

## **Quadrant II – Transcript and Related Materials**

**Programme: Bachelor of Arts (Third Year)**

**Subject: Sociology**

**Paper Code: SOC 108**

**Paper Title: Indian Society: Contemporary Sociological Theories**

**Unit: 02 Functionalism**

**Module Name: Parsons AGIL Model.**

**Module No: 09**

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### **Notes**

#### **Parsons, AGIL Model.**

##### **Introduction**

The society is a whole having various institutions within it. It has a network of status roles governed by norms and values. For e.g. the family, marriage, caste, etc. These social institutions have different rules and regulations, values and norms. Every individual is expected to play the different roles and follow the societal rules and regulations. In order to understand the structure of any social system, one must incorporate the individualistic and holistic dimensions of the society. According to Parsons, the structure of social system can be explained through the AGIL model.

##### **The AGIL Model**

The ideas developed by parsons have been referred to variously as “System Problems”, “Functional Imperatives”, the “AGIL Model”, or the “Four Function Paradigm”.

A central concern in Parsons Work has been the question of the functional requisites of a social system. That is according to Parsons functional pre-requisites are important for social equilibrium. There could be individual or

collective problems; hence there is a need to solve these problems faced, if the social system has to survive.

- The four functional requisites of a social system:

1. Adaptation (A),
2. Goal Attainment (G),
3. Integration (I),
4. Latency or pattern maintenance and tension management (I).

- Society as a large square divided into four equal parts.
- These parts are the four functional system represented by the letter AGIL.

### **1. Adaptation (A)**

Adaptation implies:

1. Problem of securing sufficient resources,
2. Distribution of the resources throughout the system.

If the social system is to survive, it needs certain structure or institutions that will perform the role of adaptation to the environment. For e.g. economy which involves the processes of production, distribution and consumptions is an institution that solves the problem of securing sufficient resources. The central aim is production or generation of wealth. For e.g. industry.

### **2. Goal attainment (G).**

It stands for the systems need to mobilize its resources and energies to attain the system goals, and establish priorities among them. It is basically the function of decision making bodies such as political institutions. The central aim is the use of power to implement social decisions. For e.g. state.

### **3. Integration (I).**

For Parsons, integration is the need to co-ordinate, adjust and regulate relationships among various actors or units within the system to keep the system functioning. In the society legal institutions and courts meet the need for social control. The central aim is implementation of laws.

#### **4. Latency/Pattern Maintenance/Tension Management (L).**

Latency is twofold:

1. Motivate actors to play their parts.
2. To provide mechanisms for internal management.

The need to make certain that actors are sufficiently motivated to play their parts in a system or maintain the value pattern.

This problem is one of keeping the value system intact and guaranteeing the conformity of the members of the system by transmitting societal values. The relevant institutions are family, religion, and education which help to conserve the values and help in transmitting from one generation to another.

#### **Conclusion**

If the society is to survive, all four institutions are important, for which there are specialized system like economy, political, legal, and religion, education , family. Parsons four functional paradigm is not clear because in simpler societies there is more of a tendency to collapse functions.