


Emergence and Development of Sociology

Lesson No.	Title	Activity
2	Emergence and development of sociology	List out various sociologists in post-independence phase who worked on village studies in India

Summary

Human beings have always been interested in knowing and thinking about their society. When we study the past history, we will find that sociological insights were found at that time. Although Sociology as a discipline does not have a long history but it does have a long past. and many theorists have significantly contributed in it's development.



EMERGENCE OF SOCIOLOGY IN THE WEST

The social developments of the nineteenth and early twentieth century have significantly contributed to in the development of sociology in the West.

The emergence of Sociology can be largely attributed to the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution.

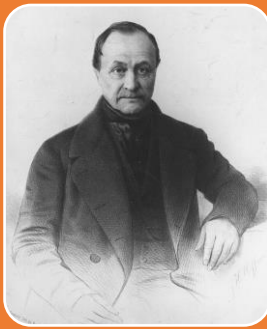
The chaos and disorder that resulted after the French Revolution in 1789, made many social theorists disturbed and they got united to find out ways and means to restore order in the society. Such concern was the key influence in the emergence of sociological theory.

The Industrial Revolution set a tone of transformation of Western societies from largely agricultural to overwhelmingly industrial systems. Industrial revolution has led to large scale migration from rural areas to the urban centres and also created huge inequality in economic terms and long list of social problems. All such changes in the west seemed to have changed the social fabric and influenced the social thinkers to a great extent.

Auguste Comte, for the first time, coined the term sociology in 1838

Various early sociologists such as **Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx** and **Max Weber** has immensely contributed in developing sociological theories. Their contribution will be discussed separately below.

Early Sociologists



Auguste Comte

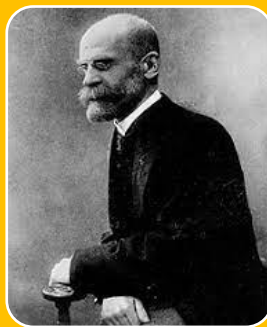
(1798-1857) Known as father of sociology

- **'Auguste Comte** argued that the methods used in physics should be used for the study of society. Such a study would reveal the laws of evolution and the laws of the functioning of society. Once this knowledge was available, we would be able to build society scientifically. Thus, the programmes of social reconstruction should follow a scientific understanding of society. Comte identified three stages of human society: Theological, Metaphysical and Positivism



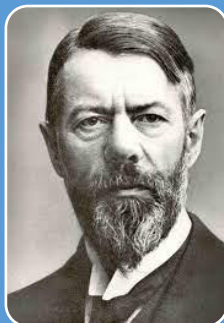
Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)

- Spencer viewed that societies evolve in the same manner as living organisms. As generations pass, the most capable members of a society survive, while the less capable die out. Thus, overtime societies become more differentiated and complex. , Spencer's views of the evolution of societies are known as social Darwinism.



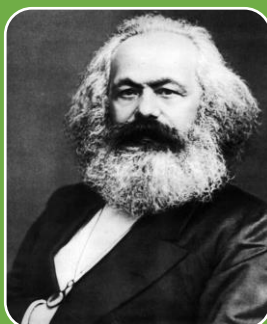
Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)

The credit for developing sociology as an independent discipline and science also goes to Emile Durkheim . to him, sociology, to be scientific must study social facts'. Social Fact is exterior to human mind and but it constraints on human behavior.



Max Weber (1864-1920)

Weber is of the view that Sociology should focus on studying social action of individuals and the method used should be different from the natural sciences. Social action, according to Weber should be studied subjectively emphasising the uniqueness of each society.



Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Marx emphasized the role of historical factors in conditioning the behavior of human beings. Marx believed that conflict was the initiator of social change. Therefore, he has given central importance to the concept of conflict

Development of Sociology In India

The growth of sociology in India can be divided into three phases. In the first phase, covering the period from 1769 to 1900, the foundation of sociology was laid down. Sociology became a profession, a university subject, during the second phase, from 1901 to 1950. The third phase, beginning after India's independence, was marked by programmes of planned development, increased interaction of Indian sociologists with their foreign counterparts, availability of money for research, and intensification of research and publications.

1769 to 1900

- The British believed that it was important to understand Indian society for smooth governance. They drew on various sources like classical Sanskrit literature to understand the Indian way of life. They carried out the first census of India in 1871.

1901 to 1950

- This phase coincided with the professional development of Sociology in India. Sociologists and anthropologists like Rivers and Radcliffe-Brown from Europe started working in India. This was also the time when Sociology was introduced in the Universities in India. Early Indian sociologists like GS Ghurye were trained in the West.

Post to 1947

- There was sharp rise in the popularity of the discipline in India. More teaching and research positions were created, as sociology and social anthropology become university subjects and more and more of their departments were opened up.
- With the era of planned development the need to know about Indian society increased. Village studies began in India after the independence especially because of the collaboration of Indian sociologists with their American counterparts. In addition, several Indian communities, both tribes and castes, were also intensively studied.

Evaluate Yourself

1. Compare the contribution of Durkheim and Weber in development of sociology.
2. List the names of a couple of the communities that sociologists have studied after the independence.
3. Evaluate how the beginning of planned development in India is one of the major reasons for development of sociology in India?