

## **Unit-5**

# **SOCIAL CONTROL**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In our childhood how parents urged us to eat with our right hand, to respect our elders and our teachers, to be punctual and to help the needy. Subsequently, we learn that we should drive on the left side of the road and to obey the laws of the land. Still later, we are made aware about responsibilities that come with one's job.

It is clear that our behaviour is regulated by family, by prevalent customs and traditions, by society and by the state, too. The notion that unrestrained freedom will lead to anarchy and a demise of social order. Therefore, it is considered imperative for any society to maintain order and progress.

For the smooth functioning of any society, it is essential that its members conduct themselves in a manner that is acceptable to other members of that society. Our behaviour in everyday life is quite orderly and disciplined. We normally do not wish to antagonize (oppose) people we interact with each other, we do try to stick to various rules and to observe discipline in schools etc. those who do not obey these norms of society are criticized or looked down upon. Social control is efforts to ensure conformity to a norm. It includes all of the processes by which people define and respond to deviant behaviour.

## **OBJECTIVES**

After reading this lesson, students will be able to:

1. explain the meanings and need for social control in a society;
2. define the forms/ means of social control;
3. define social deviance and understand the difference between formal and informal deviance;
4. describe the different methods of social control;
5. examine the role of school and teacher in developing social control.

## **5.1 Definition**

Social Control refers to societal and political mechanisms or processes that regulate individual and group behaviour, leading to conformity and compliance to the rules of a given society, state, or a social group. It is the mean by which members of a society attempt to induce each other to comply with the societal norms. Social controls influence behaviour constantly because they are internalized and come into play every time a person has a deviant impulse.

Social control is general method of regulating the behaviour of individuals in a society through accepted social norms. It is a way to channelize the behaviour of individuals in a society so that they conform to the accepted code of conduct. Social control is defined as “the way in which the entire social order coheres and maintains itself, operates as a whole, as changing equilibrium”.

This Social control refers to the way society controls our behaviour, either through norms and practices or through the state and its compelling force. The regulation of behaviour in society, whether of individuals or of groups is undertaken in two ways:

- a) By adhering to establish norms and values of society; and
- b) By the use of force.

The term “social control” is generally used by sociologists to refer to this first kind of regulation. Individuals differ in their interests and capacities. If each individual is allowed unrestricted freedom to act and behave, it may lead to anarchy and disorder in the society. The resultant conflicts, frequent and persistent, would be a constant drain on society’s energy and efficiency.

As an analogy, we could consider traffic movement on roads in the absence of any traffic rules and traffic signals, etc. it is easy to imagine the chaos that would rule the roads and the unending traffic jams that would follow. If we add to it the frustration of the drivers and their heated tempers, it is easy to understand that the end result is totally undesirable. The fact that traffic rules help to maintain order and efficient movement of vehicle is only due to the presence of control.

### **Purpose of Social Control**

Sociologists attribute many purposes of social control. The aim of social control is to bring about conformity in a particular group or society. At times, out of sheer ignorance, individuals could act in a manner that may or may not benefit them. But certainly society’s interests lie at the collective level. There are other situations when the individual is perfectly aware of the ill effects of his actions on the society but he continues with his behaviour because it increases his welfare. For instance, in an industry where the owner is fully aware of the harmful effects of pollution but does not install pollution control device because he wants to maximize his profits at the cost of safeguarding the collective interests. Society seeks to regulate the individual behaviour. The purpose of social control is to regulate the interests of the both the individual and the group in a way that is beneficial to both.

The situation in society would be no different if there was no accepted mode of behaviour. Individuals, therefore, have to be made to co-exist in a manner that benefits them as well as the groups they comprise of social control becomes a necessity for the following reasons:

- a) **To maintain the old order:** For continuity and uniformity of a social group, it is important that the old social order is maintained. This function is fulfilled by the family. The old members of the family initiate and socialize the young ones into their traditions, value patterns and accepted forms of behaviour.
- b) **To regulate individual behaviour:** Individuals vary in their ideas, interests, attitudes, habits, etc. Even children of the same parents think and behave differently. Thus their behaviour needs to be regulated in accordance with the established norms which would lead to uniformity and solidarity of the group.
- c) **To check cultural maladjustment:** Society is changing at a rapid pace. The changes threaten to uproot the existing social system and replace it with a new system. There is a need for greater social control in order to distinguish between good and bad and to retain one's sense of balance and judgment.

### **Forms of Social Control**

In primary groups, the relationships are close, direct and intimate. Social Control is often maintained by informal mechanism, i.e. customs, traditions, folkways, mores and religions. These are adopted means by informal groups.

Sociologists identify two basic forms of social controls:

1. Internalization of norms and values, and
2. External sanctions, which can be either positive (rewards) or negative (punishment)

Social control theory began to be studied as a separate field in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The means to enforce social control can be either formal or informal. Sociologist Edward A. Ross argued that belief systems exert a greater control on human behaviour than laws imposed by government, no matter what form the beliefs take.

#### **1. Informal Social Control**

The social values that are present in individuals are products of informal social control. It is exercised by a society without explicitly stating these rules and is expressed through customs, norms, and mores. Individuals are socialized whether consciously or subconsciously. During informal sanctions, ridicule or ostracism can cause a straying towards norms. The person internalizes these mores and norms. Traditional society uses mostly informal social control embedded in its customary culture relying on the socialization of its members.

Informal social control, or the reactions of individuals and groups that bring about conformity to norms and laws, includes peer and community pressure, bystander intervention in a crime, and collective responses such as citizen patrol groups. Informal sanctions may include shame, ridicule, sarcasm, criticism and disapproval. In extreme cases sanctions may include social discrimination and exclusion. This implied social control usually has more effect on individuals because they become internalized and thus

an aspect of personality. Informal sanctions check 'deviant' behaviour. An example of a negative sanction comes from a scene in the Pink Floyd film 'The Wall,' whereby the young protagonist is ridiculed and verbally abused by a high school teacher for writing poetry in a mathematics class. (Another example: About a boy, who hesitates to jump from a high springboard, is possible to say, that he is effeminate. By the fact, that he eventually jumps, he escapes from this denotation. His behaviour is conditionally controlled by a shame, which is unpleasant.

As with formal controls, informal controls reward or punish acceptable or unacceptable behaviour (i.e., deviance). Informal controls are varied and differ from individual to individual, group to group and society to society. For example, at a women's institute meeting, a disapproving look might convey the message that it is inappropriate to flirt with the minister. In a criminal gang, on the other hand, a stronger sanction applies in the case of someone threatening to inform to the police.

Informal mechanisms of social control include established and accepted institutions relating to socialization, education, family, marriage and religion etc. It is executed through informal sanctions, which may be positive or negative. Positive sanctions include smile, a nod of approval, rewards and promotions, etc. for instance, good performance in an examination may be rewarded with a bicycle or a watch by parents.

Negative sanctions include a frown, criticism, physical threats and punishments. The unruly behaviour in school may result in detention or severe punishment is an example of negative sanction. It must be mentioned here that with the variety in our ways of living, the means of social control also vary. Social control is specific to the group or the society in which it is exercised. Informal mechanisms of control vary accordingly. Besides family, informal social control is also exercised by other social institutions, like neighborhood, kin groups, clan and village, etc.

- i. Folkways:** Folkways are norms to which individuals conform. It is customary to do so. Conformity to folkways is not enforced by law or any other agency of the society. It is the informal acceptance of established practices in each group or society. Folkways are manifested in matters of dress, food habits, observance of rituals, forms of worship and method of greeting, etc. for instance, the food habits in different provinces of Pakistan are different and these habits persist even when the person has moved to a different location away from his earlier surroundings.
- ii. Mores:** Mores refer to moral conduct as distinct from the customary practice of folkways. They influence the value system of a society and are in the form of social regulations which aim to maintain social order. Mores seek to regulate the relationship between individuals in defined situations,, e.g. between husband and wife, parents and children and siblings etc. they may also refer to general social relationships in terms of honesty, truthfulness, hard work and discipline etc. Since mores are consciously designed and created with a view to preserve them. Violations of these often entail penalties. They are perhaps the strongest mechanisms of informal social control.

- iii. **Customs:** Customs are the long established practices of people, which occur spontaneously but gradually. Along with regulating social life, they also bind them together. In primitive societies, customs were powerful means of social control but in modern times, they have weakened due to rise in the forces of individualism and diversity.
- iv. **Religion:** Religion exercises a powerful influence on its adherents. Emile Durkheim defines religion as the unified system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things. Those who have common beliefs and practices are united into one single moral community through religion. Religion occupies a significant place in the life of an individual and fulfills the spiritual, social, psychological needs of an individual.

Religion helps in the process of social control in the following ways:

- a) Every religion has the concept of sin and virtue. Since early childhood, individuals are exposed to these concepts and to the notions of good and bad. These become ingrained in the individual's personality and guide his decision making during his life.
- b) Religious conventions and practices determine marriage, mutual relations among family members, property relations, rules of succession and inheritance etc.
- c) Religious leaders regulate the behaviour of individuals by exhorting them to follow a prescribed code of conduct.
- d) By organizing community activities, prayer meetings and by celebrating religious events and festivals, religious institutions also contribute to this process by bringing believers together and strengthening the common belief system thereby regulating individual behaviour.

## 2. Formal Social Control

Formal social control is expressed It is conducted by government and organizations using law enforcement mechanisms and other formal sanctions such as fines and imprisonment. In democratic societies the goals and mechanisms of formal social control are determined through legislation by elected representatives and thus enjoy a measure of support from the population and voluntary compliance.

The formal means of social control come from institutions like the state, law, education, and those that have legitimate power. The apply coercion in case of deviance. For instance, a person convicted of having stolen someone's property may be sentenced to imprisonment. In other words, these institutions exercise the legal power to control the behaviour the individual and the group.

- i. **Law:** In primitive societies, the groups followed similar occupations and individuals shared a direct, personal and intimate relation among themselves. These folkways, mores and customs suffered in controlling the individual behaviour. There was almost unquestioned compliance with the informal mechanism of social control.

In contrast, the modern societies are characterized by immense diversity, individualism, division of labour and differentiation in terms of work, ethics and

lifestyle. Urbanization and accelerated movement of people striving for more and more has changed the character of social groups. Relationships have become formal. Customs and folkways seem insufficient to control diverse population groups. Simultaneously, the state has grown stronger and more specialized groups. Simultaneously, the state has grown stronger and more specialized in nature. It is now necessary and possible to regulate individual behaviour by formulating a set of common laws which are backed by the legal, administrative and political machinery of the state, Laws and enforcement agencies are replaced by the customs and more as the regulations of behaviour and ensure social order.

Law has been defined in two ways. Some theorists have defined it in terms of “ideal behavioural norms”, while others have referred to it as rules that are promulgated by the state, which are binding in nature.

Individuals obey laws due to prime reasons:

- a. **Fear of punishment:** punishment by state results in curtailment of essential freedom of individuals and hence acts as a deterrent.
- b. **Rules conforming habit:** many individuals believe that adherence to laws is necessary for their own well-being and prosperity as also for social stability and progress. This is called the “rule conforming habit”. The family, educational institutions and religious preaches all play a role in inculcating and sustaining this behaviour.

Laws have their origin in customs, traditions, religion and judicial decisions. As such, they very often have a moral dimension too. This moral dimension and the fact that laws are supported by legal and institutional arrangements enable them to bring about a degree of conformity in human behaviour. Laws that have both customary and legislative support (e.g. prohibition of bigamy) are readily accepted.

In modern states, laws are promulgated by legislative organs and enforced by the state through the governments. The governments, in this context, include all official agencies and functionaries through which the state achieves its ends. Laws thus regulate and control social behaviour by ensuring uniformity and conformity.

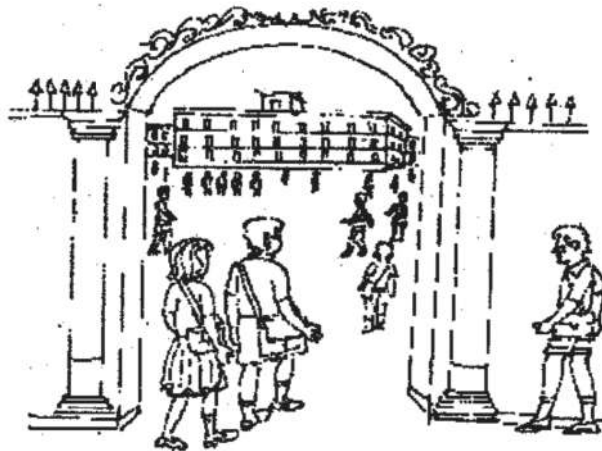
It may be noted that laws are different from customs in the following ways:

- a. Law has a coercive character. Therefore, it compels people to act in a particular way. Customs, on the other hand, are respected and practiced because of the sensibility of traditions and social approval associated with them.
- b. Customs are specific to groups and clans while laws have a more general and universal nature.
- c. Breach of law entails punishment by the state while disregard of customs frowned upon by the society and only in an extreme case may result in ostracism.
- d. Laws are a more recent phenomenon associated with the growth of the state and its institutions, while customs existed in one form or other at all times and in all societies.



With the emergence of modern nation states, an establishment of relationships among them such as political, trading and military, international laws have become necessary to maintain world order. Just as national laws are meant for establish order and control within domestic boundaries, international laws seek to establishing order and control within domestic boundaries, international laws seeks to establish orderly behaviour on the part of nations.

- i. **Education:** Along with laws, education has been an important agency of social control. It prepares the child for social living and teaches him the values of discipline, cooperation, tolerance and integration. Educational institutions at all levels, (i.e. schools, colleges, and university) impart knowledge as well as ethics through formal structured courses as well as behavioural inputs.



*School as a medium of education*

The differentpace of the educational system in different societies, depends upon changing social mores, level of development and social needs. At schools, the ideas of democrarcy, equality and national goals are communicated to students in addition to the emphasis on our shared history, culture, heritage, norms and values. By inculcating the concepts of good moral behaviour, morality, discipline and social etiquettes, the educational system serves its role as an agent of formal social control.

- ii. **State:** State has a vital role in adminstering social control. Sociologists have defined the state as “an association designed primarily to maintain order and security, exercising universal jurisdiction within territorial boundries, by means of law backed by force and recognised as having sovereign authority”.

State functions through the government. Modren nation states strive to be walfare atates, i.e they seek to provide to the citizens a wide range of social services like education, medical care, old age pension and employment allowance. These are achieved by means of the co-operation of individuals and through collective efforts of media, the NGOs and other social institutions. For example, the pulse polio programmes of the government are exclusively supported by the use of television, posters, NGOs and educational

institutions, all of which try to educate the public on the advantages of the government measures. In the above mentioned context, the state acts as an informal agency of social control, eschewing coercion.

However, certain functions, like maintenance of law and order, defence, foreign relations and currency, require the state to intervene in a formal and sometimes in a coercive manner.

Pakistan has a federal polity and government manifests itself at various levels- villages, blocks, district, state and at the national level. At all these levels, its functionaries can enforce rules and laws. In modern societies, state has become increasingly important as an agent of social control.

### **Agencies of Social Control-Family, Neighbourhood and Public Opinion.**

1. **Family:** A child is a product of its genes and environment. He is born with certain inherent capabilities, which either grow or are stunted depending upon the environmental stimuli. In this, his situation is akin to that of a flower. With proper nourishment and care, it will bloom. If denied, it will decay.

Family is the most important agency of social control. Every child learns from his immediate environment, which is first provided by the family. Etiquettes, habits and attitudes are first learnt from the immediate role models (i.e. parents, siblings, kin groups etc.). The family socializes the child into norms, values, traditions and customs of the groups. Thus, family has a predominant role in shaping the personality of the child.

In villages, an individual gets his status from his family. The elders have a dominant role in shaping the personality of the individual. This is manifested in the individual attitudes, interests and life styles, etc. Marriages are mostly arranged by the elders and seen as an alliance between families rather than between two individuals.

In cities, the family continues to play a predominant role in shaping an individual's personality. However, industrialization, limited income and the paucity of space have contributed to the prevalence of nuclear family, this is very different from what is encountered in villages. Hence, families tend to focus upon themselves. This results in an increased accent on individualism as opposed to collectivism common in villages. The function of socialization that a family carries out is complemented by other secondary institutions such as the classroom, playground, peer group and the media. Unlike in a rural surrounding, the individual derives his social status partly from his family but more importantly from his personal achievements. Parents and elders still largely arrange marriages in cities. However, the consent of the boy and the girl is sought. Marriages outside caste and religion are also on the increase. Thus, we see that individual choice is becoming increasingly important. However, due to absence of the strong family support on both sides, individual disagreements are more likely to lead to separation and divorce as

opposed to the rural setting where the family network provides a readily available conflict resolution mechanism.

- 2. Neighbourhood:** Neighbourhood in villages comprises people normally belonging to the same kin group or caste. Hence, relationships that exist are intimate and formal. Beyond the immediate neighbourhood, the bonds are strong, as is evident from the fact that the son-in-law of a family is regarded as the son-in-law of a much larger group, sometimes of entire village.

In contrast, relationships between neighbours in the urban environment are characterised formally. They are marked by intermittent interactions and hence are far weaker than what is seen in the rural environment. In big cities, the ties of neighbourhood are almost relegated to the backseat. This is hardly any interaction between neighbours.

Thus, the village neighbourhood is an enthusiastic participation in many daily activities of a family. It thereby fulfils its role as medium of social control. It ensures uniformity and conformity and corrects deviant behaviour. For instance, in a village neighbours would subject a son not looking after his aging parents to sharp disapproval and even sarcasm.

In cities, while not controlling individual behaviours so closely, individual actions affect community are monitored by the neighbours, e.g. a person throwing trash in open would be pulled up by his neighbours for spoiling the ambience of neighbourhood.

- 3. Public Opinion:** public opinion is commonly used to denote the aggregate views that individuals hold regarding matters that affect the interests of community.

Newspapers, radio, television, motion pictures, legislations, pamphlets and even the word of mouth mould public opinion.

Remote village communities, which do not have access to television and newspapers rely on “gossip” for information about the happenings around them and to express their opinion on these subjects. However, radio has increasingly become an important source to obtain news about events in distant places. There are group readings of newspapers too. Of late, television has also been introduced in the villages.

In cities, the print and visual media play a dominant role in shaping public opinion. As the audio medium is more powerful, television has slowly gained ascendancy over newspapers. However, newspapers continue to influence opinions among the educated group.

**Activity:**

- What is meant by social control? Create your own definition of social control.
- Collect newspaper cuttings and analyze how they are influencing public opinion?

## 5.2 Social Deviation and Tolerance

Social control is the means by which members of a society attempt to induce each other to comply with the society's norms. Social controls influence behaviour constantly because they are internalized and come into play every time a person has a deviant impulse.

Deviance describes as actions or behaviours that violate cultural norms including formally-enacted rules (e.g., crime) as well as informal violations of social norms (e.g., rejecting folkways and mores). It is the purview of sociologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, and criminologists to study how these norms are created, how they change over time and how they are enforced.

Toleration is "the practice of deliberately allowing or permitting a thing of which one disapproves. One can meaningfully speak of tolerating, i.e. of allowing or permitting, only if one is in a position to disallow". It has also been defined as "to bear or endure" or "to nourish, sustain or preserve". Toleration may signify "no more than forbearance and the permission given by the adherents of a dominant religion for other religions to exist, even though the latter are looked on with disapproval as inferior, mistaken or harmful".

Tolerance is an attitude of mind that implies non-judgmental acceptance of different lifestyles or beliefs, whereas toleration implies putting up with something that one disapproves of.

### What is Social Deviance?

- Social deviance is any transgression of socially established norms. Deviance can be informal and formal.
  - a. Minor transgressions of these norms can be described as informal deviance.
  - b. Formal deviance or crime involves the violation of laws.
- Social norms and the punishments for violating them change over time and from place to place.
- There are couple ways to classify deviant behaviour; it can be formal or informal, and voluntary or involuntary. Depending on the situation and the norm or value being violated, different levels of deviance are achieved. For instance, an involuntary violation of an informal norm is far less offensive than a voluntary violation of a formal norm (i.e. Law). The distinction between formal and informal deviance rests in the definition society gives to the action, and the manner in which they do so. Formal norms and values would be laws, regulations, rules and codes of conduct, for example. Reactions to transgressions against formal norms and values are external to individuals in the form of punitive action, such as fines or imprisonment. Examples of informal norms and values include customs and traditions. Reactions to informal deviance are typically internal to the individual. Consider walking into a building on a windy day, and the person ahead allows the door to slam shut on the follower. The follower would have an internal reaction. Not all deviance is a voluntary action. Physical and mental disabilities can be examined as deviant behaviour, as they do not conform to the normal definition of

a person. Often there are informal reactions to physical disability or mental disability, however from time to time there are formal sanctions imposed upon those who are disabled.

### **Deviance and Social Control**

1. Norms or rules about what members of a society should and should not do are *universal*, that is all societies have them and the members of all societies enforce them.
2. Some norms apply in specific contexts, settings, or situation. i.e. Laughing at a funeral.
3. Some norms apply to the behaviour of members of certain groups or collectivities but not to others. i.e. Street Gangs.
4. Some norms apply to everyone in a given society. i.e. Killing a baby.

### **Deviance as a Violation of Social Norms**

Norms are the specific behavioural standards, ways in which people are supposed to act, paradigms for predictable behaviour in society. They are not necessarily moral, or even grounded in morality; in fact, they are just as often pragmatic and, paradoxically, irrational. (A great many of what we call manners, having no logical grounds, would make for good examples here.) Norms are rules of conduct, not neutral or universal, but ever changing; shifting as society shifts; mutable, emergent, loose, reflective of inherent biases and interests, and highly selfish and one-sided. They vary from class to class, and in the generational "gap." They are, in other words, contextual.

Deviance can be described as a violation of these norms. Deviance is a failure to conform with culturally reinforced norms. This definition can be interpreted in many different ways. Social norms are different in one culture as opposed to another. For example, a deviant act can be committed in one society or culture that breaks a social norm there, but may be considered normal for another culture and society. Some acts of deviance may be criminal acts, but also, according to the society or culture, deviance can be strictly breaking social norms that are intact.

Viewing deviance as a violation of social norms, sociologists have characterized it as:

- a. any thought, feeling or action that members of a social group judge to be a violation of their values or rules;
- b. violation of the norms of a society or group;
- c. conduct that violates definitions of appropriate and inappropriate conduct shared by the members of a social system;
- d. the departure of certain types of behaviour from the norms of a particular society at a particular time; and
- e. violation of certain types of group norms where behaviour is in a disapproved direction and of sufficient degree to exceed the tolerance limit of the community.

### **Deviance as Reactive Construction**

Deviance is concerned with the process whereby actions, beliefs or conditions (ABC) come to be viewed as deviant by others. Deviance can be observed by the negative, stigmatizing social reaction of others towards these phenomena. Criminal behaviour, such as theft, can be deviant, but other crimes attract little or no social reaction, and cannot be considered deviant (e.g., violating copyright laws by downloading music on the internet). Some beliefs in society will attract negative reaction, such as racism and homonegativity or alternatively even race-mixing or homosexuality, but that depends on the society. People may have a condition or disease which makes them treated badly by others, such as having HIV, dwarfism, facial deformities, or obesity. Deviance is relative to time and place because what is considered deviant in one social context may be non-deviant in another (e.g., fighting during a hockey game vs. fighting in a nursing home). Killing another human is considered wrong except when governments permit it during warfare or self-defense. The issue of social power cannot be divorced from a definition of deviance because some groups in society can criminalize the actions of another group by using their influence on legislators.

### **Functions of Deviance**

Deviant acts can be assertions of individuality and identity, and thus as rebellions against group norms

- a. Deviance affirms cultural values and norms,
- b. it also clarifies moral boundaries, promotes social unity by creating an us/them dichotomy, encourages social change, and
- c. provides jobs to control deviance.
  - "Certain factors of personality are theoretically and empirically related to workplace deviance, such as work environment, and individual differences."
  - "Situated in the masculinity and deviance literature, this article examines a "deviant" masculinity that of the male sex worker, and presents the ways men who engage in sex work cope up with the job."

### **Difference Between Deviance and Deviants**

Deviance is behaviour that violates the norms of the social group in which the behaviour occurs whereas a deviant is one who is characterized as a violator of a norm. Engaging in deviant behaviour does not automatically lead to a deviant reputation or self-image.

### **Causes of Social Deviation**

#### **1. Lack in Socialization**

Socialization plays vital role in forming a good and responsible citizen. If the process of socialization is not given proper attention then the degree of social deviation increases in society. This is usually due to lack in socialization by the relevant social institution such as family.

**2. Ridged**

If the culture of society is un-flexible and un-compatible to the changing circumstances, the new generation expresses its anxiety over this rigidity. They deviate from such norms e.g. the norm inter caste marriages exchanged.

**3. Unpopular Social Laws**

In some cases the governments intact such laws which may be in the interest of the government but not in the general public's interest. People deliberately deviate from them and protest against such things.

**4. Extra Ordinary Exploitation**

If any group or nation is suffering from extra ordinary exploitation then such group or nation may deviate and protest over the exploitation to attract the attention of the government or international community. e.g. the object of freedom fighter in Kashmir is to attract the attention of Indian Government and international community towards their rights of self-determination.

**5. Cultural Invasion**

If a society's culture is being invaded in some form to an extreme degree the people deviate from their own cultural patterns and adopt the invaders cultural patterns. e.g. the eastern world is heavily influenced by the western world through media, as a result traces of westernization can be seen in countries such as Pakistan and India.

**Activity:**

1. Interview a prisoner and find out the factors behind his deviant behaviour.
2. Select two verses of Holy Quran regarding tolerance and analyze them in the light of current situation prevailing all over the world.

**5.3 Methods of Social Control**

Following are the methods of social control:

1. Internal
2. External
3. Informal
4. Formal
5. Semi-formal

**1. Internal Social Control**

The process of internalizing the norms of society and accepting them as valid. It operates through the process of socialization, that is learning and adopting the norms of the society or a particular group or collectivity within the society.

**Agents of Socialization**

- i) **Earliest Agent - The Family:** Its primary function is to help children internalize the norms of the society in which they live. Failure to socialize, leads to behaviours that society regards as deviant.

- ii) **Later Agents - Schools, Peers and the Mass Media:** When one accepts the norms of society as valid the norms are internalized. Thus, a person feels guilty if they engage in behaviour society considers wrong.  
But there are always some people, usually a minority, who don't accept the legitimacy of the norms, society turns to external social control.

**2. External Social Control**

Society's effort to bring those who "stepped outside the lines" back into line. It is made up of the system of rewards and punishments, sanctions that persons, parties, and agents use to induce others to conform to a norm. Thus, a Positive Sanction is a reward and a Negative Sanction is a punishment. But a great deal of social control is coercive and repressive; it relies on punishment and force.

**3. Informal Social Control**

- Interpersonal actions between and among people to remind someone that their behaviour upsets or pleases them. i.e. frowning, smiling, criticizing, praising, shunning or being warm.
- Informal agents of social control act on their own, in an unofficial capacity.

Since, most people seek the approval of others whom they care about, they tend to adjust their behaviour to avoid the disapproval of significant others by discontinuing the offensive behaviour or hiding it from public view.

But in large, complex societies, because it becomes easy to ignore the disapproval of others, informal social control is no longer sufficient to bring about conformity to then norms. Thus, formal social control becomes necessary.

**4. Formal Social Control**

An effort to bring about conformity to the law by agents of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) i.e. police, courts and correctional institutions.

**Formal Agents of Social Control**

- Agents who have legitimate power to make people conform to the law.
- Formal agents occupy a specific status in bureaucratic organization. It is this position which gives them the legitimacy to sanction wrongdoers for violating the formal code.  
But formal and informal social control can operate at the same time. i.e. A drug dealer who is arrested by the police and shunned by his neighbors.

**5. Semi-Formal Social Control**

- A huge territory of noncriminal, non-penal bureaucratic social control, administered by the government, which attempts to deal with the troublesome behaviour of persons under their authority.
- If a person's behaviour becomes extremely troublesome, an array of agencies, bureaucracies, and organizations may step in to handle or control that person, to



punish or bring him or her into line with the rules. These employees of these agencies are known as Professional Controllers. i.e. social workers, psychiatrists, truant officers, and representatives, functionaries and officers of mental hospitals, civil courts, social welfare offices, unemployment offices, departments of motor vehicles, and public schools.

#### **Professional Controllers**

- Do not possess the power of arrest or incarceration, but can make recommendations to agents that may have bring on arrest and incarceration. But it is informal social control that is exercised the most, not representatives of bureaucratic organizations. So, informal social control is the foundation of social life.
- Problem is the place of informal control as the "foundation" of social life not being clearly part of the control perspective.

#### **Activity:**

If you have given an authority, how you will regulate social control in society?

### **5.4 Role of School and Teacher in Developing Social Control**

School in the modern time is treated as the most suitable, active and formal agency of education. As per the changing need of the hour, school develops and grows with its specific goals. It is emerged out of the demand for education and pressure on the parents regarding their educational pursuit.

The word 'School' has been derived from the Greek word 'Skhole' that means leisure. It was before in the ancient Greece to utilize leisure time in a systematic way. But now this concept has changed to prime time activity. It is an essential investment field now on which the entire superstructure of life of the individual and nation will build.

The two main functions of schools are to educate students and to socialize them. Schools teach general skills, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, as well as specific skills needed for the workplace. Human capital is the knowledge and skills that make someone more productive and bankable.

Schools transmit values, beliefs, and attitudes that are important to society. This hidden curriculum serves to form a more cohesive society but has also been used to impose the values of a dominant culture on outsiders or minorities. Schools have been described as sorting machines that place students into programs and groups according to their skills, interests, and talents. Critics argue that this sorting process is not based solely on merit and that ultimately it serves to reproduce social inequalities.

### **Main Function of School:**

- 1. Conservation and Promotion Culture:**  
The school conserves the valuable culture, tradition, values of the society and helps in promoting and developing these with the rolling of the time. It also spreads the store of culture to the next generation.
- 2. All-round Development of the Individual:**  
For all-round development of the individual school has a package of programmes. Through its different activities, it draws out the hidden potentialities of the child and develops them in a proper way.
- 3. Development of Higher Values of Life:**  
School helps in developing and cultivating good and higher values like truth, sympathy, love, cooperation, etc. in child. Through different social interactions and moral teachings, it spreads the message of righteous living in a society.
- 4. Development of Social Responsibility:**  
School is called a society in miniature. Because in school child shares his feelings with various children coming from different strata. So he learns the lessons of social duty, responsibilities and understanding the feelings of others. So school helps in social change and social control.
- 5. Citizenship Training:**  
School creates the first civic society for the child. So child learns the duty and civic rights for the country as a responsible citizen. So school trains the lessons of citizenship to a child.
- 6. Adjustability in Society:**  
School prepares child to face the problems of the society. So proper adjustment and application of learned knowledge can be checked and guided by school. So the main function of the school is to develop adjustment capacity of an individual.
- 7. Vocational Training:**  
Through different activities, school provides training in different vocations. It also cultivates the values of dignity of work and labor. It prepares children to face any challenge in the future to solve their bare necessities.

The role of school cannot be confined with these lines. In modern days, the role of school has been increasing day by day. It is called the hub of learning. Every developed state gives first priority to the schools for total national development. Really, school is now a prestigious institution in the society, which can be called a man-making factory.

School and teachers plays important role in socializing. We have long assumed that the classroom is an arena for significant socializing experiences although empirically we know relatively little about what in the social and emotional growth of children and youth can attribute to the school experience or more especially to the socializing influence of

teachers. Furthermore, theory and research on socialization processes and institutions in general assume that functional social controls- norms, sanctions, and appropriate intervening procedures operate to structure and constrain the behaviour of social agents. This assumption may not hold for schools and particularly for teachers. It may be that the role of teacher is refractive to social control in ways we do not fully understand.

### **Teachers as Social Change Agents**

It goes without saying that teachers are responsible for the change that takes place in learners. Their words and actions trigger positive behavioural and attitudinal changes in learners. But teachers' role as change agents is not limited to the school setting and their learners. In the communities where literacy rate is low and people are not aware of their rights and responsibilities, lack ideas on good health habits, development perspectives, local teachers can act as change agents. Because teachers are conscious and educated, they can cause change to take place in the community settings.

#### **Activity:**

Education prepares the child for social living and teaches him/her the values of discipline, cooperation, tolerance and integration. Conduct an interview with elementary teachers how they are preparing their students for social living?

### **5.5 Self-Assessment Questions**

1. What is social control? Why we need social control in a society?
2. Enlist the methods of social control and explain their importance for promoting the social control among students.
3. How a teacher can develop social control? Demonstrate its importance with examples.
4. What are social agencies and how does it relate to social control? Choose a social institution to illustrate your answer with examples.
5. What are social control mechanisms? How definition of deviant depends on social context?
6. Explain how ideas about what counts as deviance change over time and how these changes are reflected in society?

## 5.6 Suggested Readings

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