

Importance of Sociology: A Review

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Abstract – It is quite natural to ask about the value of sociology, the purpose that it serves and the gain that is derived by studying it. There are some critics like Pareto who assert that Sociology is hardly of any value because it does not deal with realities of life and it is concerned with ideas only which, devoid of scientific discoveries, are of very little importance in social life. But it is not a correct view about the value of Sociology. A study of the important concepts of Sociology will convince us that this science is of immense value.

Key Words : Sociology, Social Science, Social Problems

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INTRODUCTION

Sociology seeks to discover the principles of cohesion and of order within the social structure, the ways in which it roots and grows within an environment, the moving equilibrium of changing structure and changing environment, the main trends of the incessant change, the forces which determine its direction at any time, the harmonies and conflicts, the adjustments and maladjustments within the structure as they are revealed in the light of human desires, and thus the practical application of means to ends in the creative activities of social man.' – Maclver. Sociology also devotes some attention to certain aspects of the geographical environment and to some natural as contrasted with human phenomena, but this interest is secondary to its preoccupation with human beings and the products of human life in association. Our general field of study is man as he is related to other men and to the creation of other men which surround him.' -M. E. Jones.

Sociology makes a scientific study of society:

Prior to the emergence of Sociology, the study of society was carried on in an unscientific manner and society had never been the central concern of any science. It is through the study of Sociology that the truly scientific study of the society has been possible.

Rather, Sociology because of its bearing upon many of the problems of the present world has assumed such a great importance that it is considered to be the best approach to all the social sciences and the key-study for the present situations. Scientific knowledge about society is pre-requisite to any marked improvement in the state of human affairs.

Sociology studies role of the institutions in the development of the individuals:

Again, it is through Sociology that scientific study of the great social institutions and the relation of the individual to each is being made. The home and family, the school and education, the church and religion, the state and government, industry and work, the community and association, these are the great institutions through which society functions.

Furthermore, they are conditioners of the individual. Sociology studies these institutions and their role in the development of the individual and suggests suitable measures for restrengthening them with a view to enable them to serve the individual better.

The study of Sociology is indispensable for under-standing and planning of society:

Society is a complex phenomenon with a multitude of intricacies. It is well-nigh impossible to understand it and to solve its various problems without study of Sociology. It is rightly said that we cannot understand and mend society without any knowledge of its mechanism and construction just as no man, in his senses, would dream of trying to mend a motor car without knowing anything about its machinery and the way the different parts fit in with one another.

Sociology bears the same relation to the solution of social problems as say. Biology and bacteriology bear to Medicine or Mathematics and Physics to Engineering. Without the research done in the theoretical and experimental sciences modern

techniques for curing disease or those for bridge-building would be impossible.

Similarly, without the investigation carried on by Sociology, no real effective social planning would be possible. It helps us to determine the most efficient means for reaching the goals agreed upon. A certain amount of knowledge about the society is necessary before any social policies can be carried out.

Suppose, for example, that a policy of decreasing the birth-rate is considered desirable: the best means for achieving this goal cannot be determined in exclusively economic terms because matters of family organization, customs and traditional values must be taken into account and these require a sociological type of analysis.

Sociology is of great importance in the solution of social problems:

The present world is suffering from many problems which can be solved only through scientific study of the society. It is obvious that social evils do not just happen and everything has its due cause.

It is task of Sociology to study the social problems through the methods of scientific research and to find out solution for them. The scientific study of human affairs will ultimately provide the body of knowledge and principles that will enable us to control the conditions of social life and improve them.

Sociology has drawn our attention to the intrinsic worth and dignity of man:

Sociology has been instrumental in changing our attitude towards human beings. In a huge specialized society, we are all limited as to the amount of the whole organization and culture that we can experience directly.

We can hardly know the people of other areas intimately. In order to have insight into and appreciation of the motives by which others live and the conditions under which they exist, knowledge of sociology is essential.

Sociology has changed our outlook with regard to the problems of crime etc.:

It is through the study of Sociology that our whole outlook on various aspects of crime has changed. The criminals are no longer treated as degenerated beasts. On the contrary, they are regarded as human beings suffering from mental deficiencies and efforts are accordingly made to rehabilitate them as useful members of the society.

The sciences of Criminology and Penology and Social Work and Social Therapy which are rendering commendable service in understanding social

situations and solving individual problems are but handmaids of sociology.

Sociology has made great contribution to enrich human culture:

Human culture has been made richer by the contribution of Sociology. It has removed so many cobwebs from our minds and social phenomenon is now understood in the light of scientific knowledge and enquiry.

According to Lowie, "Most of us harbour the comfortable delusion that our way of doing things is the only sensible if not only possible one". Sociology has given us training to have rational approach to questions concerning oneself, one's religion, customs, morals and institutions. It has further taught as to be objective, critical and dispassionate.

Sociology is of great importance in the solution of international problems:

The progress made by physical sciences has brought the nations of the world nearer to each other. But in the social field the world has been left behind by the revolutionary progress of the science. The million dollar question facing the world today is what will be the use of all the technological developments and scientific progress if men continue to be blood thirsty of each other.

The effects of modern war upon society are varied and profound. The social costs of a modern war are many and impressive. While there are various causes of war, the underlying cause is the marked functional disequilibrium between the political organizations of the states and their relationships.

Sociology is useful as a teaching subject:

In view of its importance Sociology is becoming popular as a teaching subject also. It is being accorded an important place in the curriculum of colleges and universities. It is also developing belatedly in Teachers' Training Colleges because the teacher need not only know his subject and his pupils as individuals but also understand the group-life for which he is fitting them. By diffusing knowledge about society socialised thinking will emerge, socialised behaviour will develop, social planning will be furthered and a new social order will be evolved.

CONCLUSION:

It is rightly felt that without the study of Sociology the training and knowledge of the candidates aspiring to hold a high post in the administrative set up of their country will be incomplete and imperfect.

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