

Two or more persons in interaction constitute a social group. It has common aim. In its strict sense, group is a collection of people interacting together in an orderly way on the basis of shared expectations about each other's behaviour. As a result of this interaction, the members of a group feel a common sense of belonging.

A group is a collection of individuals but all collectivities do not constitute a social group. A group is distinct from an aggregate (people waiting at railway station or bus stand) members of which do not interact with one another. The essence of the social group is not physical closeness or contact between the individuals but a consciousness of joint interaction.

Notes

This consciousness of interaction may may be present even there is not personal contact between individuals. For examples, we are members of a national group and think ourselves as national even though we are acquainted with only few people.

The sociological conception of group has come to mean as indicated by - Green, According to McKee, Williams

According to MacIver and Page - Any collection of human being who are brought in to social relationship with one another. Social relationship with involve some degree of reciprocity and mutual awareness among the members of the group.

⇒ Classification of Groups -

Different sociologists have classified groups in different ways. Social group are not only innumerable but also diverse. It is not possible to study all the group. A systematic study of groups needs a classification. Various thinkers have chosen many criteria or bases for the classification of social group such as size, kind of contact, nature of interests, degree of organisation and degree of permanence etc. Some of these issues have received more attention than others.

1) ⇒ Dwight Sanderson → D. Sanderson has classified group into three types on the bases of structure such as

- 1) involuntary (not free)
- 2) voluntary (free)
- 3) delegate (not free)

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⇒ An involuntary group is that to which man has no choice which is based on kinship such as the family, tribe or class.

⇒ A voluntary group is one which a man joins at his volition or wishes. At any time he is free to withdraw his membership from this group.

⇒ A delegate group is one to which a man joins as a representative of a number of people either elected or nominated by them. Parliament or Assembly is a delegate group.

2. P. A. Sorokin → An American sociologist, has divided groups into two major types.

- Ⓐ the vertical group and
- Ⓑ the horizontal group.

The vertical group includes persons of different strata or statuses. But the horizontal group includes persons of the same status.

A nation, for instance, is a vertical group, while a class represents horizontal grouping.

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3. P. H. Reddings → classifies groups into

- i) Genetic and
- ii) Congregate.

The genetic group is the family in which a man is born involuntarily. The congregate group is the voluntary group to which he joins voluntarily.

4. C. H. Cooley → classified group on the basis of kind of contact into

- i) Primary and
- ii) Secondary groups.

In primary group, there is face to face, close and intimate relationship among the members such as in the family.

But in a secondary group the relationship among the members are indirect, impersonal and superficial such as the political party, a city and trade union etc.

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67. In-Gr. Sumner → made a division of group into (Book - Folkways).

- i) in-group and
- ii) out group

The groups with which the individual identifies himself are his in-groups such as his family, tribe, college, occupation etc.

All other groups to which he does not belong are his out groups.

Besides these above, the group can be classified further into following categories:-

- 1) Disjunctive (अलग होने वाला, विरोधी) and overlapping (मिलने वाले और छेदने वाले)
- 2) Territorial (क्षेत्रीय, प्रादेशिक) and non-territorial
- 3) Homogeneous (सजातीयता) and Heterogeneous group (विजातीय)

4) Permanent and Transitory

5) Contractual and non-contractual group.

→ Reference group - Merton (Book - Social Theory and Social Structure)

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→ Quasi-group - Ballomare

Thus, sociologists have classified group into numerous categories according to their own way of looking at them.

→ Primary Group →

The concept of Primary group was introduced by Charles Horton Cooley, in his book "Social Organisation". Though Cooley has never used the term secondary group, but while discussing the groups other than those of primary, some sociologists like K. Davis, Ogburn and MacIver have popularised other group such as secondary groups.

Hence the classification of Primary and secondary group is made on the basis of the nature of social contact, the degree of intimacy, size and the degree of organisation etc.

Primary group are primary in the sense that the members within are emotionally attached together sharing their basic ways of life with one another. In the basic affairs of life which are most essential for a social life these who &