

CENTRAL THEMES IN COMPARATIVE SOCIOLOGY

Introduction

Major themes in sociological thinking include the interplay between the individual and society, how society is both stable and changing, the causes and consequences of social inequality, and the social construction of human life. to explain, in functional terms, the universal necessity which causes stratification in social system. sociology focuses on the systematic understanding of social interaction, social organization, social institutions, and social change. Major themes in sociological thinking include the interplay between the individual and society, how society is both stable and changing, the causes and consequences of social inequality, and the social construction of human life. Understanding sociology helps discover and explain social patterns and see how such patterns change over time and in different settings. By making vivid the social basis of everyday life, sociology also develops critical thinking by 28 revealing the social structures and processes that shape diverse forms of human life. Sociology is the study of groups and group interactions, societies and social interactions. A group is any collection of at least two people who interact with some frequency and who share some sense of aligned identity. ... Sociologists study all aspects and levels of society.

Modernity

Since the term "Modern" is used to describe a wide range of periods, any definition of modernity must account for the context in question. Modern can mean all of post-medieval European history, in the context of dividing history into three large epochs: Antiquity, Medieval, and Modern. Likewise, it is often used to describe the Euro-American culture that arises out of the Enlightenment and continues in some way into the present. The term "Modern" is also applied to the period beginning somewhere between 1870 and 1910, through the present, and even more specifically to the 1910-1960 period. One common use of the term, "Early Modern" is to describe the condition of Western History either since the mid-1400's, or roughly the European discovery of moveable type and the printing press, or the early 1600's, the period associated with the rise of the Enlightenment project. These periods can be characterized by:

- Rise of the nation state 43
- Growth of tolerance as a political and social belief
- Industrialization
- Rise of mercantilism and capitalism
- Discovery and colonization of the Non-Western world
- Rise of representative democracy
- Increasing role of science and technology
- Urbanization
- Mass literacy
- Proliferation of mass media
- The Cartesian and Kantian distrust of tradition for autonomous reason

In addition, the 19th century can be said to add the following facets to modernity:

- Emergence of social science and anthropology

- Romanticism and Early Existentialism
- Naturalist approaches to art and description
- Evolutionary thinking in geology, biology, politics, and social sciences
- Beginnings of modern psychology
- Growing disenfranchisement of religion
- Emancipation Defining Characteristics of Modernity

Defining Characteristics of Modernity

There have been numerous attempts, particularly in the field of sociology, to understand what modernity is. A wide variety of terms are used to describe the society, social life, driving force, symptomatic mentality, or some other defining aspects of modernity. They include:

- **Bureaucracy**- impersonal, social hierarchies that practice a division of labor and are marked by a regularity of method and procedure
- **Disenchantment of the world**- the loss of sacred and metaphysical understandings of all facets of life and culture
- **Rationalization**- the world can be understood and managed through a reasonable and logical system of objectively accessible theories and data
- **Secularization**-the loss of religious influence and/or religious belief at a societal level • Alienation--isolation of the individual from systems of meaning--family, meaningful work, religion, clan, etc.
- **Commodification**-the reduction of all aspects of life to objects of monetary consumption and exchange
- **Decontextualization**-the removal of social practices, beliefs, and cultural objects from their local cultures of origin
- **Individualism** -growing stress on individuals as opposed to mediating structures such as family, clan, academy, village, church
- **Nationalism**-the rise of the modern nation-states as rational centralized governments that often cross local, ethnic groupings
- **Urbanization**-the move of people, cultural centers, and political influence to large cities
- **Subjectivism**-the turn inward for definitions and evaluations of truth and meaning
- **Linear-progression**-preference for forms of reasoning that stress presuppositions and resulting chains of propositions
- **Objectivism**-the belief that truth-claims can be established by autonomous information accessible by all
- **Universalism**-application of ideas/claims to all cultures/circumstances regardless of local distinctions
- **Reductionism**-the belief that something can be understood by studying the parts that make it up
- **Mass society**-the growth of societies united by mass media and widespread dissemination of cultural practices as opposed to local and regional culture particulars

- **Industrial society**-societies formed around the industrial production and distribution of products
- **Homogenization**-the social forces that tend toward a uniformity of cultural ideas and products
- **Democratization**-political systems characterized by free elections, independent judiciaries, rule of law, and respect of human rights
- **Mechanization**-the transfer of the means of production from human labor to mechanized, advanced technology
- **Totalitarianism**-absolutist central governments that suppress free expression and political dissent, and that practice propaganda and indoctrination of its citizens
- **Therapeutic motivations**-the understanding that the human self is a product of evolutionary desires and that the self should be assisted in achieving those desires as opposed to projects of ethical improvement or pursuits of public virtue.

Modernity is often characterized by comparing modern societies to premodern or postmodern ones, and the understanding of those non-modern social statuses is, again, far from a settled issue. To an extent, it is reasonable to doubt the very possibility of a descriptive concept that can adequately capture diverse realities of societies of various historical contexts, especially non-European ones, let alone a three-stage model of social evolution from premodernity to postmodernity. As one can see above, often seemingly opposite forces (such as objectivism and subjectivism, individualism and the nationalism, democratization and totalitarianism) are attributed to modernity, and there are perhaps reasons to argue why each is a result of the modern world. In terms of social structure, for example, many of the defining events and characteristics listed above stem from a transition from relatively isolated local communities to a more integrated large-scale society. Understood this way, modernization might be a general, abstract process which can be found in many different parts of histories, rather than a unique event in Europe.

In general, large-scale integration involves:

- Increased movement of goods, capital, people, and information among formerly separate areas, and increased influence that reaches beyond a local area.
- Increased formalization of those mobile elements, development of 'circuits' on which those elements and influences travel, and standardization of many aspects of the society in general that is conducive to the mobility.
 - Increased specialization of different segments of society, such as the division of labor, and interdependency among areas.

DEVELOPMENT

Concept and Definitions of Development

Social and economic development as processes is inherent to a society right from its inception. However, the emergence of the concept of development is a recent one dating back to the early nineteen fifties. The post Second World War period and the period of decolonization witnessed the emergence and the dominance of the concept of “Development” in academic literature. The declaration of 1960s as the Development decade by the United Nations led to a burgeoning of

literature on the concept. Initially development was conceived as an exclusive economic term referring to “growth”, “increase in per capita income” etc. But soon it was felt, development cannot be thought of in a onedimensional way having economic implications. It should affect the other dimensions of the society. Since then development became a sociological lexicon. Simply speaking development came to be interpreted as a process that is for the benefit of the society and only economic growth minus societal progress cannot be termed as development. Development thus stands for improvement in quality of life and conditions of living.

In general terms, “development” means an “event constituting a new stage or a changing situation”. “Development” is implicitly intended as something positive or desirable. When referring to a society or to a socio-economic system, “development” usually means improvement, either in the general situation of the system, or in some of its constituent elements.

The concept of **development** though was not explicitly used, finds its essence in August Comte’s ‘Law of Three Stages’, in Herbert Spencer’s evolutionary theory, in Emile Durkheim’s ideas on the progress of society from mechanical to organic solidarity, in Karl Marx’s ideas on the progress of societies through different epochs and Max Weber’s ideas on the growth of modern capitalism.

But it was in the post Second World War period and the subsequent process of decolonization, the concept of “Development” got a momentum. During this period, the pro active role of the International agencies in assisting the war affected nations to rebuild their economies, the nation building process initiated by the newly liberalized countries gave a boost to the concept of development.

The word “develop” has come from an Italian word “voluper” meaning to unwrap or unfold. The definition of ‘development’ has been always controversial over time. As Thomas argues, development as a concept is ‘contested, complex, and ambiguous’.

“Although development has been a constant concern of governments, policymakers, economists and other social scientists – and has touched the lives of more people than ever before – there has been little agreement on what constitutes development, how it is best measured and how it is best achieved. One reason for this lack of agreement is that dissatisfaction with the pace and character of economic and social change has instilled a desire to redefine the aims and measures of development.”(UNDP 1990, 104)

Development can be defined as the process of economic and social transformation that is based on complex cultural and environmental factors and their interactions.

Thomas (2000) explains three ways the word ‘development’ is used.

- **Development as a vision:** a vision or description of how a desirable society should be.
- **Development as a historical process:** social change that takes place over long periods of time due to inevitable processes. Here development refers to the unavoidable results of progress like agricultural to industrial society.
- **Development as action:** deliberate efforts to change things for the better and to ensure a better standard of living like providing food, education, health services etc. To Prof.

Yogendra Singh “Development is a strategy of planned social change which is considered desirable by the members of a society.”

Characteristics of Development

The following are the important characteristics of development.

1. **Development is a continuous process:** The process of development continues from the moment of inception of the society. The society always marches forward. Sometimes the process of development is faster and under some situations it slows down. However, it witnesses no complete halting point. It is ongoing in nature.
2. **Development follows a pattern:** Development occurs in an orderly manner and follows a certain sequence. Thus, primitive, medieval and modern are the different phases of development of the society. The society cannot skip one stage to reach at the other in the process of development. The pattern is always maintained.
3. **Development has a direction:** It runs as corollary from the above said feature that the process of development follows a definite direction. The direction is always forward and never backward. August Comte’s “Law of Three Stages”, Herbert Spencer’s proposition that the society moves from a simple to the complex one, Ferdinand Tonnies’s idea that the society transits from community to association, Emile Durkheim’s proposition that the society makes a shift from mechanical to organic solidarity and Karl Marx’s idea that the society progresses from a class to a class less society amply justify the directionality involved in the process of development. It also impresses that in the process of development, the society progresses towards maturity.
4. **Development can be evolutionary or revolutionary in nature:** Development when occurs in a slow and gradual manner it is said to be evolutionary in character. Evolutionary development takes its natural course, time and in not very spectacular in nature. In the long run the impacts of development become visible. On the other hand, revolutionary development refers to the abrupt and rapid change in the society. Revolutionary development is triggered by some factors like education, migration in large scale, introduction of policies etc. Revolutionary development is marked in a quick span and is vividly visible in nature. For example, transition of a society from pre modern to modern is evolutionary development, but transition of a society from monarchy to democracy due to some revolution is revolutionary in nature. Even the developments taking in India in the post globalization period can said to be revolutionary.
5. **Development is multidimensional:** The conventional notion of development always insisted upon the uni dimensionality of the concept of development focussing on economic growth. However, later on it was felt economic growth is a parameter of

development, but not the sole or whole of it. At this moment the social scientists and development practitioners felt that development has to be multidimensional touching various aspects of the society. So that it can become better yielding in nature. It should not confine itself to the economic dimension, but should have its political, cultural and social dimensions too. Its political dimension is expressed through the process of democratization, distributive justice; increased consciousness for human rights, equity, liberty etc. The cultural dimensions of development is manifested through the growth of secular culture, increased consumerism etc. The social dimensions of development include increased participation of people in societal affairs, development of self reliance, better human development and environmental sustainability, etc.

6. **Development is universal, but not uniform:** Development is a common process witnessed by every society however primitive or modern it is. Every society witnesses the process of development in some form or the other. Time and space cannot arrest it. Right from the beginning of the society development process is initiated. The rich and the poor societies, the most developed and the most under developed societies too experience it. In some societies it is faster while in some societies it is slow. In some societies the yields of development are more remarkable than other societies. So, the process is universal, but the outcome is not uniform.
7. **Development insists upon adaptability:** Development as process is driven by human needs. Human needs change with the changing time and situations. The process of development demands the existing institutions to change and adapt to the upcoming demands to fulfil the emerging needs of the individuals. For example: with the process of industrialization there was increased migration which required the institution of joint family to disintegrate structurally.
8. **Development stands for dynamism:** Development necessarily entails change. It brings changes in the status quo of a society. No development process can be imagined without bringing subsequent changes. Thus, the concept of development is against the notion of static.
9. **Development is irreversible:** Development as a process is always forward looking and has no look back. There may be temporary stalemates but once a society is into the process of development, it will never revert back to its original state. So development is always progressive.
10. **Development is diffusive:** Development never remains concentrated in the place of its origin. It has a natural tendency to spread beyond its place of origin. The best example of

it is that when a new technology is innovated, very soon, it spreads to other areas beyond the place of its origin.

11. **Development always has positive yields:** The outcomes of development are always positive. It is for the betterment of the society. Development thus is progressive. But sometimes when development outcomes are used by human beings in a negative way its consequences become disastrous. For e.g. Development of technology necessarily improves human quality of life. But when men blindly use it for destructive purpose the outcomes become sorrowful.
12. **Development has got its qualitative and quantitative connotations:** Development as a process can be judged through the qualitative improvement human conditions of living. For example when there is a reduction of house hold drudgery for the women we find a qualitative change in their living conditions and term it as development of women. Similarly when there is a quantum lift or there is an increase in number of some institution, then also we feel the impact of development. For example the increase in the number of educational institutions is also described as development. Thus the qualitative aspects of development are felt while the quantitative aspects of development are observed.

Perspectives on Development

Development as a concept can be discussed from various perspectives. They are:

- 'Development' as a long term process of structural societal transformation.
- 'Development' as a short-to-medium term outcome of desirable targets.
- 'Development' as a dominant 'discourse' of western modernity

'Development' as a long term process of structural societal transformation- The first conceptualization is that 'development' is a process of structural societal change. Thomas (2000, 2004) refers to this meaning of development as 'a process of historical change'. This view, of 'structural transformation' and 'long-term transformations of economies and societies', as Gore noted, is one that predominated in the 1950s and 1960s in particular. The key characteristics of this perspective are that

- It is focused on processes of structural societal change.
- It is historical.
- It has a long-term outlook.

In this conceptualization development relates to a wide view of diverse socio-economic changes. The change in one structural element of the society has the propensity to bring changes in other institutions and elements. For example, when there is development in the economy, there is a change in the social institutions like family, marriage, education, system of stratification in the society.

‘Development ‘as a short-to-medium term outcome of desirable targets- A second perspective on ‘development’ can be seen in the light of some targeted goals and their degree of achievements. Thomas (2000, 2004) characterizes this second approach as ‘a vision or measure of progressive change’ and Gore (2000) relates it to ‘performance assessment’. At its most basic level it is simply concerned with development as occurring in terms of a set of short- to medium-term ‘performance indicators’ – goals or outcomes – which can be measured and compared with targets. For example change in the level of education, increase in income, poverty reduction etc. is the short or medium term outcomes used to indicate development. It is a practitioner accepted model of development very much used by the development agencies like the UNDP (the United Nations Development Programme), OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), The World Bank etc. The key feature of this second perspective is that it is focused on the outcomes of change so that it has a relatively short-term outlook. But it becomes easy to measure development in terms of some pre fixed objectives and the level of their attainment.

‘Development’ as a dominant ‘discourse’ of western modernity: This is the ‘post-modern’ conceptualization of development. It is also referred to as the ‘post-development’, ‘post-colonial’ or ‘post-structuralism’ development perspective. This third perspective emerged as a reaction to the deliberate efforts at progress made in the name of development since World War II and was triggered in particular by the 1949 Declaration by the US President Truman that: “We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.” Michel Foucault (1966, 1969) is a strong advocate of this post modern approach to development.

The post modern theorists are vocal against the development maladies created in the Third World countries. To the post modern development theorists development created a neo colonial regime in the Third World countries. Instead of creating abundance promised by theorists and politicians in the 1950s, the discourse and strategy of development produced its opposite: massive underdevelopment and impoverishment, untold exploitation and oppression. The western development model was super imposed on the Third world countries with a top down, ethnocentric, and technocratic approach. It neglected the local people, their needs and cultural demands.

Dimensions of Development

Development is always multi dimensional. Four important dimensions of development can be introduced here. They are: economic dimension, human dimension, sustainable dimension and the territorial dimension.

Economic development: Economic development is traditionally seen as the initial form of development. It has been strictly associated with the concept of economic growth determined through an increase in the per capita income. It proposes economic transformations to initiate growth and does not speak much about social transformation. However, soon it was realised that economic development cannot ensure true development as the benefits are cornered by a few.

Human development: Human dimension of development presupposes that development should be measured in terms of the richness of human life. The concept was insisted upon by a Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq and Indian economist Amartya Sen in 1990 and was published by the United Nations Development Programme. To quote Haq income or growth figures cannot be the sole determinant of development. Development needs to ensure greater access to knowledge, better nutrition and health services, more secure livelihoods, security against crime and physical violence, satisfying leisure hours, political and cultural freedoms and sense of participation in community activities to people of a society. The objective of human development lies in creating an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives. Today human development approach has profoundly affected an entire generation of policy-makers and development specialists around the world.

Sustainable development: The concept of “sustainable development was first introduced by Brundtland (1987), who defined development as “sustainable” if it “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. It contains within it two key concepts:

- The concept of needs in particular, the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.

Sustainable development implies minimising the use of exhaustible resources to create a constant flow of it across generations, and making an appropriate use of renewable resources. This applies to energy, fish stock, wildlife, forests, water, land and air. The concept of sustainability has also been extended beyond environmental concerns, to include social sustainability, i.e. long term acceptance and ownership of development changes by the citizens, their organisations and associations (civil society), and financial and economic sustainability.

Thus, sustainable development recognizes that growth must be both inclusive and environmentally sound to reduce poverty and build shared prosperity for today's population and to continue to meet the needs of future generations. It is efficient with resources and carefully planned to deliver both immediate and long-term benefits for people, planet, and prosperity. The three pillars of sustainable development are economic growth, environmental stewardship, and social inclusion.

Territorial development: This dimension of development refers to a territorial system. It is intended to establish interrelationships between rural and urban areas connecting them by information systems and transport infrastructures. Territorial development implies focusing on the assets of the territory, its potential and constraints (FAO, 2005). Policies to exploit and enhance this potential play an important role in the development process.

Models of Development

The post-World War II period, the process of decolonialisation, the emergence and need for economic reconstruction of nation-states, and the shadow of the Cold War widely shaped the development discourse till the late 1970s. The industrial and political rise of the West and

Southern Europe and North America on the one side, and Russia and communist states on the other, with the stagnation of a vast number of nations with low productivity, industrial backwardness and poverty gave rise to the First, Second and developing world models of development respectively. The first world model of development is called the “Capitalist Model”, the second world model was popularly known as the “Socialist Model” and The third world development model was named as the “Developing World Model”.

The capitalist model of development is characterised by provision of private ownership of property and means of production, minimum state control on economic enterprises, and a free economy regulated by competition. This developmental model also emphasises sustained growth and modernisation with massive state investment at the takeoff stage. This perspective insists economic development would revolve around industrialisation. This model of development is criticised as pro rich and anti poor in character. It is claimed that it increases the rich poor gap and results in uneven development.

The Second World model or the socialist model was contradictory to the capitalist model of development. It challenged the capitalist model of development. It propagated the abolition of ownership of private property and means of production, emphasised state ownership of means of production, state-owned public enterprise, and a state regulated economy and centralised planning by the state for economic growth. While both the capitalist and the socialist models laid primary emphasis on economic growth, the socialist model also emphasised on the equal distribution of the fruits of growth among all sections of the population. This model of development faced its tragic consequences in the 80s when there was the fall of communism in Soviet Russia. The model could not yield its targeted result and failed to create an egalitarian society. Rather, poverty and unemployment became the worst outcomes of this model of development.

The developing world is represented by the ex-colonial, newly independent and non-aligned countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. These countries were industrially backward at the time of liberation. These countries witnessed wide diversity in terms of their socio-cultural and political settings and historical experiences and levels of technological and economic development. These countries were economically and technologically underdeveloped, and were undergoing the process of nation-building and fast social transformation in the post-colonial era. As against these backdrops, these countries have been experimenting with diverse models of development. For example, India has followed the path of “mixed economy” by adopting a path of development in between the capitalist and socialist models. With the process of Globalization and the subsequent structural adjustment policies this model is tending to take a capitalist trend of development.

DIVERSITY

Why Diversity Is Important

Multiculturalism is the key to achieving a high degree of cultural diversity. Diversity occurs when people of different races, nationalities, religions, ethnicities, and philosophies come together to form a community. A truly diverse society is one that recognizes and values the cultural differences in its people.

Proponents of cultural diversity argue that it makes humanity stronger and may, in fact, be vital to its long-term survival. In 2001, the General Conference of UNESCO took this position when it asserted in its Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity that “...cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature.” Today, entire countries, workplaces, and schools are increasingly made up of various cultural, racial, and ethnic groups. By recognizing and learning about these various groups, communities build trust, respect, and understanding across all cultures. Communities and organizations in all settings benefit from the different backgrounds, skills, experiences, and new ways of thinking that come with cultural diversity.

Sociological theories offer diverse perspectives on how diversity shapes social structures, interactions, and institutions. These theories provide frameworks for understanding the complexities of human differences and their implications within societies.

1. Functionalism

Functionalist theory posits that each aspect of society serves a purpose in maintaining social stability and cohesion. From this perspective, diversity contributes to the functionality of society by introducing a range of skills, experiences, and viewpoints. This plurality can enhance adaptability and innovation, enabling societies to address complex challenges more effectively.

2. Conflict Theory

Rooted in the works of Karl Marx, conflict theory emphasizes the role of power dynamics and economic inequalities in shaping social relations. Regarding diversity, this perspective highlights how differences can lead to systemic inequalities and social stratification. Dominant groups may exploit or marginalize others to maintain their privileged positions, leading to social tensions and conflicts. Understanding these power imbalances is crucial for addressing issues of discrimination and social injustice.

3. Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism focuses on the micro-level interactions between individuals and the meanings they assign to these interactions. In the context of diversity, this theory examines how social identities are constructed and maintained through daily interactions. It explores how stereotypes, labels, and social cues influence perceptions and behaviors, shedding light on the subjective experiences of inclusion or exclusion within diverse settings.

4. Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory suggests that individuals categorize themselves and others to simplify and cope with large amounts of information. These categories often rely on visible characteristics such as race, sex, and age, leading to assumptions and biases that can influence social interactions and organizational dynamics. Recognizing these cognitive processes is essential for developing strategies to mitigate unconscious biases and promote inclusivity.

5. Social Reproduction Theory

Building on Marxist thought, social reproduction theory examines how societal structures and institutions perpetuate existing power relations and inequalities. It emphasizes that access to resources and opportunities is often mediated by factors such as race, nationality, and gender, leading to the continuous reproduction of social hierarchies. This perspective underscores the importance of addressing structural barriers to achieve genuine equity and diversity.

By applying these sociological theories, scholars and practitioners can gain a nuanced understanding of diversity's multifaceted impact on society. These perspectives inform policies and practices aimed at fostering inclusive environments and addressing systemic inequalities.

PLURALISM

A state of society in which members of diverse ethnic, racial, religious, or social groups maintain an autonomous participation in and development of their traditional culture or special interest, within the confines of a common civilisation. In a pluralist society, no one group or characteristic totally dominates social organisation because all groups have to act as if they value and accept diversity. In other words, pluralism guards against totalitarianism and against tribalism, though not against tribes asserting their separate identities, providing that they accept the equal value of other tribal cultures.

The majority of Commonwealth countries are plural societies, where different ethnic, racial, cultural and religious groups live peacefully together. Recent examples of ethnic cleansing in countries like Bosnia or Rwanda are examples of anti-pluralism or the complete breakdown of pluralism. The Rwandan genocide was tribal in nature, but its roots derived from the colonisation processes in the country which used a smaller tribe to manage a much larger tribe in the control of the country.

Challenges to pluralism

Structural imbalances of power as well as structured social exclusion can be challenges for pluralism. How can there be full democracy when a society effectively excludes some groups from education because of gender or because they can't afford it? In your own experience, you

may well find that some groups have suffered educational and cultural exclusion throughout childhood. To integrate them into pluralist society, you have to help them counteract the effects of long-term exclusion. How can there be effective democracy when some groups are so powerful that they can ignore what the voting population votes for?

Is pluralism attainable?

If any nation can be said to be pluralist it must be modern South Africa. The strength of South Africa lies in the richness and diversity of its cultures, but that ethnic diversity can also be a real impediment to the benefits of pluralism unless very carefully managed. Former Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, in a speech on Democracy in Africa: The Challenges and the Opportunities (delivered in front of the South African Parliament in Cape Town on 1 June 1998), noted that democracy can help to prevent or eliminate divisive pluralism. He noted that every African nation is a multi-ethnic nation, which can be a source of strength if it is protected in the right way.

Ethnicity is particularly dangerous to national unity when it becomes a blunt instrument exploited by politicians in their quest for power. An obvious example of this abuse is that of President Idi Amin who used a racist attack on Asian business people to drive them out of their businesses in Uganda, in the 1960s. This was meant to consolidate his own ethnic political credentials but badly damaged the Ugandan economy. Some countries have banned ethnic politics. Another way of averting this danger is to provide for power-sharing arrangements in the constitution in such a way that no particular ethnic group can feel permanently excluded from government. This can of course be enormously difficult to achieve, as the situation in Iraq following the toppling of Saddam Hussein's regime exemplifies: the numerical dominance of Kurds and Shia has clearly raised the fear among some Sunnis that they will be edged out of power in any power-sharing arrangement.

MULTICULTURALISM

Multiculturalism the view that cultures, races, and ethnicities, particularly those of minority groups, deserve special acknowledgment of their differences within a dominant political culture. That acknowledgment can take the forms of recognition of contributions to the cultural life of the political community as a whole, a demand for special protection under the law for certain cultural groups, or autonomous rights of governance for certain cultures. Multiculturalism is both a response to the fact of cultural pluralism in modern democracies and a way of compensating cultural groups for past exclusion, discrimination, and oppression. Most modern democracies comprise members with diverse cultural viewpoints, practices, and contributions. Many minority cultural groups have experienced exclusion or the denigration of their contributions and identities in the past. Multiculturalism seeks the inclusion of the views and contributions of diverse members of society while maintaining respect for their differences and withholding the demand for their assimilation into the dominant culture.

Multiculturalism as a challenge to traditional liberalism

Multiculturalism stands as a challenge to liberal democracy. In liberal democracies, all citizens should be treated equally under the law by abstracting the common identity of “citizen” from the real social, cultural, political, and economic positions and identities of real members of society. That leads to a tendency to homogenize the collective of citizens and assume a common political culture that all participate in. However, that abstract view ignores other politically salient features of the identities of political subjects that exceed the category of citizen, such as race, religion, class, and sex. Although claiming the formal equality of citizens, the liberal democratic view tends to underemphasize ways in which citizens are not in fact equal in society. Rather than embracing the traditional liberal image of the melting pot into which people of different cultures are assimilated into a unified national culture, multiculturalism generally holds the image of a tossed salad to be more appropriate. Although being an integral and recognizable part of the whole, diverse members of society can maintain their particular identities while residing in the collective.

Some more radical multicultural theorists have claimed that some cultural groups need more than recognition to ensure the integrity and maintenance of their distinct identities and contributions. In addition to individual equal rights, some have advocated for special group rights and autonomous governance for certain cultural groups. Because the continued existence of protected minority cultures ultimately contributes to the good of all and the enrichment of the dominant culture, those theorists have argued that the preserving of cultures that cannot withstand the pressures to assimilate into a dominant culture can be given preference over the usual norm of equal rights for all.

Multiculturalism’s impact on education

Some examples of how multiculturalism has affected the social and political spheres are found in revisions of curricula, particularly in Europe and North America, and the expansion of the Western literary and other canons that began during the last quarter of the 20th century. Curricula from the elementary to the university levels were revised and expanded to include the contributions of minority and neglected cultural groups. That revision was designed to correct what is perceived to be a falsely Eurocentric perspective that overemphasizes the contributions of white European colonial powers and underemphasizes the contributions made by indigenous people and people of colour. In addition to that correction, the contributions that cultural groups have made in a variety of fields have been added to curricula to give special recognition for contributions that were previously ignored. The establishment of African American History Month, National Hispanic Heritage Month, and Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in the United States is an example of the movement. The addition of works by members of minority cultural groups to the canons of literary, historical, philosophical, and artistic works

further reflects the desire to recognize and include multicultural contributions to the broader culture as a whole.

Challenges to multiculturalism

There are two primary objections to multiculturalism. One is that multiculturalism privileges the good of certain groups over the common good, thereby potentially eroding the common good in favour of a minority interest. National unity could become impossible if people see themselves as members of ethnic or racial groups rather than as citizens of a common country. The second is that multiculturalism undermines the notion of equal individual rights, thereby weakening the political value of equal treatment. Equal individual rights could be set aside or deprecated in favour of rights that are possessed by the group.

Multiculturalism raises other questions. There is the question of which cultures will be recognized. Some theorists have worried that multiculturalism can lead to a competition between cultural groups all vying for recognition and that this will further reinforce the dominance of the dominant culture. Such competition could even lead to a reaction in which the dominant culture sees itself as a beleaguered group in need of recognition and protection. Further, the focus on cultural group identity may reduce the capacity for coalitional political movements that might develop across differences. Some Marxist and feminist theorists have expressed worry about the dilution of other important differences shared by members of a society that do not necessarily entail a shared culture, such as class and sex, and the resulting neglect of policies that would minimize economic and gender inequalities. A related concern is that actions that celebrate cultural pluralism would be taken because of their popularity but that actions that redress past discrimination would not be taken because of their threat to the dominant group's status.

Multicultural politics

Multiculturalism is closely associated with identity politics, or political and social movements that have group identity as the basis of their formation and the focus of their political action. Those movements attempt to further the interests of their group members and force issues important to their group members into the public sphere. However, in contrast to multiculturalism, identity politics is based on the shared identity of participants rather than on a specifically shared culture. However, both identity politics and multiculturalism often have in common the demand for recognition and redress for past inequities. Multiculturalism raises important questions for citizens, public administrators, and political leaders about balancing recognition for groups with the interests of the entire society. By asking for recognition of and respect for cultural differences, multiculturalism provides one possible response to the question of how to increase the participation of previously oppressed groups.

NATION-STATE

The nation-state is a central concept that combines the political organization of a state with the cultural identity of a nation. It refers to a sovereign entity characterized by defined territorial boundaries and a population sharing a common sense of identity, culture, and history. This fusion of political and cultural elements distinguishes the nation-state from other forms of political organization.

Key Aspects of the Nation-State in Sociology

Sovereignty: A nation-state exercises supreme authority over its territory and population, free from external interference. This sovereignty enables the nation-state to enact laws, implement policies, and govern its citizens independently.

Defined Territory: The nation-state possesses recognized geographical boundaries within which it exercises its authority. These borders delineate the state's jurisdiction and are essential for maintaining order and governance.

National Identity: Citizens of a nation-state often share common cultural elements such as language, traditions, and historical experiences. This shared identity fosters unity and a collective sense of belonging among the populace.

Centralized Government: Nation-states typically feature a centralized political structure responsible for administering governance, enforcing laws, and providing public services. This centralization ensures uniformity in policy implementation across the territory.

Legitimacy: The authority of a nation-state is often derived from the right of a core national group to self-determination. This legitimacy is crucial for maintaining social order and the state's stability.

Instrument of National Unity: Nation-states often utilize the state apparatus to promote economic, social, and cultural unity. This can involve implementing policies that encourage a cohesive national identity and integrate diverse groups within the society.

Understanding these aspects is crucial for analyzing how nation-states function, maintain social order, and address challenges arising from internal diversity and external pressures.

The State

The term 'State' is central to the study of Political Science. But it is wrongly used as synonym for nation, society, government etc. The term 'state' is also used as State management, State aid

and so on. Also as the States of Indian union or the fifty States that make the United States of America. But in Political Science, we use this term differently; it has a more specific meaning. Some of the definitions of the concept of State are as follows:

“The State is the politically organized people of a definite territory”-Bluntschli

State is “a community of persons, more or less numerous, permanently occupying a definite portion of territory, independent, or nearly so, of external control, and possessing an organized government to which the great body of inhabitants render habitual obedience.”-Garner

State is “a territorial society divided into governments and subjects, whether individuals or associations of individuals, whose relationships are determined by the exercise of this supreme coercive power.”-Laski

State “is a people organized for law within a definite territory”.-Woodrow Wilson

“The State is a concept of political science, and a moral reality which exists where a number of people, living on a definite territory, are unified under a government which in internal matters is the organ of expressing their sovereignty, and in external matters is independent of other governments.”-Gilchrist

Human beings are social animals and cannot live alone. When people live together, they fulfill their social needs. But everybody is not good and kind. There are all sorts of men and women, who exhibit various emotions such as pride, jealousy, greed, selfishness and so on.

According to Burke, “Society requires not only the passions of individuals should be Nation and State subjected, but that even in the mass and body as in the individuals the inclination of men should be thwarted, their will controlled and their passions brought into subjection.” The best is to control human perversity through means of political authority. Therefore people are bound by rules of common behaviour. If these are broken then they can be punished. Society fulfills people’s need for companionship; the state solves the problem created by this companionship.

The state exists for the sake of good life. It is an essential and natural institution and as Aristotle said, “The State comes into existence originating in the bare needs of life and continues its existence for the sake of good life.”

It is only within a state that an individual can rise to his or her ability. If there is no authority, no organisation and no rules, then society cannot be held together. The state has existed where human beings have lived in an organized society. The structure of the state has evolved gradually over a long period of time, from a simple to a complex organisation that we have today.

The essence of state is in its monopoly of coercive power. It has a right to demand obedience from the people. However, the Marxists believe that state is a class organisation, which has been created by the propertied class to oppress and exploit the poor. They refuse to believe that the state is a natural institution. To them the propertied class created the state and it has always belonged to them only. Thus, the state is just a means of exploitation. Therefore, they visualize a situation of classless society or communism in which there will not be any need of the state. State will, thus, wither away.

Elements of The State

As pointed above, the state possesses four essential elements. These are:

Population

The State is a human institution. It is the people who make a State. Antarctica is not a State as it is without any human population. The population must be able to sustain a state. But the question is; how much should be the population?

Plato's and Aristotle's ideals were the Greek City – States of Athens and Sparta. Plato fixed the number of people in an ideal state at 5040. Aristotle laid down a general principle Individual and the State Political Science Individual and the State Notes that the state should neither be neither large nor small; it should be large enough to be self-sufficing and small enough to be well-governed. Rousseau put the number at 10,000. But it is difficult to fix the size of the people of a state. In modern times we have India and China which have huge population and countries like San Marino with a very small population. Countries like former Soviet Union gave incentives to mother of large families. In India, over-population is a big problem while China has enforced a one-child norm. Dictators like Mussolini had openly encouraged large population of the state.

So no limit-either theoretical or practical-can be put on population. But it must be enough to constitute governing and governed classes, sufficient to support a political organization. The population should be in proportion to the available land and resources. It should be remembered that the differences in the size of population, other things remaining the same, does not make any difference in the nature of State.

The quality of the population is also important. A state requires healthy, intelligent and disciplined citizens. They should be possessed with qualities of vitality. The composition of population is also very important. A state with a homogenous people can be governed easily.

Territory

Just as every person belongs to a state, so does every square yard of earth. There is no state without a fixed territory. Living together on a common land binds people together. Love for the territory inculcates the spirit of patriotism. Some call their countries as fatherland and some call it motherland. But there is a definite attachment with one's territory.

The territory has to be definite because it ensures exercise of political authority. Mobile tribals had some sort of political authority but they did not constitute a State because they lacked a fixed land. The Jews were living in different countries and they became State only with the creation of Israel, which had a definite territory. Without a fixed territory it would be difficult to conduct external relations. It is essential for the identification if one state attempts to conquer the territory of another. The territory may be small or large. But the state has to have a definite land. It may be as small as San Marino, which has an area of 62 Square kilometers, or it may be as large as India, USA, Russia or China.

The size of a state influences the form of government. For example, smaller states can have a unitary form of government but for the large states like India and the USA, the federal system is relatively suitable. The quality of land is also very important. If the land is rich in minerals and natural resources, it will make the state economically powerful. It should be able to provide enough food for its people. The States of West Asia were insignificant but they acquired prominence after the discovery of oil. Large territory of a State gives it strategic and military advantage during the times of war. Mostly the territory of a state is contiguous and compact though there are exceptions also. Before the creation of Bangladesh, the two wings of Pakistan were miles apart. Hawaii and Alaska are far away from the main territory of USA. Land, water and airspace comprise the territory of the state. The sovereignty of a state is exercised over its land, its rivers, mountains and plains and airspace above the land. The sea up to a certain limit from the land border is also a part of the territory of a State.

Government

The purpose for which people live together cannot be realized unless they are properly organized and accept certain rules of conduct. The agency created to enforce rules of conduct and ensure obedience is called government. Government is also the focus of the common purpose of the people occupying the definite territory. It is through this medium that common policies are determined, common affairs regulated and common interests promoted. Without a government the people will lack cohesion and means of collective action. There would be groups, parties and warring associations and conditions of wars and chaos. So there is a need for common authority and order where people live. This is the pre-requisite of human life. The state cannot and does not exist without a government, no matter what form a government may assume. The government is a must, though it may take any form. It may have a monarchy like Bhutan or republic as in India. It may have a parliamentary form of government like India and Great Britain or a presidential form of government as in the United States of America.

Sovereignty

A people inhabiting a definite portion of territory and having a government do not constitute a state so long as they do not possess sovereignty. India before 15 August 1947 had all the other elements of the state but it lacked sovereignty and therefore it was not a State. Sovereignty is the supreme power by which the state commands and exerts political obedience from its people. A state must be internally supreme and free from external control. Thus sovereignty has two aspects, internal and external. Internal sovereignty is the state's monopoly of authority inside its boundaries. This authority cannot be shared with any other state. The state is independent and its will is unaffected by the will of any other external authority. Therefore every state must have a population, a definite territory, a duly established government and sovereignty. The absence of any of these elements deprives it the status of statehood. So the term generally used for the 28 provinces of Indian Republic at times creates confusion and as is the case of '50 States' in the United States of America.

SOCIOLOGY AND THE STUDY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

'Sociology' is the study of social relationships, institutions, and organisations. Human life and society are built on the foundations of environmental systems. Throughout history, humans have been affected by and have influenced the natural world. The presence of human beings on the earth has had a profound effect upon environmental systems, as humans are the only species that act upon and transform the environment in profound ways to suit their purposes. The last two centuries have seen dramatic transformations and changes; the Industrial revolution, the rise of the factory system, growth of towns and cities, large scale migration of populations from rural to urban areas, population explosion, unbridled exploitation of natural resources leading to destruction of forests, massive use of fossil fuels, unchecked air, water, and land pollution to name only a few, have brought us to the very brink of an environmental catastrophe. It is widely accepted that human activities are adversely affecting Earth's life support systems, and that comprehensive social change is needed to stop this trend.

Early Sociological Perspectives

Social thinkers and theorists have long debated upon the material and environmental basis of human life. Karl Marx (1818-1883) was one of the foremost social and political thinkers of the 19th century, whose ideas had a profound impact on the discipline of Sociology. He recognized the central role that material factors played in human and social life. We produce our livelihood from the external world that we experience through our senses. Marx traced the development of human societies based upon the way material or economic life was organized. The capitalist system that emerged during the industrial revolution was a fundamentally exploitative one. Friedrich Engels (1820-1895), Marx's collaborator, described the inhuman living and working

conditions of the industrial workers at the time, who lived in filthy, insanitary conditions and worked for long hours in factories, mills, and mines to eke out meagre wages. Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) the French sociologist, who is credited with establishing Sociology as a discipline in its own right, believed that the subject matter of Sociology was 'social facts'. His work on the division of labour in society showed how societies moved from simpler, homogenous forms to more complex ones where there was greater differentiation and specialisation. Societies transformed as populations increased and competed for scarce resources and developed new forms of 'social solidarity' to deal with changed material conditions. Max Weber (1864-1920) also recognized as one of Sociology's 'founding fathers' along with Durkheim and Marx, wrote at length about the process of 'rationalization' that marked Western society in the industrial age. Human 'mastery' and control over nature, the growth of science and technology and the engine of capitalism, all result in nature being regarded as a resource to be used rather than as a gift to be conserved. The consequences on ecology and environment have proved to be destructive to humanity. Although Weber did not specifically dwell upon the environmental impact of capitalism, his theories have paved the way for contemporary sociologists to take forward. However, some scholars have opined that sociologists who succeeded the early pioneers did not adequately take up the study of environment as a central sociological concern. This is because the discipline's preoccupation with social relations, processes and social institutions did not pay due heed to the natural world and the dependence of human beings upon it

Scope and Subject Matter

What marks Environmental Sociology as distinct from other specialisations within sociology is that it has compelled sociologists to engage with nonsocial issues such as environmental quality and environmental problems that traditionally fell under the ambit of natural sciences. It is this interdisciplinary orientation and interaction that makes it an important area of study for environmental scientists and policy makers as well. 'Environmental Sociology' is the sociological study of how humans interact with the various aspects of the environment, in other words, "societal-environmental interactions" (Dunlap and Catton, 1979). Such interactions include the ways in which humans influence the environment as well as the ways in which environmental conditions (often modified by human action) influence human affairs. It also refers to the way such interactions are socially construed and acted upon. For sociologists, these interactions are particularly important because human populations depend upon the biophysical environment for survival, and this requires a closer look at the functions that the environment.

Environmental Issues and Society serves for human beings. Some of the major themes examined are capitalism, consumerism, globalization, critiques of development, marginalized communities, gender dimensions and social change. In other words, environmental sociology is concerned with the nature of environmental social movements; states, politics, and environmental policy formation; environmental attitudes, beliefs, and values; the relationships between consumption and production institutions; the reciprocal impacts of societies and environments; the role of technology in social and environmental change; and the significance of 'the global' in terms of 'environmental scale' and social institutions.

THE RISE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY

According to Hannigan (2006), the term 'Environmental Sociology' was first used by Samuel Klausner in his 1971 book *On Man and his Environment*. The growth of environmental and energy problems in the Western world in the 1960s, after decades of industrial growth, signalled the rise of 'environmentalism' as a social movement. The publication of Rachel Carson's famous book *Silent Spring* in 1962. The book laid out in detail the deadly effects of chemical pesticides like DDT commonly used in the USA, on the environment, and on human health. It received an overwhelming public response and popularised environmentalism and the environmental movement. The inauguration of 'Earth Day' on 22 April 1970 provided an impetus to the study of environment.

GENDER

The definition of sex (the categories of man versus woman) as we know them today comes from the advent of modernity. With the rise of industrialisation came better technologies and faster modes of travel and communication. This assisted the rapid diffusion of ideas across the medical world.

Sex roles describe the tasks and functions perceived to be ideally suited to masculinity versus femininity. Sex roles have converged across many (though not all) cultures due to colonial practices and also due to industrialisation.

For example, in early-2014, India legally recognised the hijra, the traditional third gender who had been previously accepted prior to colonialism.

Sex roles were different prior to the industrial revolution, when men and women worked alongside one another on farms, doing similar tasks. Entrenched gender inequality is a product of modernity. It's not that inequality did not exist before, it's that inequality within the home in relation to family life was not as pronounced.

In the 19th Century, biomedical science largely converged around Western European practices and ideas. Biological definitions of the body arose where they did not exist before, drawing on Victorian values. The essentialist ideas that people attach to man and woman exist only because of this cultural history. This includes the erroneous ideas that sex:

- Is pre-determined in the womb;
- Defined by anatomy which in turn determines sexual identity and desire;
- Differences are all connected to reproductive functions;
- Identities are immutable; and that
- Deviations from dominant ideas of male/female must be “unnatural.”

As I show further below, there is more variation across cultures when it comes to what is considered “normal” for men and women, thus highlighting the ethnocentric basis of sex categories. Ethnocentric ideas define and judge practices according to one’s own culture, rather than understanding cultural practices vary and should be viewed by local standards.

Social Construction of Gender

Gender, like all social identities, is socially constructed. Social constructionism is one of the key theories sociologists use to put gender into historical and cultural focus. Social constructionism is a social theory about how meaning is created through social interaction – through the things we do and say with other people. This theory shows that gender it is not a fixed or innate fact, but instead it varies across time and place.

Gender norms (the socially acceptable ways of acting out gender) are learned from birth through childhood socialisation. We learn what is expected of our gender from what our parents teach us, as well as what we pick up at school, through religious or cultural teachings, in the media, and various other social institutions.

Major Sociological Theories of Gender

Each major sociological framework has its own views and theories regarding gender and how it relates to other aspects of society.

During the mid-twentieth century, **functionalist theorists** argued that men filled instrumental roles in society while women filled **expressive roles**, which worked to the benefit of society. They viewed a gendered division of labor as important and necessary for the smooth functioning of a modern society. Further, this perspective suggests that our socialization into prescribed roles drives gender inequality by encouraging men and women to make different choices about family and work. For example, these theorists see wage inequalities as the result of choices women make, assuming they choose family roles that compete with their work roles, which renders them less valuable employees from the managerial standpoint.

However, most sociologists now view this functionalist approach as outdated and sexist, and there is now plenty of scientific evidence to suggest that the wage gap is influenced by deeply ingrained **gender biases** rather than by choices men and women make about family-work balance.

A popular and contemporary approach within the sociology of gender is influenced by **symbolic interactionist** theory, which focuses on the micro-level everyday interactions that produce and challenge gender as we know it. Sociologists West and Zimmerman popularized this approach with their 1987 article on "doing gender," which illustrated how gender is something that is produced through interaction between people, and as such is an interactional accomplishment. This approach highlights the instability and fluidity of gender and recognizes that since it is produced by people through interaction, it is fundamentally changeable.

Within the sociology of gender, those inspired by **conflict theory** focus on how gender and assumptions and biases about gender differences lead to the empowerment of men, oppression of women, and the structural inequality of women relative to men. These sociologists see gendered power dynamics as built into the **social structure**, and thus manifested throughout all aspects of a patriarchal society. For example, from this viewpoint, wage inequalities that exist between men and women result from men's historic power to devalue women's work and benefit as a group from the services that women's labor provides.

Feminist theorists, building on aspects of the three areas of theory described above, focus on the structural forces, values, world views, norms, and everyday behaviors that create inequality and injustice on the basis of gender. Importantly, they also focus on how these social forces can be changed to create a just and equal society in which no one is penalized for their gender.

GLOBALISATION

Origin of the Concept of Globalisation Tracing back the etymology of the word "globalisation", it can be pointed out that the term was coined as early as 1959, although it gained momentum only after 1980. In 1961, the Webster dictionary for the first time introduced the definitions of the words "Globalism" and "Globalisation" as observed by Malcom Waters. As the very name globalisation suggests, it has emerged from the adjective "global" meaning worldwide. Peter Kools states the adjective "global" dates back to the 16th century England and came into world attention during the period of expansion. The word global attained a greater attention in the writings of Mc Luhan who referred the world to a "Global Village" in 1961. To Luhan the metaphor global village refers to 4 the more united world community.

Sociological Interpretation of the Term Globalisation

Coming to the domain of Sociology, it can be noted that the term "Globalization" has got extensive treatment in the hands of many sociologists. The sociologists perceive that though economic in origin, the term has enormous social implications. To cite some examples, to George Ritzer globalization refers to the rapidly increasing worldwide integration and interdependence of societies and cultures. Scholte defines globalization as deterritorialization or the growth of 'supraterritorial' relations between people. Globalization refers to a farreaching

change in the nature of “social space”. To quote Albrow globalisation includes “all those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single society, global society”. In the languages of Ronald Robertson “Globalization as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole.” To Anthony Giddens, “Globalization can thus be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” . Water defines globalization as “a social process in which the constraints of geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede, in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding and in which people act accordingly”. To quote Held et al, “Globalization can be thought of a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power”.

U. Beck has underlined the differences among ‘globality,’ ‘globalism’ and ‘globalization.’ According to him, “‘**globality**’ refers to the fact that individuals are increasingly living in a ‘world society’ in the sense that ‘the notion of closed spaces has become illusory. Meanwhile, ‘globalism’ is the view that the ‘world market’ is now powerful enough to supplant (local and national) political action;” and “‘globalization’ is the blanket term to describe ‘the processes through which sovereign national states are criss-crossed and undermined by transnational actors and varying prospects of power, orientation, identities and networks’.

Theories of Globalisation

According to Held and McGrew there are three main schools of thought relating to globalization. The versions of these three schools about globalisation dominate the entire discourses on globalisation. These three schools are: the Hyperglobalites School, the Skeptics School, the Transformationalists School.

The Hyperglobalites School: The Hyperglobalites focus on economic globalization which argues to denationalize economies and thereby creating global markets which would transcend state control, resulting in a loss of autonomy and sovereignty for the state.

The second school of thought that is the **Skeptics School** argues that globalization is a myth. Skeptics also question what exactly is global about globalization. To them, it is not a universal phenomenon. On this ground, the concept itself loses validity and is not specific.

The third school of thought i.e. the **Transformationalists School** argues that globalization has structural consequences and is a driving force in society which influences political, social and economic change. Globalisation is responsible for social transformation. Due to globalisation, there is structural change in the society and a global shift with respect to power and authority takes place following the process

The Historical and Social Context of Globalisation

Globalisation is not a revolutionary outcome, but an evolutionary development. Even if, it is often termed as a contemporary or modern phenomenon, it can be studied from a historical perspective. As a process it is noted by sociologists to be antique spanning many centuries or millennia. **Herman van der Wee, one of the world's famous economic historians of Belgium commented globalisation is a new word for an old process that has been taking place for centuries.** This clearly indicates globalisation is a historical process. It is sometimes identified by scholars that there are three tipping points that have led to global convergence of today under the banner of globalisation. These are: the consolidation of Asian and Indian ocean net works having its root one millennium before, the discovery of sea routes five centuries before with European expansionism and the Industrial revolution galvanising the European economy two centuries ago. However, most of these attempts were country or continent specific and more or less regional rather than worldwide in nature. Though some scholars have tried to designate these processes as "Proto globalisation" or "Archaic globalisation", the currencies have not achieved much intellectual acceptance.

Thus, globalisation is a historical process. It has witnessed many preceding stages in human history which can be identified as the prelude to today's globalisation. There is no consensus on the initiation period of the process of globalisation among the scholars. However, all agree upon the point globalisation is a social reality that the world has experienced due to the interaction of complex economic, political, socio-cultural and biological factors. Economic crises leading to political disruptions have led the foundation of global convergence. Further, social and cultural changes have changed human vision, prompted them to explore the world around them, led to economic expansion and changes and changed the political boundaries. Biological factors like the break of epidemics have propelled human migration which have contributed significantly for cultural diversities, social change and crossing the borders leading to flow of individuals, ideas leading to cross border integration, the basic foundations of globalisation. The economist vision of the initiation of the process of globalisation is shorter than that proposed by the historians. The historians trace back the history of globalisation to the Industrial revolution of the west. To them the three landmarks that symbolise the beginning of global interaction and integration include the Industrial Revolution of the west which took place 1800 years ago, the maritime expansion which had its origin around 1500 years ago and the integration of Asia which took place 1000 years before. However, polarised is the views of Friedman who in his famous statement *The World is Flat* proposed that globalisation is of recent origin. Though it was mooring from 1945 after the end of the great depression and the world wars, it had a rapid development towards the end of the twentieth century.

To some historians, maritime revolution was initiated by Europe by 1500s. This became a turning point in the human history as this led to establish interconnectivity between Europe with Asia, Sub Saharan Africa and the American continent. Maritime revolution was initiated through the development of maritime technology and resulted in maritime exploration. This contributed for mercantile expansion. By this revolution, humanity could triumph over geographical barriers and the geographical segregation the nations were experiencing hitherto. This led to the influx of new culture, knowledge, wealth into a nation. The Italian Renaissance effects, the ideals of French and American Revolution were diffused across the European borders and this was the beginning point of globalisation. Most historical evidence, refer 1500s as a watershed in the evolution of the process of globalisation. Industrial revolution was an accelerant of global

integration. It opened a new era in the human history by increasing production and the GDP in the western countries. This led to the foundation for market expansion which is a precursor to globalisation. This is often termed as **the second phase** of globalisation. During this phase, there was vast transformation in the **production technology** and the **demand of the consumers**. Mass scale machine based production increased the quantum of production which forced for expansion of the market beyond the national borders. This resulted in colonial plunder, investments outside the national borders, colonial expansion. This was the prelude to global integration. Geoffrey Gunn an authority on Asian history and International Relations identifies the period spanning from **1500 to 1800 as the era of first phase of globalisation**. To him the first confluence between the east and the west took place during this period. Global capitalism was in its wake and there was the ascendancy of the west. This was percolating to the colonies and cultural and material exchanges were fast taking momentum. However, globalisation halted due to the two world wars that took place in the first half of the twentieth century. Globalisation was again spearheaded during the 1970s when the East Asia miracle took place. This was led by the key role played by the transnational companies. Finally, in the beginning of the twenty first century, with the awakening of the sleeping giants like China and India, globalisation started taking a new face. During this time, all countries started rowing in the globalisation boat. All became equal partners and participants in the process. The income inequality started declining. The national sovereignty started eroding and the world organisations and corporate giants began directing and dictating state power. Thus, the historical context of globalisation can be summarised under five different phases which can be described as the five waves of globalisation.

These waves have touched the world in different periods which are as follows.

- First wave of globalisation taking place between Third to Tenth centuries.
- Second wave of globalisation taking place between Eleventh to the end of the Fourteenth century.
- Third wave of globalisation between Fifteenth to Nineteenth centuries.
- Fourth wave between the beginnings of twentieth century to the first half of twentieth century.
- Fifth wave from the last two decades of twentieth century and continuing till date.

Globalization and India:

Developed countries have been trying to pursue developing countries to liberalize the trade and allow more flexibility in business policies to provide equal opportunities to multinational firms in their domestic market. International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank helped them in this endeavour. Liberalization began to hold its foot on barren lands of developing countries like India by means of reduction in excise duties on electronic goods in a fixed time frame.

In 1991, Indian government did the same and liberalized the trade and investment due to the pressure from World Trade Organization. Import duties were cut down phase-wise to allow MNC's operate in India on equality basis. As a result globalization has brought to India new technologies, new products and also the economic opportunities.

IMPACTS OF GLOBALISATION IN INDIA

Economic Impact:

1. **Greater Number of Jobs:** The advent of foreign companies and growth in economy has led to job creation. However, these jobs are concentrated more in the services sector and this has led to rapid growth of service sector creating problems for individuals with low level of education. The last decade came to be known for its jobless growth as job creation was not proportionate to the level of economic growth.

2. **More choice to consumers:** Globalisation has led to a boom in consumer products market. We have a range of choice in selecting goods unlike the times where there were just a couple of manufacturers.

3. **Higher Disposable Incomes:** People in cities working in high paying jobs have greater income to spend on lifestyle goods. There has been an increase in the demand of products like meat, egg, pulses, organic food as a result. It has also led to protein inflation.

Negative Impacts:

- **Protein food inflation** contributes a large part to the food inflation in India. It is evident from the rising prices of pulses and animal proteins in the form of eggs, milk and meat. With an improvement in standard of living and rising income level, the food habits of people change. People tend toward taking more protein intensive foods. This shift in dietary pattern, along with rising population results in an overwhelming demand for protein rich food, which the supply side could not meet. Thus resulting in a demand supply mismatch thereby, causing inflation.
 - In India, the Green Revolution and other technological advancements have primarily focused on enhancing cereals productivity and pulses and oilseeds have traditionally been neglected.
- **Shrinking Agricultural Sector:** Agriculture now contributes only about 15% to GDP. The international norms imposed by WTO and other multilateral organizations have reduced government support to agriculture. Greater integration of global commodities markets leads to constant fluctuation in prices.
 - This has increased the vulnerability of Indian farmers. Farmers are also increasingly dependent on seeds and fertilizers sold by the MNCs.
 - Globalization does not have any positive impact on agriculture. On the contrary, it has few detrimental effects as government is always willing to import food grains, sugar etc. Whenever there is a price increase of these commodities.
 - Government never thinks to pay more to farmers so that they produce more food grains but resorts to imports. On the other hand, subsidies are declining so cost of production is increasing. Even farms producing fertilizers have to suffer due to imports. There are also threats like introduction of GM crops, herbicide resistant crops etc.

- **Increasing Health-Care costs:** Greater interconnections of the world has also led to the increasing susceptibility to diseases. Whether it is the bird-flu virus or Ebola, the diseases have taken a global turn, spreading far and wide. This results in greater investment in healthcare system to fight such diseases.
- **Child Labour:** Despite prohibition of child labor by the Indian constitution, over 60 to a 115 million children in India work. While most rural child workers are agricultural laborers, urban children work in manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairs. Globalization most directly exploits an estimated 300,000 Indian children who work in India's hand-knotted carpet industry, which exports over \$300 million worth of goods a year.