

17.3 NATURE OF SOCIOLOGY

What is real nature of sociology about this controversy is likely to continue. According to Robert Stead, Sociology is a social science and not a natural science, because it deals with human beings and social phenomena. It is positive and not normative science because it studies social phenomena as it is and not as it ought to be. It is pure and not applied science because it studies underlying factors of a social phenomenon. Sociology is an abstract and not a concrete science because it studies society in general. It deals with society, which in itself is abstract and as such the subject cannot be concrete. It is a science of generalisation and not that of particularisation because it studies a social problem in general, and not in particular way. It does not study a social phenomenon from a particular angle. It is an empirical or rational science because it tries to follow logical method of data collection.

17.4 IMPORTANCE OF SOCIOLOGY

Sociology is becoming quite popular subject of study because it has some obvious advantages. These may briefly be discussed as under:

- Sociology attempts to study how and why people are organised as a society. It allows for a scientific study of society as an organisation, which is of help in the formulation and implementation of policies that benefit society.
- It analyses the structure of society and studies the factors that contribute to the creation of social groups.
- Sociology includes the study of behavioural patterns, interactions, and relationships among the individuals of society, as well as their ethical and moral values.
- It tries to examine the organisational structure of society and the influence it has on the social, political, and religious ideas of its members.
- It attempts to analyse the creation and management of social groups as well as the factors which lead to their breakdown.
- It is a subject which helps us in assessing available human resources and extent of human resources needed for solving our social problems. In this way sociology helps in human planning process which contributes significantly in economic problem.
- It provides us basic and fundamental knowledge about human society, which includes strong and weak points of society, including

- human relationships. In this way it saves us from duping in the dark
- Each society is faced with social problems, which in turn create economic and political problems. Some of the social evils are deep rooted and it is essential that these should be rooted out. Sociology helps us both in identifying those problems and finding out their solution. Without proper understanding magnitude of the problems, these cannot be appropriately tackled.
 - It is sociology which helps us in conciliation and adjustment. Each society has diverse elements. These, if not properly reconciled, can result in disorganisation and de-stabilisation of the society. It is sociology which helps us in understanding the extent of diversity and the way in which this diversity can be converted into homogeneity.
 - Sociology helps us in social reconstruction.
 - Each society has its cultural heritage and wants to preserve that. It is sociology which high-lights and researches past culture heritages, and also helps in the development and growth of cosmopolitan culture, so that there are no cultural clashes.
 - It helps in bringing family stability. It is sociology which helps us in identifying the causes of family instability and family disorganisation. It is again sociology which tells us how emerging de-stabilising trends in the family should be checked, so that strong family system continues.
 - It is sociology which helps us in understanding social problems. Many social problems remain unidentified and many with the passage of time become maladies. It is essential that these should be timely checked before their tackling becomes difficult. It is sociology which helps us in timely identifying social problems.
 - It helps us in properly understanding the needs of social relationship and the way in which this relationship should be maintained.
 - It is sociology which makes us tolerant by telling us good points and healthy customs, traditions, norms and value of other societies. It enables us to appreciate what is the best in them which needs to be adjusted in our life style. Thus, sociology helps us in tolerating others and appreciating their view point.
 - Sociology studies the role that social institutions play in the development of an individual. These institutions are those through which the society functions. Examples include family, school, church, and the government.
 - Sociology helps us understand how people influence the government and law, and how the legal system and political structure influence society and social norms. It gives us an understanding of our rights and duties as parts of society and thus makes us better citizens.

* NATURE OF EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

Educational sociology is an important division of sociology which has the following characteristics:

1. Educational sociology is a theoretical study of the interaction between the individual and the society.
2. Educational sociology is also a practical study of the forces of interaction between the individual and the society.

theoretical & practical

3. Educational sociology regulates and controls the interacting forces of individuals and society.
4. It is an educational method to develop one's personality.
5. It establishes the relationship between society and education.

NEED FOR EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

The combined approach of education and sociology is necessary in order to foster social feelings among the people to achieve better human relationship. Educational sociology is considered necessary for the following reasons:

1. The larger aims of sociology cannot be achieved without integrating the process of education into it.
2. Without making a micro study of social problems through education, we cannot think of a macro solution.
3. Educational sociology studies social processes and interactions very objectively. It is essential to find solutions for educational problems.
4. It is needed to foster social attitudes among the people through education and to improve human relationship.
5. Educational sociology studies social activities and social institutions in the context of future social needs also. It is, therefore, very helpful for the progress of education.
6. Educational sociology gives equal weightage to the development of the individual as well as the society.
7. Education and sociology are interrelated and interdependent. Sociology without education is like a body without a soul and education without sociology is like a vehicle without wheels. Hence, the combination of education and sociology, that is, educational sociology is necessary for cultural and social development.

★ IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

1. Man should be socialised to lead a group life. So, he should learn and understand the significance of social adjustment at school. For this purpose educational sociology recognises the social nature of man and plans accordingly.
2. It emphasises the belief that all men are equal. In fact, the influence of educational sociology guarantees every man the right to have education according to one's needs, aptitude, interests and ability. There is no bar such as race, caste, creed, colour and sex for any individual to develop more and more to the utmost extent.
3. It protects and promotes the progress of culture. It fosters those cultural qualities which promote international understanding and welfare.

4. It formulates rules and procedures which establish and develop social growth among individuals and make them active participants in social activities.
5. It secures for an individual self-reliance and self-development.
6. It tries to secure and promote happy life for all individuals. It makes people to understand their welfare and strive to achieve social good for all.
7. School is an integral part of the society. It is the reflection of society. Hence, any change we want to bring about in the society requires its foundation to be laid in the school. It is because small and immatured representatives of the society will lead the society in future when they are matured.
8. Educational sociology helps the educationists in constructing the curriculum keeping in view the socio-economic tendencies and demands of society.
9. It helps us to provide sound social bases for educational researches. In fact, sociological researches in education have special significance.
10. It analyses the causes of social and group conflicts and helps to remove them by imparting suitable education.
11. It prepares and develops the child for living independently in the society.
12. It studies the social elements which affect the individual objectively, and apply them in the educational environment of the school.

★ ✓ SCOPE OF EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

The scope of educational sociology is a wide and comprehensive subject. This is because it deals with the influences of educational process on sociology and the effects of sociological process on education. It deals with the impact of the total cultural milieu in which and through which experience is required and organized. In fact, anything under the sun which concerns society is the theme of sociology. Hence, the scope of educational sociology includes the following factors:

- ✓ 1. Mutual relationship among students and their impact on education. ✓
- ✓ 2. Mutual relationship between teachers and students and their impact on teaching—learning process. ✓
- ✓ 3. It includes how culture is (handed over to) coming generations through agencies like the school, the home, the religious organisation and the play and peer groups. ✓ *transmitted*
- ✓ 4. It includes how socialisation takes place in the child as a result of social interaction. ✓
- ✓ 5. It includes the role of the school, the press, the radio, the television and the cinema in the educational process. ✓ *mass-media*

6. It includes how education serves as a means of social change and social control. ✓
7. The impact of sociological thinking on the meaning, aims, and functions of education, the curriculum including co-curricular activities, social organization and the methodology of teaching ✓
8. The place of the teacher in the society. ✓
9. Social aspirations, needs and problems and their impact on education and life. ✓
10. Interrelationship of education and sociology. ✓
11. Social organisation and their role on education and school administration. ✓
12. The place of school in the society and its relationship with society and other small organizations. ✓
13. Effects of social patterns and culture on education. ✓
14. Progress of democratic values in educational institutions. ✓
15. Role of education in socialisation and social change. ✓
16. Social life in the school. ✓
17. Promotion of social feeling in the students. ✓
18. Curriculum and the needs of the society. ✓
19. Equalisation of educational opportunities. ✓
20. National integration. ✓
21. New world order and its impact on education in future.
22. School and community. ✓
23. Role of the mass media in education and social progress. ✓
24. Use of group and cooperative methods of teaching. ✓
25. Terrorism and fundamentalism in relation to social change. ✓

OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

Prof. Harington has suggested a few objectives of educational sociology. They are:

1. To acquire knowledge about the school work in relation to society and social progress.
2. To gain knowledge about the role of the teacher in relation to the society and social progress.
3. To acquire knowledge about the effects of social elements on the individual.
4. To construct a curriculum fully understanding the economic and cultural tendencies of the society.
5. To gain knowledge about the democratic values or ideologies.
6. To study the effects of the individual on social elements.
7. To employ research techniques for achieving the aims of educational sociology.