

Q1. The individual is a product of society and its institutions. Comprehensively discuss the relationship between the individual and society.

Q. Shed a light on the theoretical perspective of society and the individual.

Q. Make a comparative and analytical discussion on the Social Contract theory and Organismic Theory while developing your thesis with a logical conclusion. (CSS-2018)

## I- INTRODUCTION: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN

### INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY AND ITS THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

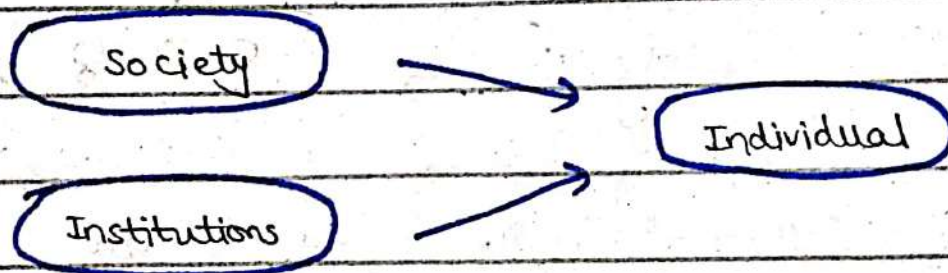


Figure 1. The Individual - A Product of Society and its Institutions

An individual is a single person and a society is a collection of individuals. They both are interconnected and move parallel.



with each other. An individual cannot survive without society and societies cannot exist without members. Individuals and societies mutually benefit each other. Two theories that relate individual and society are the social contract theory and the organic theory. The former views society as a mutual agreement of individuals and the latter explains society as an organism. Thus, there is a unique relationship between the individual and society.

## II - THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

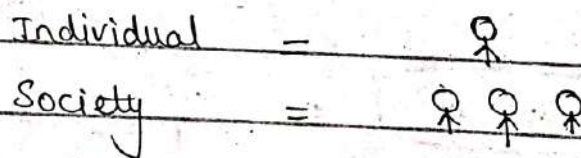


Figure 2: Individual and Society

### A) Individual

An individual is a single person existing and considered separately from others.



### B) Society

"Society is a web of social relationship, which is always changing."

(Maclver)

"Society is a system of relationships that exists among the individuals of the groups"

(Prof. Wright)

### III - INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

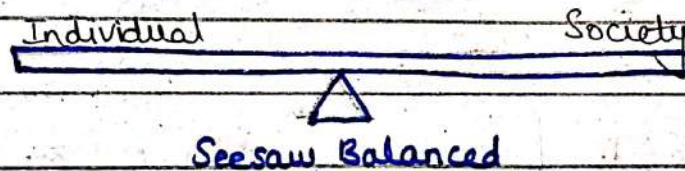


Figure 3: Relation between Individual and Society

Man is a social animal. He has a natural urge to live an associated life with others. Man needs society for his existence and survival. Similarly, a society needs individuals in order to be called a society. Thus, there exists an intimate and harmonious bond between a society and its individuals.



### A) The Society for Individual

The society creates conditions and opportunities for the all-around development of individual personality and ensures harmony and cooperation among individuals.

Example: Before the creation of Pakistani society, the Muslims of the subcontinent lived an unidentified life characterized by chaos and instability.

### B) The Individual for Society

A society cannot exist without its members. The individuals contribute to society by their work, good deeds and wisdom.

Example: The citizens/individuals of Pakistan by following the Islamic rules and regulations make a Pakistani society which is unique in the world.

## IV - THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

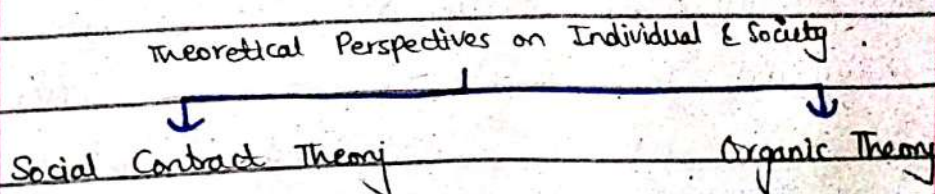


Figure 4: Theoretical Perspectives on Individual & Society



## A) The Social Contract Theory

The social contract theory explains the origin of society. According to this theory, all men are born free and equal. People live together in society in accordance with an agreement that establishes moral and political rules of behavior. Thus, individuals made a mutual agreement and created society.

### a) Proponents of Social Contract Theory

#### i) Thomas Hobbes

According to Thomas Hobbes, man in the state of nature was in perpetual conflict with his neighbours on account of his essentially selfish nature. The life of man was solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short. Due to these intolerable conditions in the state of nature, society came into being as a "means for the protection of men against the consequences of their own nature. People entered into a kind of social contract to ensure for themselves security and certainty of life and property. The contract became binding on the whole community as perpetual social bond.



## ii) John Locke

According to John Locke, the state of nature was a state of peace, goodwill, mutual assistance and preservation, having no recognized system of law and justice. Hence, the people's lives were unsafe and threatened by the bad men. To make good this deficiency and the exercise of his liberty man entered into a social contract by which certain powers were conferred upon the community. In a similar manner, the governmental contract was also made by the societal members.

## iii) J.J. Rousseau

J.J. Rousseau in his famous book "The Social Contract" held that men in the state of nature were equal, self-sufficient, and contented. They lived a life of idyllic happiness and primitive simplicity. But these conditions did not last long. As population increased, the simplicity and idyllic happiness of men disappeared. Man began to think in terms of mine and yours. Consequently, men entered into a contract by virtue of which everyone, while



uniting himself to all, remains as free as before.

## b) The Social Contract in Pakistan's Constitution

Articles 4 and 5 of the Pakistan's constitution are a social contract as these articles are:

Article 4: Rights of Individuals to be dealt with in accordance with law, etc.

Article 5: Loyalty to state and obedience to Constitution and law.

## c) Criticisms on Social Contract Theory

1. The social contract theory is not historically true because man is a social animal and has always lived in societies and never existed individually.
2. The sudden transition of hostile men into friendly men by simply entering into a social contract is unbelievable.
3. Social contract is legally invalid and void because there was no any legal or authoritative body at that time to approve and enforce that contract.



4. Social contract theory is wrong on psychological grounds because it considers state as an artificial institution.
5. The theory follows a mechanical approach and is a dangerous theory because it makes or abolishes a state based on human needs.

### B) The Organic Theory

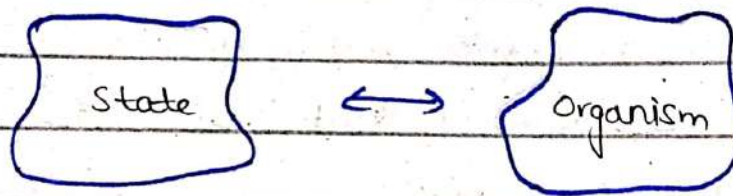


Figure 5: The Organic Theory

The organic theory states that the state in its nature is like a biological organism or a living being and the relation between the society and the individual is the same as between an organism and its cell.

### a) Herbert Spencer

According to Herbert Spencer, the state is a living organism. He draws an elaborate analogy between the society



and a living organism in the following manner:

### i) Growth and Evolution

Both society and organism show a similar process of growth and evolution from simplicity to complexity. A society grows from a tribal organization and an organism grows from an embryo.

### ii) Main Systems

Both society and organism have three main systems; a sustaining system (agriculture and industry, digestive system), a distributor system (transport and communication, circulatory system), and a regulating system (government and military, brain and nerves).

### iii) Basic Units

Both society and organism are composed of basic units. A society is composed of individuals and an organism is composed of cells.



#### iv) Process of Wear and Tear

Both society and organism are subject to a constant process of wear and tear. In a society, old individuals are replaced by newborn babies. In an organism, old cells are replaced by new cells.

#### v) Well-Being

The well-being of both society and organism depends upon the well-being of their basic units i.e. individuals and cells.

#### vi) Life Cycle

Both society and organism exhibit a similar cycle of birth, growth, decay and death.

#### b) Criticisms on Organic Theory

1. The concept that individuals depend solely on the society leads to the conclusion that individuals are completely subordinated to the state i.e. the state becomes a totalitarian state, controlling the life and happiness of the people.



2. The theory is a direct negation of democracy and its ideals.
3. ~~This~~ According to Leacock, this theory is a direct attack on the social contract theory.
4. The bonds of unity among the individuals composing the state are not biological but physical and psychological.

## V - CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The individual is a basic unit of society. They are interdependent and both contribute to each other. But how this relationship of interdependence emerged? This is explained by the two theories i.e. the social contract theory which explains <sup>that</sup> society is formed as a result of mutual agreement among individuals and the organic theory which relates society with an organism. The social contract theory is criticized because of its illogical explanations. This led to the development of organic theory which provides valid explanations, but is also being criticized as it establishes dictatorship. A good society can be established by



adopting the valid explanations and by negating the criticisms of both theories.

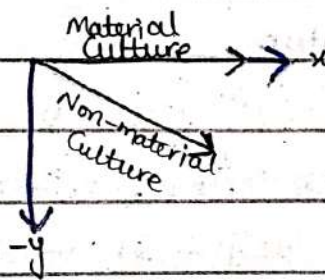
## VI - CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, the individual and society are mutually dependent entities. Their relationship is explained by the social contract theory and the organic theory. The social contract theory considers society as a social contract among individuals for their safety and prosperity. The organic theory considers society as an organism with individuals being the basic units like cells.



Q2. There is a continuous struggle between material and non-material cultures. In this process, the non-material culture lag behind the material culture and creates culture lag. As a sociologist give your opinion on how to fill this gap. (CSS-2019)

Ans. I - INTRODUCTION: CULTURAL LAG OF NON-MATERIAL CULTURE BEHIND THE MATERIAL CULTURE AND THE WAYS TO REMOVE THE CULTURAL LAG

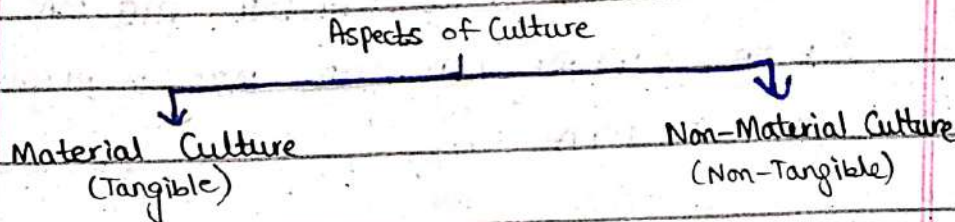


Culture is a symbolic, cumulative and progressive process having two aspects: material culture (tangible aspects) and non-material culture (non-tangible aspects). There is a continuous struggle between these two aspects and in the process the non-material culture lags behind the material culture and creates a culture lag. Several impediments



like, fear of the unknown, ideological conflicts among people, religious beliefs, etc. cause this culture lag. These impediments need to be reduced by adopting stern measures at the individual, societal and governmental levels in order to remove this culture lag.

## II - THE CULTURE AND ITS ASPECTS



### a) Culture

"Culture is an emergent web of representations, holistically encompassing the deep-set value, belief, and symbolic systems of a natural collectivity."

(Emile Durkheim)

### b) Aspects of Culture

#### i) Material Culture

Material culture refers to the physical objects, resources, and spaces that people use to define their culture. Material



culture is physical, concrete, substantial, or tangible.

Example: Plants, trees, buildings, goods, products, etc.

## ii) Non-Material Culture

Non-material culture refers to the non-physical ideas that people have about their culture. Non-material culture is abstract, conceptual, theoretical, or intangible.

Example: Norms, laws, ideas, beliefs, worship, ethics, etc.

## III - THE CULTURAL LAG OF NON-MATERIAL CULTURE BEHIND THE MATERIAL CULTURE

### a) Culture Lag

The idea of culture lag was developed by William Ogburn.

#### i) Definition

Cultural lag refers to the phenomenon that occurs when changes in material culture occur before or at a faster rate than the changes in non-material culture.



## ii) When a Cultural Lag Exists?

A cultural lag exists when two or more social variables, which were once in some form of agreement or mutual adjustment, become dissociated and maladjusted by their differential rates of change.

## iii) Ogburn's views

According to Ogburn, not all parts of a culture change at the same pace. When one part of a culture changes, other parts lag. Ogburn pointed out that a group's material culture <sup>usually</sup> changes first and creates a cultural lag of non-material culture.

## b) Impact of Culture lag

According to Brinkman and Brinkman, whenever one part of a culture changes more rapidly than another part, social problems can arise called cultural lag. Cultural lag broadly happens in those countries which do not accept change and show heavy resistance to it especially technological changes.



### c) Example of Culture Lag in Pakistan

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Pakistani people were hesitant to vaccinate because they believed that it is a propaganda of the west to limit their population size.

### d) Why Non-Material Culture Lags?

As the non-material culture is associated with a person's beliefs, values, thoughts, etc., the non-material culture lags due to the following reasons:

1. Fear of the unknown
2. People do not want to break their comfort zones.
3. Ideological conflicts among people
4. Religious constraints by religion and scholars.

## IV - WAYS TO REMOVE THE CULTURAL GAP BETWEEN MATERIAL AND NON-MATERIAL CULTURES

Following are the ways to improve the non-material culture:



### a) Educate People

"Education is the movement from darkness to light"

(Allan Bloom)

The people should be educated to transform their beliefs, values, etc., according to the need of the time.

Example: In order to limit population, people should be educated to use contraceptives (against their religion).

### b) Strengthen Democracy

Democracy ensures justice which in turn removes deprivation of the people. When all segments of society are equally uplifted, they all will contribute towards a country's development.

Examples: Due to lack of democracy and transparency, the Baloch people of Balochistan have created their separate group i.e. Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) — a violent group.

### c) Eliminate Corruption

Corruption negatively impacts



all sections of society. They become morally, socially, ethically dead due to this menace.

Example: In Pakistan, due to corruption, the youth especially have developed agitation against the public sector and they started to believe that they cannot get a job without a strong support.

#### d) Direct Media Towards Positivism

Media massively impacts the personality of people. It plays a profound role in the learning behavior of individuals.

Thus, media should be directed to break the socio-cultural taboos among people.

Example: Media can play a positive role in empowering women.

#### e) Promote Science and Technology

Mostly the religious teachings of certain groups are against the science and technology. The government should take initiatives to strengthen this field as it is a means of success.

Example: Religious scholars initially were against media and now, they use it to gain popularity.



### f) Strengthen Economy

Unless a country is not economically stable, it cannot take initiatives to encourage socio-cultural developments. The government should try to strengthen economy through cooperations and investments.

### g) Change the Youth's Mindset

The youths are the assets of any nation. The parents and government should try to provide facilities for the progress of youths.

Example: The prevalent menace of honor-killings can only be eliminated by inculcating the human rights concepts in youths.

## V - CRITICAL ANALYSIS

In every society, material culture makes progress and the non-material culture lags far behind. It is due to this cultural lag that the societies (~~the~~ rural societies) do not make socio-cultural developments. From a functionalist viewpoint, this lag prevents societies from drastic changes such as modernism.



The conflict perspective states that this cultural lag exploits the poor (who are attached to their beliefs) at the hands of rich (who control the materials). According to symbolic interactionist perspective, the individuals perpetuates this cultural lag. A balanced approach to improve the non-material culture lies in adjusting the beliefs of the people according to the need of the time. In this context, each individual should play his/her role.

### VI - CONCLUSION

To conclude, the non-material aspect of culture lags behind the material culture. This lag makes societies backward and impedes their development. By taking certain corrective measures such as educating people, strengthening democracy, changing youth's mindset, the cultural lag of non-material culture can be eliminated.