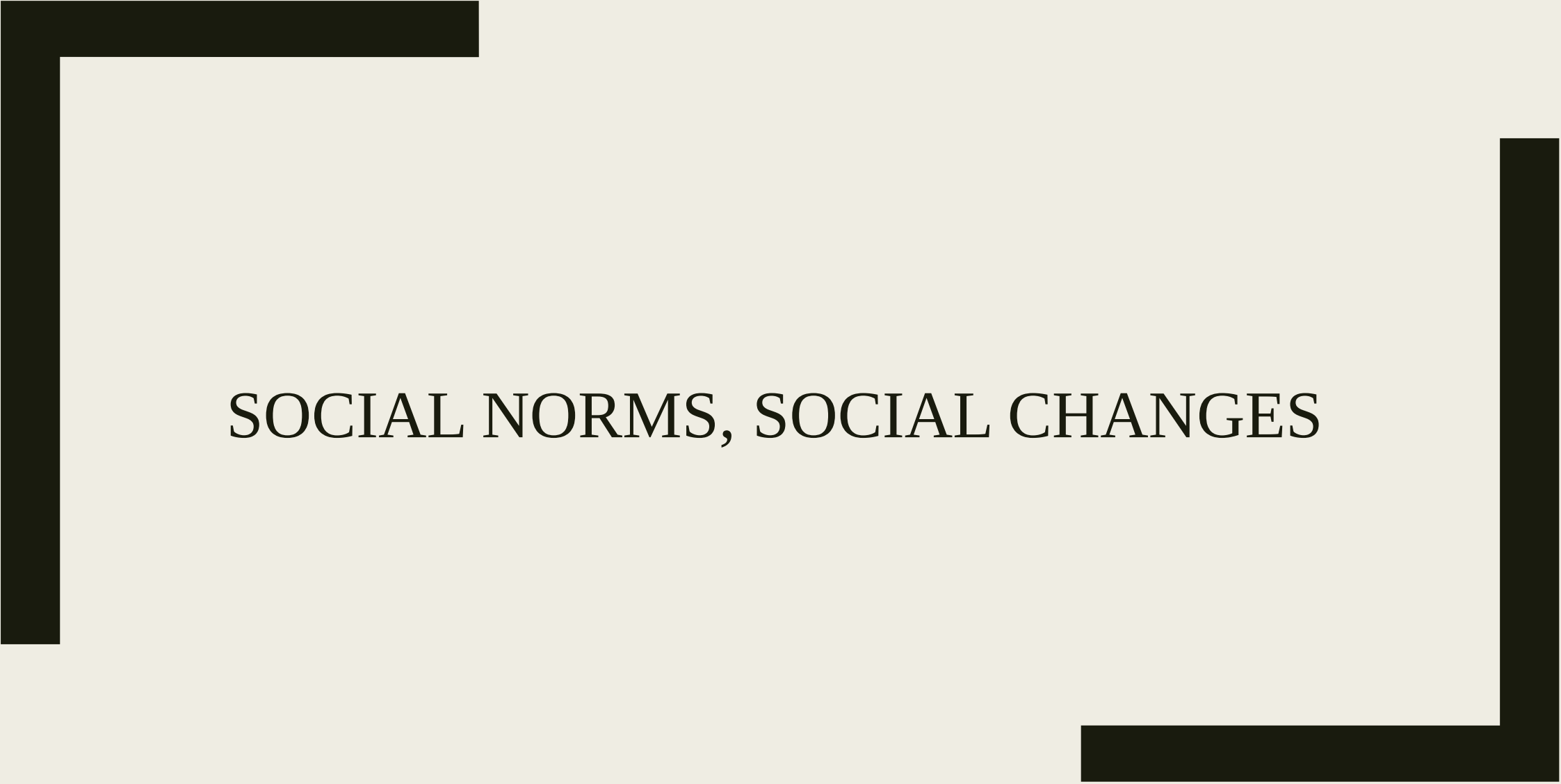


The image features two large, thick, black L-shaped brackets. One is positioned on the left side, with its horizontal bar at the top and its vertical bar extending downwards. The other is on the right side, with its horizontal bar at the bottom and its vertical bar extending upwards. These brackets frame the central text.

SOCIAL NORMS, SOCIAL CHANGES

SOCIAL NORMS, SOCIAL CHANGES- AN OVERVIEW

Society is made up of individuals who have agreed to work for mutual benefit. Philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau dubbed the set of rules that a society lives by "the social contract". Norms, look societal but is a standard of behavior shared by the members of the community.

Social Norms are guidelines for expected behavior and thus they set out our options for appropriate behavior. The norms are the "should do's" and sometimes the "must do's" of the society. Norms can be loosely held, such as folkways or tightly held, such as mores and taboos, those that are often built into the legal code. Social structure is built and maintained by social norms. Social norms create social orders- by giving us guidelines of behavior .

Social Change is the alteration of mechanisms within the social structure characterized by changes in cultural symbols, rules of behavior, social organization or value system. This change evolves from different sources which include contact with other society, changes in the ecosystem, technological change, population growth and other demographic variables etc.

OBJECTIVES

The course "Social Norms, Social changes" aims to let people understand the concept of norms and social structure and ways to conduct social changes. The norms have different streams of factors which leads to effect individual's behavior. It may be custom, may be paradoxical elements of tradition and so on. It teaches how to diagnose social norms and how to distinguish them from other social constructs, like conventions or customs. These distinctions are crucial for effective policy interventions aimed to create new, beneficial norms or eliminate harmful ones. The study of this course teaches us how to measure social norms and the expectations that supports them, and how to decide whether they cause specific behavior. The chapters in the course are all the basic concepts and definitions, such as customs, descriptive norms and social norms.

CHAPTERS – AT A GLANCE

1. Interdependent and Independent Actions + Empirical Expectations
2. Normative Expectations + Personal Normative Belief
3. Conditional Preferences + Social Norms
4. Pluralistic Ignorance + Measuring Norms

What we learnt ?

1. Interdependent and Independent Actions + Empirical Expectations

Keywords:

- *collective behavior*
- *Habits*
- *Actions*
- *Customs*

There is a specific common need. We use the same means to satisfy the common need and thus engage in the same behavior and our behavior is independent of what others do.

Interdependent vs Interdependent Actions

Collective behaviors that are completely independent as when they are purely determined by economic or natural reason, and interdependent, as when other people's actions and opinions matter to one's choice,

Habits, social customs and moral injunctions are independent, in this sense that they involve undertaking certain actions regardless of what others do or expect us to do.

* not all collective behaviors are interdependent and not all interdependent behaviors are social norms.*

Customs can be defined as a pattern of behavior such that individuals (unconditionally) prefer to conform to it because it meets their needs.

How are Customs made?

Supposing a man lives in an environment where water is scarce, and latrines do not exist. All find it useful to satisfy our bodily needs by defecating in the open. This action meets his needs and will therefore be repeated. This repetition will create a habit. Since people have similar needs, the habitual action that meets their needs will become a custom.

Empirical Expectations

A descriptive norm is a pattern of behavior that we prefer to engage in because we believe that others follow it. It associates with the reference network and hence it becomes what we believe people in our reference network do.

What we learnt ?

2. Normative Expectations + Personal Normative Belief

Keywords :

- *Ought*
- *Empirical Expectations*
- *Reference network*
- *Beliefs*

Normative Expectations are second-order beliefs- what we believe, people in our reference network believe, we should do. Social expectations are beliefs about other people's behavior or beliefs. Social expectations are :

- Empirical Expectations: what I believe other people do
- Normative Expectations: what I believe other people think I ought to do.

Like Empirical Expectations, Normative Expectations are reference network dependent. Normative Expectations may not matter to one's decision. In case, of customs and descriptive norms, normative expectations do not matter to choice.

Example: A man in my village believe that his fellow villagers think he ought to marry off his daughter as soon as possible.

Personal Normative Beliefs are our personal beliefs about what we should do. Typically, moral beliefs, religious beliefs are personal normative beliefs about what we should do, what we ought to do.

Personal Normative Beliefs and Normative Expectations

Personal normative may or may not coincide with one's normative expectations.

For Example: A woman may believe that she ought to infibulate her daughter, or she may be less sanguine about infibulation and in both the cases she believe that her fellow villagers think she ought to infibulate her child. If she is obeying her group's norms to infibulate the child, regardless of her personal normative beliefs, her behavior will be influenced by her beliefs about what relevant others think she should do- that is, her normative expectations.

*That normative expectations always express an indirect evaluation; one believes that other people think one ought to behave in a certain way (or refrain from behaving in a certain way) where ought, as we shall see is not merely prudent.

What we learnt ?

3. *Conditional Preferences + Social Norms*

Keywords:

- *Descriptive norms*
- *Preference*
- *Conditional*
- *Unconditional*

We will understand **Conditional Preferences** with the help of an example.

Example 1: A lady adores chocolate but cannot eat as she is diabetic.

Example 2: Some parents prefer to marry off their young daughters maybe the case that they would have liked better to send them to school, wait a few years and marry then later.

People often think that having a preference for something means that one really like that particular thing. But preference and liking are two different thing. The above produced examples are preference for a certain behavior and is very different from their really liking and endorsement of that behavior. A descriptive norm is a pattern of behavior such that individuals refer to conform to it on the condition that they believe that most people in their reference network conform to it. Which also means that they have empirical expectations. So, Descriptive norms are based on empirical expectations.

Conditional Preference applies to both descriptive and social norms. Preference may be completely unconditional in the sense that my preference is not influenced by what other people live, do or endorse. Therefore, it shows that preferences are conditional on Empirical Expectations or Both Empirical and Normative Expectations.

A **Social Norm** is a rule of behavior such that people have a conditional preference for following it. Social Norm underlines these important segments into it:

- Interdependent Decisions
- Empirical and Normative Expectations
- Conditional Preferences

What we learnt ?

4. *Pluralistic Ignorance + Measuring Norms*

Keywords:

- *Normative Expectations*
- *Personal Normative Beliefs*
- *Conditional Preferences*
- *Norms*

Pluralistic Ignorance is typically a situation in which most people, personal normative beliefs are not in line with their normative expectations. In the previous slides we talked about Normative Expectations and Personal Normative Beliefs and it is said that the two may not go together, it is situation where they often do but they may not. And this is how bad norms often can survive. It is very important that people communicate because if people cannot transparently communicate amongst them or tell anybody else, whether they really like or dislike certain rules, they will keep obeying them and therefore, they will keep believing that other people not only obey these rules but support them. And this is the case when bad norms survive because of Pluralistic Ignorance.

Example: In a village, where women and men taboo menstruation, they see menstruation as one's harm and are very cruel to the lady. It is because they have been believing that menstruating is a curse to the person and hence treat it likewise. The regular believe have made them obey the pseudo rules, rules of treating and isolating women in the worst.

It means that none of the villagers want to voice their disagreement, not even women because they have accepted the harsh situation raised against them or because their disagreement would put them into disadvantage.

What do we mean by Measuring Norms ?

To understand **Measuring norms**, we have to measure social expectations. In the previous slides we talked about Empirical Expectations and about what people think other people or most people in their reference network do, this is considered the first measurement of social expectations. The second measure is a measure of Normative expectations, as it holds two parts:

- Measurement of Personal Normative Beliefs within their reference network.
- Measurement of Conditional Preferences.

Learning Methodology

The module 'Social Norms Social changes' is a collaboration of quizzes, reading material, videos and discussion prompt platforms. With each topic there are more than three videos and at least two reading materials with quiz page on every topic. The more the complex topic, the more are the videos and reading materials. The questions in the quiz inculcates eight questions with three attempts as necessary to move onto next topic.

The discussion prompt platform is an opportunity to reflect the understanding of the individuals. However, the learning was all through these prospects and discussion practice on the rostrum.

