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**Cults Research Paper**

 Sociology is defined as the study of societies and also the living of human groups together. Society is the community of people who are living in a particular country or a particular region having common customs and religious beliefs. Three are different agents that influence sociology that include emotions, attitudes, behavior, gender, and religion. Culture is the language beliefs and norms and values that are passed from one generation to another. There is a term in a culture that is also called ethnic culture where people judge another culture and ethnicity on the basis of their standards. Cult is another term in sociology that is used to describe a small group that sufficiently bound its members; they also share a complete set of practice and acts that require extraordinary devotion, a charismatic and religious leader normally leads such practices. Cult became popular in the latter part of the twentieth century. Since its inception, this particular belief is considered to be more controversial. In the year 1930s sociologists started to study this particular terminology as a part of their studies of religious behavior. In the year 1970, the popularity of cult increased due to the increased interest in such groups. This was first defined as the group of people who worship a diety or god (Rousselet et al., 2017)..

 Some Christian groups consider all smaller religious groups as cults. For such religious leaders all the groups who do not share their own beliefs or if their beliefs deviate from the religious leaders then they are referred to as cults. But several other sociologists refer to cults as new religious movements. Over the years scholars try to reduce the boundaries and implications of cult groups that have multiplied rapidly, but at the same time, the concept of cult has become appropriate by the people who were totally against of this concept, and they thought that such religious values and such beliefs are dangerous for individuals and society as a whole. But with time the mass media has used the term so rapidly that now it has become a positive concept and societies are now accepting it widely. So many sociologists now dropped the term cult because they believed that it had become a polluted concept among the masses so instead of using this term more acceptable terminologies are being used like new religions. Sociologists Durkheim in the elementary forms of religious life and also Weber in the sociology of religion used a classical concept of a cult as designing a ritual system of worship activities.

 As discussed earlier it is a general perception that cult is a dangerous concept for societies as a whole and also for individuals. The members of cults show extraordinary respect and devotion towards its leaders and the unity among the members of these specific groups is also noteworthy. The members are manipulated and brainwashed by the leaders of these groups. Even the members are subjected to mental stress and other types of physical injuries in order to purify their souls. The leader in this particular religious group controls the thinking and belief system of the members. He also controls the interpersonal and family affairs of the individual. The leader has the power of separating husband and wife and their children from each other so that they can not leave the group even if they want to (Dubrow & Dubrow-Marshal 2016)..

 When the members of a cultic culture still believe in their religious beliefs, then it is quite difficult to approach them. Even after they leave the group, then it is also quite difficult to approach them because of their suspicious nature. The members themselves do not know that they are manipulated or even tortured in the group. Despite these tortures, most of the cult members find it quite difficult to leave the group. The leader's and other members of the group lie about the real purpose of the group to attract new members. Also, the leaders force their members to depend on the group emotionally and financially entirely. This is done by when the members turn over their properties and bank balance to the group leader. Also, the members are forbidden to contact their family and friends outside of the group to make sure that they become dependent on the leader completely. They are dreaded to the extent that they always feel that something bad will happen to them or their family if they leave the group and don't show their sincerity towards the group. Similarly, they are forced to think that if they leave the group, then they will not be able to survive without the group leader.

 All the members of this group along with the group leader have a firm desire to belong to a specific group or organization. Such people often want to become something big and worthwhile so those people are targeted, and they are made part of the group. They lack self-confidence because they are not sure of themselves so they always need others to validate themselves. Such people also want to find meaning in their lives. They want to achieve something big rather than living the ordinary life, so they become part of this group (Dayan, 2018).

 In the early years of the cult group, the concept was new, so people were scared of being part of this group. The group leaders and other old members try hard to attract members, but with the passage, it became quite easy to target such people. It is also a known fact that joining a cult group is in the hands of people but leaving it is not in their hands because the members start to depend on the group both emotionally and financially. But the practices in the groups has changed quite significantly so now it is referred to the new religious group rather than a cult.

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