

INDUSTRIAL SOCIOLOGY: UNIT-1

Nature and Scope of Industrial Sociology-Development of Industrial Sociology

Industry

Any organization which has the primary aim of producing goods and services, exchanging them or organizing and manipulating monetary processes is called Industry.

Industry may be defined as **“the application of complex and sophisticated methods for the production of economic goods and services.”** The complex and sophisticated methods refer to the use of machines which improve the quality and quantity of production.

Sociology

The word Sociology has been derived from the Latin word ‘Socius’ means companion. The suffix has been derived from the Greek word ‘logos’ means the study of society, including patterns of social relationship, social interaction and culture. Sociology can be defined as the study of human society focusing on the social patterns and its influence on humans.

In the words of **Maclver and Page**, **“Sociology is about social relationships, the network of relationships we call society”**. In simple words, sociology is a science of social relations. It is the scientific study of the social aspects of human life.

Scope and Application of Sociology

- 1) Sociology can help us to understand the role of work in people’s life and in modern societies. The goal of sociology is to understand human behavior, to generalize about the causes of human behavior, to predict future human behavior, to understand how society influences people, how and why people are organized in society, either as individuals or in groups.
- 2) Sociologists are employed by national and international bodies to recommend programs, evaluate their progress and effects, gather data for planning and propose methods for initiating change.
- 3) Sociologists aid industry by obtaining data on clients and workers i.e. social surveys, offering advice on personnel or public relations problems, providing labor unions with advice, helping communities, counseling families, advice to consumer groups.
- 4) Other direction of sociological activity includes the role of consultant and social activist.

Industrial Sociology

The term ‘Industrial Sociology’ comprises of two things; Industry and the society. The term ‘Industrial’ means concerning the industry and the term ‘Sociology’ means concerning the society. Industrial sociology is the study of social relationships in industry i.e., relationship between employers and workers or study of impact of industry on social relation.

According to **J. M. Smith**, **“Industrial Sociology is concerned with industry (or any of work organization) as social system, including those factors (technical, economical, political) which affect the structure, the functions and the changes in the system.”**

Objectives of Industrial Sociology

- 1) Protect management and labor interests by securing mutual relations between the two groups.
- 2) Avoid disputes between management and labor and create harmonious relationship between the groups so that productivity can be increased.
- 3) Ensure full employment and reduce absenteeism, hence, increasing productivity and profits.

- 4) Emphasize labor-employer relationship to maintain profit gains and personal development of all the employees.
- 5) Provide better wages and living conditions to labor, so that misunderstandings between management and labor are reduced to a minimum.
- 6) To bring about a government control over plants where losses are relatively high or where products are produced in the public interest.
- 7) To bridge a gap and reshape the complex social relationships emerging out of technological advances by controlling members and adjusting their conflicts of interests.

Scope of Industrial Sociology

The scope of sociology is very wide while on the other hand the scope of industrial sociology is narrow and limited. Industrial Sociology attempts to combine the concept of sociology with the social relationship that exists in the work organization and include those economic organizations whose sole aim is to provide the goods and services. In Industrial Sociology, we study only those social relations which either arise due to industrialization or are indirectly associated with it.

Internal relations

These are the social and interpersonal relations existing among individuals within the industry itself. They may concern management, operatives (managerial staff and workers) or both. They may be further subdivided into:

- Formal relations
- Informal relations
- Mixed relations

Formal relations

The formal relations in industry are those which are established between individuals in an industry on account of their work and position. The formal relations exclude personal relations. The formal relations are functional and are determined by the hierarchical order in the industry. For example, if in an industry any two persons are working on the same job, that is, one may be manufacturing a part of machine while the other is polishing or finishing it, the relations between them would be formal. Besides, the official relations between the management and employees would be formal. These are all formal relations which can be called organizational relations. Another kind of formal relations may be called statutory or sanctioned by the law or custom. Such relations are implied in collective bargaining, adjudication, grievance procedure, industrial councils, etc. these are usually called “Industrial Relations”

Informal relations

The personal and individualized relations among the members of management and employees are called informal relations. Informal relations are those that spontaneously arise everywhere in industry. These relations may develop among individuals or among groups. For example, if there is friendship or enmity between two workers of a factory, these would be called individual informal internal relations. If two or more laborers conspire against the foremen or some other officer, the kind of relationship which comes into being in this way is group informal internal relations.

Mixed relations/Socio-technical relations

These are certain relations who are neither purely formal nor purely informal. Such relations are called mixed internal relations. These relations occur between persons connected with industry in the course of the performance of their duties. These relations are partly connected with the industry and are partly personal. For example, the laborers while lifting super heavy load sing collectively. Through song they urge each other to put in his best effort. This relation of belongings is personal but it emerges in the course of performing work or duty. Therefore, this type of relationship is known as mixed relationship.

External relations

A particular industrial unit or factory has besides internal relations, relations with other industrial units or factories, suppliers, government and various social agencies. Such relations are known as external relations. Each industrial unit has many types of such relations. From government agencies, an industry may seek industrial license, financial assistance, etc. The industries also seek to establish contact with several groups or agencies. The industries also have some relations with educational institutions and polytechnics. From these they may be recruiting workers and executive trainees. These relations are numerous, varied and sometimes difficult to define; but no industry can exist and thrive without taking them into consideration. External relations are rapidly growing in importance. That is why industry is becoming progressively aware of this and giving more importance to the role of the external public relations officer and other similar roles.

Applications of Industrial Sociology

- 1) Industrial Sociology can be used to conduct studies on trade unions.
- 2) Industrial Sociology can be used to conduct studies in industrial relations.
- 3) Industrial Sociology can be taught as a subject at the post graduate level.
- 4) Industrial Sociology can be used in the training of manpower.
- 5) Knowledge of Industrial Sociology can create trained staff to conduct research and training for collecting information about the impact of the various community development programs.

Importance of Industrial Sociology

- 1) **Knowledge of labor class**
The labor class has its peculiar status, role and problems. In urban society these must be understood and solved. This requires knowledge of industrial sociology.
- 2) **Problems of urbanization**
Urbanization is the process by which the number of people living in cities increases compared with the number of people living in rural areas. A country is considered to be urbanized when over 50% of its population lives in urban places. Urbanization in India had started creating problems of houses, over-crowding, high cost of living, unsanitary living conditions and slums.
- 3) **Solution to the problems of industrialization**
Industrialization has resulted into various problems such as strikes and lockouts, health, sanitation, education, recreation and social security etc. These industrial problems are intimately concerned with other sections of urban society. The remedies to all these problems require a sound knowledge of industrial sociology.
- 4) **Division of labor**
In India, division of labour has been traditionally based upon caste system. Efforts are being made to eliminate caste system. The revaluation and re-organization of the scientific division of labour is necessary for harmony between different classes. Industrial Sociology extends help in this process.
- 5) **Development of labor organization**
A remedy to industrial dispute is the development of industrial organization. Labour unions are more involved in playing political games rather than labour welfare. This causes a great need of industrial sociology in India.
- 6) **Helpful in industrial policy**
It is common perception that when some private companies fail to solve their internal disputes, one of the remedies is the nationalization of the sick industries. Again industrial sociology helps us in gaining this objective.

7) Helpful in industrial management

Success in the industry depends upon industrial management. Efficiency of industrial management depends upon the practice of scientific laws of industrial management. Therefore, industrial managers require training in industrial sociology.

8) Solution to the problems of automation

With the setting up of the large scale industries in India, automation is increasing. This has increased unemployment; though on the other hand it has increased profit of the industries. Industrial Sociology helps in solving the problems of automation in industries.

9) Betterment of employer-employee relationship

Industrial peace and progress depend upon harmonious relationships between the employers and the employees. This requires suitable attention to several factors such as rates of wages, working conditions, security of jobs, provision of housing, scientific method of recruitment etc. All these fall within the scope of industrial sociology whose help is therefore necessary for the betterment of employer-employee relationships.

10) Use in labor legislation

A variety of labor laws have been enacted by Indian government for securing the rights of the labour and to develop harmonious relations between the management and the workers. Industrial Sociology studies the use of labour legislations in an industrial establishment and provides the management and workers an insight about the welfare of each.

Similarities between Sociology and Industrial Sociology

- 1) Both have the scientific method and techniques in their investigations.
- 2) The subject matter of both is human relations.
- 3) Both apply common methods and techniques like observation, questionnaire, schedule and interviews.
- 4) Both give similar and parallel conclusions.
- 5) Both sciences are less reliable than natural sciences in their conclusion and projection.

Differences between Sociology and Industrial Sociology

The scope of sociology is much wider than that of industrial sociology. Sociology is concerned with a general study of the wide spectrum of social relations whereas industrial sociology makes a specialized study of human relations in the limited field of industry.

In sociology one studies all aspect of society and kinds of social relations which have come up as a result of industrialization.

Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Marx was a German philosopher, economic historian and revolutionary socialist who developed the socio-political theory of Marxism. His ideas have since played a significant role in the development of social science and the socialist political movement.

Marxism

Marx's theories about society, economics and politics are collectively known as Marxism. He hold that all societies progress through the dialectic of class struggle. He was heavily critical of the current socio-economic form of society, capitalism, believing it to be run by the wealthy middle and upper classes purely for their own benefit. He predicted that, like previous socioeconomic systems, it would inevitably produce internal tensions which would lead to its self-destruction and replacement by a new system, socialism.

History of Industrial Sociology

Industrial sociology's origins lie in the ideas of Marx, Weber and Durkheim. It was recognized as a discrete subject only between the world wars, developed in the late 1960's and early 1970's and subsequently fragmented into extremely large forms such as the

sociology of work and organizational behavior or has become merged along with some elements of industrial relations into Human Resource Management.

The history of industrial sociology can be read against the changing backdrop of the founding authorities. During the interwar period, when mass unemployment and economic crises prevailed, Marx, with his proletarian revolution generated by exploitation, was expected to prevail. In modern industrialized societies work tasks are increasingly carried out within bureaucratized corporations and formally structured enterprises that employ people to work under the instructions of organizational managers.

Labor Process Theory (LPT)

Labor Process Theory seeks to explain how capitalists extract labor power from workers.

Harry Braverman wrote *Labour and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work* in the twentieth century, which provided a critical analysis of scientific management. This book analyzed capitalist productive relations from a Marxist perspective. Following Marx, Braverman argued that work within capitalist organization was exploitative and workers were forced to work for others without any freedom. For Braverman, the pursuit of capitalist interests over time ultimately leads to deskilling and routinisation of the worker.

Braverman's key contribution is his "deskilling" thesis. Braverman argued that capitalist owners and managers in factories were driven to deskill the labour force in order to lower production costs and ensure higher productivity. Deskilled labour is cheap and above all easy to control. In turn, work becomes intellectually or emotionally unfulfilling.

Braverman's contribution to the sociology of work and industry (i.e. industrial sociology) has been important and his theories of the labour process continue to inform teaching and research.

Relation of Industrial Sociology with Psychology and Anthropology

Industrial Sociology and Psychology

The individual and society are the two main concepts in social sciences. Society is an enduring set of relations between persons and it is an aggregation of individuals which is different from crowd. Each individual of a society has its own identity.

Psychology examines more of the workings of the human mind why persons think and behave as they do. Sociology tends to examine group of persons (societies), communities and nations. Psychology explains why there is a variation between the behaviors of two individuals belonging to the same society. The knowledge how one should behave comes from society. Psychology studies psychic or mental facts. In addition to a qualitative assessment, psychology makes a lot of use of qualitative techniques.

Psychology is more about the individual or small group and sociology is more about communities and larger groups of people.

Psychology helps the individual to function independently in personal relationships and within the community whereas sociology intervenes and assists individuals and families through the hardships and crises they face through continuous support as needed.

Psychology may be perceived as a goal toward independence while sociology might be perceived as the support necessary to sustain families and society.

Industrial Sociology and Anthropology

Anthropology is a science of man, especially of the origin, development, customs and beliefs of mankind. It is the study of biological and socio-culture aspects of human beings. It is a scientific study of man in all its dimensions.

Social anthropology studies tribal, peasant and pre-literate societies of the world. These societies were largely untouched by the forces of civilization. This is the reason why sociology is regarded as the study of one's own society while anthropology is regarded as the study of other culture.

Anthropology and sociology both deal with society but the only difference is that social anthropology mainly considers small states and their culture but their area of studies is basically the same.

Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy means that the behavior in the public's domain is regulated by explicit rules and regulations. Bureaucracy has been designed to bring rationality and predictability of behavior in organizations. The purpose of a bureaucracy is to successfully implement the actions of an organization of any size, in achieving its purpose and mission with the greatest possible efficiency and at the least cost of any resources. Moreover, as a public institution, bureaucracy restricts the power of the officials in regard to their responsibilities and does not provide absolute power to them.

A bureaucratic organization displays the following characteristics:-

1) Division of Work

There is a high degree of division of work at both the operative and administrative levels. This leads to specialization of work.

2) Hierarchy of Positions

There is a hierarchy of authority in the organization. Each lower position is under the control of a higher one. Thus, there is unity of command. The bureaucratic structure is hierarchical in nature. It is like a pyramid in which quantity of authority increases as one moves up the ladder in the organization.

3) Rules and Regulations

The rules, regulations and procedures are laid down by the top administration. Their benefits are as under:-

- a. They standardize operations and decisions.
- b. They serve as receptacles of past learning.
- c. They ensure equality of treatment to everybody.

4) Impersonal Conduct

There is impersonality of relationships among the organizational members. The decisions are entirely guided by the rules and regulations and are totally impersonal. There is no room for emotions and sentiments in this type of structure. The essence of bureaucracy is total depersonalization.

5) Staffing

The personnel are employed by a contractual relationship between the employee and employer. The tenure of service is governed by the rules and regulations of the organization. The employees get a salary every month which is based on the job they handle and also the length of service.

6) Technical Competence

The bureaucrats are neither elected nor inherited but they are appointed through selection and the basis of selection is their technical competence. Promotions in bureaucracies are also based on technical qualifications and performance.

7) Official Records

The administration of a bureaucratic organization is supported by an efficient system of record-keeping. The decisions and activities of the organization are formally recorded and preserved safely for future reference. This is made possible by extensive filing system. The official records serve as the memory of the organization.

French Revolution (1789-1799)

The French Revolution announced the arrival of political sovereignty at the level of individuals as well as nation-states. The Declaration of Human Rights asserted the equality of all citizens and questioned the legitimacy of privileges inherited by birth. It

signaled the emancipation of the individual from the oppressive rule of the religious and feudal institutions that dominated France before the revolution. As free citizens of the republic, sovereign individuals were invested with rights and were equal before the law and other institutions of the state. The state had to respect the privacy of the autonomous individual and its laws could not intrude upon the domestic life of the people.

The ideals of the French Revolution-**liberty, equality and fraternity**-became the watchwords of the modern state.