Social Control
Meaning, Types and Agencies
### Meaning

1. Social control refers generally to societal and political mechanisms or processes that regulate individual and group behavior, leading to conformity and compliance to the rules of a given society, state, or social group.

2. Many mechanisms of social control are cross-cultural, if only in the control mechanisms used to prevent the establishment of chaos or anomie.

3. Some theorists, such as Émile Durkheim, refer to this form of control as regulation. Sociologists identify two basic forms of social controls:
   a) **Internalization of norms and values**
   b) **External sanctions**, which can be either positive (rewards) or negative (punishment).
Definitions

“Social control focuses on the capacity of a social organisation to regulate itself.”

Morris Janowitz

According to him, this concept of self-regulation can be applied to the actions of individuals and organizational units. Without social control even the best intentioned efforts at cooperative endeavour would quickly dissolve into uncoordinated separate actions by various participants.

“Social control refers to the techniques and the strategies for regulating human behaviour in any society.”

Roberts

According to him social control works at all levels of society. For instance, in our family we all obey our parents, at office we abide by formal norms etc.
1. In traditional societies, greater importance was given to the informal network of relationships.

2. The fear of God, Magic and Spiritual power was inculcated in them to check deviance.

3. Informal and subjective measures were used for securing conformity and checking deviance.
## Social Control in Modern Societies

1. Informal methods used in traditional societies, for exercising social control have become non- operative.
2. In the changing circumstances where people have adopted individualistic orientation and in the era of industrialization and globalization, unity, cohesiveness and peace is maintained by formal means.
3. Judiciary, police forces etc. are the means of social control in modern societies.
Karl Mannheim classified social control into following two types:

1. **Direct Social Control**: It is the control that exercises upon the individual by the reactions of the people who are living within the proximity. E.g. Family, neighborhood and play group.

2. **Indirect Social Control**: This is the type of control which is exercised upon individual by the factors like customs, laws, opinions, which effects the entire social system. E.g. Secondary groups, traditions, customs etc.
**Types of Social Control by Kimbell Young**

Kimbell Young classified social control into following two types:

1. **Positive Social Control:** Rewards and incentives have an immense value upon the activities of individual. Everyone desires to be rewarded by the society, consequently they have to conform with the traditions, mores etc. accepted by society. E.g. Rewards, fame, respect and recognition etc.

2. **Negative Social Control:** A person is prevented from doing something wrong by threat of punishment. Fear of these punishments helps the people to prevent from violating the socially accepted customs, traditions, values and ideals. E.g. Verbal punishment, defamation and negative criticism etc.
### Types of Social Control by Hayes

Hayes classified social control into following two types:

1. **Control by Sanction:** E.g. Awarding the obedient and punishing the miscreant
2. **Control by Socialization and Education**

### Formal and Informal Social Control

1. **Informal Social Control:** The primary Group formulates the controlling measures. For e.g. Mores, Traditions, Customs etc.
2. **Formal Social Control:** Rules and regulations formed by Judiciary and law control the people’s behaviour within society. For instance: Police, bureaucracy etc.
Agencies of Social Control can be broadly divided into two main types:

**Informal and Formal**
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal Agencies</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1. Family:</strong> The most important agency of social control is family. Family has the control over child. A person might violate the other codes and conducts but not the family norms.</td>
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<td><strong>2. The Peer Group:</strong> The peer group controls its members by informal sanctions</td>
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<td><strong>3. Neighbourhood:</strong> There are unwritten laws which demand cooperation and co–existence among neighbours. The fear of rejection, ridicule, gossiping and social isolation by the neighbours forces the individuals to conform their behaviour to the normative pattern.</td>
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<td><strong>4. Caste/Class:</strong> Each caste and class has its own code of conduct which exercises control over the members.</td>
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<td><strong>5. Religion:</strong> The religious ideology helps the demarcate between good and bad, sacred and profane etc.</td>
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Formal Agencies

1. **The Law:** It’s the most obvious formal agency that exercises social control. It determines possible offenders against the social order.

2. **Educational Institution:** Schools formulate specific rules and regulations that ensure discipline and a code of conduct.

3. **The Media:** Television, radio, newspapers, magazines and public hoardings do not operate like other agencies of social control by use of sanctions but can still play a very crucial role in influencing behaviour. The media penetrate the hidden regions of life. They pass judgements upon purely private acts. Human behaviour is continually influenced by the fact that the public opinion will be ruthlessly expressed. Any person not conforming to public opinion is likely to meet with social rejection.
Therefore, we can say that through social control, members of group remain united and exhibit a common behaviour pattern. In case there is no social control, society would wither away. It is for this reason that an overwhelming majority of our society adhere to normative pattern.
THANK YOU ...

Veenat
Dept. of Sociology
PGGCG- Sec 11
Chandigarh