

Discuss the concept of social solidarity as proposed by Emile Durkheim and its significance in understanding the modern societies.

## 1. Introduction

Emile Durkheim described the division of labor based on social solidarity in traditional and modern societies. Social solidarity refers to cohesion and integration among the members of the society. Emile Durkheim believed that division of labor is deeply associated with the types of social solidarity in a society. Durkheim believed that division of labor helps to channelize workforce, produces a sense of attachment in the society, brings moral and social order in the society.

## 2. Division of labor in terms of social solidarity

Mechanical  
Solidarity

Organic  
Solidarity

### i) Mechanical Solidarity

It is the society which is homogeneous in terms of values, norms and other social aspects. It existed in primitive and traditional societies where members resembled one another.

## ii) Relating hunter and gathering society Through mechanical society

### i) Division of labor

In hunter and gathering society the division of labor was simplest. There were no institutions so the involvement was minimum. The division of labor was based on sex and age. Men to work in farms while women in house chores.

### ii) No interdependence

The tasks were simple in nature and can be performed alone.

### iii) Less greed for materialistic things

The purpose of division of labor was not to make money but to serve the needs of one another.

### iii) Strong social control

In mechanical societies as people have developed mutual understanding and respect, the rate of crimes were less. Societies would refrain people to engage in anti social behavior.

## 3 Organic Society

The characteristics of this society are highly heterogeneous in terms of norms, values and social aspect of its members. It exists in modern and advanced societies whose members differ from each other.

## i) Relating post-Industrial society with organic society.

### i) Division of labor

In organic society there exist heterogeneous norms, values and other social aspects. It is based on dissimilarities among the members of society. It exists in modern societies where one individual is different from another.

In organic societies the division of labor is complex. A huge role is played by social institutions, which are relatively high in number and division of labor varies by the speciality held by each employee.

### ii) High interdependence

Due to various roles involved by specialized division of labor the interdependence remains high. Different parts of the labor are interconnected.

For example, in a hospital, doctor, nurses, x-ray machines, technicians and many other staff are dependent on one another to provide healthcare to the patients.

### iii) Pure materialistic approach

In an organic society people's primary goal is to generate maximum wealth.

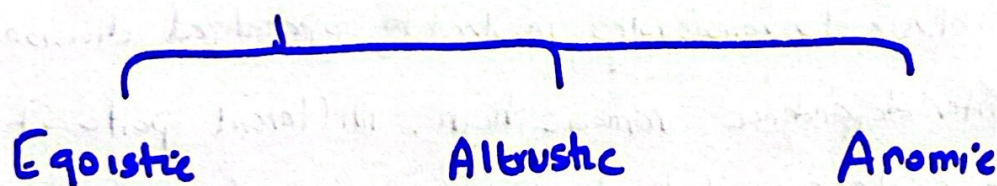
#### iv) Weak Social Control

As people are heterogeneous among one another, the division of labor is specialized and social control is weak. It is usually monitored by institutions.

#### 4. Suicide Theory in Social Solidarity

Suicide is not a personal act. It is caused by a power beyond the individual or the super individual. Suicide results from social turmoil or lack of social integration or cohesion.

#### Durkheim three fold Classification of Suicide.



##### i) Egoistic Suicide

This results when an individual does not feel integrated with the society. The individual feels left out and receives no social support.

##### e) Unmarried men are more likely to suicide

According to research, unmarried men are more likely to commit suicide due to their less integration with the society. Married men have stable norms, values, and are well integrated into the society.

## b) High suicide rate in Protestants

Durkheim studied various degrees of integration with the society. It was observed that the rate of suicide in Protestants Christians were less as compare to Catholic Christians.

## ii) Altruistic Suicide

It is marked by a feeling of being overwhelmed by the group's goals and beliefs. It occurs in highly integrated society.

### a) The concept of Sati

It is practised in North India and has religious sentiments attached with this suicide where the women knowingly ~~burn~~<sup>kill</sup> herself.

### b) Military Service

Those individuals who join army for the sake of prestigious jobs and to provide social security in the society, knowingly know in case of war they can lose their lives but still join military.

## iii) Anomic Suicide.

It is a sign of failure economic development and division of labor to create organic solidarity.

## a) Old people commit suicide in Japan

When entering in old age, people in Japan commit suicide as they believe that they are no longer beneficial for the country.