men.

Sociologists, however, debate whether this stratification occurs because the most highly valued jobs are reserved for

this group (white, middle-class, old men) or whether, because this group performs these jobs, the jobs are therefore more highly valued. It is a question of which comes first, but the point from the perspective of the conflict theory is that the prestige attributed to different jobs follows along lines of race, class, gender, and age, among other factors.

9.2 Functionalist Theory

Functionalist theorists interpret the work and the economy as a functional necessity for society. Certain tasks must be done to sustain society, and the organisation at work reflects the values and characteristics of a given social order. Functionalists argue that when society changes too rapidly, as is the case with new technological and global development, work institutions undergo social disorganisation–perhaps alienation, unemployment or economic anxiety – as social institutions try to re-adjust and develop new forms that will again bring about social stability.

The functionalist theory also calls attention to the cultural values that are widely shared about work. People place a high value on the work ethic, believing that hard work is a moral obligation. As Max Weber noted, the work ethic stems from the Protestant belief that hard work is a sign of moral stature, and prosperity is a sign of God's favour. Those perceived as lazy, therefore, lacking strong work ethic, are adjudge as moral failures and are blamed for their own lack of success. The cultural value is the crux of stereotypes about the "undeserving poor" – the belief that the poor have become so because of their failures and refusal to internalised the values of diligence and hard work.

At the same time, people who are most admired for success tend to be thought of as hard workers, even if their success comes largely through inheritance. But, once a principle with the primacy of the work ethic becomes embedded in the value system of a culture, such contradiction tends to be ignored.

9.3 Symbolic Interaction Theory

Symbolic interaction brings a different perspective to sociology of work. Symbolic interaction theorists are interested in the meaning people give to work, as well as the

actual interaction that people have in the workplace. Thus, some classical studies have examined how new workers learn their new roles and how a worker's identity is shaped by social interaction in the workplace (Becker et al, 1961). Some studies, using this perspective, also analyse the creative ways that people deal with routinised jobs. People may create elaborate and exaggerated displays of routine tasks to bring some human dimension to otherwise dehumanising labour (Leidner, 1993).Another way to use the insights of symbolic interaction theory is to think about how work is defined in society. Most people think of work as an activity for which a person gets paid, but does this definition devalue work that people do? Unpaid jobs such as housework, childcare, and volunteer activities make up much of the work done in the world. If you define work as productive human activity that creates something of value – either goods or services – you see that work takes many forms. It may be paid or unpaid. It may be performed inside or outside the home. It may involve physical or mental labour, or both. Another way to think about work is through the concept of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983). Emotional labour is work that is specifically intended to produce a desired state of mind in a client. Many jobs require some handling of other people's feelings. Emotional labour involves putting on a false front before clients, and is performed in jobs where inducing or suppressing a feeling in the client is a primary work task. Emotional labour, like other work, is done for wages. It is supervised and evaluated. Workers are trained to produce the desired effect among clients.

Many jobs require the performance of emotional labour. In other words, producing a particular state of mind, in the client is part of the product being sold. In a service-based economy, emotional labour is a growing part of the work that people do, although it is seldom recognised as real work. Emotional labour also makes the production of emotion a commodity – a product created for profit and consumed. This can result in the "commercialisation of human feeling", meaning that the production and management of emotional states of mind is increasingly seen as a commodity to be bought and sold in the marketplace (Hochschild, 1983).

In sum, each theoretical perspective reveals different dimensions of the sociological study of work – either in the organisation of work within systems of stratification, in

studying the values and meanings associated with work, and in analysing the interaction people has with one another at work (Anderson and Taylor, 2004). One can also see that these different theoretical perspectives can be combined to explain particular subjects.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we examined the three main theoretical perspectives on work such as, the conflict theory, the functionalist theory, and the symbolic interaction theory. We explained the characteristics of each of the theories in relation to workers disposition to work, how work is defined in society, and the concept of emotional labour. All these were discussed to provide different cogent frameworks for understanding the social structural forces that are transforming work within economic systems.

Assessment

Assignment

1. List the three major theoretical perspectives on work.
2. What is Industrial Sociology?
3. What is the importance of the results of research from Industrial Sociologists?

Study Session 10

Nature of Politics

Introduction

In this Study Session, we will explorethe nature of politics. In doing so, we will examine the concept of power and authority within a community.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

10.1 *explain* the nature of politics.
10.2 *discuss* the types of power.
10.3 *discuss*the four main theoretical models on the exercise of political power in society.
10.4 *describe* the types of authority within a political

10.1 Political Institutions

These are sets of norms and statuses that specialise in the exercise of power and authority, the complex set of political institutions – judicial, executive, and legislative – that operate throughout a society from the state (Korblum, 1997).

The nature of politics can be seen in the following dimensions (Korblum, 1997):

1. "**Politics",** according to Max Weber, is the slow boring of hardboards. By this, he meant that political change is almost never achieved easily. Creating new political institutions or changing old ones, even just changing the leadership of existing institutions, usually requires years of effort. There will be endless meetings, ideological debates, find-raising, negotiations, and campaigning. At times, however, especially during times of revolutionary social change, the pace of political change is fast and furious.
2. We are living through a period of severe crisis and dramatic change in world politics. It is not at all clear that the democratic nation – state, the rule of law, and guarantees of the rights of minorities can be established

in many parts of the world (Mestrove, 1991). In the opinion of many political sociologists, the twentieth century is ending with the world in a state of political unrest and nationalist conflict much like that which existed at the end of the last century. This uncertainty in world and national politics makes the comparative study of political institutions – established by the pioneering political sociological sociologist, Barrington Moore (1968) – a major growth area in sociology.

3. The fall of the Barlin Wall in 1989 symbolised the beginning of a new era in world politics. The Cold War between the former Soviet Union and the Western capitalist democracies had dominated the politics of many parts of the world for more than 40 years. Although many nations, including the United States, still feel the effects of the arms race that accompanied the competition between the superpowers, the end of the Cold War has brought about an end to the nuclear "balance of terror" and the suppression of political expression within the former Soviet empire. Nationality groups in the former Soviet republics are asserting their desire for independence or, at least, for protection of their rights within a multiethnic state.
4. The political upheavals in Eastern Europe, Africa, and India, the struggle to transform South Africa into truly democratic state, the potential for disunion in Canada, and the rise of violently antigovernment hate groups in the United States – were all come together to make the comparative study of politics a central era of social-scientific research for years to come.
5. We can gain much insight into what the nationality groups in Eastern Europe, the blacks in South Africa, and others who are trying to bring about political change are experiencing by looking more carefully at politics and political institutions and the place they occupy in national life.

10.2 Power

Power is at the heart of a political system. According to Max Weber, power is the ability to exercise one's will over others. To put it in another way, if one party in a relationship can control the behaviour of the other, that individual group is exercising power. Power relations can involve large organisations, small

groups, or even people in an ultimate association (Schaefer and Smith, 2005).

10.2.1 Sources of Power

There are three basic sources of power within any political system – force, influence, and authority (Schaefer and Smith, 2005). They are briefly discussed below:

10.2.2 Force

This is the actual or threatened use of coercion to impose one's will on others. When leaders imprison or even execute political dissidents, they are applying force; so, too, are terrorists when they seize or bomb an embassy or assassinate a political leader.

10.2.3 Influence

Influence, on the other hand, refers to the exercise of power through a process of persuasion. A person may reconsider his or her choice of career because of comments made by peers, the advice of school guidance counsellors, or a passionate description of a profession by someone recruiting talented youth. In each case, sociologists would view such efforts to persuade people as examples of influence.

10.3 Theoretical Models on the Exercise of Political Power in Society

The four main theoretical models of political institutions are now examined below:

10.3.1 Pluralist Model

This model interprets power in society as coming from the representation of diverse interests of various groups in society. This model assumes that in democratic societies, the system of government works to balance the various interest groups in society. An "interest group" can be any constituency in society organised to promote its own agenda, including large, nationally based groups such as the American Association of Retired People (AARP); groups organised around professional and business interests, such Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), American Medical Association (AMA), Nigerian Bar Association (NBA); groups that concentrate on a single political or social goal, such as Rotary Club of Nigeria.

According to the pluralist model, interest groups achieve power and influence through their organized mobilisation of concerned people and groups (Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

The pluralistic model has it origins in the functionalist theory. This model sees the state as benign and representative of the whole society. No particular group is seen as politically dominant. Instead, the pluralist model sees power as broadly diffused across the public realm in society. Groups that want to effect change or express their point of view need only mobilise to do so. The pluralist model also suggests that membership of diverse ethnic, racial, and social groups can participate equally in a representative and democratic government. This theoretical model assumes that power does not depend upon social status or wealth. Different interest groups compete for government attention and action with equality of political opportunity for any group that organizes to pursue its interests (Harrison, 1980; Block, 1987; and Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

According to the pluralist model, special-interest groups are the link between the people and the government. They compete with other interest groups in shaping public policy, each group using any influence it can garner to encourage policies favourable to its interests. One resource of special-interest groups is sheer numbers. A special-interest group with a large membership can influence a politician by threatening to support another candidate. Another tool in interest, group uses is money. A small interest group with a substantial financial basis can wield a disproportionate amount of influence. The pluralist model sees special-interest groups as an integral part of the political system even though they are not an official part of government. In the pluralist view, interest groups make government more responsive to the needs and interests of different people, an especially important function in a highly diverse society (Berberoglu, 1990; and Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

10.3.2 Power Elite Model

This originated in the work of Karl Marx (1818-1883) and the conflict theory. According to Karl Marx, the dominant or "ruling" class controls all the major institutions in society. The state itself is simply an instrument by which the ruling class exercises its power. The Marxist view of the state emphasizes the power of the upper class over the lower class –

the small group of elites over the rest of the population. The state, according to Marx, is not a representative, rational institution, but an expression of the will of the ruling class (Marx, 1972 [1845]).

The power elite model posits a strong link between the government and the business. In a state; the business promotes the interests of the government, which in turn promotes the interests of the business men and women. The power elite model also emphasizes how power overlaps between influential groups. The power elite model sees the state as part of a structure of domination in society, one in which the state is simply a piece of the whole. Members of the upper class do not need to occupy high office themselves to exert their will, as long as they are in a position to influence those who are in power. The majority in the power elite are white men, which, according to the power elite model, means that the interests and outlooks of white men dominate the national agenda (Domhoff, 1998).

However, two strong criticisms have been levelled against the power elite model, according to Domhoff (1988) and Anderson and Taylor (2004): These include:

a. The model assumes too readily that there is a unity of interests among elites. In fact, according to critics, the most powerful people in society hold widely divergent views on many political issues.
b. The power elite model fails to acknowledge how well public interest groups have been able to make themselves heard,

10.3.3 Autonomous State Model

A third view of power developed by sociologists, the autonomous state model, interprets the state as its own major constituent. From this perspective, the state develops interests of its own, which it seeks to promote independent of outside interests and the public that it allegedly serves. The state is not simply reflective of the needs of dominant groups, as Marx and power-elite theorists would contend. Autonomous state theory sees the state as a network of administrative and policing organisations, each with its own interests, such as maintenance of its complex bureaucracies and protection of its special privileges (Domhoff, 1990; Skoepol, 1992; Rueschmeyer and Skoepol, 1996).

The interests of the state intersect at times with the interests of the dominant class or the members of the society as a whole, but the major concern of the state is maintaining the status quo and upholding its own interests in its competition with other states. Autonomous state theorists note that states tend to grow over time, possibly including expansion beyond their original boundaries. The huge government apparatus now in place in the United States is a good illustration of autonomous state theory. The government provides a huge array of a social support programmes, including social security, unemployment benefits, agricultural subsidies, public assistance, and other economic interventions intended to protect citizens from the vagaries of a capitalist market system (Collins, 1988).

The purpose of these programmes is to serve people in need. Autonomous state theory argues that the government has grown into a massive, elaborate bureaucracy, run by bureaucrats more absorbed in their own interests than in meeting the needs of the people. As a consequence, government can become paralyzed in conflicts between revenue-seeking state bureaucrats and those who must fund them. This can lead to a revolt against the state, as in the tax revolts appearing sporadically throughout the country (Collins, 1988; Lo, 1990; and Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

Critics of this theory say, however, that by focusing on the state alone, the autonomous state model overlooks the degree to which the state supports the interests of big businesses. Like the pluralist and power elite models, autonomous state model contributes to our understanding of the state, but it is not a total explanation of state power (Collins, 1988; Lo, 1990; and Anderson and Taylor, 2004).

10.3.4 Feminist Model

The feminist theoretical model diverges from the preceding theoretical models by seeing men as having the most important power in society. Pluralist theorists see power as widely dispersed through the class system. Power elite theorists see political power directly linked to upper class interests. Autonomous state theorists see the state as relatively independent of class interests. Feminist theory begins with the premise that an understanding of power cannot be sound without a strong analysis of gender (Haney, 1996).

Some feminist theorists argue that all state institutions reflect men’s interest. They see the state as fundamentally

patriarchal, its organisation embodying the principle that men are more powerful than women. Feminist theories of the state concluded that, despite the presence of a few powerful women, the state is devoted primarily to men's interests and, moreover, the actions of the state will tend to support gender inequality. One historical example would be laws denying women the right to own property once they married. Such laws protected men's interested at the expense of women (Blankenship, 1993).

The argument that "the state is male" is easily observed in powerful political circles (MacKinnon, 1983). Despite the recent inclusion of more women in powerful circles, and the presence of some notable women as major national figures, the most powerful members are men. For example, the U.S. Senate is 87 percent men. Groups that exercise state power, such as the police and military, are predominantly men.

10.4Authority

The word "authority" refers to power that has been institutionalised and is recognised by the people over whom it is exercised. Sociologists commonly use the tern in connection with those who hold legitimate power through an elective process or publicly acknowledged process of holding power and positions. A person's authority is limited by the constraints of a particular social position. For example, a soccer referee has the authority to award a penalty kick if he thinks there has been an infraction on the field. He does not, however, have the authority to give parking tickets to those spectators who have left their cars in a no-packing zone outside the stadium. Conversely, a police officer has no authority over player's actions within the context of the game.

Max Weber (1947, original edition 1913) therefore, identified three ideal types of authority: traditional, legal-rational, and charismatic. Sociologists have described Weber's typology as valuable in understanding different manifestations of legitimate power within a society. They are discussed below:

10.4.1 Traditional Authority

In a political system based on "traditional authority", legitimate power is conferred by customs and culturally accepted practices. The orders of one's superiors are said to be legitimate because "this is how things have always been

done". For example, a king or queen is accepted as a ruler of a nation simply by virtue of inheriting the crown. For the traditional leader, authority rests in customs, but not in the personal characteristics, or technical competence, of the leader or even written law. Traditional authority is absolute in many instances because the ruler has the ability to determine any policies. The ruler may be loved, or hated, competent or destructive; in terms of legitimacy, that does not matter.

10.4.2 Legal-Rational Authority

Power made legitimate by law is known as "legal-rational authority". Leaders derive their legal-rational authority from the written rules and regulation of political systems. For example, the authority of any president of a nation is legitimised by the constitution of the nation. Generally, in societies that are based on legal-rational authority, leaders are conceived of having specific areas of competence and authority. They are not viewed as having divine inspiration, as are the heads of certain societies with traditional forms of authority.

10.4.3 Charismatic Authority

Weber also observed that power can be legitimised by the charisma of an individual. The term "charismatic authority" refers to power made legitimate by a leader's exceptional personal or emotional appeal to his or her followers. Charisma lets a person lead or inspire without relying on set rules or traditions. Interestingly, charismatic authority is derived more from the beliefs of followers than from the actual qualities of leaders. So long as the common people in a society perceive a leader as having qualities setting him or her apart from ordinary citizens, that leader's authority will remain secure and often unquestioned.

Unlike traditional rulers, charismatic leaders become well known by breaking with establishment institutions and advocating dramatic changes in the social structure and the economic system. Their strong hold over their followers makes it easier to build protest movements, which challenge the dominant norms and values of a society. Thus, charismatic leaders such as Jesus, Mohammed, Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King all used their power to press for changes in accepted social behaviour.

Weber used traditional, legal-rational, and charismatic

authority as ideal types. In reality, particular leaders and political systems combine elements of two or more these forms.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we examined the nature of politics, power and authority; we described the nature of politics in the political systems as well as the three sources of power, which are force, influence, and authority. We discussed the four main theoretical models on the exercise of power in society; the pluralist model stated that power is dispersed through the class system, the power elite models noted that power in society is mainly exercised by the elite in the society, that is the upper class, the autonomous state model insisted that power is solar exercised by the state independently of any class interest; and the Feminist model envied that power in society is mainly in the hand of the male.

Also, we defined authority as an institutionalised and recognised power. Furthermore, we noted that there are three ideal types of authority which are; traditional authority, legal-rational authority, and charismatic authority.

Assessment

Assignment

1. How did Herold Lasswell define politics?
2. Name the two cultural universals common to all economic systems.
3. What are the concerns of sociologists in the study of politics and government?
4. list the theoretical models on the exercise of political power in society
5. outline and discuss the assumptions of each of the models.

Study Session 11

The Military as a Social Institution

Introduction

A major question in political sociology is how states can control their military institutions. A society cannot remain democratic for a long time if the military usurps the authority granted to it by civilian institutions. One factor that contributes to this problem is the fact that the military is staffed by professional soldiers for whom service in the armed forces is a career. In view of the above, this Study Session will look at the military as a social institution, as well as the military socialisation, and the economic role of the military.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

11.1 *explain* the reason military is regarded as s social institution.

11.2 *discuss* military socialization.

11.3 *appraise* the role of military in the economy of a state

11.1 Characteristics of Military as a Social Institution

The military as a social institution is characterised by the following features, identified by McPherson (1984) and Anderson and Taylor (2004):

1. Institutions are stable systems of norms and values that fill certain functions in society. The military is a social institution whose function is to defend the nation against external (and sometimes internal) threats. A strong military is often considered an essential tool for maintaining peace, although the values that promote preparedness in the armed forces are perilously close to their war-like values that lead to military aggression against others.
2. The military is a strict hierarchical and formal social institution. For instance, people who join the military

are explicitly given a rank and, if later promoted, pass through a series of well-defined levels, each with clearly demarcated sets of rights and responsibilities. As in other social institutions, military enlistees are carefully socialised to learn the norms of the combative culture they have joined. Military socialisation places a high premium on conformity. New recruits have their hair cut short to look alike; they are issued identical uniforms, and they are allowed to retain very few of their personal possessions. They must quickly learn new codes of behaviour that are strictly enforced.

3. Like other hierarchical institutions, the military embeds social class into its structure. People recruited from the working class are most likely to serve in lower-end positions within the military. They, however, experience social mobility as a result of military education and training. People from the upper classes who serve in the military are most likely to be officers and in non-combat positions.
4. Many find the military to be distinctively masculine. Not only are men the majority in the combative culture, but the organisation itself rests on masculine cultural traits such as aggression, competition, hierarchy, and violence. Soldiers are often abused if they fail to live up to the masculine image of the military. New recruits may derisively be called “sissies” and told that, if they fail to live up to military ideals, it is because they are effeminate or homosexual.
5. Military life is obviously very different from life off the base, yet the military is intimately linked to other institutions in society. Most notably, a strong connection exists between the military and corporate America. The “military-industrial complex” is the term used to describe the linkage between business and military interests. The link is so strong that the military supports many of the basic research and development projects in the nation. From university research laboratories to corporate research institutes and centres, the military funds much of the basic scientific and technological knowledge.

11.2 Military Socialisation

In his classic study of socialisation in a military academy,

Dornbusch (1955) showed that traditional military socialisation processes are designed to develop a high level of motivation and commitment to the institution. Those processes include the following:

11.2.1 Suppression of Previous Statuses

Through haircuts, uniforms, and the like, the recruit is deprived of visible clues to his or her previous social status.

11.2.2 Learning of New Norms and Rules

At the official level, the recruit is taught obedience to the rules of the military. Through informal socialization, he or she is taught the culture of the military institution.

11.2.3 Development of Solidarity

Both informal socialisation and harsh discipline build solidarity and lasting friendships among recruits; they learn to depend on one another.

11.2.4 Bureaucratic Spirit

The recruit is taught unquestioning acceptance of tradition and customs; orders are taken and given from morning to night.

11.3 Economic Role of the Military

Where the threat of military coups is not considered great, the military has so much influence on the economy that social control of the military becomes difficult. The economic role of the military can be considered as follows:

1. The function of the military is, of course, the defence of the nation-state. However, in the United States, the military also serves an important economic function as a producer of jobs and revenue.
2. The private companies that vie for military contracts became a major source of employment, often providing some of the most highly paid and secure jobs in a country.
3. The growth in the production for military purposes in different parts of the United States also adds to the potential for armed conflict elsewhere in the world. Therefore, faced with declining domestic sales, U.S. arms makers seek to supply advanced weapons to buyers in other nations. Indeed, weapons account for a

significant portion of U.S. exports (Kornblum, 1997).

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we examined military as a social institution. We looked at the norms and values, hierarchy, social class, and socio-economic status in the military. We also discussed the traditional military socialisation processes, and these include, suppression of previous statuses, learning of new norms and rules, development of solidarity, and the bureaucratic spirit. Finally, we examined economic role of the military in a state.

Assessment

Assignment

1. Why it is that society cannot remain democratic for a long time?
2. State two reasons for military intervention in the political institution of a society.

Study Session 12

Health Care Institution

Introduction

Inthis Study Session, we will examine health from sociological perspective, and explain the relationship between health and society.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

12.1 *define* health from sociological point of view.

12.2 *show* the relationship between health and society.

12.3 *discuss* the four main sociological theories that attempt to conceptualize health and illness.

12.1What is Health?

From a sociological point of view, social factors contribute to the evaluation of a person as "healthy" or "sick". How, then, can we define health? We can imagine a continuum with health on the one end and health on the other. In the preamble to its 1946 constitution, the World Health Organisation (WHO) defined "health" as a "state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of diseases and infirmity" (Leavell and Clark, 1965). With this definition in mind, the "healthy" end of our continuum represents an ideal towards which we are oriented rather than a precise condition that we expect to attain. Along the continuum, people define themselves as "healthy" or sick on the basis of criteria established by each individual, relatives, friends, co-workers, and medical practitioners. The relativistic approach to health allows us to view it in a social context and to consider how it varies in different situations or cultures (Twaddle, 1978; Wolinsky, 1990; and Schaefer and Lamm, 1997).

12.2 Health and Society

The health of any population is shaped by the traits of the

surrounding society (Macionis, 1995). This can be viewed in different ways.

People Judge their Health Relative to others

Standards of health vary from society to society. Dubos (1980 [1965]) points out that early in this century, yaws, a contagious skin disease, was so common in tropical Africa that societies there considered it normal. In that context, then, health was a matter of having the same diseases as one's neighbours.

People Pronounce as "Healthy" What they hold to be Morally Good

Members of our society (especially men) consider a competitive way of life to be "healthy" because it fits in with our cultural mores (This is so despite the fact that stress is related to heart disease and many other illnesses). Contrarily, some people who object to homosexuality on moral grounds claim that this sexual orientation is "sick" (even though it is quite natural from a medical point of view). In short, ideas about good health constitute a type of social control that encourages conformity to cultural norms.

Cultural Standards of Health Change Over Time

Early in this century, some prominent physicians condemned women for enrolling in college, claiming that higher education placed an unhealthy strain on the female brain. Furthermore, some specialists denounced masturbation as a threat to health. Today, however, such notions elicit little support from the medical community. Conversely, few physicians fifty years ago recognised the dangers of cigarette smoking, a practice that is now widely regarded as a threat to health.

Health Relates to a Society's Technology

Members of poor societies routinely contend with malnutrition, poor or non-existent sanitation, and all sorts of infectious diseases. As industrialisation raised living standards, conceptions of health correspondingly rose. Industrial technology, on the other hand, creates new threats to health. For instance, rich societies have the capacity to endanger health by overtaking the world's resources as well as generating various forms of pollution.

Health Relates to Social Inequality

Every society on earth unequally distributes the resources that promote personal well-being. The physical, mental, and social health of wealthy women and men in the United States is far

better than that of poor people. The pattern starts at birth, with infant mortality highest among the poor. Affluent people also live longer than poor people do.

12.3 Theories of Health and Illness

Several theoretical approaches offer a range of insights into health and treatment of illness, such as the ones explained by Parsons (1972, 1975), Segall (1976), Zia (1990), Abbott and Wallae (1990), Schaefer and Smith (2005), and a host of others. It is therefore pertinent to discuss the four main theoretical approaches to understanding what health is and what illness is.

12.3.1 Functionalist Approach

Illness entails at least a temporary disruption in a person's social interactions both at work and at home. Consequently, from a functionalist perspective, "being sick" must be controlled so that not too many people are released from their societal responsibilities at any one time. Functionalists contend that an overly broad definition of illness would disrupt the workings of a society.

"Sickness" requires that one take on a social role, even if temporary. The "sick role" refers to social expectations about the attitudes and behaviour of a person viewed as being ill. According to Parson's theory, physicians function as "gatekeepers" for the sick role, either verifying a patient's condition as "illness" or designating the patient as "recovered". The ill-person becomes dependent on the doctor because the latter can control valued reward (not only treatment of illness but also excused absences from work and school). Parsons suggests that the doctor-patient relationship is somewhat like that between parent and child. Like a parent, the physician helps the patient to return to society as a full functioning adult.

There have been many criticisms of the concept of sick role. First, patient's judgements regarding their own state of health may be related to their gender, age, social class, and ethnic group. Second, the sick role may be more applicable to people experiencing short-term illnesses than those with recurring, long-term illnesses. Finally, even simple factors, such as whether a person is employed or not, seem to affect willingness to assume the sick role – as does the impact of

socialisation into a particular occupation or activity (Curry, 1993). Nonetheless, sociologists continue to rely on Parson's model for functionalist analysis of the relationship between illness and social expectations for the sick.

12.3.2 Conflict Approach

Functionalists seek to explain how health care systems meet the need of society as well as those of individual patients and medical practitioners, but conflict theorists take issues with this view. They express concern that the profession of medicine has assumed a preeminence that extend well beyond whether to excuse a student from school on an employee from work. Conflict theorists use the term "medicalisation of society" to refer to the growing role of medicine as a major institution of social control (McKinlay and McKinlay, 1977).

Social control involves techniques and strategies for regulating behaviour in order to enforce the distinctive norms and values of a culture. Typically, we think of informal social control as occurring within families and peer groups, whereas formal social control is carried out by authorised agents such as police officers, judges, school administrators, and employers. However, viewed from a conflict perspective, medicine is not simply a "healing profession", it is a regulating mechanism as well.

How does it manifest its social control? First, medicine has greatly expanded its domain of expertise in recent decades. As the "medicalisation" of society has proceeded into the twenty-first century, physicians have become much more involved in examining a wide range of issues, among them sexuality (including homosexuality), old age, anxiety, obesity, child development, alcoholism, and drug addiction. The social significance of medicalisation is that once a problem is viewed using a medical model-once medical expert becomes influential in proposing and assessing relevant public policies – it becomes more difficult for "common people" to join the discussion and exert influence on decision making. It also becomes more difficult to view these issues as being shaped by social, cultural, or psychological factors, rather than simply by physical or medical factors (Starr, 1982; Caplan, 1989).

Second, medicine serves as an agent of social control by retaining absolute jurisdiction over many health care procedures. It has even attempted to guard its jurisdiction by placing health care professionals such as nurse – midwives

outside the realm of acceptable medicine. Despite the fact that midwives first brought professionalism to child delivery, they have been portrayed as having invaded "legitimate" field of obstetrics.

12.3.3 Interactionist Approach

In examining health, illness, and medicine as a social institution, interactionists generally focus on micro-level study of the roles played by health professionals and patients. They emphasize that the patient should not always be viewed as passive, but instead as actor who often shows a powerful intent to see the physician (Zola, 1983; Alonzo, 1989).

Sometimes, patients play an active role in health care by "failing" to follow a physician's advice. For example, some patients stop taking medications long before they should, some take an incorrect dosage on purpose, and others never even fill their prescriptions. Such noncompliance results in part from the prevalence of self-medication in our society; many people are accustomed to self-diagnosis and self-treatment. On the other hand, patients' active involvement in their health care can sometimes have very "positive" consequences. Some patients read books about preventive health care techniques, attempt to maintain healthy and nutritious diets, carefully monitor any side effects of medication, and adjust dosage based on such perceived side effects.

12.3.4 Feminist Approach

Feminist sociologists point out that health is an area of central concern for women, yet there is a historical pattern of the medical field concentrating primarily on women's reproductive potential, overshadowing a diversity of other health and illness issues. For example, it is suggested that women patients and their doctors have very different views about pregnancy and childbirth. Women see pregnancy as a natural phenomenon, while doctors see it as a medical problem (Graham and Oakley, 1981). Medical practice is based on the assumption that doctors have access to a scientific body of knowledge about childbirth, but doctors deal mainly with illness and they tend to treat pregnancy as if it were a sickness.

While radical feminists emphasize the ways in which medical ideology is used to control, Marxists feminist point to

inequalities in the health system and the control that the state holds over the field. Though women are the majority of workers in the paid health care system, they are concentrated in the lower paid and lower status jobs – as nurses and as general practitioners, compared to administrators or physician specialists.

Another key feature of the medical field is the dominance and control that doctors have over health workers such as midwives and nurses. This is again based on the perception of their advanced and superior knowledge.

The role of nurse within the home also generally falls on the women in the families – they play the major role in caring for the sick, the disabled, the elderly, and other dependent groups. Grahams (1987) argues that much of routine domestic labour within the home is about health maintenance; women are responsible for the health education of their children, they are generally the ones to "nurse" the sick ones back to health, to arrange for medical appointments, and to decide whether someone is sick enough to miss school, or work, or have to be taken to the hospital.

Whether they focus on the control of women by male health practitioners or on the inequalities in the roles within the health care system, feminists have advanced our knowledge of women as primary consumers of, as well as the main workers in, health services.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we discussed "health" from a sociological point of view. We also established the relationship between health and society. We also examined the four main theories of health and illness, these include: functionalism, conflict theory, interactionism, and feminist theories. All these offer a range of insights into the social context shaping definitions of health and treatment of illness.

Assessment

Assignment

1. How can we define health?
2. Who is sick, or healthy?

References