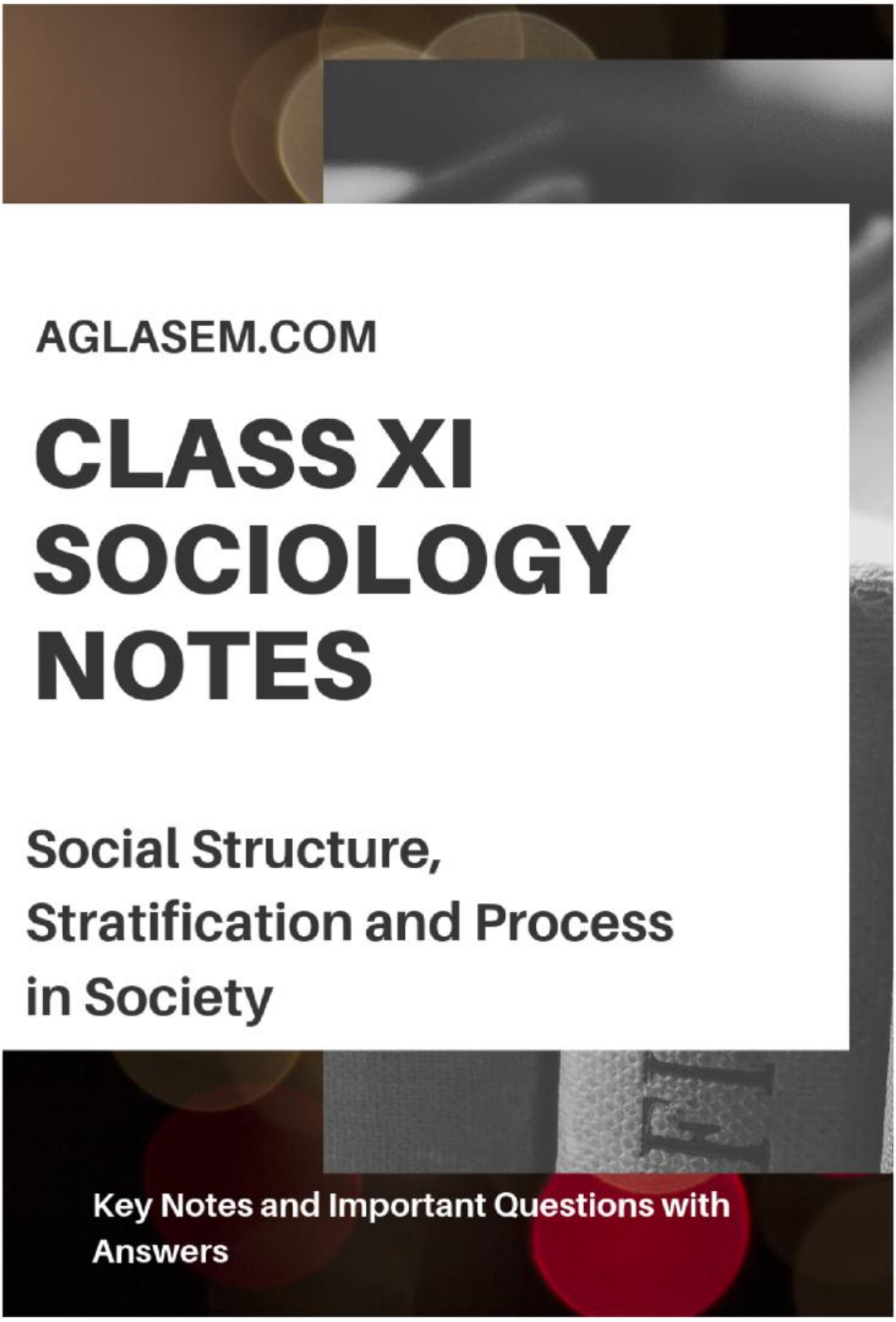


AGLASEM.COM

CLASS XI SOCIOLOGY NOTES

Social Structure, Stratification and Process in Society

Key Notes and Important Questions with Answers

BOOK-2 - UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY

CHAPTER 1

SOCIAL STRUCTURE, STRATIFICATION AND PROCESSES IN SOCIETY

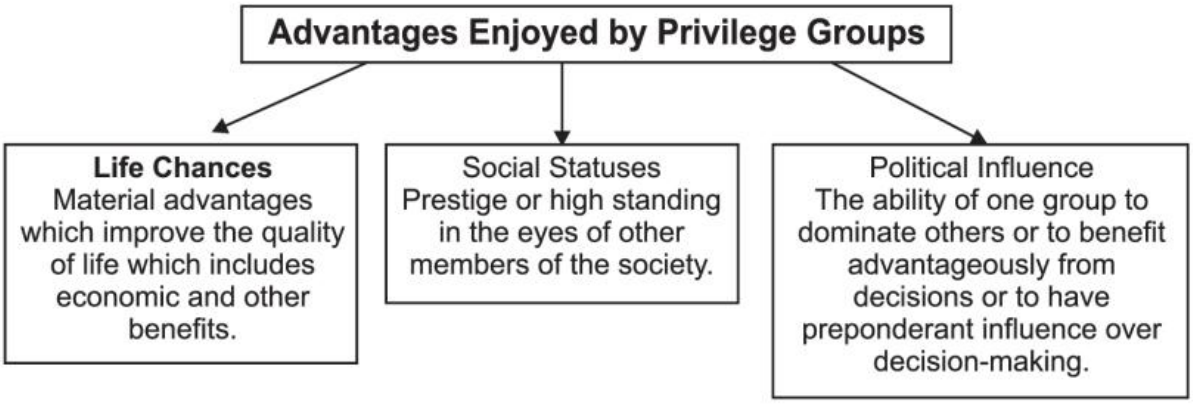
Points To Remember

Social Structure:- It refers to the way the various parts are organized and follows stable patterns of collective rules, roles and activities. There are underlying regularities in how people behave and the relationship they have with one another.

- The term social structure points to the fact that society is structured, organised in a particular way.
- There are regularities, pattern in how people behave and in the relationships they have with one another.
- According to Durkheim, social structure constrains our activities to constructed frameworks and patterns of organisation and directs our behaviour.
- Social stratification refers to the existence of structural inequalities between groups in society, in terms of their access to material or symbolic rewards.

  Modern societies are often marked by wide difference in wealth and power.

Social stratification indicates patterns of inequality. People with superior position have certain privileges.



Understanding social processes in sociology

According to functionalist perspective human beings have to cooperate to meet their basic needs, to produce and to reproduce themselves and their world.

- Concerned with functional requisites and pre-requisites necessary for the system's existence.
  (i) the socialisation of new members;
  (ii) a shared system of communication;
  (iii) methods of assigning individuals to roles.
- Different parts of the society have a function or role to play for the maintenance and functioning within the system of production relations.

The conflict perspective emphasised that groups and individuals are placed differently and unequally within the system of production relations.

- Societies are divided by castes or class. Some groups are disadvantaged or discriminated against.
- Co-operation, competition and conflict are universal features of all societies.
- Relationship between cooperation, competition and conflict is often complex and not easily separated.

Example of how relation between cooperation, conflict and competition is complex :- A study conducted among different sections of society to understand the attitude towards taking natal property shows that significant number of woman emphasized apprehension rather than affection by saying they would not claim full or any share of natal property because they were afraid this would sour relations with their brothers or cause brother's wives to hate them, and that they would do longer be welcome to their natal homes. A woman demanding her share is considered to be a greedy shrew.

Definition of Accommodation :- It would be seen as and effort to compromise and co-exist despite conflict. In such a situation a woman would prefer not to claim property rights in their natal home.

Cooperation and Division of Labour

Division of Labours:- It implies dividing the complex work into smaller parts and distributing it among labourers on the basis of their skill specialization, age, gender etc. The role of division of labour implies cooperation to fulfil certain needs of society. Durkheim argued that without human cooperation it would be difficult for human life to survive. According to him it is a law of nature and a moral rule of human conduct.

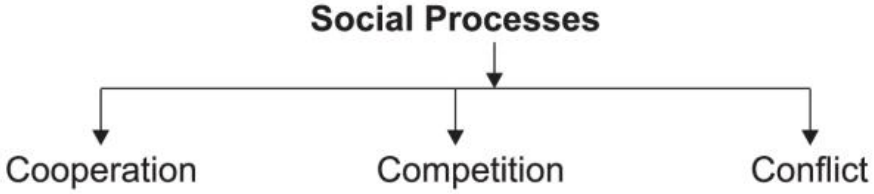
- The role of division of labour implies cooperation to fulfil certain needs of society.

- Durkheim distinguish between mechanical and organic solidarity.

'Social Solidarity' as given by Emile Durkheim :-

Mechanical Solidarity	Organic solidarity
• It exists in preindustrial society.	• It exists in industrial society
• Agriculture is the main occupation & all the work is labour intensive.	• Many other occupations are taken up and work is done by machines.
• Exists in society with less population.	• Existing in large population.
• There is more of cooperation.	• There is more of conflict & competition.
• Social relationships are more personal.	• Social relationships are impersonal.
• The society is person oriented	• The society is goal oriented
• Relationships between members are intimate, close and direct.	• Relationships are neither intimate nor close but formal.
• The people have common interest	• The people have selfish aims.
• No formal code of conduct	• There is detailed code of conduct.

- Traditional cultures with a low division of labour are characterised by mechanical solidarity. Because most members are occupied in similar occupation, they are bound together by common experience and shared beliefs.
- Societies chracterised by organic solidarity are held by people's economic interdependence and a recognition of the importance of other's contributions. Relationships of economic reciprocity and mutual dependency come to replace shared beliefs in creating social consensus.
- This leads to alienation. It refers to the loss of control on the part of workers over the nature of the labour task, and over the products of their labour.



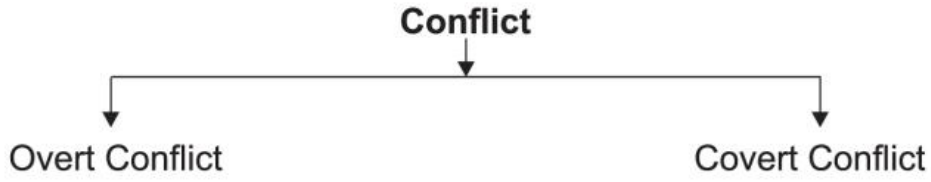
Cooperation:- It means working together for common interest and goals. It is associative social process which is opposite to competition and conflict.

Competition:- It is a form of social action in which we strive against each other for possession of or use of limited material or non material goods.

Conflict:-

- It implies clash of interest. The basis of conflict may vary but it is always a part of a society.
- Basis of conflict — Personal, Racial, Class, Caste, Political and international

Blow chart on types of Conflict:



Types of Conflict

(i) **Overt Conflict :** Conflict appears as a overt clash only when it is openly expressed.

Example - The existence of a peasant movement is an overt expression of a deep rooted conflict over land resources. But the absence of a movement does not imply the absence of a conflict.

(ii) **Covert Conflict :** Conflict appears as a covert clash only when Individual secretly develop strategies to cope with conflict and ensure cooperation.

Example - A study conducted among different sections of society to understand the attitude towards taking natal property shows that significant number of women emphasized apprehension rather than affection by saying they would not claim full or any share of natal property because they were afraid this would sour relations with their brothers or cause brothers' wives to hate them, and that they would no longer be welcome to their natal homes. A woman demanding her share is considered to be a greedy shrew. When such conflicts are not property expressed they are termed as convert conflicts.

Competition as an Idea and Practice

- In the contemporary world, competition is the dominant norm and practice.
- Modern capitalist society lays stress on greater efficiency and greater profit maximisation.
- The following are the underlying assumptions of capitalism:
  - (a) Expansion of Trade;
  - (b) Division of Labour;
  - (c) Specialisation;
  - (d) Rising Productivity.
- The ideology of competition is commonly found in capitalist societies.
- Competition along with the laissez-fair economy in the 19th century has made important contribution in promoting economic growth.

Conflict and Cooperation

- The term conflict implies clash of interests.

- Scarcity of resources in society results in creation of groups that struggle to gain access to and control over these resources.
- The basis of conflict vary. It could be class or caste, tribe or gender, ethnicity.
- Conflicts change in nature and form at different stages of social development.
- Social change and greater assertion of democratic rights by disadvantaged and discriminated groups made the conflict more visible.
- Conflict appears as a discord or overt clash only when it is openly expressed.
- There exists a relationship between conflict, involuntary cooperation and resistance.

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

1. **Altruism:** The principle of acting to benefit others without any selfishness or self-interest.
2. **Alienation:** Marx used the term to refer to the loss of control on the part of workers over the nature of the labour task, and over the products of their labour.
3. **Anomie:** For Durkheim, a social condition where teh norms guiding conduct break down, leaving individuals without social restraint or guidance.
4. **Capitlism:** An economic system in which the means of production are privately owned and organised to accumulate profits within a market framework, in which labour is provided by waged workers.
5. **Division of Labour:** The specialisation of work tasks, by means of which different occupations are combined within a production system. All societies have at least some rudimentary form of division of labour especially between the tasks allocated to men and those performed by women. With the development of industrialism, however, the division of labour became more complex than in any prior type of production system. In the modern world, the division of labour is international in scope.
6. **Dominant Ideology:** Shared ideas or beliefs which serve to justify the interests of dominant groups. Such ideologies are found in all societies in which they are systematic and engrained inequalities between groups. The concept of ideology connects closely with that of power, since ideology systems serve to legitimise the differential power which groups hold.

   Indiviidualism: Doctrines or ways of thinking that focus on the autonomous individual, rather than on the group.
7. **Laissez-faire Liberalism:** A political and economic approach based on the general principle of non-interference in the economy by government and freedom for markets and property owners.

8. **Mehanical Solidarity:** According to Durkheim, traditional cultures with a low division of labour are characterised by mechanical solidarity. Because most members of the society are involved in similar occupations, they are bound together by common experience and shared beliefs.

2 MARKS QUESTIONS

1. What is social stratification?
2. Give the meaning of the term 'alienation'.
3. What do you understand by the term 'social structure'?
4. Name the scholars associated with functionalist and conflict perspective.
5. What do you understand by 'division of labour'?
6. What do you understand by the term 'conflict'?

4 MARKS QUESTIONS

1. What are Karl Marx's views on cooperation?
2. Distinguish between mechanical and organic solidarity.
3. What are the three basic forms of advantages which privileged groups enjoy?
4. Explain with a suitable example the concept of overt conflict.

6 MARKS QUESTIONS

1. Explain the two perspectives of understanding social processes in sociology.
2. The ideology of cooperation is the dominant ideology in capitalism. comment.
3. Explain with suitable examples the relationship between conflict, involuntary cooperation and resistance.

HOTS

- **Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)**
  - (1) Pick up examples of covert and conflict from your own families.
  - (2) Is competition a necessary component for the progress of mankind? Discuss.

© ERTL Publications