

Meaning and Scope of Educational Sociology

INTRODUCTION

Man is a social animal. He is born and brought up in society. He spends his whole life in society. Human history is a standing proof of his social nature, social feelings and social behaviour. In short, he is a part and parcel of the society. Hence, we cannot think of a human life without a society. Social interaction among individuals is a constant process which develops fellow-feeling, friendship, relationship and social elements. Sociology, according to Duncan, is the scientific study of dynamic processes of interaction of persons and the patterns. These form a relation with biological, psychological and cultural influences. In the words of Merrill and Eldridge, the field of study of sociology is 'human relationships'. According to E. Durkheim, "Sociology is the science of collective representation".

MEANING OF SOCIOLOGY

Before discussing the term "educational sociology", it is necessary to understand the meaning of the word 'sociology'. Auguste Comte, the well-known French philosopher, used the word 'Sociology' for the first time in his lecture in 1837. (He coined the word 'Sociology' by combining the Greek word *Societus* meaning society and the Latin word *Logos* meaning 'Science' 'or' 'Study'.) (He recognised sociology as a fundamental science which deals with the application of scientific method to study the relationship between society and the individual.) Since Comte advocated the scientific study of society for the

first time, he is considered as the Father of sociology. According to him, sociology is the synthesis of all sciences and as such it should be effectively used in the reformation and reconstruction of society. Hence, sociology is the scientific study of society or it maybe called the science of society. (In short, sociology is the science of the nature and growth of society.) The teaching of sociology started in 1876 in the United Nations; in 1889 in France; in 1907 in Great Britain, after the World War I in Poland and India; in 1925 in Egypt and Mexico; and in 1947 in Sweden. Hence, sociology is the youngest of social science.

DEFINITION OF SOCIOLOGY

Alex Inkeles: "Sociology is the study of systems of social action and their inter relations".

Comete, Ward, Blackmar, Gillonin, Giddings: ("Sociology is the science of society").

Gilllin and Gillin: "It is the study of interactions arising from the association of living beings".

Maclver, Page, Abel: ("Sociology is the study of the nature of social relationships")

Max Weber: "Sociology is a science which attempts the interpretative understanding of social action".

Green: "Sociology is the synthesizing and generalizing science of man in all his social relationships".

Parson, Merton: ("Sociology is the study of social action".)

John Madge: "It is the study of the interacting groups of which all societies are composed".

Morris Ginsberg: "Sociology is the study of the conditions and consequences of human inter-action and inter-relations".

Kimball Young: ("Sociology is the study of human behaviour in groups".)

J.F. Cuber: "Sociology may be defined as a body of scientific knowledge about human relationships".

Fair Child: ("Sociology is the study of the relationships between man and his human environments".)

It is clear from the given definitions that the central theme of sociology is social interaction. Social interaction includes interaction with cultural and other institutions such as family, play groups, peer groups, religious, economic and educational institutions. It studies the customs and traditions that grow

out of these interactions, the institutions that crystallise these basic human interests and the changes that occur in these institutions. Thus, in the study of sociology different forms of human inter-relations are involved. In the words of Robbins, "Sociology deals with the whole man in relation to all the social, cultural and bio-physical backgrounds". We may define Sociology thus "Sociology is the study of human relationship and behaviour in the social environments".

★ MEANING OF EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY ✓

Educational sociology is a branch of sociology which has come into existence as a synthesis between Education and Sociology. E. George Payne is regarded as the father of educational sociology. According to him, "Educational sociology is the applied science in the field of sociology". It emphasises that the aims of sociology should be achieved through educational processes. Thus, educational sociology is that science which studies social activities, human groups, social institutions and agencies which fulfil the needs of education. It concerns itself with the development of individuals and society. It is, therefore, necessary to study the working of various social institutions, customs and traditions, social rules, codes and norms of behaviour which affect human progress and development through various educational activities and experiences.

Educational sociology is a branch of sociology which deals with the problems of the relationship between society and education. It is the application of sociological principles to education for the sake of the improvement of educational programmes in the schools. Educational sociology is an important division of sociological studies like criminal sociology, industrial sociology, medical sociology, occupational sociology, rural sociology, social stratification sociology and urban sociology. The theme of educational sociology is preserving and modifying the society. Thus, educational sociology is a separate subject which has been developed by prominent educationists and sociologists such as Auguste Comte, George Payne, John Dewey, Ottaway, David Snedden, Allen Cook, George Counts, Hilda Taba, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Oris Herod Clarke, Karl Mannheim, MacIver, Morris Ginsberg, Davis, Frédérick Lepay, Moore, Dollard and Merrill)

★ DEFINITION OF EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

The term 'educational sociology' has been defined by different educationists and sociologists in the following manner:

✓ George E. Payne: "Educational Sociology is a science which describes and explains the institutions, social groups, and social processes or social concerns, that is, the social relationship in which or through which the individual gains and organizes his experiences".

✓ **Ottaway:** "Educational Sociology is the scientific study of the relationship between education and society".

Brown: "Educational Sociology is the study of interaction of the individual and his cultural environment including other individuals, social groups and patterns of behaviour".

✓ **Robinson Smith:** "Educational Sociology is the application of the scientific methods and principles of sociology to the study of education".

Good: "Educational Sociology is the scientific study of how people live in social group especially in the study of education that is obtained by living in the social groups, and education that is needed by the members to live efficiently in social groups".

Alvin Good: "Educational sociology is the study of education which is obtained by man in social groups and the education that is needed by the member to live efficiently in the social groups".

Roucek: "Educational Sociology is sociology applied to the solution of fundamental educational problems".

D.W. Dodson: "Educational sociology is particularly interested in finding out how to manipulate the educational process to achieve better personality development".

Carte: "Educational sociology is the study of those processes of sociology that are significant for the educative process".

✓ **Cook and Cook:** "Educational Sociology is the study of human factors in the educative process, with the aim to improve teaching and learning in all types of educational systems".

From the given definitions, it is discerned that educational sociology is the study of the relationship between education and society. Hence, we may define the term "educational sociology" as the branch of sociology which scientifically deals with the impact of society on education and education on society, their relationship in solving problems related to them. In short, educational sociology through the medium of education socialises human beings and links man with society.