

meanings such as 'suicide' lies in its demonstration of the function of sociological theory in empirical science.

Despite above criticism, Durkheim's concern was with understanding the mechanisms which structured relations between the individual and society. Durkheim acknowledges that there may be a secondary role of psychological factors too, but the real cause of suicide is social. He concludes that rates of suicide are fairly consistent in different societies, making it a social phenomenon, linked with the nature of a particular society. A particular rate is normal in society as it highlights the problem of integration and regulation. Once suicide is committed, the whole society works to reinforce appropriate levels of integration and regulation. If suicide rate increases beyond a certain limit, it becomes pathological or abnormal.

**3.(b). R. K. Merton argued, "The social and cultural structures generates pressure for socially deviant behavior upon people variously located in the structure." Analyse the statement.**

**Line of Thought - Content/Knowledge**

R.K. Merton begins with the premise that deviance results from the culture and structure of society. Merton starts from the functionalist premise that for smooth functioning of society, **VALUE CONSENSUS** among the members is essential. **However, since member of society are placed in different position in social structure, for example they differ in terms of class position; they do not have this same opportunity of realizing the shared values.** This situation can generate deviance.

- **Merton states that a state of anomie exist in the social structure.** One form of anomie is that there might be **lack of co-ordination between CULTURALLY APPROVED GOALS (CAG) and STRUCTURALLY PERMITTED MEANS (SPM) to attain these goals.** The members of society placed variously in the social structure may adapt differently to this anomic situation.

**Merton outlines five possible responses to this state .**

1. **FIRST** first response is **CONFORMITY**. Where culturally approved goals and structurally permitted means are in consonance. So they strive for success through accepted channel.
2. **SECOND** possible response is **INNOVATION**. Here culturally approved goals are there but structurally permitted means are absent. **For example**, a poor boy living in slum and working as helper in rich house may have **CAG** to be rich like his employer but due to lack of access to quality education, social and economic capital he do not have **SPM** to succeed. Hence he may go for innovations such as **crime, smuggling etc.**
3. **THIRD** response according to Merton is **RITUALISM** where member cling to structurally permitted means rather than aiming for goals. Their occupation provides less opportunity to success compared to others.
4. **FOURTH** type of response as **RETREATISM**. Where member denies both CAG and SPM. It applies to psychotics, vagabond, tramps, chronic drunkards and drug addicts.
5. **FIFTH** response is **REBELLION**. These members not only reject CAG and SPM but they provide alternative to replace them. They wish to create new society with these CAG and SPM. **For example**, Lenin can be categorized into such group.

• Therefore location of member at various position in social structure defines his/her access to SPM and it decides the way person responds to this pressure. **The acute poverty, lack of access to education (former untouchables in India), low or no social mobility due to rigidity of structure e.g. caste system in India generate pressure on individual to be deviant and adapt to situation.** Hence anomie is rooted in social structures of society.

**Thus, Merton through theory of conformity and deviance tries to analyze the causes of deviant behavior of individuals.** And come to conclusion that deviance is cause of social structure. Where structure allows low mobility of individuals and groups. *Therefore he explains*