

MODULE 1

BASIC CONCEPTS OF SOCIOLOGY



SOCIETY

- The term '**society**' is the most fundamental one in Sociology.
- The term society is derived from the Latin word 'Socius' which means companionship or friendship.
- Companionship means sociability.
- In Sociology, the term society refers to a complex pattern of the norms of interaction that arise among the people.
- People are valuable only as agencies of social relationships.
- A society is intangible.
- **George Simmel** has pointed out that sociability is the essence of Society.
- It indicates that man always lives in the company of other people.
- **Aristotle** said "man is a social animal".
- Man needs society for his living, working and enjoying life.
- Society has become an essential condition for human life to arise and to continue.
- Human life and society always go together.

Definitions

Mac Iver "Society is the web of social relationships".

Morris Ginsberg "A society is a collection of individuals united by certain relations or modes of behavior which mark them off from others who do not enter into these relations or who differ from them in behavior".

Characteristic features of Society

1. Society involves both likeness and difference.
2. Difference subordinate to likeness in society.
3. Society is based on interdependence of individuals and groups.
4. Cooperation and conflict are equally found in society.
5. Society consists of groupings and divisions.
6. Society consists of mechanisms of social control.
7. Society consists of liberty and constraints.
8. Society is a permanent institution.
9. Society has both associative and dissociative types of the process of social interaction.
10. Society is abstract.

COMMUNITY

- **Mac Iver** defines community as "an area of social living marked by some degree of social coherence". He further says "whenever the members of any group, small or large, living together in such a way that share, not this or that particular interest, but the basic conditions of a common life, we call that group a community".
- We know that a person rarely exists alone. He is linked with many ways to his fellows who form a group.

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- We cannot, however, expect a man to become the member of all the groups existing in the world.
- He can establish his relations only with the people who reside near him in a definite part of the territory.
- It is inevitable that the people who over any length of time reside in a particular locality should develop special likeness, should have common social ideas, common traditions and the sense of belonging together. This fact of social living and common specific area gives birth to community.

Definitions

Lundberg- "community is a human population living within a limited geographic area and carrying on a common inter-dependent life".

Mannheim- "community is any circle of people who live together and belong together in such a way that they do not share this or that particular interest only, but a whole set of interests.

Characteristic features of Community

- **Group of People:** Group of people share the basic conditions of common life. Group members can act collectively in an organised manner.
- **Permanency:** Includes permanent group life in a definite place community is relatively stable.
- **Naturality** Community is established in a normal and natural way, they are not made or created by an act of will or by planned efforts. Individuals become members of the group by birth. Community is spontaneous in their origin.
- **Likeness:** Language, practices, customs, traditions, folkways, mores are common. People share the common way of life and work through customs and traditions.

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- **Wider Ends:** People associate not for the fulfillment of a particular end, they are natural and wider but not artificial. The membership of the community is of wide significance.
- **Particular name:** Each community will have its own specified name indicating the reality in individuality and describes the total personalities.
- **Legal Status:** Community has no legal status.

Association

Association is a group of people, formed to a particular goal. Such a group is not of a permanent type. Its membership is voluntary and it can be dissolved after the attainment of the goal. An association is sort of a cooperative unit having its own organisation, rules and regulations.

Meaning

- When a group or collection of individuals organises itself expressly for the purpose of pursuing certain of its interests together in a co-operative pursuit, an association is said to be born.
- An association is a group of people organised for a particular purpose or a limited number of purposes.
- According to **Mac Iver**, an association is "an organisation deliberately formed for the collective pursuit of some interests or set of interests, which its members share."

Characteristic features of Association

Group of People: An association is a group of people who form it for the attainment of common goals.

Voluntary Membership: Only those people who

endorse the common goals of the association . association become its members. Membership is voluntary and cannot be imposed on people who do not wish to do so.

Common Goals: Members form an association for the attainment of common objectives. Those who do not endorse these objectives do not become members of the association.

Institution

- In ordinary speech or writing, people often use the term institution to mean an organisation with some specific purpose, as a public or charitable institution.
- Sometimes it is used to denote any set of people in organised interaction as a family or club or government.
- For the purposes of Sociology, a more precise definition is required.

Definitions

- **Mac Iver** defined institution as “the established forms or conditions of procedure characteristic of group activity”.
- According to **Sunmer** “an institution consists of a concept (idea, notion, doctrine or interest) and a structure”.

Characteristics

- Institutions are means of **controlling individuals**.
- Institutions depend upon the collective activities of men.
- The institution has some proceedings which are formed on the basis of customs and dogmas.
- Institution is **more stable than other means of social control**.
- Every institution has some rules which must be compulsorily obeyed by the individuals.

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- Every institution has got a symbol which may be material or non-material.
- Institutions are formed to satisfy the primary needs of men. It has social recognition behind it.

Culture

- The term culture is used in a specific sense and it gained popularity in Germany in the 18th century.
- It was first used in Anthropology by Edward Tylor, an English Scholar in 1871 and has come to be widely used in Sociological discourse in the 19th century.
- Both society and culture have been invariably employed and there is as yet no general agreement about its meaning.
- It is impossible to exist a society without culture and a culture without society. So culture is an unavoidable part of society
- .A culture refers **to the distinctive way of life of a group of people**, their complete design for living.
- Culture is a very broad term that includes in itself all our walks of life, our modes of behaviour,our philosophies and ethics, our morals and manners, our customs and traditions, our religious,political, economic and other types of activities.

Definitions

Tylor- "culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society."

Malinowski- "culture is the handiwork of man and the medium through which he achieves his ends."

Characteristics

- Culture includes an acquired quality.
- Culture is found among human society.
- Culture is communicable.
- Culture is continuous and cumulative.
- Culture is not individualistic but social.
- Culture is the total social heritage.
- Culture is idealistic.
- Culture satisfies certain needs.
- Culture is capable of adjustments.

Types of society

Sociologists have classified the different types of societies into six categories, each of which possess their own unique characteristics.

1. Hunting and gathering societies

2. Pastoral societies

3. Horticultural societies

4. Agricultural societies

5. Industrial societies

6. Post-industrial societies

Type of society	Key characteristics
Hunting-and-gathering	These are small, simple societies in which people hunt and gather food. Because all people in these societies have few possessions, the societies are fairly egalitarian, and the degree of inequality is very low.
Horticultural and pastoral	Horticultural and pastoral societies are larger than hunting-and-gathering societies. Horticultural societies grow crops with simple tools, while pastoral societies raise livestock. Both types of societies are wealthier than hunting-and-gathering societies, and they also have more inequality and greater conflict than hunting-and-gathering societies.
Agricultural	These societies grow great numbers of crops, thanks to the use of plows, oxen, and other devices. Compared to horticultural and pastoral societies, they are wealthier and have a higher degree of conflict and of inequality.
Industrial	Industrial societies feature factories and machines. They are wealthier than agricultural societies and have a greater sense of individualism and a somewhat lower degree of inequality that still remains substantial.
Postindustrial	These societies feature information technology and service jobs. Higher education is especially important in these societies for economic success.

1. Hunting and gathering societies

They are the earliest form of society. The members survive primarily by hunting, trapping, fishing, and gathering edible plants. The majority of the members' time is spent looking for and gathering food. A hunting and gathering society has five characteristics:

- **Family** is the society's **primary institution**. Family determines the distribution of food and how to socialize children.
- These societies are small compared to the others. They generally have less than 50 members.
- Hunting and gathering societies are **nomadic**, which means that they move constantly in order to find food and water.
- Members of hunting and gathering societies are mutually dependent upon each other.
- Although there **is an equal division of labor** among the members of hunting and gathering societies, there is a division of labor based on sex.

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- Men are typically responsible for hunting, and women are typically gatherers.



2. Pastoral societies

They began around 12,000 years ago. These societies rely on products obtained through the **domestication and breeding of animals for transportation and food.**

Pastoral societies are common in areas where crops cannot be supported, for example in North Africa. Unlike hunting and gathering societies, pastoral societies only have to move when the land in which the animals graze is no longer usable. Pastoral societies also allow for job specialization, since not everyone is needed to gather or hunt for food.

For example, while some people breed animals, others are able to produce tools or clothing, which allows for specialization in these areas.



3. Horticultural Societies

In horticulturalist societies, the primary means of subsistence is the cultivation of crops using hand tools. Like pastoral societies, the cultivation of crops increases population densities and, as a result of food surpluses, allows for an even more complex division of labor. Horticulture differs from agriculture in that agriculture employs **animals, machinery, or other non-human** means to facilitate the cultivation of crops. **Horticulture relies solely on human labor for crop cultivation.** Horticultural societies were among the first to establish permanent places of residence. This was due to the fact they no longer had to search for food; rather, they cultivated their own.



4. Agricultural Societies



In agrarian societies, the primary means of subsistence is the cultivation of crops using a mixture of human and non-human means, like animals and machinery. In agriculture, through the cultivation of plants and the raising of domesticated animals, food, feed, fiber and other desired commodities are produced.

- In comparison with the previously mentioned societal types, agriculture supports a much greater population density and allows for the accumulation of excess product.
- This excess product can either be sold for profit or used during winter months. Because in agricultural societies, farmers are able to feed large numbers of people whose daily activity has nothing to do with food production, a number of important developments occur.
- These include improved methods of food stores, labor specialization, advanced technology, hierarchical social structures, inequality, and standing armies.

5. Industrial Societies

In an industrial society, the primary means of subsistence is industry, which is a system of production based on the mechanized manufacture of goods. Like agrarian societies, industrial societies lead to even greater food surpluses,

resulting in even more developed social hierarchies and an even more complex division of labor.

The industrial division of labor, one of the most notable characteristics of this societal type, in many cases leads to a restructuring of social relations.

Whereas in pre-industrial societies, relationships would typically develop at one's place of worship, or through kinship and housing, in industrial societies, relationships and friendships can occur at work.



6. Postindustrial Societies

In a post-industrial society, the primary means of subsistence is derived from service-oriented work, as opposed to agriculture or industry. Importantly, the term post-industrial is still debated, in part because it is the current state of society. Generally, in social science, it is difficult to accurately name a phenomenon while it is occurring.

Most highly developed countries are now post-industrial. This means the majority of their workforce works in service-oriented industries, like finance, healthcare, education, or sales, rather than in industry or agriculture. This is the

case in the United States.



Social Group

- Social Group is any collection of persons who share common interests and reasons for being together. **Some groups are formed naturally; others are organised for a particular purpose.**
- A true group exhibits some degree of social cohesion and is more than a simple collection of individuals, such as people waiting at a bus stop, or people waiting in a line.
- Characteristics shared by members of a group may include interests, values, representations, ethnic or social background or kinship ties.

CHARACTERISTICS

- Collectivity
- Interaction
- Mutual Awareness
- Reciprocity
- We Feeling

DEFINITIONS

- "A group is any collection of human beings who are brought into social relationships with one another ." **Maclver and Page**
- "Whenever two or more individuals come together and influences influences one another another they may be said to constitute constitute Social Group"
- "A social group is a number of people who define themselves as members of a group; who expect certain behaviour from members that they do not expect from outsiders and whom others define as belonging to a group"

Types of Social Group

Group-Based classification is a hierarchical system used to classify different types of social groups. In this model, all people fit into one of five different categories: in-group, out-group, primary group, secondary group, reference groups

1) **In- Group**: The type of the group is named in-group or primary group. In-group members are called in-group members, like George is the in-group member of the group called 'George'. This is the best example of a first level classification.

2) **Out-Group:** Out-group refers to people who are not part group members, as in the case of Paul, who belongs to an out group. The second level classification is out-group or secondary group, and people belonging to these groups can be revealed by face to face conversation and reactions.

3) **Primary Group:** A primary group is a group whose members interact more than others because of shared goals and interests, or because they belong to a particular social class or race. The goal of these groups may be everyday needs and convenience, or to fulfill cultural needs like entertainment. Primary groups are groups of people who interact with each other according to the norm of reciprocation they have established.

4) **Secondary Groups:** These groups are composed of participants who do not interact and show a passive view. This classification is done according to the convention of “who in turn plays whom”.

Social stratification:

- In all societies people differ from each other on the basis of their age, sex and personal characteristics.
- Human society is **not homogeneous** but heterogeneous. Apart from the natural differences, human beings are also differentiated according to socially approved criteria.
- So, socially differentiated men are treated as socially unequal from the point of view of enjoyment of social rewards like status, power, income etc. That may be called social inequality.
- The term social inequality simply refers to the existence of **socially created inequalities**.

Meanings:

- **Social stratification** is a particular form of social inequality. All societies arrange their members
- in terms of **superiority, inferiority and equality**. Stratification is a **process of interaction or differentiation** whereby some people come to rank higher than others.
- In one word, when individuals and groups are ranked, according to some commonly accepted basis of valuation in a hierarchy of status levels based upon the inequality of social positions,
- social stratification occurs. Social stratification means division of society into different strata or layers. It involves a hierarchy of social groups. Members of a particular layer have a common identity. They have a similar lifestyle.
- The Indian Caste system provides an example of a stratification system. The society in which divisions of social classes exist is known as a stratified society.
- Modern stratification fundamentally differs from stratification of primitive societies. Social stratification involves two phenomena
(i) differentiation of individuals or groups on the basis of possession of certain characteristics whereby some individuals or groups come to rank higher than others,
(ii) the ranking of individuals according to some basis of evaluation.

Origin of Stratification:

Regarding the origin of stratification many views have been given.

- According to Davis, social stratification has come into being due to the functional necessity of the social system.
- Professor Sorokin attributed social stratification mainly to inherited difference in environmental conditions.

- According to Karl Marx, social factors are responsible for the emergence of different social strata, i.e. social stratification.
- Gumplovioz and others contended that the origin of social stratification is to be found in the conquest of one group by another.
- According to Spengler, social stratification is founded upon scarcity which is created whenever society differentiates positive in terms of functions and powers.
- Racial differences accompanied by dissimilarity also leads to stratification.

Types of Social Stratification:

Social stratification is based upon a variety of principles. So we find different type of stratification.

The major types of stratification are

- (i) Caste**
- (ii) Class**
- (iii) Estate**
- (iv) Slavery**

Caste is a hereditary endogamous social group in which a person's rank and its accompanying rights and obligations are ascribed on the basis of his birth into a particular

group. For example-Brahmins, Kshyatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudra Caste.

Class-Stratification on the basis of class is dominant in modern society. In this, a person's position depends to a very great extent upon achievement and his ability to use to advantage

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the inborn characteristics and wealth that he may possess.

Estate system of medieval Europe provides another system of stratification which gave much emphasis to birth as well as to wealth and possessions. Each estate had a state.

Slavery had economic basis. In slavery, every slave had his master to whom he was subjected. The master's power over the slave was unlimited.

FUNCTIONS of social stratification

1. Social stratification is universal:

There is no society in this world which is free from stratification. Modern stratification differs from stratification of primitive societies. It is a worldwide phenomenon. According to **Sorokin** "**all permanently organized groups are stratified.**"

2. Stratification is social:

It is true that biological qualities do not determine one's superiority and inferiority. Factors like age, sex, intelligence as well as strength often contribute as the basis on which statues are distinguished. But one's education, property, power, experience, character, personality etc. are found to be more important than biological qualities. Hence, stratification is social by nature.

3. It is ancient:

The Stratification system is very old. It was present even in the small wandering bonds. In almost all the ancient civilizations, the differences between the rich and poor, humble and powerful existed. During the period of Plato and Kautilya even emphasis was given to political, social and economic inequalities.

4. It is in diverse forms:

The forms of stratification are not uniform in all the societies. In the modern world class, caste and estate are the general forms of stratification. In India a special type of stratification in the form of caste is found. The ancient Aryas were divided into four varnas: the **Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras**. The ancient Greeks were divided into freemen and slaves and The ancient Romans were divided into the patricians and the plebeians. So every society, past or present, big or small is characterized by diverse forms of social stratification.

5. Social stratification is Consequential:

Social stratification has two important consequences: one is "life chances" and the other one is "lifestyle". A class system not only affects the "life- chances" of the individuals but also their "lifestyle"

SOCIAL INTERACTION

According to **Eldredge and Merrill**, "**social interaction**" is "the overall process by which two or more persons are in meaningful contact and their conduct is influenced, even if only a little."

Social interactions are reciprocal relationships which not only influence the interacting individuals but also the quality of relationships.

TYPES OF SOCIAL INTERACTION

1.Associative Process or Conjunctive :

The **associative or conjunctive** social processes are positive. These social processes work for the solidarity and benefit of society. This category of social processes include cooperation, accommodation, assimilation and

acculturation etc. Three major social processes such as **cooperation, accommodation and assimilation** are discussed below.

A. COOPERATION

Cooperation is one of the **fundamental processes** of social life. It is a form of social process in which two or more individuals or groups work together jointly to achieve common goals. Cooperation is the form of social interaction in which all participants benefit by attaining their goals. The term 'cooperation' has been derived from two Latin words – **'Co' meaning 'together' and Operary meaning 'to work'**. Hence, cooperation means working together for the achievement of a common goal or goals.

Following are the important characteristics of cooperation:

- (i) Cooperation is an associative process of social interaction which takes place between two or more individuals or groups.
- (ii) Cooperation is a conscious process in which individuals or groups have to work consciously.
- (iii) Cooperation is a personal process in which individuals and groups personally meet and work together for a common objective
- (iv) Cooperation is a continuous process. There is continuity in the collective efforts in cooperation.

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(v) Cooperation is a universal process which is found in all groups, societies and nations.

(vi) Cooperation is based upon two elements such as common end and organised effort.

(vii) Common ends can be better achieved by cooperation and it is necessary for the progress of individuals as well as society.

Types of Cooperation:

Cooperation is of different types. Maclver and Page have divided cooperation into two main

types namely, (i) Direct Cooperation (ii) Indirect Cooperation.

(i) Direct Cooperation:

Under direct cooperation may include all those activities in which people do things together. For example, playing together, working together, carrying a load together or pulling the car out of mud together. This type of cooperation is voluntary e.g., cooperation between husband and wife, teacher and student, master and servant etc.

(ii) Indirect Cooperation:

Under indirect cooperation are included those activities in which people do unlike tasks together towards a common end. For example, when

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carpenters, plumbers and masons cooperate to build a house. This cooperation is based on the principle of the division of labour. In it people perform different functions but for the attainment of the common objective.

B. Accommodation:

Adjustment is the way of life. It can take place in two ways such as **adaptation and accommodation. Adaptation refers to the process of biological adjustment. Accommodation, on the other hand, implies the process of social adjustment.** "Accommodation is the achievement of adjustment between people that permits harmonious acting together in social situations.

Characteristics:

- It is the **End-result of Conflict**
- It is both Conscious and Unconscious Process
- It is a Universal Activity
- It is a Continuous Process
- It is a Mixture of both Love and Hatred:

C. Assimilation:

Assimilation is a **fundamental social process**; it is that process by which individuals belonging to different cultures are united into one. Successful accommodation sets the stage for an additional consequence of human interactions, namely assimilation.

This implies the complete merging and fusion of two or more bodies into a single common body, a process analogous to digestion, in which we say that food is assimilated. **Acculturation is the first step to assimilation**

Characteristics of Assimilation:

- Assimilation is an associative process.
- Assimilation is a universal process. It is found in every place and at all times.
- Assimilation is a slow and gradual process. It is gradual as the individual comes to share the expectations of another group and slowly acquires a new set of values.
- Assimilation is an **unconscious process**. Individuals are not conscious that they discard their own values and acquire new sets of values.
- Assimilation is a two-way process. It is based on the principle of give and take. Assimilation takes place when groups of individuals borrow cultural elements from each other and incorporate them to their own culture.

2. Dissociative or Disjunctive

Social processes which lead to **negative results** are called dissociative processes. These social processes result in the disintegration of society.

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These are also known as disjunctive social processes. **COMPETITION** and **CONFLICT** two types.

1.COMPETITION

Meaning of Competition

Competition is the most fundamental form of social struggle. It is a natural result of the universal struggle for existence. It is based on the fact that all people can never satisfy all their desires. Competition takes place whenever there is an insufficient supply of things that human beings commonly desire. Whenever and wherever commodities which people want are available in a limited supply, there is competition.

Definition of Competition

There are many definitions of competition given by different scholars. Some of the important definitions are given below:

Park and Burgess: "Competition is an interaction without social contact".

Features of Competition

Competition as disintegrative social process has the following characteristic features:

- i. **Universal Process:** It is the most universal social process present in all societies, whether civilized or uncivilized, rural or urban, traditional or modern in all periods of history and among all classes of people like doctors, engineers, workers, students and farmers etc.

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- ii. **Continuous process:** Competition is a continuous process as it never comes to an end. If one process of competition ends then another process of competition stands there. The desire for status, power and wealth in an ever degree makes competition a continuous process.
- iii. **Unconscious process:** The individuals or the groups who are involved in the process of competition do not bother about themselves but they are primarily concerned with the achievement of goal or reward. Hence competition takes place on an unconscious level.
- iv. **Impersonal process:** Those who take part in competition do not know one another at all. They do not compete with each other on a personal level. They focus their attention on the goal or reward which they are trying to achieve. They do not have any contact whatsoever.
- v. **Always governed by norms:** Nowhere competition is unregulated. It is always and everywhere governed by norms. Competitors are expected to use fair means to achieve success.

Forms or types of Competition

Competition as a universal social process is found in all fields of social life. In our day to day life we come across many types or forms of competitions. Some of the important competitions are the following.

- i. **Political Competition:** This type of competition is found in the political field. For example, during elections each and every political party competes for getting majority. This is not only found at national level but at international level. Also, there is keen competition between nations who are wedded to different political ideologies.
- ii. **Social competition:** To get high social status usually this social competition is mostly observed in open societies where an individual's talent, capacity, ability as well as merit are given weightage.

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- iii. **Economic Competition:** In the economic field economic competition is fairly observed. It is the most vigorous form of competition. It is reflected in the process of production, distribution and consumption of goods. In the economic field men compete for salaries, jobs and promotions etc. they generally compete for higher standard of living. This economic competition is not only present at individual level but also at group level.
- iv. **Cultural Competition:** Cultural competition is present among different cultures. When two or more cultures try to show their superiority over others, this type of competition takes place. *For example*, in modern society there is cultural competition between the Hindus and the Muslims. In the ancient period, there was a strong competition between the cultures of Aryans and Non-Aryans.
- v. **Racial competition:** Like cultural competition, racial competition is found among the major races of the world. When one race tries to establish its supremacy over other races, it gives birth to racial competition. *For example*, the competition between Negroes (Black) and the whites is the bright example of racial competition.

2. CONFLICT

Meaning of conflict

Conflict is an ever present process in human society. Whenever a person or persons or groups seek to gain reward not by surpassing other competitors but preventing them from effective competition, conflict takes place.

For example, the movements like Civil Disobedience, Non-Cooperation and Satyagraha launched by Mahatma Gandhi against the Britishers in India before Independence are in conflict. Even in today's society conflict is found in every

sphere like caste, religion, language, culture and so on. Thus, it is considered as a universal social process.

Definition of Conflict

- i. **Kingsley Davis** defines conflict, "as a modified form of struggle."
- ii. **Maclver and Page** state that, "Social conflict included all activity in which men contend against one another for any objective."

Features of conflict

From the above definition the following characteristics may be noted.

- i. **Universal Process:** Conflict is found in all societies in all periods of time. The degree and the form of conflict may vary from society to society and from time to time but it is present in all types of societies.
- ii. **Conscious process:** This is a process in which the conflicting parties are very much conscious in causing loss or injury to persons or groups. They attempt to fight or oppose and defeat each other consciously.
- iii. **Personal process:** The chief aim of conflict is to cause harm or to bring loss to the opponents. The conflicting parties personally know each other. So in this form of struggle to overcome the opponents, the goal is temporarily relegated to a level of secondary importance.
- iv. **Intermittent process:** Conflict is not as continuous as competition. It is an intermittent process. It takes place suddenly and comes to an end quickly. It never continues for ever due to the occasional occurrence of conflict.
- v. **Conflict is based on violence:** Sometimes conflict takes the form of violence. Violence is harmful to the growth of the society and retards the process as it creates a number of problems.

TYPES OF CONFLICT

Conflict may be of various types, like –

- i. **Overt and covert:** Overt conflict has some manifestation but covert conflict or latent conflict primarily remains invisible.
- ii. **Personal and corporate:** Personal conflict occurs within the group due to hostility, jealousy etc., on the other hand, corporate conflict occurs among the groups within a society or between two societies.
- iii. **Temporary and perpetual:** When conflicts occur among the individuals in the bus or in the shop or in the road are called temporary conflict, on the other hand when conflict occurs between two rival groups, then it is called perpetual conflict.

Conflict is not a continuous process. It may stretch for some time. In each and every conflict there is an intermittent period of peace and social harmony.

FUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY

Normative system presents the society with ideals and values. The people attach emotional importance to these norms. The institutions and associations are inter-related according to these norms. The individuals perform their roles in accordance with the accepted norms of society.

Position system refers to the **statuses and roles of the individuals**. The desires, aspirations and expectations of the individuals are varied, multiple and

unlimited. So these can be fulfilled only if the members of the society are assigned different roles according to their capacities and capabilities. Actually the proper functioning of social structure depends upon proper assignments of roles and statuses.

Elements of Social System:

The elements of social system are described as under:

1. Social Status

Every individual in society is **functional**. He goes by status–role relation. It may come to the individual by virtue of his birth, sex, caste, or age. One may achieve it on the basis of service rendered.

social status, also called **status**, the relative rank that an individual holds, with attendant rights, duties, and lifestyle, in a social hierarchy based upon honour or prestige.

Achieved Status, requiring special qualities and gained through competition and individual effort.

Ascribed status is typically based on sex, age, race, family relationships, or birth, while achieved status may be based on education, occupation, marital status, accomplishments, or other factors.

2. Role:

Like the status, society has prescribed different roles to different individuals. Sometimes we find that there is a role attached to every status. Role is the



external expression of the status. While discharging certain jobs or doing certain things, every individual keeps in his mind his status. This thing leads to social integration, organization and unity in the social system. In fact statuses and roles go together. It is not possible to separate them completely from one another.

3. Authority:

Conflict is a part of the social system, and order is its aim. It is implicit, therefore, that some should be invested with the power to punish the guilty and reward those who set an example. The authority exercising power will differ from group to group; while the authority of father may be supreme in the family, in the state it is that of the ruler.

4. LEADERSHIP

It refers to the process through which a person directs, guides and influences the thought, feeling and behavior of other members of the society. The nature of the leadership generally determines the behavior or level of achievement of the members of the society.

Social control

It is a concept within the disciplines of the social sciences. Social control is described as a certain set of rules and standards in society that keep individuals bound to conventional standards as well as to the use of formalized mechanisms. The disciplinary model was the forerunner to the control model.

Social control is the term sociologists apply to those mechanisms by which any society maintains a **normative social system**. It refers to all the ways and means by which society enforces conformity to its norms. The individual internalises social norms and these become part of his personality. In the process of socialisation the growing child learns the values of his own groups as well as of the larger society and the ways of doing and thinking that are deemed to be right and proper.

CLASSIFICATION OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Generally social control is classified under the following two forms:

(a) Formal social control, (b) Informal social control

(a) Formal social control:

This type of social control is exercised by **known and deliberate agencies of social control**, such as law, punishment, army, Constitution etc. Man is forced to

accept these forms of social control. Generally these forms are exercised by secondary groups.

(b) Informal social control:

These agencies of Social Control have grown according to **the needs of the society**. Folkways, mores, customs, social norms etc. fall under this category of social control. Generally primary institutions exercise this type of social control.

AGENCIES OF SOCIAL CONTROL

1. Norms:

Norms are rooted in the institution. They provide the standard of behaviour and are regulatory in character. The choice of individuals striving towards the cultural goal is limited by institutional norms. These provide the guideline for action. The norms give cohesion to the society.

They influence the attitude of individuals. Broom and Selznick described norms as a blueprint for behaviour, setting limits within which individuals may seek alternate ways to achieve their goals. A social norm operative in one social system is not equally operative in the other. Conformity to norms is qualified in view of the socially defined situation. Violators of norm may invite loss of prestige, social ridicule or even a more severe punishment.

2. Value:

It consists of culturally defined goals. It is held out as a legitimate object of realisation for all or for diversely located members of the society. It involves various degrees of "sentiments and significance". These may consist of inspirational references. Values are "goals worth striving for". These are basic, though not exclusive.

3. Folkways:

Folk are people with a community sense. They have a uniform and a common way of living. This constitutes the folkway. These are, according to F.B. Renter and C.W. Hart, "simple habits of action common to the members of the group; they are the ways of folk that are somewhat standardized and have some degree of traditional sanction for their persistence". These in the interest of communal life and uniformity are accepted binding. Disregard shown to these brings forth disapprobation.

4. Mores:

Mores are such folkways as are based on value judgement and are deeply rooted in community life. Any disregard shown to these invokes sanction. According to Green, mores are "Common ways of acting which are more definitely regarded as right and proper than the folkways and which brings greater certainty and severity of punishment if violated..."

5. Custom:

Custom is "a rule or norm of action." It is the result of some social expediency. It is followed as it involves sentiment based on some rational element. It is automatic in character; no special agency is required to enforce it. Any disregard shown to it invokes social censure; It is enforced as it is.

It cannot be stretched to meet the changing requirements. It may with the change of circumstances fade into nonexistence. It at a given time, is a force, and reflects the social consensus. A lawmaker has to take it into consideration. He cannot disregard it. Custom is the handiwork of time. As a blueprint for specific social purposes it develops over the time. It takes time to evolve itself.

6. SOCIAL CONFORMITY

- Conformity is the act of matching attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors to group norms, politics or being like-minded.
- Norms are implicit, specific rules, shared by a group of individuals, that guide their interactions with others.
- People often choose to conform to society rather than to pursue personal desires - because it is often easier to follow the path others have made already, rather than forging a new one.
- This tendency to conform occurs in small groups and/or in society as a whole, and may result from subtle unconscious influences (predisposed state of mind), or from direct and overt social pressure.
- Conformity can occur in the presence of others, or when an individual is alone. For example, people tend to follow social norms when eating or when watching television, even if alone.

7.DEVIANCE

Deviance is based on **adherence to and violation of norms**. Human groups need norms to exist. By making behavior predictable, norms make social life possible. Consequently, all human groups develop a system of social control, which involves formal and informal means of enforcing norms. Those who violate these norms face the danger of being labeled "deviant." Violators can expect to experience negative sanctions for the violation of norms. Members of society who conform to societal norms, especially those who go above and beyond what is commonly expected, receive positive sanctions.

8.FASHION

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- Fashion, defined as being the style popular at a given time, can be seen in every corner of the world in one form or another.
 - Fashion is not only a very dynamic concept but is also seen to be specific to the location and context that it is in.
 - Each culture has its own form of traditional fashion that can be seen in the more modern forms of fashion.
 - As a result of increasing **globalization** many of these cultural barriers have been breached and the fashion within spills over into worldwide fashion.
 - For example we might now see international footballers wearing a sarong in an attempted fashion statement.
 - Role models are a key issue within the concept of fashion, and will be looked at further on in the argument.
 - Clothes are a clear form of **division within society**, whether it is between class, gender or even sex orientation.
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