

## 5. Culture And Socialisation

### Culture : Meaning, Characteristics and Elements

Man is man because he is having his own culture. He can be separated from other creatures of the animal world due to his culture. Man will be like other animals if he is separated from his culture. Man is the only creature in this world, who has been able to create culture due to his specialties.

If we see from anatomy point of view then man is not very huge or strong creature. Elephants, horses, alligators, wolves, lions etc. are stronger than man, but man has a sufficiently developed brain, which makes him capable of maintaining his existence and establishing control over animals.

**Meaning of Culture**—The word culture is used in many senses. Generally Culture is meant for being cultured .

Refined language, nice clothing, modest behaviour, boarding, modes of living, religion, manners, means of entertainment etc. used by man is included in culture. But this is not the sociological viewpoint of culture.

Culture (Sanskriti) word has been adopted from ‘ Sanskrit ‘ language. ‘Sanskriti’ (culture) and ‘ Sanskrit’ both these words are made from ‘Sanskara’ (sacrament), and the literal meaning of sanskara is to perform some religious acts . This means that through the means of sanskaras (sacraments) the aims of collective life is achieved.

Anthropologists use the word culture in many ways. According to them a child learns different aspects of culture, through participation in collective life since the very childhood . It is through learning, that a man becomes a social creature.

**According to Tylor**, “Culture...is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”.

In this definition Tylor has considered culture as a social legacy. Which man acquires as a member of society.

**Herskovits**, giving a very short definition of

culture has written, “Culture is the man—made part of the environment”. In this definition Herskovits has clarified that we cannot tell the whole environment as culture, but culture is only it’s man—made part. Man—made objects can be divided into two parts : first is tangible which can be touched and seen, and other is abstract which cannot be touched and seen. On this basis Ogburn has mentioned two types of culture—material and non-material culture. On the basis of above mentioned definitions culture is that legacy of man which he acquires for being the member of society. Being a social creature man, whatever acquires and learns from society, that social knowledge is called his social legacy. It is this learnt knowledge which is called culture.

In this chapter different definitions of culture have been mentioned above. To understand culture more clearly we will discuss about it’s characteristics. These are some of the universal characteristics of culture—

**1. Culture is man-made**—Man is a social animal. It is man only, who as a social animal creates culture. Man has some physical and mental specialties e.g. capacity to stand erect, developed and intelligent mind, structure of hands, neck structure etc. which makes him special from other animals. All these capabilities are not found in other creatures. Due to these capabilities man has made new inventions and fulfilled his requirements. It is the inventions made by man and his experiences, that together create culture.

**2. Culture is learnt**—Culture is not hereditary, it is learnt through socialisation. Hoebel has said that culture is learnt behaviour. At the time of birth a child is is a biological creature. He is ignorant about society, his birth place and his family or caste. While living in society he comes to know about them and learns how to behave in society. The total sum of behaviour patterns of individuals is called culture. At the time of birth, there is no special difference between human infant and animal infant. It is through learning the culture that human infant transforms into

social creature. Culture is learnt behaviour but every learnt behaviour is not culture. Animals too have learning capability. Staying with man animals too learn a great deal of behaviour, but the behaviour learnt by an animal is its personal behaviour and not the part of collective behaviour. Due to this reason behaviours learnt by animals cannot be part of culture. Behaviour learnt by human beings is collective, which is exhibited through customs, traditions, mores, folkways etc.

**3. Culture is transmitted**—As culture is learned, therefore, it is easily transmitted from one group to another group and from one generation to another generation. Man transmits culture mainly through the medium of language. Language, writings and symbols are the medium through which man acquires knowledge and transmits the earned knowledge.

Animals learn some behaviour from man, but they lack the capacity to teach like man. Due to lack of knowledge of language, they are unable to teach the learned behaviour to other animals. It is this characteristics of culture, that man enables man to learn from the acquired knowledge of ancestors. Man modifies the acquired knowledge, and transmits his experiences and inventions safely to new generation. The sequence of transmission goes on. Thus the repository of knowledge and culture of man gets rich day by day.

**4. Culture is Social**—Culture exhibits the total social way of life of any society. Culture is not made by any particular person, but it is made by the whole society. Only that accomplishment of man becomes part of culture, in which the whole society participates. Sometimes, one or two persons together make new invention or discover something new, but these can not be called culture unless it is recognised by the whole society. Traditions, folkways, mores, customs, religion, philosophy, art, language, science etc. which are included in culture, exhibit the way of life of whole society instead of individual way of life.

Thus, we can say that the characteristics of sociality is inherent in culture and this is the gift of society.

**5. Every society has a specific culture**—Every society has got its own culture. The reason for

this is that differences in geographical and social conditions is found among different societies. Due to geographical and social differentiations, the requirements of each society also differ. Man does many inventions to fulfil these requirements. It is the inventions made by man, which provide a new form to culture. The culture of every society becomes specific due to differentiations in necessities of different societies. According to culture, ample variation in the behaviours of members of different societies can be observed. In spite of cultural variations, some elements of the culture are generally similar in almost all societies. Some institutions like family, marriage, kinship, religion, education and law etc. are found in almost all societies. The functions of these institutions too, are almost similar in all societies. In every society, some elements of culture are similar whereas some are dissimilar. It is these elements, which make the culture of each society specific.

**6. Culture fulfils Human Needs**—Man has many physical, mental and material needs. Culture helps in fulfilling these human needs. Functional Sociologists, Malinowski and Radcliff Brown, have the opinion that no element of culture is useless, instead it helps in satisfying human needs. When the contribution of any cultural element is minimised, then its existence slowly disappears. Any cultural element remains the part of culture till it satisfies human needs. Man makes new inventions to satisfy his different needs. These inventions and man's experiences become the elements of culture. Thus, different elements of culture created by man and culture itself fulfil human needs.

**7. Culture has the capability of adaptation**—Culture has the characteristic of adaptation and volatility. Changes take place in culture according to time, place, and circumstances. Substantial cultural variations is found in different geographical conditions e.g. plain regions, mountainous areas, deserts, inaccessible areas, cold regions etc. The culture of mountainous regions is different from plains. Similarly the lifestyle and folkways of people of cold regions is different from the people residing in hot areas. The reason of this differentiation is that, culture of every place has

adapted itself according to its physical conditions.

Geographical conditions bring changes in some parts and elements of culture but does not determine it completely. With the passage of time there is change in different elements and units of culture but this change is very slow and not sudden. It is this process of change and adjustment which is called adaptability.

**8. Culture in the form of an Ideal**—People of every group and society consider their culture as ideal. Culture is an ideal also, as it exhibit the behaviour of whole group rather than being the outcome of behaviour of any specific individual. These collective behaviour are accepted by the group and therefore these are treated as ideals. Every group expects from its members that they will follow these ideals while behaving, and compels people to follow these ideals directly or indirectly. For example, bowing down before elders to show respect for them, touching their feet etc. When two cultures are compared, then a person tries to tell that his own culture is ideal. For example, when an Indian compares Indian culture with Western culture, then he proclaims that his culture is superior.

**9. Culture is helpful in forming Human Personality**—After birth a human infant enters the man-made cultural environment. The upbringing of man takes place in some or the other culture. Man internalises his culture by being a part of it. The personality of an individual is affected by norms, customs, traditions, folkways, language, religion, art etc. prevalent in culture. Therefore, personalities of individuals, grow up in different culture vary as their rearing takes place in different cultural environments.

Prof. Ruth Benedict, accepting the impact of culture on personality has written, “The culture of an individual provides him that raw material, from which he forms his life. If this raw material is insufficient then the growth of individual does not take place completely, and if this is sufficient then he gets the opportunity to properly utilize it.” Hence, it is clear that there is close relationship between culture and personality. Culture has a great contribution in giving a definite direction and form to the personality of an individual.

**10. Culture has Integrative quality**—

Different small units in a society join together to create culture. Different cultural elements are tied together and not separated from each other. Therefore they are systematic and balanced. The elements which constitute culture, are tied together in harmony and not in an incoherent manner. When there is change in one element of culture then it affects other elements, too.

In different areas different cultural elements develop. Despite regional differences, different elements of culture do the task of uniting people. This creates integration and balance in society. As our whole life is organised and balanced, similarly all the elements, complexes and patterns of culture are also organised and balanced. The existence of any element is not in separation but in organisation. This characteristics of culture is more clearly visible in simple, primitive and rural societies.

**11. Culture is super—individual and super-organic**—Famous American Anthropologist, Kroeber, while mentioning this characteristics of culture has said that culture is above individuals and organisms. Though man is the creator of culture, but once culture is created, it arises above individuals, because individual acts according to culture. No single man can create culture, rather it is the endowment of whole society and culture. Sometimes, some social reformers do bring changes in some values, traditions and customs, but they cannot change the whole culture. Culture is not the endowment of any particular individual, rather it is the endowment of whole society and groups. Therefore the quality of continuity is found in it.

A single man can neither create culture, nor he can bring changes in it. In this sense, culture is super-individual.

The word organic is applied for man and other living creatures. Man has created culture himself. As man is a organism super—organism.

### **The Components of Culture**

Culture is made up of many divisions, sub-divisions or units. These units are organised and systematically knit together. These units which create culture are called; cultural trait, culture complex, culture pattern and culture area. There is found balance and organisation among them. As a result,

continuity and balance exist in culture. That smallest unit of culture which is indivisible, is called cultural trait or element. When many cultural traits meaningfully join together, then it is called culture complex. There is a system found in culture complexes of culture, which provides a specific form to culture. This is called culture pattern. The spread of culture pattern is found in a specific area, which is known as culture area.

### Main Components or elements of Culture

1. Cultural trait or Element
2. Culture Complex
3. Culture Pattern
4. Culture Area

**Cultural Trait**—That smallest unit of culture, which can not be divided any more, is called cultural trait. As cell is the smallest unit of body, atom is the smallest unit of matter and family is the smallest unit of social structure, similarly cultural trait is smallest and indivisible unit of culture. Cultural unit is the smallest unit of any culture. As culture has two aspects—material and non-material, hence cultural traits are of two types—material and non-material. Cycle, fan, table, chair, watch etc. are included in material aspect. Whereas sign, thought, custom, folkway etc. are included in non-material aspect. These all are called material and non-material cultural traits.

**Herskovits** has considered cultural trait as the smallest recognisable unit of a specific culture.

**S. C. Dubey** in his book 'Man and Culture' has written, "We can treat cultural traits as the simplest practical units of constituting culture".

**Kroeber** treats it as "the minimal defined element of culture".

To understand cultural trait we can take the example of a watch. Watch is a cultural trait and it is used in human life for knowing time. As far the parts of watch e.g. needles, number, cells etc. remain organised and systematic, so far it is useful. But when all parts are separated, then it cannot be used as watch. As cultural traits are indivisible, so they become meaningless when divided.

### Characteristics of Cultural Trait—

- There is a history of emergence of cultural trait

- Cultural trait is dynamic and volatile
- Cultural traits are organised and systemised together.

For understanding culture it is essential to understand cultural traits. These cultural traits are the primary basis of whole cultural structure.

**Culture Complex**—That group of cultural traits in which many cultural elements joining together in a meaningful way fulfil different necessities of man, is called culture complex. Cultural trait alone is not important in whole culture. Rather some cultural traits joining together fulfil different needs of man. Dubey defining culture complex writes, "Culture complex, as is clear from its name, is made of similar religions or complimentary culture traits". In the words of Sutherland and Woodward, "Culture complex is a whole set of culture traits that 'cluster' together in a meaningful interrelationship."

The 'Game of Football, is an example of culture complex. In this, players, football, rules of game, ball, skill in sport etc. all together cluster in a meaningful way. It is then only that game of football can be played. Similarly family, marriage, human body, religion etc. are seen as culture complex, in which many cultural traits cluster together in a meaningful way. Without cultural traits the formation of culture complex is impossible.

**Culture Pattern**—Ruth Benedict has developed the concept of culture pattern in his book, "Patterns of Culture". Culture complex is formed when many cultural traits join together. Cultural traits and culture complex, when get interrelated in a functional way to form a meaningful ingredient then it is called culture pattern. In culture pattern, cultural traits and culture complex are settled in a special way. According to Herskovits, "Culture pattern is that design of elements of culture, which is expressed through the medium of individual behaviour patterns of the members of that society and provides affiliation continuity and specificity to this way of life."

Marriage is a pattern in which bridegroom, bride, sweets, chairs, light etc. are elements. Decoration in marriage is done by many elements instead of a single element. Therefore decoration is a pattern. Similarly, there are many patterns, e.g. food pattern, welcome pattern, phera (round off) pattern,



farewell pattern etc., which together create marriage pattern.

Hence, meaningful cluster of cultural traits is called culture complex. Meaningful and systematic summation of culture complexes create culture pattern. It is the culture patterns which create the culture of society. Thus, we can say that culture is the whole system of culture patterns. We can understand the characteristics of culture ingeniously through the medium of culture patterns. Joint family, caste, religious and social differences, spiritual life philosophy etc. all these culture patterns are included in Indian culture.

**Culture Area**—Every culture is spread in a definite geographical region. This definite geographical region, in which culture traits, complexes and patterns are spread, is called culture area. It was Wisler, who first of all used the concept of culture area during the study of American Indian cultures. According to Dubey, “Some of the cultural traits or culture complexes spread in a particular geographical region and create culture area.”

In the words of Herskovits, “That region in which similar cultures are found, is called culture area.”

On the basis of above definitions we can say that every culture or its elements spread in a definite geographical area. As culture can be learned, so any person can learn culture. But from practical point of view, it is easy for a person to learn the culture of his own region.

There are the characteristics of mobility and volatility, in cultural elements. Hence they keep on expanding while mixing with the traits and complexes of other culture. In the expansion of cultural elements, there is contribution of means of transport and communication, too. There is cultural exchange, when people of different cultures come in contact.

Therefore, no clear boundary can be fixed for culture area. The cultural characteristics of a region or province nearby a culture area, can be observed in some form or other, in other regions too.

### **Socialisation—Meaning, Stages and Personality Formation**

You might have seen that at the time of birth a child is only a structure of bone and flesh. The does

not know anything about herself and society. He is incapable of participating in social activities, but as the infant grows, staying in the company of parents, brothers and sisters, relatives, friends, neighbours, teachers etc. learns to behave according to social norms, in his day to day life. He adapts himself according to the culture of society. The process of learning and internalising culture is called socialisation.

This process of socialisation goes on lifelong. It is through the medium of process of socialisation, that man transmits his culture from one generation to the other generation. Family is the institution which introduces man to social, cultural and material environment. It is the socialisation process through which man becomes a functional member of society and learns to participate in the activities of society. This means that it is the socialisation process which changes a man from biological animal to social animal. Today in whatever condition a man is, it has become possible due to this process only. Man has adopted almost all works, e.g. language, customs, living style, boarding etc. from this process of socialisation only. Hence all the learned behaviour of man is the outcome of socialisation itself.

### **Meaning and Definition of Socialisation**

That process of learning in which man gets acquainted with his social and cultural world, is called socialisation. In more clear words socialisation is that process in which a person learns the ideals, values, mores, and folkways of his group and society and transmits his social heritage which is known as culture, from one generation to another generation. Sociologists have explained socialisation through the medium of different definitions. Jhonson in his book, ‘Sociology : A Systematic Introduction’ defining socialisation has said, “Socialisation is that process of learning which enables the learners to perform social norms.” It is clear from this definition that socialisation is a process of learning. According to him learning everything is not socialisation, but learning to behave according to social rules and values is known as socialisation. It is through socialisation that a person gets acquainted with his different social statuses and learns to perform roles according to them.

**A.W. Green** in his book ‘Sociology’ has

written, " Socialisation is the process by which the child acquires a cultural content along with selfhood and personality." It is clear from this definition that through socialisation a person learns cultural characteristics and adopts himself according to them. This helps in the development of his personality.

**Gillin and Gillin** in his book, "Cultural Sociology" defining socialisation have written "By the term 'socialisation' we mean the process by which individual develops into a functioning member of the group according to its standards, conforming to its modes, observing its traditions and adjusting himself to the social situations develops the feeling of tolerance towards their friends." Gillin and Gillin in their definition have told that the main function of socialisation is to make the individual an active member of society. According to them a person learns to adopt himself to different conditions of life through the process of socialisation. Besides, through socialisation he also learns how to behave with relatives, friends and neighbours staying nearby. Other scholars have defined socialisation in this way—

**According to Haralambos**, "The process by which individuals learn the culture of their society is known as socialisation"

**According to Kimball Young**, "Socialisation is the process of inducting the individual into the social and cultural world; of making him a particular member in society and its various groups and inducting him to accept the norms and values of that society."

It is clear from the above mentioned definitions that socialisation is the process of learning, in which individual learns the social values, norms and socially approved behaviours. Under this process, a man learns to adopt with social and cultural characteristics of his group and society.

### **Characteristics of Socialisation**

**1. Learning Process**—It is the process of learning which is called socialisation. Learning all kind of behaviour is not socialisation, rather behaviours done according to social values and norms are called socialisation. For example, to learn to do hard work to pass competitive examination, to respect elders and to behave well with disabled persons etc., are

socialisation . But to learn the skill of pick—pocketing, to use blue tooth for cheating to pass the exam, to learn to abuse etc. is not socialisation.

**2. Life long Process**—The process of socialisation starts from childhood and continues till old age. It is a life long process. A person learns more rapidly in childhood than in old age. An individual in his life time acquires many statuses and performs his roles according to those statuses. For example in his childhood he learns how to behave with parents, grand father-grand mother, brother-sister, friends etc. In youth, he acquires the status of husband, father, businessman, office staff or other posts. In old age individual performs the roles according to statuses of grandfather, maternal grandfather, father in law etc. Thus we can say that socialisation is a life-long process in which individual learns socially approved behaviour.

**3. Related to Time and Space**—The process of socialisation is related to time and space. This means that the behaviour which is worthy of reward in one society, may be punishable in other society. For example, In the Masai tribe of Africa people spit on each other to show respect. But if we follow the same way of showing respect then it will be considered unfair.

The process of socialisation is relative to time also. The customs of any society or group changes a lot at two different times. For example a newly wedded bride was taught to follow purdah, but in modern times this is not expected from a new bride.

**4. The Process of Culture Assimilation**—The process of learning culture is socialisation. Through the process of socialisation man learns the material and non-material aspects of culture and assimilates the cultural values, norms and socially approved behaviour. The self of an individual develops in this process of assimilating culture. Slowly that culture which man has learnt through socialisation becomes part of the personality of an individual.

**5. Process of becoming a functional member of society**—Man learns different actions through the process of socialisation and becomes capable of participating in social actions. Acquiring any social status and performing the role according to

this and learning to behave in different circumstances is called socialisation. In lack of the process of socialisation an individual cannot behave in a socially approved way, neither he can be a general member of society.

#### **6. Process of Development of the Self—**

Socialisation is the process of development of self of an individual. Man behaves according to the expectations attached with the statuses, which a man acquires. The development of self of an individual takes place while staying in society. What kind of work is expected from him and what does society thinks of him, man behaves on that basis. It is through socialisation that a man learns to do self—evaluation from the point of view of people of society.

**7. Cultural Transmission—**As we have studied earlier, culture is transmitted from one generation to another. This process of transmission is called socialisation. We internalise cultural heritage by learning from old generation. This process of cultural transmission and assimilation goes on.

#### **Stages of Socialisation**

We have studied earlier that socialisation is a learning process which starts from the birth of a child and goes on life long. Due to being a very long process different psychologists and sociologists have tried to divide the process of socialisation into various stages.

Giddings has mentioned about two levels of socialisation that is; primary and secondary. Parsons has divided socialisation into four parts—

1. Oral stage
2. Anal stage
3. Oedipal stage
4. Adolescent

#### **Other Stages of Socialisation**

5. Youth Stage
6. Adult Stage
7. Old Stage

**These are the various stages of socialisation—**

**1. Oral Stage—**Human infant experiences various tensions after birth. He gets pain from hunger, cold, heat, wetness and therefore he cries. In the first stage of socialisation, child expresses his pleasure—pain, gestures etc. orally hence it is called oral stage.

In the first stage of socialisation a child does not know anybody except his mother. He is unable to differentiate between his role and his mother's role. In this stage a child cannot accept himself separate from his mother. If he is separated from his mother, then he expresses pain by his gestures orally. If due to some reason father or any other member of the family looks after the child, then he too plays the role of mother. In this stage child and mother are interlinked together. Freud has called this situation as 'primary introduction'. Child feels pleasure from the physical contact of his mother. This stage lasts for one and a half year from the birth.

**2. Anal Stage—**The second stage of socialisation is anal stage. This stage begins in different societies in different ages. In Indian society this stage starts from one and a half or two years and lasts till three-four years of age. In this stage child is given toilet-training. It is expected from him that he should learn to be slightly self-dependent.

For example—washing hands, not wetting the bed, not defiling the clothes, brushing teeth, going for defecation at proper place, etc. This stage starts from defecation crisis. In this mother teaches the child to use toilets for defecation. If the child behaves properly then he gets love from his mother and gets punishment for doing improper behaviour. In this way mother and child get identified with each other. He gets loved by his mother and he loves his mother too. Mother faces many difficulties in training the child for defecation and getting rid of the habit of breast feeding. This stage of socialisation is very painful for mother and child, both. A mother does not feel pleasure while training the child for defecation and quitting from breast feeding the child. But keeping in mind the final results, she does this affective role. In the end of this stage child comes in contact with other members of family. He learns to speak, walk and play.

**3. Oedipal or Maternal Love Stage—**This stage generally begins at fourth year and lasts till twelve or thirteen years of age. Psychologists have told it oedipal crisis stage. This is the period in which the feelings of 'Oedipus Complex' and 'Electra Complex' take birth in the children. Psychologists have made it clear that 'Oedipus Complex' is that



feeling of the boy in which son is affectionate towards his mother and he desires monopoly over her and something similar feeling a daughter has for her father which is called 'Electra Complex'.

In this stage it is expected from the children that they behave according to their gender. They get rewarded for behaving according to their gender. There is differences in the toys and dresses of boys and girls. Due to this a child gets aware of opposite gender and inclination towards opposite sex increases. In this stage many questions arise in child's mind. To escape from these intimate crisis of mind and for the acceptance of new demands of independent existence, a child spends more time in the group of his friends.

**4. Adolescence**—Adolescence is the transitional period of human life in which an adolescent faces heavy tensions and conflicts. In this stage children want to be free more and more from their parental control. In this stage adolescents try to behave according to their bio—genic motivations and fulfil their attitudes. Adolescents feel at ease with their friends rather than family members. In this age physical changes are clearly seen among boys and girls. Due to these physical and mental changes, different kind of tensions might be observed in them. One reason of these tensions is that in this stage only adolescent takes many decisions of his life. Among these selection of life partner, occupation or selecting any job etc. are included. While taking these decisions, it is essential for adolescent to keep in mind his family traditions and cultural values. In this stage he has to adjust with many new people. During this stage only, the feeling of self—control and super—ego develops in them through cultural values and personal experiences.

### Other Stages of Socialisation

These four are the main stages of socialisation. We know that socialisation is a lifelong process which changes biological animal into social animal. The socialisation of individual is not complete only in these four stages, rather in other three stages, e.g. youth, adult and old stage the process of learning goes on. Though it is true that these four stages play important role in personality formation because in them only an individual learns his culture, language and takes

important decisions of his family and occupational life. In the later stage the process of socialisation gets simple and automatic. In addition to these four stages from oral stage to adolescent stage, these are three other stages of socialisation—

**Youth Stage**—In this stage a person becomes young. He starts doing some job according to his ability and caliber. During vocation he acquires many statuses and plays different roles with officers, employees and subordinate staffs working there. It is in youth stage that a person gets married. Getting tied up in matrimony he acquires many new statuses, e.g. husband, brother-in-law, son-in-law, father, uncle etc. He has to discharge the role expected of these statuses. In the life of an individual youth stage is the period of maximum responsibilities. It is expected of him that he will discharge the responsibilities towards his parents, younger brothers—sisters, wife, son—daughter etc. Due to playing different roles together he has to face role—conflicts.

**Adult Stage**—In this stage, the responsibilities of an individual grows more. In this stage only, individual adjusts with the arrangement of higher education for children, their marriage and career anxiety etc. like different situations. As he gets promotion in his job, so he has to face new situations. In adult stage, along with acquiring new statuses an individual internalises different roles too easily.

**Old Stage**—Even in old stage the process of socialisation goes on. In this stage many social, physical and psychological changes take place in a person. A person becomes physically weak, losses competence to work, economic dependence grows due to retirement and gets frustrated due to ideological differences with new generation. Though he has almost finished his responsibilities before this stage, nevertheless he acquires new statuses now e.g. grandfather, great-grandfather. maternal grandfather, father in law etc. and performs the roles accordingly.

Thus we can say that the process of socialisation goes on lifelong in which man keeps on learning something or the other from birth till last moments.

### Major Institutions of Socialisation (Agencies)

Man in his whole life time becomes the members of many institutions and groups and learns



many things from them. This keeps the process of socialisation always going on. During his socialisation man adopts with different social institutions. The institutions playing major role in individual's socialisation can be divided into two parts.

- (1) Primary Institutions
- (2) Secondary Institutions

It can be understood in this way—

Major Institutions of Socialisation (Agencies)

Primary Institutions	Secondary Institutions
Family	Educational Institutions
Play Group	Political Institutions
Neighbourhood	Economic Institutions
Kin group	Cultural Institutions
Marriage	Religious Institutions
	Occupational Groups

(1) **Family**—The role of family is very important among the institutions doing socialisation. Family is the first school of child where staying in contact with his parents, brother-sister, uncle, aunty etc., he learns the knowledge of norms, folkways, customs and culture of his society. By staying in contact with the members of family he acquires the knowledge of different roles and learns to behave according to them.

(2) **Play-Group**—Among primary institutions play-group or friend circle is too important from the point of view of socialisation. Children spend most of the time in company of their friends after the family. Children learn different behaviour from their same-age groups. They learn rules of game, discipline, competition, adaptation, conflict etc. from their friend circle only.

(3) **Neighbourhood**—Since childhood an individual stays in contact with his neighbours. Neighbours provide important contribution in socialisation. Their praise and contempt inspire individual to behave in a socially approved manner. The impact of neighbours is felt more in villages than in cities.

(4) **Kin-group**—In Kin-group those relatives are included, which are related through blood or matrimonial ties. An individual learns many things from the contact with brother-sister, husband-wife, mother in law-father in law, brother in law-sister in law, devar-bhabhi etc. and other relatives. He

performs roles according to them and gains the knowledge of different rules of behaviour.

(5) **Marriage**—Many changes occur in the life of an individual after marriage. After marriage only he has to discharge many new responsibilities. Husband-wife have to keep the feeling of sacrifice and loyalty for each other. Husband-wife themselves in future become mother-father and grand father-grand mother and learn to perform the roles according to these statuses.

### Secondary Institutions—

(1) **Educational Institutions**—A child learns many things from his teachers, textbooks and class mates in educational institutions. These educational institutions school, college, university etc. are important. An individual slowly becomes a functional member of society by studying in these educational institutions and builds his personality.

(2) **Political Institutions**—Political institutions make an individual aware towards his rights and duties. Through the medium of these institutions only, an individual becomes an aware citizen of society by gaining the knowledge about law, governance, discipline and different plans .

(3) **Economic Institutions**—Economic institutions direct man's living and occupational activities. It is these institutions which teach a person the feelings of cooperation, competition and adjustment. The characteristics of dishonesty and honesty too are learnt through these economic institutions.

(4) **Cultural Institutions**—These institutions acquaint an individual with his culture. Through these institutions a person gains the knowledge of his customs, literature, dresses, traditions, music, art, language etc. and develops his personality .

(5) **Religious Institutions**—A man's life is deeply affected by religion. No society can exist without religion. Due to religion only the feelings of peace, purity, morality, mercy, ideal, honesty, justice etc. develop in a person. The notion of sin-virtue and heaven-hell force people to behave according to social norms.

(6) **Occupational Groups**—An individual acts according to his status or the occupation with which he is engaged in. He comes in contact with many low

or high officials, agents, and manager during his vocation. In this process he gains occupational knowledge and acquaints himself with new works.

### Theories of Socialisation

Psychologists and Sociologists have tried to explain the theory of socialisation on the basis of 'Development of Self'. 'Self' is a mental fact rather than being a physical fact. These are some theories related with development of 'Self' and socialisation—

#### Theory of C.H.Cooley

American Sociologist C.H.Cooley in his book **"Human Nature and the Social Order"** has discussed in detail about his theory of socialisation. He has clarified in his theory that how any biological animal becomes a social animal. Cooley has presented this theory on the basis of relationship between individual and society. In his view a man's 'Self' develops while staying in society. Society acts as a mirror for him. As a person tries to see his 'self' in a mirror, in the same way every person tries to see his 'Self' in society's mirror. What do people in society say about him, on that basis he forms his views about himself. As by seeing our image in mirror we evaluate that we are looking good or not, similarly a child sees his image in social mirror and forms opinion about oneself that what do people think about him. On the basis of this opinion feeling of superiority or inferiority develops in him. For example, every person has a strong desire to know that what do members of family, friends and people in society think about him and what is the perception of society about him. If people think that he is wise, disciplined, attractive or well behaved then he develops a feeling of superiority about himself. But contrary to this if somebody consider him as fool, indisciplined, aggressive and combative then he develops a feeling of inferiority about himself. Thus, from the reactions of others towards oneself, a man creates his 'Self'. Therefore, Cooley has termed this theory as 'Looking Glass Self Theory'.

Cooley has explained his theory on the basis of Looking Glass Self. According to Cooley every individual passes through three stages in this process—

A—An individual thinks that what other people think about him.

B—On the basis of views of others what does he think of himself.

C—By thinking about oneself how does he consider himself, that is to say either he feels guilt or pride.

Horton and Hunt have explained these three things by giving an example. Suppose you enter a room, where some people are talking in a group among themselves. As soon as you enter they leave the room by making some excuse and this happens frequently, then you will develop a feeling of inferiority about yourself. Contrary to this, when you enter the room, everyone surrounds you and wants to talk to you, then you will feel pride. Therefore, whatever reactions about us are expressed by the individuals in society, we form similar views about ourselves. This is called 'Looking Glass Self' by Cooley.

Thus formation of 'Self' takes place due to individual's contact with other members of society. On the basis of formation of 'Self' individual evaluates himself. In this process only individual considers oneself superior or inferior and does his own socialisation.

#### Mead's Theory

Mead has discussed his theory of socialisation in the book, "Mind, Self and Society". Mead has the opinion that it is individual who creates society, and which has brain and 'Self'. At the time of birth a child is only a biological animal in which there is lack of wisdom. At that time he acts by being inspired from internal drives. It is by staying in contact with society that, an individual learns to behave according to the expectations of others. In this way a child's 'self' gets affected by the behaviour of others. It is this only which Mead has termed as 'Generalised Others'.

That opinion of a person about oneself which other people keep for him is known as 'Generalised Other'.

In other words what other people decide about him and what expectations they have from him, a man internalises them, that one is called 'Generalised Other'. Mead has used two words 'I' and 'Me' to clarify the development of 'Self Consciousness' in an individual. The meaning of 'I' is associated with the behaviour which a person does with others. By 'Me'

is meant the reactions of others for the behaviours done by him, which is internalised by him. It is due to interaction between 'I' and 'Me' that the development of 'Self' takes place, and thus socialisation of a person takes place.

Due to contact with society whatever a child learns, he tries to repeat. For example during game a child by playing the roles of his mother-father, thief-police etc. and performs the roles. He behaves in such a manner, which occur with them in real life. The child adopts the behaviour of others through the medium of imitation, signs and language. Slowly he develops the capability to perform different kind of roles, which is called by Mead as 'Development of Self'.

Some scholars have used the term 'Important Other' in place of 'Generalised Other'. The individual whose approval we desire in our behaviour and whose direction we accept is called 'Important Other'. These may be parents, teachers, praiseworthy persons or friends. Individual forms his personality in the direction of 'Important Others'.

When a person receives respect from the 'Important Others' then he considers himself honoured. On the basis of given respect from 'Important Others' the development of 'Self Respect' takes place in a person, and thus formation of personality of the individual takes place in right direction.

### **Freud's Theory—**

Psychologist Sigmund Freud has explained his theory on the basis of mental actions. On the basis of mental actions Freud has divided the brain into three parts—(1) Conscious Mind (2) Sub-Conscious Mind (3) Unconscious Mind. Those events and actions of an individual's life are included in 'Conscious Mind' in which he performs his actions in a conscious state. 'Sub-Conscious Mind' is the store of man's past experiences and events. Regarding 'Unconscious Mind' Freud has the opinion that as the maximum part of an iceberg is under the water, similarly a major part of human personality is guided by unconscious and unforeseen forces. According to Freud, experiences and events stored in mind, contribute in the formation of personality.

Freud in his theory of socialisation has divided the 'Self' into three parts-Id, Ego and Super-Ego. 'Id' is the basis of all the mental activities of an individual and it is related with the sum of basic drives, inspirations, antisocial desires and self interests. Before 'Id' there is no question of right-wrong, moral-immoral etc. It wants satisfaction anyhow.

'Ego' works on the principle of reality. It is the conscious and logical aspect of 'Self' which controls the 'Id' and directs it to behave according to the circumstances. Though 'Ego' too does not give much importance to moral—immoral, love and hatred etc. but even then 'Ego' is more practical than 'Id'. 'Ego' directs the 'Id' to behave according to the circumstances for fulfilling the necessities.

'Super-Ego' is related with the moral values and norms of the society. 'Super-Ego' tells the individual about what rules have been made for fulfilling one's desires?

This can be understood through an example. Suppose 'Id' 'Ego' and 'Super-Ego' are three brothers. 'Id' is the youngest, 'Ego' is in the middle, and 'Super-Ego' is the elder brother. Younger brother (Id) manifests his desire to eat mangoes which he saw laden on the trees of a garden. Middle brother (Ego) persuades him to stop and wait till the gardener goes somewhere, and then he can pluck the mangoes. But the elder brother (Super-Ego) tells that stealing is sin. If one has to eat mangoes then he should get it by paying money, otherwise he should avoid.

Thus there is conflict between the 'Id' and 'Super-Ego'. According to Freud, in this process to what extent the individual behaves according to the 'Super-Ego', till that extent his socialisation is considered successful.

It is clear from these theories of socialisation that development of the 'Self' of an individual takes place by staying in society only. Along with the development of the 'Self', personality of the individual also develops.

Being separated from the society, an individual cannot be the functional member of the society and neither he can participate in different activities of the society.

For the formation of personality socialisation is essential. To understand this we can take the example





- Adolescence is that transitional phase of human life in which an adolescent has to face huge tension and conflict.
- It is the family, which is the first school of a child.
- It is due to religion that feelings of peace, purity, morality, mercy, ideal, honesty, justice etc. develop in a person.
- Freud has divided the mind into three parts—(1) Conscious Mind (2) Sub—conscious Mind (3) Unconscious Mind .
- Freud in his theory of socialisation has divided the ‘Self’ into three parts—Id, Ego and Super-Ego.
- It is only by staying in society that man develops his personality by learning the culture.

### Questions for Practice

#### Multiple Choice Questions

- Which among these is not the characteristics of culture?  
(a) Culture is learned.  
(b) Culture is man-made.  
(c) Culture is bought.  
(d) Culture is social.
- The smallest unit of culture is called  
(a) Cultural Trait (b) Culture Complex  
(c) Culture Pattern (d) Culture Area
- “Socialisation is that process of learning which enables the learner to perform social roles”. Who has given this definition?  
(a) Green (b) Gillin and Gillin  
(c) Johnson (d) Merton
- What is meant by socialisation among these?  
(a) Integrating process of society  
(b) Learning process of culture  
(c) Process of roaming  
(d) Process of talking with persons
- Who is the author of the book, “Mind, Self and Society”?  
(a) Freud (b) Cooley  
(c) Weber (d) Mead
- Freud has given which theory of socialisation?  
(a) Staying in society  
(b) Of ‘I’ and ‘Me’  
(c) Of Looking Glass Self  
(d) Of ‘Id’, ‘Ego’, and ‘Super Ego’

#### Very Short Answer Type Questions

- Write any two characteristics of culture.
- Give any one definition of socialisation.
- What does Freud mean by the condition of ‘Primary Introduction’ ?
- Who has written the book “Human Nature and Social Order”?
- What is the first school of socialisation ?
- According to Freud how do we gain the knowledge of Right-Wrong?
- Write the names of two secondary institutions.
- Due to what kind of knowledge man is different from animals?
- According to Herskovits what is created from the meaningful combination of cultural traits?

#### Short Answer Type Questions

- Define culture according to Tylor.
- Culture is transmitted from one generation to another. Elaborate.
- “No element of culture is futile”. Explain.
- How is the process of socialisation relative to time and space?
- What do you mean by oedipus complex and electra complex?
- Elaborate any two primary institutions of socialisation.
- “The process of socialisation goes on lifelong.” Elaborate.
- What is the “Looking Glass Self” theory?

#### Essay Type Questions

- Define culture. Write it’s main characteristics.
- Discuss the components of culture.
- ‘Culture’ is super-individual and super-organic. explain.
- Define socialisation and discuss it’s characteristics.
- Discuss various stages of socialisation.
- Elaborate Freud’s theory of socialisation.
- Who has given the theory of ‘Generalised Others’? Discuss in detail.
- Describe the main institutions of socialisation.

#### Answer Key

- (c) 2. (a) 3. (c) 4. (b) 5. (d) 6. (d)