

# Chapter-8

## Social Movements

### Introduction

- Where a group of people come together in order to bring about change in society in regard to certain social issues with the aim of changing people's perspectives about that aspect.

Dissent (dissatisfaction)



Protest (where it comes out openly)



Social Movement (may or may not lead).

- Dissent is a form of dissatisfaction that people feel about a certain issue and when it comes out openly it is in the form of a protest.

### During colonial rule

There were many social reformers who wanted to change the life of the depressed class and few social evils.

- Now social movements are present today also but the issues have changed.
- They have become global and have a difference there e.g. environment, domestic violence etc.

### Features of Social Movement

- Requires sustained collective action over time. Such action is often directed against the state and takes the form of demanding changes in state policy or practice.
- Collective action must be marked by some degree of organisation. This organisation may include a leadership and a structure that defines how members relate to each other, make decisions and carry them out.
- Those participating in a social movement also have shared objectives and ideologies. A social movement has a general orientation or way of approaching to bring about (or to prevent) change.



- These defining features are not constant. They may change over the course of a social movement's life.
- Social movements cannot change society easily. Since it goes against both entrenched interests and values, there is bound to be opposition and resistance. But over a period of time changes do take place.

### **Counter Movement**

- Counter movements sometimes arise in defence of status quo. There are many instances of counter movements.
- When Raja Rammohun Roy campaigned against sati and formed the Brahmo Samaj, defenders of sati formed Dharma Sabha and petitioned the British not to legislate against sati.
- When reformers demanded education for girls, many protested that this would be disastrous for society.
- When reformers campaigned for widow remarriage, they were socially boycotted. When the so called 'lower caste' children enrolled in schools, some so called 'upper caste' children were withdrawn from the schools by their families.
- Proposals for extending reservation in educational institutions have led to counter movements opposing them.

### **Acts of social movement**

- While protest is the most visible form of collective action, a social movement also acts in other, equally important, ways.
- Social movement activists hold meetings to mobilise people around the issues that concern them. Such activities help shared understanding, and also prepare for a feeling of agreement or consensus about how to pursue the collective agenda.
- Social movements also chart out campaigns that include lobbying with the government, media and other important makers of public opinion.
- Social movements also develop distinct modes of protest. This could be candle and torch light processions, use of black cloth, street theatres, songs, poetry.
- Gandhi adopted novel ways such as ahimsa, satyagraha and his use of the charkha in the freedom movement.

### **Difference between social change and movement**



| Social Change   | Social Movement                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Ongoing process   | Keeps changing not ongoing          |
| Effects eco, social, political, Cultural aspect society | Effects a certain aspect of society |

## Sociology and Social Movement

1. In an country, social movements aims at changing some aspect of society.

- French revolution against monarchy when people were suffering, depressed and wanted freedom and equality.
- Industrial Revolt (Britain) – protest by common man → paid low wages and treated badly.

2. According to Emile Durkheim, social movement can lead to disintegration/disorder of society. Society is more important than individuals.

- Spoke about division of labour, social facts, suicide and religion.

3. Social movements usually aim at improving the life of depressed class and sociology is the study of society.

- Poor people/depressed section express themselves through protests as they have no other way of doing so.

## Theories of Social Movements

(1) Theory of Relative Deprivation

- Everyone is deprived of something but every deprivation does not lead to social movements.
- However this theory states that when a particular, group is deprived by any basic necessity it will lead to a social movement. The basis of this theory is that the individual
  - (i) Feels resentful (unhappy with situation)
  - (ii) Has a psychological factor which convinces them that they are deprived.

## Limitations

- Every deprivation should not or will not lead to a social movement.
- Deprivation is not enough for a social movement.
- Many other factors are involved.

## Theory of collective action



- Given by Olson who states that every individual who is part of a social movement have a self-interest. As soon as their self-interest is fulfilled they leave the social movement.
- The basis of this theory is humans rational thinking why should I be part of a social movement if I don't benefit.

### Theory of Resource Mobilisation

- Given by McCarthy and Zald.
- They said everyone in a social movement need not have self interest.
- They said social movement is successful if one is able to mobilise resources (people, good leaders, economic resources, political support), e.g Anna Hazare (2011), did not have self interest.

### Limitations

- According to Sociologists people can create resources. They don't have to mobilise them. A social movement need not depend on existing resources, new identities, new resources etc are created.  
e.g. Freedom struggle – no money, political power but generated resources in man power, good leader etc.

### Types of Social Movements

- Three ways to classify social movements

Reformist Movement is a movement where the reformers try to change the mindset of the people regarding a particular issue.

Revolutionary Movement is a movement where radical or violent methods are used to bring about change in society. (Could use weapons),

e.g Subash Chandra Bose – Indian National Army, Bhagat Singh

Redemptive Movement is formed to reduce actions done in the past. It lies to change the thinking of the people.

e.g. Anti Brahmin Movement started by Shree Narayan

|   | Old Movement  |   | New Movements   |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Most have links with political parties and they were very imp. e.g freedom struggle INC | 1 | Do not have links to politics parties. May sometimes oppose the practices of govt., e.g workers movement. |

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Main aim Saw the reorganization of power relationships.                                   | 2 | Main aim address social issues, no change in power relationships.           |
| 3 | Usually to do with economic inequality.   | 3 | Involves economic, social, political and cultural inequality.               |
| 4 | Usually concerned with the lower or depressed class like women and dalits e.g Arya Samaj. | 4 | To do with all classes and all castes e.g workers movement. Tribal movement |

### Ecological Movement

- Any movement to do with the environment.
- It is a new problems.
- It was not there in the past.
- Have come up in the last 2-3 decades.

Chipko Movement – is a movement which was not only economic aspect, it affected all aspect.

### Economic

- When contractors from cities came to cut down the trees, the women and children went and hugged the trees.
- Reason being they were dependent on the forest for their livelihood (grazing, fodder, firewood, food and gathering).

### Political

- Villagers were unhappy that politicians sitting in the cities were dictating terms and they knew politicians were not concerned about their livelihood.
- It became popular, mass media was important in spreading the news and people started their own movements in their own states.

### Class Based Movement

#### Peasant Movement

1. Pre-Colonial: There were movements, but they were not localised so we did not know about them as peasants were too scared to form their own movements. They were poor and could not mobilise people.

2. Colonial



- (i) 19th Century – Some revolts did become quite popular.
- (ii) Bengal Revolt – Indigo plantations by Gandhi during 1917 – 1920 when he came back from South Africa he traveled all across India helping people.

There were 2 important movements.

(i) Champaran

(ii) Bardoli

1920 there were a lot of revolts to do with forest.

Organisations formed: All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS), Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha

### After Independence

- Telangana Movement (West Bengal).
- Farmers had to give 50% profit to government.
- They wanted 2/3<sup>rd</sup> (60%) profit and give remaining 1/3<sup>rd</sup> to the govt → sharecroppers (supported by CPI and AIKS).

### Telangana Movement (Andhra Pradesh).

- They were against the Feudal System.
- Peasants protested against the Nizams rule.
- They wanted proper working system.
- It was supported by CPI.
- Naxalbari – in West Bengal it started off as peasant movement and slowly became New Farmers Movement
- Started off by farmers in a few places like Tamil Nadu, Punjab.
- Farmers put money together and built roads etc as they were tired of the politicians faked promises and they did all the work and they did not let the government vehicles pass.
- No support from government parties.
- Anti urban and anti government.
- Worked for years for administration to help them but since they got no help they did it on their own. Mainly connected with market.
- Prices reduced more support from government reduce taxes, subsidies, support price, easy loans, stop exploitation, methods they used to show their displeasure.
- Bandhs, blocked roads and railways. No politicians, administrators on the road. New farmers movements slowly took under its wings women issues and ecological issues.

## Workers Movement

- During the colonial period, the workers had their own problems.
- Chennai, Bombay, Calcutta
- Initially problems were to do with wages, working conditions.
- Trade unions – consists of workers themselves,
- They form an association.
- Initially the protest was localised but national movement picked up momentum and so the workers movement picked up momentum.
- In the early 20th Century there were textile strikes, workers strikes
- Calcutta – Jute mill
- Chennai & Bombay – Textile mill
- Trade unions were established
- TLA (textile labour association) – Gandhi ji
- AITUC (all India trade union congress) – B.P. Wadia
- Old movements were supported by a political party. Some supported by radicals and moderate.
- When AITUC was formed, the Britishers became very cautious.
- Many laws were passed by the Britishers which had its own rules and regulations as Trade Union Act.
- Slowly AITUC became very powerful and were supported by the communists. They formed – Indian National Trade Union Congress
- The Radicals and Congress moved away AITUC became very powerful at local, regional, national level.

## 1960's

- During recession period many became jobless. There was inflation and protests

## 1970's

- There were many railway strikes main urban of transport.
- Demanding better wages and working conditions.
- During emergency no protests allowed.

## Caste Based Movement

### Dalit Movement

They are different from other movements as they were fighting for self-respect and dignity.



- They wanted to be touched. It was not only Dalits fighting but also some Brahmins and Gandhi ji.
- It was a struggle against discrimination. The concept of untouchability was to be abolished.
- Concept of untouchability had connections with destiny and pollution purity.
- Dalit movement took place all over India and each dalit movement had a different issue/ agenda (wages/employment) but they also fought for dignity and self-respect.
- Not only started by Dalits but other castes also (Sri Narayana Guru)
- Satnami Movement – Chhattisgarh
- Mahar Movement – Maharashtra
- Adi Dharma Movement – Punjab
- Anti Brahman Movement – Kerala.
- Dalit Panther Movement.
- Dalit movement could be ignored in the past but not now due to media.
- Dalit literature became popular because it was poems, dramas, songs, stories about their lives and sufferings etc.
- This led to the change in the mindset of people and emphasized the fighting for self dignity by Dalits and to bring about change in all aspects of life.
- Reservations are a result of dalit movement.

### **OBC Movement**

- Other backward classes
- Economically backward but are part of the forward caste.
- Don't suffer from untouchability.
- OBC was first used in Madras and Bombay for those who were economically backward
- AIBCL/F – All India Backward classes League/Federation.