

Programme:- Master in Sociology
Postgraduate Department of Sociology
Patna University, Patna

Semester-III

Compulsory Paper:- C.C. 11 (SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN INDIA)

Unit I:- Social Disorganization and Social Problems Concepts and Theories

Characteristics of Social Disorganisation:

The main characteristics of social disorganisation are the following:

(i) Conflict of Moeres and of Institutions:

As we have studied earlier every society has its moeres and institutions which regulate the life of its members. With the passage of time, these moeres and institution become obsolete. New ideals arise and new institutions are formed. The existing moeres come into conflict with new moeres.

Some people want to replace them by new ones. This destroys consensus in society. With the destruction of consensus, social organisation breaks up and social disorganisation ensues. In the Indian society we can see such conflict of moeres and institutions.

If, on the one hand, there are critics of caste system, on the other hand there are its staunch supporters. There is a strong difference of opinion on a number of other issues like divorce, family planning, untouchability, love-marriage, joint family system, women education, widow remarriage, education etc.

On the one hand, we denounce caste system while on the other we apply casteism in the selection of candidates for political offices, recruitment to public services and admission to educational institutions. There is much confusion of moeres in our society and so we are passing through a state of social disorganisation. Elliot and Merrill called social organisation fundamentally a problem of consensus and when there is disagreement concerning moeres and institutions, the seeds of social disorganisation have been sown.

(ii) Transfer of Functions from one Group to Another:

In an organised society the functions of different groups are defined and predetermined. But as society is dynamic, the functions of one group are transferred to another. Thus most of the functions once performed by the family stand transferred today to nurseries, schools and clubs. This has caused family disorganisation. Thus transfer of functions from one group to another is characteristic of social disorganisation.

(iii) Individuation:

Man today thinks in terms of self. The functions of different groups are determined in purely individualistic terms. Under the impact of individualism every person thinks upon all the important matters of life from his individual viewpoint. The young men and women want to take decisions on such important matters as marriage, occupation, recreation and morality in accordance with their individual prejudices, interests and attitudes. This trend has set in a dangerous process of social disorganisation.

(iv) Change in the Role and Status of the Individuals:

In an organised society the roles and status of people are defined and fixed. Their functions are well defined and they carry on the tasks allotted to them. They enjoy the status in accordance with their role in society. A primitive society suffers less from disorganisation because it is stable and its members follow the professions allocated to them.

But in course of time our norms change which also brings a change in the roles and statuses of the people. They no longer are treated as fixed and the people begin to choose from amongst the different role which causes disequilibrium. Thus the women are no longer confined to homes.

They work in offices. This change in the roles of women has caused family disorganisation. The Government of India is making efforts to raise the status of the lower classes which has led to disorganisation in the caste system. Faris writes, "Social disorganization is the disruption of the natural relation of persons to a degree that interferes with the performance of the accepted tasks of the group."