

Introduction to Social Problem

CHAPTER OUTLINE

• Social disorganization • Social Problem • Components of Social Problems • Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems • The Functionalist Perspective • The Conflict Perspective • The Interactionist Perspective

SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION

INTRODUCTION

The members in a social system when leave their function or lose their mutual relationship, social disorganization occurs. The bonds of social relationship in an organized body when become loose and weak this body becomes disorganized. The members in such a group become out of control and the social relationship within the system also decreases.

A family is disorganized when its members lose parents by death, separation or other cause and do not submit to the head of household. If a section of a factory fails to function it is called dysfunctioning which creates disorganization in the functioning of the factory. If the workers of a factory go on strike against the treatment of the owner. The factory-system is disorganized due to failure in its objectives. The candidates in an examination hall if boycott a stiff paper and walk out of the hall there is disorganization in the examination system.

Social disorganization is usually the result of abrupt changes in the existing social system. By the introduction of a new element in the system, the previous bonds of relationship break, creating confusion and 'disruption called disorganization. The new element does not adjust into the old framework. Till this adjustment disorganization in the system prevails.

According to Cohen, "the disruption or breakdown of a social system is called social disorganization."

Rober Eolofairs states that: "Social disorganization is a disturbance in the patterns and mechanism of human relations."

Ogburn & Nimkoff have said that: "When the harmonious relationship between

the various parts of culture is disturbed, social disorganization ensues."

Emile Durkheim: "State of disequilibrium and a lack of social solidarity among the members of society."

Maciver: "The process by which the relationship between members of group are shaken."

SOCIAL PROBLEM

Walsh and Furfey (Social Problems and Social Action 1958) defined social problem, "a deviation from the social ideals remediable by group efforts".

Weaver defined social problem as "a situation in a dynamic society believed to be a threat to or an infringement upon a social value and considered capable of amelioration or elimination by appropriate collective action".

Frank L.K. a social problem then appears to be any difficulty or misbehavior of a family large number of persons which we wish to move or correct.

H.A. Phelps: Social problems are abnormalities in social relationship which manifest themselves when people live in groups, which are considered dangerous and intolerable and which must be eliminated to safeguard the society.

Walsh: a deviation from the social ideals remediable by group efforts.

A condition affecting a significant number of people in ways considered undesirable and about which it is felt that some thing can be done through collective social action.

COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

- a. Social problem is that condition which is disliked by majority of the people.
- b. Academicians and scholars of other segments of life are writing on different aspects of problem.
- c. The problem can be solved by collective action instead of individual.
- d. Majority of the people is am about it and being affected each other directly or indirectly.
- e. Complexity of the problem is very much and difficult to understand.

Draught, heavy rains, earthquake, storm and epidemics are problems and not social problems because they cannot be controlled by group efforts of the people. Mass failure of students in examinations, student's unrest, unemployment, population expansion, crime, maladjustment in family, traffic accidents, illiteracy, neurosis, drug addiction, tuberculosis (T.B.), sectarianism, party faction are the social problems of Pakistan. We shall discuss here a few of them briefly.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The Functionalist Perspective

The functionalist perspective grew out of the similarities early sociologists observed between society and biological organisms.

Society, functionalists argue, operates in a way somewhat analogous to that of a biological organism. According to the **functionalist perspective**, society is a system made up of a number of interrelated and interdependent elements, each performing a function that contributes to the operation of the whole (Parsons, 1951; Merton, 1968; Turner and Maryanski, 1979). For functionalists, then, all parts of society are interdependent and function together to provide the things that are essential to maintain society. In addition, there needs to be considerable agreement among the members of society regarding the content of important values and norms.

In a system with all of the parts so tightly interdependent, it should be obvious that a change in one element of society will probably lead to changes in other parts. Small changes can usually be absorbed with relative ease, but large or sudden changes can cause major social disruption and lead to problems. Because of this, functionalists argue, social systems are characterized by stability and a tendency toward **equilibrium**—a state of balance in which the relationships among the various parts of the system remain the same.

In addition, some social practices are functional as well as *dysfunctional*; that is, they may disrupt social equilibrium rather than contribute to it. For example, encouraging large families, as some religious teachings do, would be dysfunctional in a society that is already overpopulated.

According to the functionalist perspective, a social problem exists when some element in society becomes dysfunctional and interferes with the efficient operation or stability of the system or the achievement of societal goals. In other words, social problems arise from social disorganization, in which the parts of society work at cross-purposes rather than together. Functionalists search for the sources of this societal breakdown. Consider how divorce might be viewed by functionalists: Marital dissolution involves the breaking up of what is perhaps society's most basic institution, the family. Divorce could be seen as a social problem if those functions that are typically served by the family were to go unperformed, such as children not being raised properly to become contributing members of society.

The Conflict Perspective

Conflict theorists emphasize the inevitability of coercion, domination, conflict, and change in society. The **conflict perspective** is based on the idea that society consists of different groups who struggle with one another to attain the scarce societal resources that are considered valuable, be they money, power, prestige, or cherished values. Karl Marx provided the foundation for the conflict perspective when he viewed society as consisting of two different social classes *i.e.* proletariat & bourgeoisie. The two central classes of his era were the proletariat, or the workers, and the bourgeoisie, or those who owned businesses, factories, and textile mills in which the proletariat toiled. Marx saw these classes as being in constant struggle with one another to improve their respective positions in society. The workers tried to gain more income and control over their work; the owners tried to make more profits by lowering labor costs and getting workers to work more. For Marx, this conflict was irreconcilable, because what benefits one group necessarily works to the disadvantage of the other. Furthermore, if one group can gain an advantage in this struggle, they will use it to dominate and oppress the other group and enhance their own position. They might, for example, gain control of the government and pass

legislation that limits the ways the subordinate groups could otherwise compete.

In the conflict view, social change involves redistributing scarce resources among various interest groups. A **vested interest group** is an interest group that benefits from existing policies, practices, and social arrangements, and generally resists social changes that might threaten their privileges. However, the inevitable clash of interests ensures that any existing social arrangements eventually will be rearranged. Out of the resulting struggle, new winners will emerge and uneasy truces will be established. These truces, however, will be temporary, because new conflicts will develop that will lead to further struggle and change.

For the conflict theorist, a social problem exists when a group of people, believing that their interests are not being met or that they are not receiving a sufficient share of resources, work to overcome what they perceive as a disadvantage. Unlike functionalists, conflict theorists view a phenomenon such as divorce as normal because it represents one way of dealing with marital discord. This does not mean that the disruptive effects of divorce are ignored or that divorce is not a social problem. Rather, it means that divorce becomes a social problem when particular groups that have power regard their interests as being threatened by the extent of divorce in society.

The Interactionist Perspective

The interactionist perspective focuses on everyday social interaction among individuals rather than on large societal structures such as politics, education, and the like. For interactionists, society consists of people interacting with one another; to understand society we must understand social interaction. It is through such interactions that groups, organizations, and society as a whole are created, maintained, and changed. The operation of educational institutions can be observed, for example, through students interacting with teachers and through school administrators making decisions. It is these day-to-day interactions that give education its shape and substance.

From the interactionist perspective, a social problem exists when some social condition is defined by an influential group as stigmatizing or threatening to their values and disruptive of normal social expectations. For example, the interactionist would observe that there have been important changes in attitudes toward divorce in our society. In addition to being more common today, divorce has less stigma attached to it in modern America than it did around the turn of this century. At the same time, however, divorce is viewed by many groups as a social problem because they see marital dissolution as posing a threat to family stability. If the family is such a basic social institution, divorce may challenge shared meanings and definitions that these groups hold about this institution.

Social Problems of Pakistan

CHAPTER OUTLINE

• Illiteracy • Causes of Illiteracy • Impacts of Illiteracy • Solution of Illiteracy • Population Expansion • Population Expansion as a Social Problem • Factors of Population Growth • Causes of Population Expansion • Impacts of Population Growth • Steps to Reduce Population Growth • Poverty • What is Poverty • Who is poor? • Poverty as a Social Problem • Causes of Poverty • Impacts of poverty • Solution of poverty • Drug Addiction • Causes of Drug Addiction and Solution • Environmental Pollution • Divorce • Husband and Wife Relationship • Divorce is a Flame Burning Family Life • Devotion is Required for Peaceful Family • Effects • Freedom of Ideas and Actions • Poor Standard of Education • Teacher-Student Relationship • Students and Employment • The Students and the Community • The Students and Politics • Role of Teachers • Student's Unrest • Human Migration • Feudalism • Smuggling • Aging

1. ILLITERACY

Illiteracy has been defined as reading a paragraph of a language with understanding according to the census of Pakistan 1981. The literacy rate is about 45% and the rest of the people 55% are illiterate according to 1998 census of Pakistan. Those people who are well-informed in modes of life are called educated. But illiterate are those who cannot read a paragraph in any language with understanding. The difference between literacy and education is clear. In common understanding the educated people are those who have received formal education in educational institutions.

But actually the educated people are those who understand the modes of life.

Illiteracy covers the maximum number of population in which the higher age group people fall. They have crossed the age of 40 and more. There are the people mostly living in rural areas and have their rural profession related to agriculture. With the advancement of mechanized farming the labor force in rural areas became unemployed and some people are shifting to urban areas for job. Again these people are unemployed in urban areas facing problems of residence and employment. Moreover, those who are literate are unable to get employment due to shortage of jobs.

Illiteracy is the problem when the people are unable to understand new policies in agriculture which give poor yield per acre. Illiterate people are mostly familiar with old methods of cultivation and feel hesitation in adopting the new ones.

Illiteracy is a problem because the national target could not be attained by which self-sufficiency in food could not be achieved.

Illiteracy is a social problem because maximum number of people are in this condition and they are unable to understand the new techniques of social life. They remain behind in raising their standard of living. They are mostly poor.

Illiteracy is a social problem because such people are irrational in attitudes and in emotions they commit such acts which are violation to the rules and laws of the society.

Illiteracy is a social problem in view of failure in understanding the methods of life, the religious knowledge and values and the general information on social progress. The roles they play in life without such information and knowledge are least useful.

CAUSES OF ILLITERACY

i. Culture: The most common cause of illiteracy is our traditional culture based on pure agricultural profession in which education is not considered to be a foundation of life. Mostly, the cultivators have been illiterate people through out centuries in the history of our social life. It was considered that if a boy become highly educated, he will become useless for the farms. It means cultivation of land and education is considered opposite concepts in our agrarian society.

ii. Agrarian Society: Most of the people (about 68%) live in rural areas of Pakistan and majority of them are attached with different fields of agriculture. Some are cultivators and some are helpers to the cultivators. Therefore, the tendency towards education is not favorite concept among the residents of rural area. A student put to school and college is considered to be useless for them. Moreover, they say that he will neither get employment in offices nor he will be able to cultivate the land and thus his life shall has been destroyed. cost of education is increases and becomes unbearable for parents as he gets promoted.

iii. Conservative Approach: Illiteracy rate is higher among women than men. It is evident from the fact that most of the women are illiterate in rural areas. The people of rural areas dislike women to be employed in any government or private office. A woman is preferred to be a good wife, a good mother and a good daughter, if she works within the family.

Now a change has come into the social structure of rural life that an educated girl is liked to be married as a wife but working within the household duties. This education is limited to school and the Holy Quran. The first question which is asked by the parent of boy is that can the girl read the Holy Quran and is a follower of prayers and understands the religious values?

iv. Illiterate Parents: Most of the parents are illiterate that is why they do not like to send their children to schools specially the daughters. In urban areas this percentage of illiteracy is also higher among the women than that of men. The cultural value of Pakistani society dominate both in rural and urban areas to restrict the women within the boundary of the house.

v. Ancestral Profession: Another important factor is that people are attached with these ancestral professions for a long period of life and a son is expected to follow the same professional activities which his father is doing. It is a matter of prestige to work in farms as his ancestors used to do. It means professional activities are handed down from generation to generation and it is considered to be a cultural tradition of the family.

vi. **Low Social Contacts with Cities:** Another very important factor in illiteracy is that the people of rural areas have not been in contact with big urban settlements. Social relations with urban life is very important factor for bringing about change in their attitude and actions. Because the cultivators remain busy with their lands, animals and their crops finding little time to visit cities.

vii. **Poor Transport:** Moreover transport facilities are not personal which is a hindrance in social change.

viii. **Lack of Facilities:** Lack of facilities like industrial, educational and the new environment of technology is the most important cause of illiteracy.

ix. **Unemployment:** Another very important fact is that people of rural areas see educated young men are without employment. Then they think that what is the use of educating children to schools and colleges.

x. **Poor Communication Facilities:** The social relations with other people, with transportation and telephone are limited that is why change in their attitude and behaviour towards education is limited.

IMPACTS OF ILLITERACY

Impacts of illiteracy are as follows:

i. **Low development of resources:** Illiteracy minimizes social relations in society which leads to less development of resources.

ii. **Barrier to Social Change:** Illiteracy is itself a barrier in the social progress among people for better standard. Illiteracy itself is hurdle in understanding techniques for advancement and progress.

iii. **Low Prestige:** An illiterate person is given less prestige while sitting with other people. He is given only a labor work and not allowed to sit on table and chair in offices. He is considered to be at low class in society by the educated people because he is poor and illiterate.

iv. **Deprivation from recreations:** Illiteracy creates deprivation among people to enjoy recreations of the society. Illiterate person is unable to read books, magazine, articles and other reading materials. He cannot participate in forums and platforms of educated people.

v. **Abnormal attitude and dealing:** Illiterate people are unable to deal with the social situations in a better way. In such kind of situation, their attitude is abnormal and some times deviant too.

vi. **Backwardness:** Illiteracy creates backwardness among the people. Illiterates are unable to understand and its solution.

vii. **Poverty:** There is a relationship between level of educational attainment and income. Generally speaking, it is true that the more you educate the more you earn so illiteracy creates poverty.

viii. **Hamper Social Change:** Illiteracy hampers social change because illiterates do not like social change. They want to live with their existing environment. Any change in it is resisted by them.

ix. **Crime and violence:** Illiterates commit more crimes than the educated people. Educated people commit organized crime with latest techniques which illiterate do not. Violent attitude is more in illiterate than the literate persons.

x. **Low quality of life:** Due to above-mentioned point, illiterates enjoy poor quality of life and their status in the society is also poor.

SOLUTION OF ILLITERACY

Solution of illiteracy given below:

i. **Awareness about Problem:** To bring these illiterate people into the lines of progress, advancement and change it is necessary to aware them about problems and consequences of illiteracy as their problem. They should be provided information through mass media of communication and general social contact with the educated people about impacts of illiteracy.

ii. **Attitude Change:** Illiterate people can be drained into channel of progressive people with attitude change through showing movies, lectures by officers and programs of literacy on radio and television. These people can be given incentive of prizes, if they take classes of literacy in the union council offices or schools of the village.

iii. **Literacy Programs:** The literacy program includes teaching the basic subject in the language of the people, English, Urdu or what ever they like. This work can be done by other educated young men of the rural area on voluntary basis. The building is available as school, hospital, council office and even the mosque of the area.

iv. **Free Educational Items:** Those people who attend to this literacy program can be provided stationary and books free of cost. The time of teaching and learning can be fixed in the evening of the completion of their work. Four to six weeks teaching is sufficient to make them literate as to read and write the basic things of their need. This can be continued up to another two to three weeks at their homes on their interest.

v. **Increase the Importance of Education:** The people who are illiterate say that what is the use of this literacy and education for us because we are in the last stage of our age. Our argument is based on the fact that their literacy will be helpful to educate their children. They will feel importance of education and will educate their children at any cost. Those young men who are quite illiterate are wasting their costly time of life without less output of their works whether it may be in farms. The literate people can utilize new techniques of agriculture with better results. A revolution can be brought up in rural economy and social life if literacy percentage rises at the level of urban area. They will be able to provide better life and good sanitation and health occasion within their household life.

vi. **Change the Mindset:** It is the mind, which changes first and then it brings changes in the total of social life. Change of mind is the change of general social life. And the mind cannot be changed until the education is not given to the people. Education is an injection of change and progress. The use of radio, television, newspapers and the mass media of communication are the leading sources for the acceptance of education for progress.

Poverty is a social problem of Pakistan with the fact that most of the people have limited economic resources and their standard of living is low. The people have been deprived of modern facilities in education, health, communication and good food. Such people are worried due to lack of income resources and they are unable to fulfill their needs to live a life parallel to their neighbors. In this age of competition they feel deprived of their rights and inferiority complex prevails upon them. They feel shy in sitting with the well off families. They are not given marital relations with well off people because they are disliked due to poverty.

These people are mostly illiterate and their friendship is with the people of same type. That is why their standard of life does not rise without education and economic resources. Poverty itself is a social problem because the poor people are unable to follow the new trends and they fail to adopt new modes in social life.

Poverty is a social problem because they have failed to increase their income resources.

Poverty is called to be a social problem because these people lag behind the advancing people and do not understand the ways of progress. They are mostly frustrated when their needs of life are not fulfilled. In frustration they become aggressive and may commit such acts which are criminal in nature. Due to hatred by others they take reaction and get into criminal activities. They destroy the vehicles and property of rich people due to economic disparity. Sometimes a child of rich man is abducted. Sometimes his car is lifted and sometimes "a dacoity is put in his house. This leads to more heinous crime like murder on the rich man. In this way poverty being a social problem creates other social problems of serious nature.

WHAT IS POVERTY

i. **Bargata & Borgata** define: "the word Poverty is derived from French word 'Pauvre', meaning poor. Material possession of having little or no more means to support one self is called poverty".

ii. **Ian Robertson** defines: "Poverty is the inability to maintain minimal standards of food, clothing, shelter and health care".

iii. Most comprehensive definition was given by **Lewis**: "poverty not only as economic deprivation, or the absence of something but also as a way of life, the personal of sub-cultural values and attitudes passed down from generation to generation".

Who is poor?

According to **World Bank**, "a person earning less than one US dollar (60 rupees Pakistani) a day is called poor".

POVERTY AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM

Pakistan is mostly sub-cultural by traditions and the social life of the people is simple related to their culture and resources. The resources at our disposal and discovered up till now have not been mobilized up to the advance stage. As it found in advanced countries, who utilized the sources of oil and gas and water for the welfare of the human beings.

The problems with Pakistani people are that some of the resources, which are very costly have not been discovered from earth. Gold, silver, copper, iron, metals have not been fully discovered and utilized. Gas and oil reserves have not been fully discovered by the experts.

There are three sources of man while living as a member of society. Time, money and labor are great sources at our disposal. Time is the time of life and age which is not fully utilized because our culture is not industrial and mostly we are not trained in technology of using resources available. We are getting our young men trained in technical fields and have succeeded to great extent.

Our medical and engineering skills have been saturated in Pakistani society due to lack of economic wealth and they are in search of jobs in foreign countries. This has given an idea that our society is not able to absorb technical skill due to lack of technological resources with us. Our culture is traditional and requires manual labor more than technical labor. Weightlifter, road builders and menders of broken things are the required persons. These all things have led to decide that Pakistani society and the people are poor and are not able to cover their foreign exchange, foreign expenditure and needs of the nation within the country.

The main cause of this main problem is that human resources are mostly with talent without technical training. What we want a mechanic of a tractor, car, bus and the motor cycle. This is the most important requirement of technical work. Because our society needs these services.

The next of the resources is money and wealth this is drawn from the economic resources of land, industry, labor, technical work, business, trade, services and professional works. These all require talent and training in the worker with material equipment in offices and buildings. They are provided with technical skills with the objectives of wealth got from agricultural produce, industrial production, profits and gains from business and trade, work in economic institutions with the expansion of economic productions. The production in economy leads to expansion of wealth and resources.

This production in economy depends upon the third factor as labor. It is the main theme of all activities in life. Man is useless without work. Labor is of three types. (1) non - skilled labor is that one in which the workers are laborers in the farms, on road, lifters of weight in shopping centers and buildings construction. These are the most, cheap servants available easily in Pakistan. They are huge in number because they are non - technical members and mostly illiterate. This is the poorest class with least resources with their family.

The skilled are those laborers, who are workers in highly technical and industrial plants. They build buildings of high standards. They are the engineers, medical practitioners, legal advisors, mechanic, judges, police officers, the muftis of shariat laws. These are skilled workers of the nation and work in different fields of life, in which the needs of satisfaction for the nationals are fulfilled.

From this discussion we deduce results that poverty is a social problem of Pakistan.

CAUSES OF POVERTY

There is a number of causes of poverty, which are given below:

i. Lack of Getting Benefit with Natural Resources: We are unable to get economic resources from the natural environment gifted by God to us. It is the land, hills, mountains, rivers and falls from which we can get wealth by our technical skills. We can control and divert the waters flowing from mountains into dams from which power can be generated and the canals for irrigation.

ii. Avoid Low Quality Work: The people of our nation avoid hard work and labor. They feel shy in working down in the street and on the road. They think themselves to be respectable by not working in labor but wearing a dress clean and tidy. This concept of respect and prestige puts them into dingy house, dirty places to live and low standard food to eat with missing facilities of sanitation in their residential areas.

iii. Lack of Hard Work leads to drug addiction: Such people who avoid hard work lead a life of poor man and mostly indulge in drug addiction. They get into heroine, chrus and other things of abuse. The prohibited acts get into their habits and they involve in delinquent activities, which leads to criminal actions in life.

vi. Anti Social Habits: Jobless and workless people also fall into such habits, which are anti social like, gambling, drinking, cheating, theft and robbery. Such people feel themselves satisfied in associates of these types. They remain satisfied and get things stolen from house for fulfillment of their needs. Smoking and telling a lie are bad habit develop in general behavior of such workless adults. They are idle and useless persons hated by good citizens.

v. Lack of Religious Education: They avoid getting into religious education and hate moral and cultural values of Islam. They disobey their parents and elders of family. They walk late at night out of home in company of associates of such habits. Ultimately they become criminals in adult life.

vi. Wastage of Economic Resources: Another cause of poverty is wasting the economic resources. If the savings are not protected, the family faces problems in future. Ill health and other necessities of food and dress require money from saving. If saving is poor, then these problems create heavy tension and disturbance on the members of family.

vii. Unemployment: Unemployment is the most important cause of poverty. Those young men, who are unable to get jobs can do works of low standards available to them. They can work in farms. They can work in factories and in business centers at low wages. They feel shy to do so and consider these jobs to the below standards. In such cases, unemployment is self created by them, because our culture is simple and non-technical. Employment chances are few for a large number of people. Therefore, unemployment cannot be blamed as main cause of poverty. We can choose other works on construction of buildings, on shoe mending, working with tailors and carpenters, electrical works and works of techniques on machines. There are mechanical works available frequently around us in which job can be taken according to the wishes of the owner. This minimum and low wage also provides a back ground and foot step towards progress of the future.

vii. Blame on Fate/Wrong Perceptive of Tawakal: Some people believe that it is the fate, which is responsible for our poverty. No doubt it is true but the basic factor according to sharait of Islam is work and hard work.