Indian Sociology: Emerging Vistas

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Abstract: *Though formal teaching of sociology is little more than 100 years old in India, teaching and research in India has expanded rapidly. It was mainly because of the efforts of pioneers as G. S. Ghurye, R. K. Mukherjee, D. P. Mukerji, M. N. Srinivas and others. After independence, sociology got a boost because of challenges of nation-building and liberal funds provided by UGC. Even before independence and after, sociologists in India have been busy studying institutions like caste, joint family and village which are primarily rural. Now, they have ventured into newer areas as Urban Sociology, social movements, Sociology of small groups, Sociology of economic development etc. In this paper, the author draws attention to the emerging vistas in sociology as Action sociology, Sociology of sanitation, Applied Sociology, Sociology of consumerism, Sociology of atrocities, Sociology of disability, Sociology of homicide and suicide, and Sociology of LGBT Question. The author himself has done yeomen service in the area of Action sociology and Sociology of sanitation.*

Key words: Indian sociology, Action sociology, Sociology of sanitation, Applied sociology, Sociology of consumerism, Sociology of atrocities, Sociology of disability, Sociology of homicide and suicide, and Sociology of LGBT Question.

Introduction

Though sociology is nearly 200 years old, Indian sociology is little more than 100 years old. The origins of Indian sociology and social anthropology can be traced to British administration where some of the administrators started studying Indian customs, traditions and values in the hope that it will help them in smooth administration. Christian missionaries were interested in learning local languages, folklore, and culture to carry out their proselytising activities. Formal teaching of sociology started in 1914 with a course in sociology in Bombay University. Gradually, courses in sociology were started in other universities and the students and the faculty have taken keen interest in the study of sociology and in sociological research.

Origins of Sociology

Srinivas and Panini (1973) divided the growth of sociology and social anthropology into three stages. First, period between 1773-1900 when their foundations were laid, second, from 1901 till independence when they became professionalised and third, the post-independence years where the Government of India took up the task of planned development of the country which prompted Indian scholars to evaluate these activities. Indian society and culture were totally unfamiliar to the colonial authorities when they first arrived. So, British civil servants, missionaries, and Western scholars took up the study of understanding Indian culture and way of life. The origin, development, and functioning of the various customs and traditions, the Hindu systems of caste and joint family, and the economy and polity of the village / tribal community were some of the prominent themes of study by the British administrators and missionaries as well as other British, European, and Indian intellectuals.

The critics of British rule suggest that with the revolt of 1857, the British were unable to find out the possible reasons for such revolt, got confused about the complexity of Indian society and shocked to see the unity among different castes and communities. In 1774, William Jones founded the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal to study the society and culture in Bengal. According to Dhanagare, Francis

Buchanan's famous travelogues written in the early 19th century, B. H. Baden-Powell's pioneering work on *Land System of British India*, Risely's *The People of India*, studies on castes and tribes by Nesfield, W. Cock, E. Thurston and J. H. Hutton, work on the village communities by Henry Maine and Baden-Powell, Grierson's monumental *Linguistic Survey of India*, all these were inspired by the same urge for basic data and information required by the colonial administration (1993: 34). During the colonial period, many British and European writings on Indian society and culture used conceptual categories which were Eurocentric in cognitive and value terms; some of these also tended to distort history and imputed meanings in Indian reality in the abstract (a-historically) as if to perpetuate colonialism. Concepts such as caste, tribe, village, community, family and kinship were defined as segmentary entities, often analogous to their socio-historical equivalents in European society. (Singh 1986: 1)

Exposure to the forces of modernisation stirred the minds of some men to understand and interpret the complexities of the Indian tradition. This resulted in the social and religious reforms initiated by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Ramakrishna Paramhans and Vivekananda. It also gave rise to political thinkers and freedom fighters as Dadabhai Naoroji, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Gopal Krishna Gokhale. These through their writings and social movements created intellectual and social self-awareness in the country about India's cultural and civilizational strengths and yet pleaded for radical reforms in society in order to encounter the challenges of the western civilization and its colonial expansionism.

Teaching of Sociology in India

Although the first universities in India were established in 1857 in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, formal teaching of sociology began only in 1914 in Bombay University, followed by Calcutta University in 1917 and at Lucknow University in 1921. In South India, sociology made its appearance at Mysore University in 1928. Later, it was introduced in Osmania and Pune Universities. Though teaching of

sociology had commenced, there was no separate department of sociology; it was joined with the department of economics (Bombay and Lucknow), economics and political science (Calcutta), anthropology (Poona), and philosophy (Mysore).

The Department of Sociology in Bombay University was established in 1919 with Patrick Geddes joining as Professor of civics and sociology where he served up to 1924. He was joined by G.S. Ghurye and N. A. Toothi. Geddes' major focus was upon viewing social reality from a moral, communitarian, global and multidisciplinary perspective. Quoting Mairet, Yogendra Singh says that "our great need today is to grasp life as a whole, to see its many sides in their proper relations; but we must have a practical as well as a philosophical interest in such an integrated view of life." (2004: 138-139)

Ghurye was a great scholar who was educated in Cambridge. He was a Sanskrit scholar and an Indologist. His writings such as Mahadeva Kolis and his field-survey of sex habits of middle-class people in Bombay demonstrated that he was not an arm-chair sociologist but a down-to-earth empiricist. Like a discreet butterfly, Ghurye moved from one theme to another with equal interest, erudition and ability. (Dhanagare, 1993: 39) His interests reflected in the variety of topics his students researched on as family, kinship structure, marriage, religious sects, ethnic groups - castes and aboriginals, process of stratification and mobility, caste and class, education and society, the Indian nationalist movement etc. Under his able leadership, many scholars were produced who richly contributed to the promotion of sociological studies and research in the country. K. M. Kapadia, Irawati Karve, M. N. Srinivas, A. R. Desai, I. P. Desai, M. S. Gore, M. S. A. Rao and Y. B. Damle are some of the outstanding scholars who shaped the destiny of the discipline.

Calcutta University was the second centre where sociology was started with the lead given by K. P. Chattopadhyay. He completed his M. Sc. from the University of Cambridge, UK, had specialized in Anthropology and later became the Professor and Head of the

Department of Anthropology in the University of Calcutta. He is credited with extensive anthropological research among the tribal groups like Santhals, Khasis and Korkus. In fact, he inherited the legacy of B. N. Seal and B. K. Sarkar. He was a renowned scholar and an eminent professor of philosophy in Calcutta University and Vice- Chancellor of Mysore University for about a decade. Credit goes to B. K. Sarkar for founding the Bengali Institute of Sociology. Radhakamal Mukherji taught economics, sociology and political philosophy for five years.

Lucknow University was another major centre of sociology and social anthropology where the triumvirate - Radhakamal Mukherjee, D. P. Mukerji and D. N. Majumdar - played important role in teaching of sociology and in research. It was R. K. Mukherjee who established the Department of Economics at the Lucknow University and introduced the teaching of sociology. Speaking aboutR. K. Mukherjee, T.N. Madan says, the idea that he should study for the country and the nation took possession of him, and he opted for an M. A. in Economics, which subject, he believed, could provide the scientific and adequate answers to the grave national issues of Indian misery, exploitation and subjection. (2011: 20) His areas of writing were around Institutional economics, integration of social sciences, social ecology and the sociology of values. His vision of sociology, though rooted in the Indian tradition, was universalistic. He envisaged in developing a general theory of sociology based on social action theory. He served as the Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University from 1955 to 1957.

Though D.P. Mukerji was never involved in any empirical exercises of data collection or surveys, he preferred to be an arm-chair sociologist, social philosopher and culturologist. His academic interest ranged from music and fine arts to the Indian tradition in relation to modernity. Since he was a Marxist, he attempted a dialectical interpretation of the encounter between the Indian tradition and modernity. Since D. N. Majumdar had anthropological background most of his writings are in the field of social anthropology. His ethnographic works include the study of Ho

(Bihar), the Khasa, the Korwa, the Tharu, and the so-called criminal tribes (all of Uttar Pradesh), the Gond (Madhya Pradesh), and the Bhil (Gujarat). Because of the influence of Malinowski and the writings of Ruth Benedict, his studies showed a leaning towards functionalism.

Sociology after Independence

After independence in 1947, the country's political leadership and intellectuals were conscious of the challenges of nation-building, development and reconstruction of Indian society. Establishment of Planning Commission, expansion of higher education in the fields of sciences, technology, management, engineering, medicine and introduction of new projects as Community Development Projects gave boost to the Indian economy. The teaching of sociology began to expand as new universities and colleges were set up which increased the number of students and teachers. University Grants Commission (UGC) was set up to provide funds and regulate the standards of teaching and research. Reservation enabled the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to enter colleges and universities. With the establishment of Indian Council of Social Science research (ICSSR) sociology and other social sciences received an impetus to their growth. A significant aspect of the contribution made both by the UGC and the ICSSR to the teaching and research in sociology is that their efforts sharpened the concern for relevance in the evaluation and structuring of the pedagogy of the discipline. (Singh, 2004: 149)

Even before independence and after, sociologists in India have been busy studying institutions like caste, joint family and village which are primarily rural. According to M. N. Srinivas (1970) Indian sociologists have not been as active in the fields of urban and industrial sociology as in that of the rural, and there is an urgent need for priority to be given to problems in this area. And urban research has to take lot of demographic factors, of social and economic factors behind migration into urban areas. The effects of migration on the urban job market, and on facilities such as transport, housing, hospitals and schools, need to be understood. They will have consequences in a variety of areas, including the complexion of urban

politics. The role of traditional Indian institutions such as caste and joint family in the urban and industrial context deserve analysis. A. M. Shah voices the same opinion when he says "many have considered such basic institutions as caste and joint family as essentially rural in character, or as having their origin in rural society and therefore rural even if they occur in cities .... Fortunately, there is now an increasing realisation among sociologists of the fact that India has had urban centres since the time of the Indus Valley Civilization, several centuries before Christ, and that towns and cities, small and large, existed in all parts of India throughout its recorded history". (1988: 2)

Professional Development

One of the outstanding features in the development of Indian sociology is the organization of professional bodies of sociologists. G. S. Ghurye was instrumental in establishing the Indian Sociological Society (ISS) in 1951 in Bombay (later its office was shifted to New Delhi). At present, it has more than 4,000 life members. One of the important activities of ISS is the organization of All India Sociological Conferences every year. ISS is well organised with 28 Research Committees who meet during annual conferences and some of the research committees hold their own conferences or seminars. ISS has inspired the members to organise State level and regional level associations who hold their own conferences and seminars. ISS, State and local associations give an opportunity to the members to present the result of their research in these conferences.

Some associations, university departments and research institutes have also started their own journals. ISS started its journal, *Sociological Bulletin* in 1952. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* was established in 1957 by Louis Dumont and David Pocock and now it is published by Sage Publications in association with the Institute of Economic Growth. *Social Change* is another journal by the Council for Social Development, New Delhi now published by Sage Publications. Other research journals are: *Indian Journal of Social Work* published by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai;

Social Action published by the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi; *International Journal of Critical Sociology,* published from Jaipur; *Indian Journal of Comparative Sociology*, published from Hyderabad; *Kerala Sociologist* is the journal of the Kerala Sociological Society; ***Social Science Gazetteer is the journal of Indian Social Science Association, Agra*** and *SamajaShodhana* is the journal of Mangalore Sociology Association, Mangaluru. Sulabh International Social Service Organisation is getting ready to launch its journal, Sulabh Journal of Action Sociology.

In the article, 'How Egalitarian Is Indian Sociology?' Vivek Kumar (2016) argues that while sociology is dominated by British, European and American sociologists, Indian sociology is dominated by twice-born castes. This domination is found at four levels - as members practicing sociology in universities, institutions and colleges, in the sphere of production of knowledge while writing chapters of books, producing knowledge with the help of scriptural sources, or producing data from the field and while teaching sociology in the medicine etc. Now, because of reservation facility, Dalits are shining in all the fields and they have shown the world that they are no less to others. Even in sociology, we had Prof. Parvathamma in Mysore University, Prof. Nandu Ram in Jawaharlal Nehru University, Prof. M.H. Makwana in Gujarat University, Prof. Venkateswarlu in Sri Venkateshwara University, Prof. P.G. Jogdand in Mumbai University, Prof. Dahiwale in Poona University, Prof Jagan Shankar, Vice-Chancellor, Kuvempu University and at present Prof Jagan Karade at Shivaji University, Kolhapur and he is also the Secretary of Indian Sociological Society.

Emerging Vistas

Having discussed the origin and development of sociology in India and its professional development, it is essential to critically evaluate the various challenges the sociology is facing in India. Within a short span of 100 years, it has grown and expanded having more than 50 branches. Below, we will be discussing its emerging vistas.

Action Sociology

The term, action refers to the accomplishment of a thing over a period of time. While action refers to the exertion by the individual social action refers to the action performed by a group. In action sociology, social action means taking steps to change the things that are wrong in our society and introducing new ideas and processes for doing things better in the future. The concepts of Karma (action) and Dharma (righteousness or duty) are the important concepts in Hindu philosophy. Max Weber conceived of sociology as a comprehensive science of social action. His primary focus was on the subjective meanings that human actors attach to their actions in their mutual orientations within specific socio-historical contexts. For Talcott Parsons, action is a process in the actor-situation system which has motivational significance to the individual actor or in the case of collectively, its component individuals. Vilfredo Pareto's sociology holds that much social action is non-logical and that much personal action is designed to give spurious logicality to non-rational actions. For Mahatma Gandhi, social action was directed towards social change where Gandhi touched or dwelt upon myriad issues of interpersonal, inter group and individual-group relations that affected society and called for reform and even revolutionary change in the structure, institutions, processes and value orientations of society.

Sociology can be understood as a study of social life, of group interaction and social behaviour. It is the study of human social relationships and institutions. Sociologists emphasize the careful gathering and analysis of evidence about social life to develop and enrich our understanding of key social processes. While much of the academic sociology is theory oriented, Action sociology is practical oriented. I would understand action sociology as action-oriented praxeological sociology. It aims at sociologist's intervention to shape the process of social change. Action sociologists have to contribute to the solution of the problems of society by directly involving themselves. According to Jose Kananaikil an Action sociologist is one who is convinced that, in order to be an authentic sociologist, he

has to transform his convictions into action both in his individual life and in the society to which he belongs (1992: 40).

The concept and working of Action Sociology is much wider in its reach and goes far beyond the earlier sociological limits of 'Applied Sociology' and 'Sociology in Action'. In Action sociology, the sociologist himself plunges into action and shows the results. Sociology, in spite of the strides it has made in unravelling the complex social realities, tends to remain, by and large, indifferent to their roles as effective agents to guide the direction of change. Instead of actively involving in this endeavour, they have remained a mute witness to the existing as well as emerging social realities. Action sociology is an innovative field and not a fashionable addition to the enlarging horizons of sociology. It protects sociology against insulating scholarship from practice. Sociology has to extricate itself from the maze of concepts and theories become action-oriented to be a practical instrument for social change.

Through Sulabh International Social Service Organisation (herein after Sulabh), I have founded the Indian Association of Action Sociology which now enjoys the full support of a large number of distinguished Indian sociologists, which has organized many conferences on the subject and also instrumental in writing many books and articles. Efforts are afoot to introduce Action Sociology at the post-graduate level in the department of sociology throughout the country. The curriculum devised includes a wide variety of socially significant subjects such as environmental sanitation, preservation of ecology, low-cost sanitation technology, clean water supply, primary healthcare, social forestry and emancipation of downgraded sections of society. Such a course will make the discipline of sociology more relevant to society and would enable the students of sociology to play a socially constructive role, besides getting opportunities of self-employment.

In order to expand the scope of Action sociology, Sulabh International Centre for Action Sociology (SICAS) was established in 1993 as a means of rehabilitation of scavengers, socially and

economically. The main idea was to evolve and operationalise a set of innovative, sustainable and replicable activities to ensure social and financial independence of the lowest strata of the society. SICAS has established a Public School, Vocational Training Centre, Social Upgradation Programme, Slum Children Welfare Programme and sanitation programmes in cities and villages.

Sociology of Sanitation

Sanitation refers to formulation and application of measures designed to protect public health. It also refers to the safe conditions which includes clean and safe water supply, clean and safe ambient air, efficient and safe animal, human and industrial waste disposal, protection of food from biological and chemical contaminants and adequate housing in clean and safe surroundings. The need for sanitation arose when mankind adopted agrarian way of life and started living in permanent settlements. Permanent agricultural life made it possible to construct villages which gradually grew into towns and cities all of which were highly dependent on water and sanitation. We find well- planned sanitation systems in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Mohenjo-Daro and Rome. However, the importance of sanitation was not understood until the 19th century. Social scientists thought that developing sanitation was a major social aspect of life. Now, sanitation has developed as a major subject of study.

Sanitation work in India started with Mahatma Gandhi who worked tirelessly to restore the human rights and dignity of scavengers and to eliminate the evil of untouchability. Following Mahatma Gandhi, the author has played a pioneering role in sanitation by establishing Sulabh International Social Service Organisation (Sulabh). Sulabh is envisioned as an agent of social and cultural change. It seeks to develop an egalitarian society, based on equal opportunity for every human being irrespective of caste, creed and natural endowments. The role of Central government is very significant with the launching of Central Rural Sanitation Programme in 1986 and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan started by present Prime Minister, Sri Narendra Modi on 2nd October 2014.

Sociology is a vast subject which includes almost everything of society which human beings deal with. Recently, the importance of sanitation forced social scientists to improve sociology of sanitation as a specialised study in sociology. Sociology of sanitation is the study of human action which includes the individual, community and the public policies for the betterment of sanitary measures in the environment. It studies the present infrastructure of sanitation and the required development of sanitation from individual household to community living (Pais, 2015: 24).

Sociology of sanitation is a field of study that seeks to analyse and explain important matters that affect our everyday sanitation problems in our society, and the world in which we live. At a personal level, sociology of sanitation investigates the causes and consequences of such things as lack of toilets in the houses and in public places, lack of drainage facilities, lack of proper drinking water facilities, gender and sanitation issues, behavioural approach towards sanitation, disposal of waste and cultural practices of various ethnic groups and management of sanitation. At the societal level, sociology of sanitation examines and explains such matters as existence of night soil carriers, prejudice and discrimination of night soil carriers in the society, toilet as business, sanitation at schools and educational institutions and social movement towards sanitation. At the global level, sociology of sanitation studies such things a contribution of WHO, UNICEF etc. It studies economic contribution towards sanitation development policies.

The author has not only worked in the field of sanitation but also tried to propagate sociology of sanitation. Through the establishment of Sulabh in 1970 in Patna, he has started a sanitation movement in the country and abroad with areas of major initiatives as Sulabh technologies which includes invention of two-pit latrines, Sulabh public toilet complexes, Bio-gas plants, Waste water treatment plants, Sulabh International Institute of Technical Research and Training, Sulabh International Institute of Health and Hygiene and Sulabh International Museum of Toilets. As a propagator of sociology of sanitation, he has organised many national and international

conferences, encouraged College and University Professors to write books and articles on sociology of sanitation, started a newspaper, a magazine and a research journal. Because of his efforts, sociology of sanitation has been introduced in 15 Universities of the country. As a mark of recognition, the author was awarded with Padma Bhushan in 1991 and above all, Usha Chaumar, a manual scavenger liberated by the author received Padma Shri Award in 2020 for her inspiring social work.

Applied Sociology

Sociology is often classified as pure (basic) and applied sociology. Pure or basic sociology uses concepts and theories to produce knowledge and research in the field. Academics including teachers, scholars, and researchers use basic sociology to study society, test hypothesis, and construct theories. Theories are very significant in sociology. A theory is a way to explain different aspects of social interactions and to create a testable proposition, called a hypothesis, about society.

Applied sociology is sociology in use or at work. More specifically, applied sociology might be seen as the translation of sociological theory into practice. Applied sociology is the use of sociological theory, methods, skills and research in order to resolve particular issues in real-world settings. The basis of Applied sociology goes back to August Comte who divided sociology into Social statics and Social dynamics. While, social statics is the study of social order, social dynamics is the study of social progress and development. According to Olsen and Micklin (1981), the roots of applied sociology go back to the publication in 1883 of Lester Ward's *Dynamic Sociology: or Applied Social Science*, a text in which he laid the groundwork for distinguishing between an understanding of causal processes and how to intervene in them to foster social progress.

An applied sociologist works in the field of Clinical sociology, Social engineering and Public sociology. Clinical sociology refers to sociological work done across the health sector, in social work, and

even in forensic settings. This work includes collaborating with medical practitioners, nurses, psychologists, psychiatrists and nutritionists, as well as advocacy and support in mental health programmes, including through counselling, interpersonal therapy, intervention programmes with youth, substance abuse services, and group counselling. Social engineering refers to applied research activities that are used in social planning. Applied sociological knowledge lends itself to a systems engineering approach. It tries to understand how societies are built, how to evaluate the problems of a given social structure, and how to break down the structures that are not working well. Public sociology is the branch of sociology that aims to engage 'lay' audiences, including neighbourhood groups and grassroots organisations, with the aim of stimulating informed public dialogue.

Scope of applied sociology is to deal with social problems. These social problems can be divided into two categories that is - (i) problems of social disorganisation or social rehabilitation which includes problems of criminals, delinquents, orphans, mentally defectives, ills, blinds, etc, and (ii) problems of social reconstruction. In the second category such things as child welfare, women welfare, youth welfare, labour welfare, housing welfare, etc. are included. Role of an applied sociologist includes conducting scientific surveys and researches in various fields of human social life; correcting misinformation about races, minorities and other marginal groups and to make sociological predictions.

Sociology of Consumerism

In contemporary Indian sociology there has been absence of sociology of consumption. Consumption is central to man's daily life. It primarily depends on one's needs, attitudes and status. Consumerism is the belief that personal wellbeing and happiness depends to a very large extent on the level of personal consumption, particularly on the purchase of material goods. It is concerned with how consumption differs across groups and how power relations are often reproduced and challenged through relations of consumption.

The growth of consumerism as a dominant way of life is one of the hallmarks of the 20th century. In this century, capitalist production of consumption has given rise to newer areas of marketing, advertising and retailing. Sociology of consumerism has its theoretical roots in the ideas of Karl Marx, Émile Durkheim, and Max Weber. Karl Marx provided the concept of 'commodity fetishism,' which suggests that the social relations of labour are obscured by consumer goods that carry other kinds of symbolic value for their users. Émile Durkheim's writings on the symbolic, cultural meaning of material objects in a religious context explain how identity is connected to consumption, and how consumer goods play an important role in traditions and rituals around the world. Max Weber in his book, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* points to the centrality of consumer goods.

Thorstein Veblen's discussion of 'conspicuous consumption' has been greatly influential to how sociologists study the display of wealth and status. There are many research areas for a sociologist to study consumerism. First. the interaction at sites of consumption, like shopping malls, streets, and downtown districts can be studied. Secondly, the relationship between individual and group identities and consumer goods and spaces can be evaluated. Further, how lifestyles are composed, expressed, and slotted into hierarchies through consumer practices and identities can be studied. The processes of gentrification, in which consumer values, practices, and spaces play a central role in reconfiguring the racial and class demographics of neighbourhoods, towns, and cities can be studied. Further study can be made on the values and ideas embedded in advertising, marketing, and product packaging. The study of individual and group relationships to brands is important. Ethical issues tied to and often expressed through consumption, including environmental sustainability, the rights and dignity of workers, and economic inequality is another area of study. Finally, an action sociologist can involve in consumer activism and citizenship, as well as anti-consumer activism and lifestyles.

Sociology of consumerism can also take into cognizance existing theories of consumerism. Economist Alfred Marshall believed that consumers buy their goods and services based on what offers the most personal satisfaction. Psychoanalytical theory held that humans are not able to fully understand their own motivations because the psychological factors that shape them are largely unconscious as a result, people will repress them. The theory further holds that age and income cannot fully account for consumer behaviour because motivations lay deep in the psyche. Instead, marketing messages that contain an emotional appeal to consumers' feelings, hopes, aspirations and fears are often more effective than rational appeals. In fact, marketers can use the theory of classical conditioning to help create or change consumer habits or reinforce brand elements that are associated with positive customer experiences. Veblen's theory of 'leisure class', takes into account the desire for prestige rather than utilitarian need fulfillment of people. Though the theory of counterculture looks being anti-consumerist, it is a rejection of standardised mass-consumption and promoting individual self-expression. According to Karl Thompson (2016), Bourdieu and Featherstone see the intensification of consumption as being related to the emergence of the 'new middle classes' as a result of technological innovations and social changes leading to an increase in the number of people working in jobs such as the media and fashion. Further, erosion of traditional sources of identity provided by family, traditional authority, and work has given rise to consumption which is a useful vehicle for constructing a life narrative that gives focus and meaning to individuals. Finally, other researchers have looked at the role of subcultures in contemporary society, where individuals consume in order to signify their identity as part of a group.

Sociology of Atrocities

Atrocity refers to an extremely cruel, violent, or shocking act. Atrocities include crimes as war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity, terrorism cruelty and violence. Sociology of atrocities investigate and explain the role of individuals, groups, and institutional actors in committing atrocities, including the role of

group identities, bureaucracies, collective decision-making, shared repertoires, legacies of hate, and peer networks. It also focuses on national and international criminal justice, legal institutions, humanitarian bodies, journalists, and others. Understanding the causes and effects of atrocities will be a major part of the study.

In India, there has been a phenomenal increase in the number and intensity of the cases of atrocities meted out to the Scheduled Castes, women and children. Atrocities on Scheduled Castes include a) Social discrimination, b) Beating, slashing and other forms of torture, c) Arson-the burning of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes communities and their homes, d) Violence against women, e) Bonded labour, f) Denial of rights, especially land rights and g) Police abuses against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and custodial abuse. The causes include caste hatred and untouchability; illiteracy and poverty; self-assertion by the Scheduled Castes; lack of political will and corruption and prejudices of the police.

Atrocities on women include murders such as dowry deaths, honour killings, witchcraft-related murders, female infanticide and sex-selective abortion. Secondly, sexual crimes including rape, insult to modesty and human trafficking and forced prostitution. Other crimes include domestic violence, forced and child marriage, acid throwing and abduction. Causes of atrocities include patriarchy, lower status of women, consumption of alcohol by the husband, low level of education, poor socio-economic status, harsh discipline by the father, early marriage, modernisation and lifestyles.

Atrocities on children include trafficking of children, particularly for sexual exploitation; violence against children including sexual violence; child labour, including working in hazardous conditions; discrimination against girls in education and in access to food and discrimination against children on the basis of caste, tribe or indigenous background. The reasons include poverty, illiteracy, vulnerability of the child, social stigma of a girl child, neglect of children, socio-economic stress from financial issues, unemployment, or medical problems, lack of parenting skills, family stress or crisis

caused by domestic violence, relationship turmoil, separation, or divorce etc. Lastly, a course on sociology of atrocities should take into consideration not only causes and effects but also remedies.

Sociology of Disability

A disability is any condition that makes it more difficult for a person to do certain activities or interact with the world around them. These conditions, or impairments, may be cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory, or a combination of multiple factors. Impairments causing disability may be present from birth or occur during a person's lifetime. According to WHO (1980), disability is "any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for human being." (Wikipedia) The sociology of disability emerged in the 1980s as a direct challenge to the problems of special education of the disabled. Though disability is traditionally defined in medical terms and as an individual problem, it has for the last several decades increasingly become a socio-politically defined phenomenon. Disability can be understood at two levels: Sociological level and biomedical level. At sociological level people think that anyone who has impairment can act as a normal person but they do not have that chance. The main reasons of disability are social barriers and discrimination. At the bio-medical level, impairment is seen as an abnormality and it is based on medical model of illness. Culture will affect how we understand disability. Finally, resources are one of the factors that affect the understanding of disability.

Though sociology is highly developed and branched into many sub-disciplines, sociological analyses of disability has been theoretically and methodologically inadequate. The reason for this is that sociology has accepted almost without question the legitimacy of the individualistic biomedical approach to disability. As a result, this has precluded a meaningful evaluation of the economic, political and cultural forces which created and continue to create disability in modern society. Writers on disability have suggested that disability is

an issue as central to mainstream sociological discourse and analysis as class, gender race and sexuality.

In India, disability is associated with marginality, stigma and discrimination. Discrimination is in the field of education, employment and in social area. A section of western sociologists understood that, by and large, the onus of disability did not lie with affected individuals but rather on society which was responsible for their activity and for imposing restrictions. Its absence from the subject matter of Indian sociology has created a gap in the discipline's understanding, creating the risk to exercise sympathy and charity rather than a sociological sensibility which sees disability as a human rights issue to be dealt with at the level of rehabilitation and social work. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 is the disability legislation passed by the Indian Parliament. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) set up the National Centre for Disability Studies during the 10th plan period that is operational since November 2006. Mahatma Gandhi University in Kerala has established Inter-University Centre for Disability Studies. Another department of disability studies is at Sant Longowal Institute of Engineering and Technology, Longowal, Punjab. Let us hope that more centres will come up in India and suggest remedies for the problems of the disabled.

Sociology of Homicide and Suicide

Homicide is the act of one human killing another. Homicide may be in the form of murder or manslaughter. If there is intent to kill, it becomes murder. Manslaughter can be voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary manslaughter is the killing of another person under extreme provocation or while under the heat of passion whereas involuntary manslaughter usually involves acts of negligence or recklessness that led to another person's death as in the case in vehicular accident. A course in sociology of homicide should include the causes, legal procedures, punishment and rehabilitation.

Sociological explanation for homicide should take into consideration the rates of homicide. In simple societies it is less and in complex

societies it is more. Cultural theorists explain homicides as resulting from learned, shared values and behaviour specific to a given group. Similarly, certain subgroups exhibit higher rates of homicide. Social structural explanations such as economic stratification as poverty, unemployment and income inequality also play dominant roles. Direct causes in India include property disputes, family violence, caste disputes, village feuds etc. Suicide refers to killing of self. It is an act or an instance of taking one's own life voluntarily and intentionally. It is estimated that every year around 1,40,000 people commit suicide in India.

While psychologists attribute suicide to personal factors, Emile Durkheim attributes suicide to social factors. He concludes that suicide is the result of social disorganisation or lack of social integration of the individual into the society. Durkheim classified suicides on the basis of different types of relationship between the actor and his society. His types of suicide are: Egoistic suicide, Altruistic suicide and Anomic suicide. Anthropologists have documented the role of stress created by cultural conflict in increasing the risk for suicide.

A course on sociology of suicide should include causes, methods, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and prevention. Suicide is committed through shooting, hanging, poisoning, jumping from heights, drowning, throwing oneself on railway tracks, electrocution, self-immolation, fasting unto death etc. Suicide is caused by individual stressors as mental illness, traumatic stress, alcohol and substance use, chronic pain or illness, social isolation, family or marriage problems as dowry, extra-marital affairs, divorce and failure in love, economic reasons as debt, poverty and unemployment, failure in examinations, death of a loved one and professional problems and failure of crops.

Prevention of suicides can be done through counselling, preventing social disintegration, treating mental disorders, regulating the sale of pesticides and ropes, promoting psychological motivational sessions and meditation and yoga.

Sociology of LGBT Question

LGBT stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender. Now, letter Q or word Question is added for those who identify as queer or are questioning their sexual identity. LGBT organizations or LGBT communities are united by a common culture and social movements. These communities generally celebrate pride, diversity, individuality, and sexuality. Though gay and lesbian studies started in the 1920s in several larger US cities, LGBT studies started in 1970s. The field has expanded to include the academic study of issues raised in biology, sociology, mental illness, anthropology, the history of science, philosophy, psychology, sexology, political science, ethics, and other fields by an examination of the identity, lives, history, and perception of queer people. In China, Fudan University in Shanghai opened the country's first course on homosexuality and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) prevention in 2003 entitled "Homosexual Health Social Sciences."

A study by Badget and Schneebaum (2013) has shown that LGBT people and same sex / gender couples are more vulnerable to conditions of poverty as compared to heterosexual people and couples. As a result, they experienced discrimination. A lack of acceptance and fear of persecution can lead many LGBT youth to leave their homes and live in transitional housing or on the streets. Many LGBT youth may also be rejected by their family of origin or caregivers and forced to leave the home as minors. They are also discriminated in employment, education, health care, and access to social services. During their work and in social life, LGBT persons experience name calling, homophobic language and inappropriate jokes.

Homosexuality was never illegal or a criminal offence in ancient India but was criminalized by the British during their rule in India. In 2018, the Supreme Court of India decriminalized consensual homosexual intercourse. Transgender people in India are allowed to change their legal gender post-sex reassignment surgery under legislation passed in 2019, and have a constitutional right to register themselves under a third gender.

There is a dearth of Indian psychiatric and sociological literature that has systematically investigated issues related to homosexuality. In 2015, an Indian student in the US received a LGBT scholarship from the California University in Berkely to study how political issues brought new notions of sexual identity in India. "Indian sociology should include queer movement within its inventory of social movements". says Pushpesh Kumar in his paper, Queering Indian Sociology: A Critical Engagement. So, there is urgent need to study LGBT persons, their economic and social conditions and develop data on LGBT people to accelerate research.

Conclusion

Almost all the pioneers in sociology were trained in disciplines other than sociology. At the same time, sociology was not exclusively taught but, it was taught with other subjects as economics, political philosophy, civics etc. Now, sociology has become a full fledged science in India. However, there is urgent need to develop areas as Action Sociology, Sociology of Sanitation, Applied Sociology, Sociology of Consumerism, Sociology of Atrocities, Sociology of Disability, Sociology of Homicide and Suicide, and Sociology of LGBT Question.

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Post-Enlightenment Paradox: The Perils of Advancement

Brij Mohan

Abstract: *The dark- medieval ages plagued by religious mayhem and genocidal conflicts began to fade in the light of rising tides of questions, dissents, and skepticism which threatened institutional hegemonies of existing powers. Thinkers, mathematicians, philosophers and other scholarly men and women challenged the prevailing orthodoxies of mindless believers. The Flat Earthers die hard. However, a new causal perspective explained the effects of unexplained phenomena from natural disasters to human depravity. This article seeks to signify the rise of humanities and science in search of a civil—secular and egalitarian—society that values decency and human dignity. The ordeal of existence need not be catastrophic. It's imperative to overcome the serendipitous paradox of the Enlightenment.*

"Only wisdom based on self-understanding, not piety, will save us."

Edward O. Wilson (2014: 15)

"A civilization tends to atrophy when its vision is lost, and imagination muffled by its arrogance…. Anti-state prefixes—*cartel, narco-, failed* and so forth—serve as euphemisms for a new anarchy breeds terror, violence wrapped in post-ideological opportunism"