

Open Educational Resources

Topic-Introduction, Meaning and Concept of Sociology

Introduction :

The briefest acceptable definition of sociology is that it is the science of human association. Man is a social being. The whole existence of man is in social groups. The study of sociology implies an examination of the laws and principles underlying human relations and an interpretation of phenomenon of group life. Sociology is the youngest and less developed addition to the social sciences.

The well-known French philosopher Auguste Comte used the word 'sociology' in 1837, to designate the application of scientific method to the study of human nature and society. He said that sociology was a fundamental science because it had a method of exact investigation, collection of data (about mankind) like any other science. He believed that sociology dealt with complex and intricate social phenomenon. His vaguely defined ideas were taken up by Herbert Spencer, August Schaffle and Lester F. Ward.

Herbert Spencer, the great English philosopher published his book "The Principles of Sociology" in 1876, describing the individual as a cell and the society as an organism. An individual has to perform different functions in society, just as cells perform different functions in an organism.

Meaning and Concept of Sociology

- (1) Moore and Coole describe sociology as a study of plural behaviour. Plural behaviour means behaviour in relation to others i.e. behaviour of man in relation to other men, group or associations. The central idea of sociology is social interaction i.e. interaction with culture, family, the play and the peer group, religious, economic and educational institutions and every form of group living.
- (2) Max Weber defined sociology as a science which interprets social behaviour with the aim of arriving at a casual explanation of human behaviour.
- (3) Merritt and Eldridge describe sociology as a study of "human relationships". It studies the customs and traditions which grow after the human beings interact with each other and also the changes that occur in these institutions. It also helps us to understand the forces that bring changes, and also the effects of these changes on behaviour and personality, development in

individuals.

- (4) Duncan says, "Sociology is the scientific study of the processes of interactions of persons and patterns which these form in relation to biological, psychological and cultural factors."
- (5) Morris Ginsberg points out, "Sociology is the study of human interaction and inter-relation, their conditions and consequences." It is concerned with all that happens to human beings by "virtue of their relationship to each other."
- (6) Robbins lays emphasis on the fact that "Sociology deals with the whole man in relation to all the social, cultural and biophysical backgrounds." Man is studied in relation to all the aspects of his surroundings : the focus is on his social relationships, which include all culture, religion and other institutions. Sociology is thus the study of societies, institutions and social relationships.

Conclusion

It is a scientific study of man as a social being, living in organised communities to which he belongs either by birth or by choice. Sociology is a science which describes the social groups and social processes in which and through which the individual gains and organises his experiences. It also analyses such process of interaction as competition, conflict, cooperation, accommodation and assimilation, as well as their results such as acculturation and socialization. Sociology also deals with social problems such as crime, juvenile delinquency, poverty and other ills, with a view to their solution.

SUGGESTED BOOKS AND WEB SOURCES

1. Philosophical and Sociological : T.S. Sodhi and Bases
of Education. Harinder Kaur Sodhi
2. Theory and Principles : J.C.Aggarwalof
Education
3. The Philosophical and Sociological : Bhatia and Bhatia
Foundations of Education
4. Philosophy and Sociology of : R.N.Sharma
Education

Web Sources

- (a) en.wikipedia.org
- (b) books.google.co.in
- (c) www.cceindia.org.
- (d) <https://www.pupdepartments.ac.in/de/>