

What is Society?

DSE-2A Social Geography

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The term is used in various sense.

Examples: Cooperative society, etc. here society means *association*. 'I belong to high society.' it is a form of *fellowship*.

There is also terms like, *Regent society, Gokuldharm society* etc. we often say *Urban society, Rural society, Tribal society, Modern society, primitive society, Agrarian society, Industrial society* etc.

In Social Geography it has specific meaning.

The term '*society*' is derived from Latin '*socius*' meaning *companionship* meaning *sociability*. It indicates that man always lives with company of other people.

Definition of society?

Morris Ginsberg: "a society is a collection of individuals, united by certain relations or mode of behaviour which mark them off from others who do not enter in to these relations or who differ from them in behaviour."

G. D. Cole: "society is the complex of organised associations and institutions within the community."

Characteristics of Society?

1. Society consists of people.
2. Society depends on likeness or similarities.
3. Mutual interaction and mutual awareness.
4. Interdependence.
5. Co-operation.
6. Society is dynamic
7. Social control.
8. Society has its own culture or way of life.
9. Continuity.
10. Society rests of difference.

What is Social Groups?

Society consists of groups. A social group exists when two or more people are in direct or indirect contact and communication. **Example:** Family, Political party, Members of a religion etc.

Maclver: “A group is a social unit which consists of number of individuals who stand in definite status and role relationship to one another and which possess a set of values or norms of its own regulating the behaviour individual members.”

Marshal Jones: “Two or more people between whom there is an established pattern of interaction”

Classification of groups:

There are diverse social groups.

1. **In group and Out group-** ‘In group’ means ‘we group’ and Out group’ means ‘they group’.
2. **Involuntary and Voluntary group-** Family, Caste, Race, Religion etc. are involuntary group. Political party, Youth association, Trade union etc. are voluntary group.
3. **Institutional and Non Institutional group-** State, School, Club, Church etc. are Institutional group. Crowd, Audience etc. are Non institutional group. These two are also called **Permanent group** and **Temporary group**.

4. **Horizontal and Vertical group**- Nation, Religious organisation etc. are horizontal group. Economic classes etc. are Vertical group.

5. **Primary Group and Secondary group**- Primary group is small and in Primary group member have intimate and face to face interaction. They have '*we feelings*' among themselves. Relation is cooperative, friendly and close.

Example of Primary group- Family, Club etc.

The Secondary groups are large, formed with specific objectives in their mind. There is code of conduct, laws in the group. There is no '*we feelings*'.

Example of secondary group- Political party, Cooperative society, Organisations NGO etc.

Characteristics of Social group:

1. Collection of individuals.
2. Mutual awareness.
3. Interaction among members.
4. We feeling.
5. Common Purpose.
6. Common behaviour.
7. Organisation.
8. Group norms.
9. Dynamic.
10. Control over members

Social Structure?

“**social structure** is the patterned social arrangements in society that are both emergent from and determinant of the actions of the individuals.”

“**social structure** of this society would describe the position of the numerous groups in this social order with reference to each other as manifested in the system of familial, economic, political, religious and social class obligation-relations which obtains at any given time.”

“**Social structure** is the way a society is organised into expected relationship. To be simple, the term ‘structure’ refers to the way the parts of anything related to one another. That is to say, ‘structure’ means an ordered arrangement of parts.”

Three scales of definition-

On the **macro scale**,

“social structure is the system of **socioeconomic stratification** (e.g., the class structure), **social institutions**, or, other **patterned relations** between large social groups.”

On the **meso scale**,

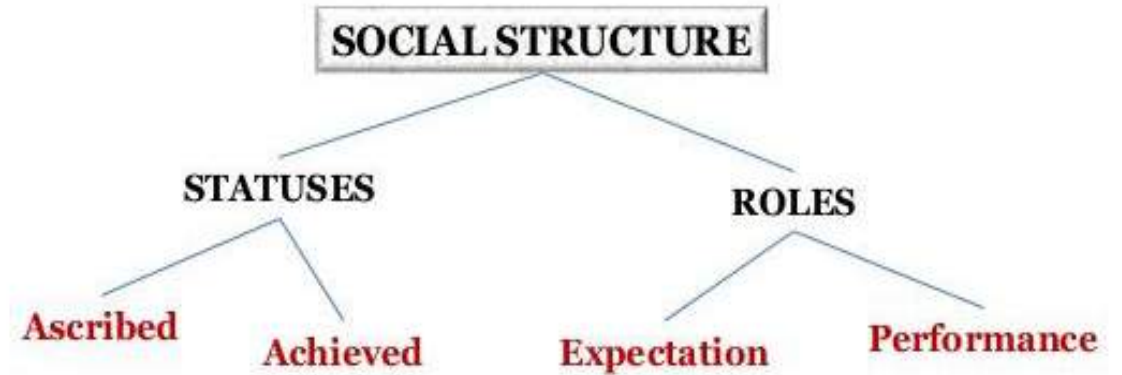
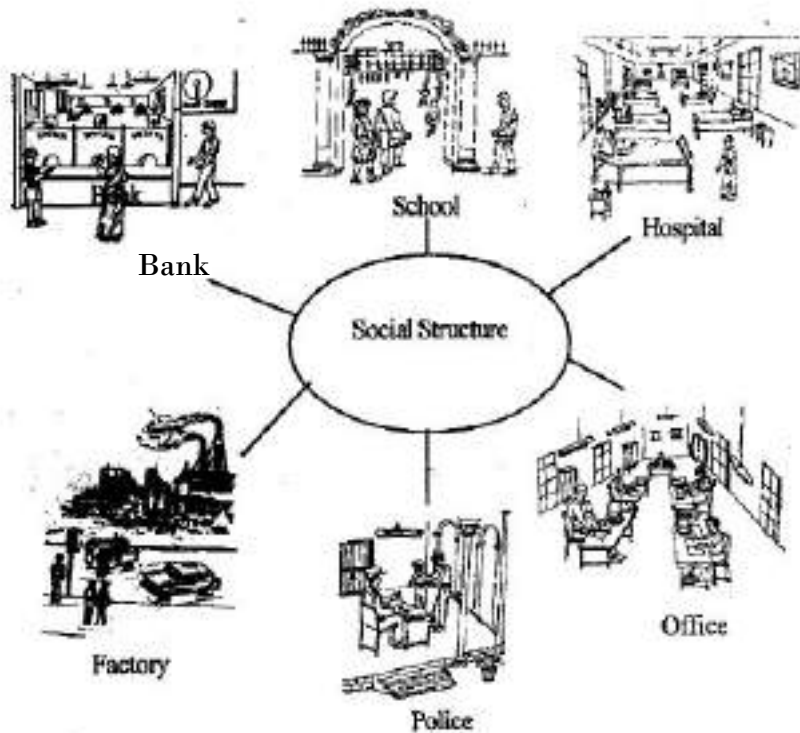
“it is the structure of social network ties between individuals or organizations.”

On the **micro scale**,

“it can be the way norms shape the behaviour of individuals within the social system.”

Social norms influence social structure through relations between the majority and the minority. Because those who align with the majority are considered normal while those who align with the minority are considered abnormal, majority-minority relations create a hierarchical stratification within social structures that favours the majority in all aspects of society.

- Social structure is made up of statuses and roles. A *status* is a position in a social structure, and the *role* is how we (generally) expect members of a status to behave.
- Statuses and Roles exist independently of their 'incumbents' or 'occupants'



- **Social structure** refers to the way society is organized.
- **Status** = is a position in a social structure.
- **Role** = how we (generally) expect members of a status to behave.
 - Statuses and Roles exist independently of their 'incumbents' or 'occupants'

Statuses

- You can think of (sets of) **statuses** as different ways of categorizing people in different situations.
 - Examples: *Family statuses, occupational statuses, social class statuses, demographic statuses*, etc.
- 1. **Achieved statuses** – positions that are achieved by the individuals for themselves (but not always on purpose); these statuses can change.
- 2. **Ascribed statuses** – statuses given to individuals generally at birth, and from which they cannot escape; these statuses are fixed.

Role

- A **role** is the ‘sum total of expectations about behavior attached to a particular social status’; how we expect occupants of a social status to behave.
 - ‘Occupants of a social status are *expected to perform* certain roles’
 - Role = the *common denominator* among all occupants of a status; (i.e. removing all idiosyncracies, what they all have in common)
 - Example: I have the status of ‘teacher’; My role is to teach.

Roles

- **Roles**- how we expect occupants of a social status to behave and their attempt to meet those expectations in role performances.
 - Role = the *common denominator* among all occupants of a status; (i.e. what they all have in common)
- **Role Conflict**- a situation in which incompatible role demands are placed on a person by two or more statuses at the same time.

Characteristics of Social Structure?

Social structure is created from the inter-relationship and organisation of human beings, who are organised for pursuing certain common objectives and aims. To fulfil the aims, social structure must be based upon certain principles:

1. **Normative System**- these are the ideals and values that bind the society in a structured pattern. For example the old age home is not widespread in India like in America due to our ideals and value systems.
2. **Position System**- these are the status and roles of individuals. As the desires and aspirations of individuals varies widely, proper functioning of social structure depends upon proper assignment of roles and statuses. For example, status and role of Judge, Doctor, Teachers, Labours, Sweepers etc.
3. **Sanction System**- these are the laws that has two aspects: rewards and punishments. The conformity with social norms are rewarded and nonconformity with social norms are punished. Stability of social structure depends upon the effectiveness of the sanctioned system, which tells about the social and political environment.
4. **A System of anticipated Response**- this response system calls upon individuals to participate in the social system. For example, 'work ethics', 'city yours, keep it clean' etc.

