

Groups and Sub-Groups.

This sub-bit analyses the concept of social groups, which is the constituting parts of society.

social control, culture, norms and values. These are the basic concepts referred in sociology.

The main analytic element of sociology is social group, which is maintained by social control.

The social control facilitated by culture, norms and values. Man is a social animal, he intent to live in society.

This sub-bit helps to make a clear idea about social groups.

Groups and Sub-Groups.

- **Social group is a basic concept in sociology. Society is made up of social groups. In common parlance group means merely a collection in a physical area, but in sociological sense its meaning is different.**
- **A group means a collection of two or more people among the direct or indirect contact and communication. The people are collected in a geographical area on the basis of certain qualities like common interest, features, feelings, believes, etc.**
- **Short term or long term groups are found in society. Interrelationship is the nature of group.**
- **Different sociologists had explained social group in different ways. The definition of groups are given below.**

Definitions of Groups and Sub-Groups

- 1. **Maclver and Page** defines “social group as any collection of human beings who are brought into human relationships with one another.”
- 2. **Harry M Johnson** defines “a social group is a system of social interaction.”

Characteristics of Groups and Sub-Groups

- 1. Collection of individuals:** one individual cannot say a group which means two or more persons collected in a particular geographical area.
- 2. Interaction among members:** two or more individual collected in particular are among them direct or indirect contact and communication.
- 3. Common quality:** It is the nature of group. The members of a group have a common quality that may be a common interest, feeling, believes, features, ideology, aims or any qualities similar to others.

Characteristics of Groups and Sub-Groups

- 4. We-feeling:** It means feeling of oneness. It represents group unity. It refers to the tendency on the part of the members to identify themselves with the groups. It creates cooperation among group members and helpful to protect and attain the common goal.
- 5. Mutual awareness:** Mutual awareness is the quality of group members and it involves in group life. The members are aware of one another and their behavior, their ideologies and they respect and give priority like their own.

Characteristics of Groups and Sub-Groups

- 6. Unity and solidarity:** It is a characteristic of social group. Unity means a state of oneness but solidarity is a psychological sense of unity. The members have a unity on the basis of dependence is called solidarity but the equal consideration to one another is unity.
- 7. Size of the group:** The number of people have important for group. Countable numbers of persons are included in group.

Characteristics of Groups and Sub-Groups

8. Stability: It means the state of permanency. Groups may be temporary or permanent for short term or long term. The temporary group or short term groups are unstable, but the long term or permanent group is stable. The ideology, objectives, norms or values of the group may be changed in accordance with time changed but the group existed.

Characteristics of Groups and Sub-Groups

- 9. Group norms:** Norms are the foundation of society. No group without norms. Norms means the expected mode of behavior. The members of a group have some code of conduct related with the ideology and objectives. Norms of a group closely related with its existence in society.
- 10. Groups are dynamic:** Social groups are not static. Groups are subject to changes whether slow or rapid. New members may enter group on the basis of changes in interest, ideology etc. and old members may go outside of the group. Due to internal or external pressures or forces groups undergo changes.

Types of Social Group

- Man is a social animal he is interested to live in group. Group means a collection of people who establish and maintain direct or indirect contact and communication. Interaction has the basis of any group.
- Social groups have divided into different types on the basis of nature of interaction, and characteristics such as primary group and secondary group, voluntary group and involuntary group, in group and out group, Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, Horizontal and vertical and reference group.

Types of Social Group

- **1. Primary group and secondary group.**
- **2. Voluntary and involuntary group.**
- **3. In group and out group.**
- **4. Gemeinschaft and gesellschaft.**
- **5. Reference group.**
- **6. Horizontal and vertical.**
- **7. Small groups and large groups.**
- **8. Organized and unorganized groups.**
- **Other types.....**

Primary Group and Secondary Group:

Charles Horton Cooley (1864-1929)

An American Sociologist and a prominent sociologist in Chicago School. He classified group as **primary and secondary group** on the basis of the characteristics of relationship found in group. His concept of primary group is analyzed in the book

- *Social Organization: A study of the Larger Mind (1910).*

Primary Group

- **Primary group** is a type of group which is primary in sense and it is the intimate face to face close association and co-operation. Commonly primary group is small in size. The relationship is close and the unity existed there mainly on the basis of harmony and love. The relationship found in primary group is often long lasting and goals in themselves.

Family, neighborhood, play group of children and community group of elders.

Secondary group

- **Secondary group** is another type of group the relationship found there is impersonal and its existence is temporary. The secondary group is mainly goal oriented and larger. Distant relations are the peculiarity of the secondary group.

Voluntary Group and Involuntary Group:

These are the classification of group based on the peculiarity of **membership** found in group. **Charles Abram Ellwood** (1873-1946) an American sociologist conceptualized the voluntary group and involuntary group in his book *Psychology of Human Society (1925)*.

- The membership in voluntary group will be based on the will of individuals. It is a formal group in which a man joins his own volition. He is free to withdraw at any time in membership. Cricket association, unions, political parties etc.

Voluntary Group and Involuntary Group

Involuntary group is a type of group, the member of which group is compulsory and the individual has no choice to membership. Kinship, family, Caste, Race etc. are the example of involuntary group. In these institutions the membership on the basis of birth and the

In Group and Out Group:

- These are types of groups are conceptualized by **William Graham Sumner** (1840-1910) an American Sociologist, in his famous book *Folkways* (1907)
- This classification based on the psychological factors rather than physical factors. In group means 'we' group in that group a man is member and he feels interest to that group. The members in in-group are strongly related and they respect and consider all members likings

Out Group

- Out group means 'they' group, where an individual is not the member. An individual evaluates other group, in which he is not a member based on the qualities of his own group.

Small Groups and Large Groups

- It is another classification based on size of the group introduced by **George Simmel**. Small groups are the groups constituted by two or three people. Group with two people is known as dyad and with the three people is triad. Large groups are constituted with large number of people like racial groups, political groups, nation etc.

Horizontal and Vertical Group:

- Horizontal and vertical is the classification of the group put forwarded by an American sociologist, **Pitrim A Sorokin**. Horizontal groups are the large and inclusive groups such as nations, religious organizations and political parties etc. The second type is vertical groups which are the smaller divisions such as economic classes, status groups etc.

Reference Group:

- It is a type of group. It simply means other group of which he is not a member. The term reference group was coined by an American Sociologist 1942 to identify the group against which **Herbert Hymen** in h an individual evaluates his or her own situation or conduct. Muzaffar Sherif (1906 1988) a Turkish social psychologist firstly applied the term in literature on small group in his book namely *An Outline of Social Psychology (1948)*. He used the term in contrast to *the term* membership group, which means a group to which a person belongs while the reference group means a group that affects his behavior. The concept was hypothesized by Robert K Merton in social science.

Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft:

- **Ferdinand Tonnies (1855-1936)** a German Sociologist introduced this classification of groups in social science as analytic concepts of society. Tonnies referred these groups in his book entitled as *Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft* (1887).
- *Gemeinschaft and gesellschaft are the two German words meaning community and society.*

Significance of Social Groups

Social groups are of great individual as well as social significance. Social group is a fundamental concept in social science. It has social as well as psychological significance. Social group is not merely a simple collection of people, but among them existing interaction. As a sociological concept it has some significance in society which are given below

1. Social groups function as agency of social control.
2. It controls individual's behavior.
3. It is an agency of socialization.
4. It is the moulder of human personality.
5. It satisfies psychological needs like happiness, security and sharing.
6. It provides various stimulus to pursue the interest of individuals.