

B.A.PART-I(SOCIOLOGY)
Paper-I(Principles of Sociology)

Topic-Primary and Secondary group College- MMC,P.U(Department of Sociology)	By: Dr. Archana kumari Email ID: archnakumari706@gmail.com
--	---

□ **Introduction:**

Social groups have been classified in various ways. Some classifications are simple and some are elaborate. Various writers⁶⁹ have chosen different bases of classifying groups such as racial features, religious beliefs, territory, nature of government, size, caste, sex, age, class, occupation, blood relationships, nature of social interaction, range of group interests, permanent or temporary nature, degree of mobility and so on.

Classification of Social Group:

Sociologist	Types of Groups
Sumner	In-group and out-group
Miller	Vertical and Horizontal group
R.Merton	Membership group and Reference group
Charles Cooley	Primary and Secondary group
MacIver and Page	a) Territorial Unities b) Interest conscious unities without definite organization c) Interest conscious unities with definite organization

□ **Primary and Secondary Group:**

The concept of 'primary groups' is a significant contribution of C. H. Cooley to the social thought. Primary groups are found in all the societies. The primary group is the nucleus of all social organisations. It is a small group in which a few persons

come into direct contact with another. These persons meet face to face for mutual help, companionship and discussion of common questions.

Cooley used the term 'primary groups' to mean a social group characterized by face to face relationship, mutual aid and companionship. By primary groups, Cooley meant the intimate personal 'face to face' groups in which we find our companions and comrades as the members of our family and our daily associates. These are the people with whom we enjoy the more intimate kind of social relations. The primary groups can be referred to as the 'We groups'. Cooley explained that a primary group involves the sort of sympathy and mutual identification for which we is the natural expression.

Primary groups are universal groups functioning in all stages of cultural development. Primary groups socialise the individuals. Examples for primary groups: Family, neighborhood, children's play ground, peer group etc.

- **Characteristics of Primary Group**

1. **Dominance of face to face relations:** Primary groups are characterised by close and intimate relationships among the members. There exists a face to face relationship. In primary groups everyone knows everyone else; one's name and fame, one's status, wealth, occupation, level of education etc. Close contact between them increases intimacy among the members. Face to face relations are commonly observed in small groups like family, neighborhood etc.
2. **The relationship is personal:** In the primary groups the interest of each is centred in others as persons. The relationship disappears if the particular person disappears from it. The relationship is non transferable and irreplaceable. The relationship between the husband and wife is such that no third person can replace any one of them.
3. **The Relationship is Spontaneous:** A purely primary relationship is voluntary. It is not planned. It is not based on any contract. Relationships develop between naturally. The relationships that develop between the mother and child, husband and wife are purely voluntary and spontaneous.
4. **Small size:** Primary Groups are smaller in size. Effective participation of the members is possible only when the group is of a small size. The character of the group tends to change with the size. The increase in the size of the group will have negative effect on the intimacy of the members.
5. **Physical Proximity or nearness:** Face to face relations can be found only when members reside in a more or less permanently. Seeing and talking with each other facilitates exchange of ideas, opinions and sentiments. Physical proximity provides an opportunity for the very development of primary groups.

6. Stability of the group: A primary group is relatively a permanent group. Social ties deepen in time.
7. Similarity of background: The members of a primary group must have more or less similar background. Each must have to something to contribute, to give as well as to take.
8. Limited self interest: Members of the primary group subordinate their personal interest to the interests of the group. The common interest of the group is strong enough to control individual interest. The commonness of interests provides mental pleasure and contentment to the members.
9. Communication: Communication in the case of primary group like family or children's play group, for example is very quick and effective. Direct face to face contact helps easy communication between the members.
10. Direct Co operation: Direct co operation characterises primary group. Members work directly and in cooperation with each other to achieve their common interest. Work is essentially 'a mode of sharing a common experience'. The group is a unity in the performance of a function.

□ Secondary Group

An understanding of the modern industrial society requires an understanding of the secondary groups. The secondary groups are almost opposite to primary groups. The social groups other than those of primary. Groups may be termed as secondary groups. Maclver and page refer to them as great associations. They are of the opinion that secondary groups have become almost inevitable today. their appearance is mainly due to the growing cultural complexity. Ogburn and Nimkoff say that the 'groups which provide experience lacking in intimacy' can be called secondary groups.

● Characteristics of the Secondary Groups:

1. Dominance of secondary relations: Secondary groups are characterised by indirect, impersonal, contractual and non inclusive relations. Relations are indirect because secondary groups are bigger in size and the members may not stay together. Relations are contractual in the sense; they are oriented towards certain interests and desires.
2. Largeness of the size: Secondary groups are relatively larger in size. City, nation, political parties, trade unions, corporations are bigger in size. They may have thousands and lakhs of members. There may not be any limit to the membership in the case of some secondary groups.

3. **Membership:** Membership in the case of secondary groups is voluntary. For example, they are at liberty to join political parties, international associations like the rotary club, lion club, and business corporations and so on. However, there are some secondary groups like the state whose membership is almost involuntary.
4. **No physical Basis:** Secondary groups are not characterised by physical proximity . Many secondary groups are not limited to any definite area. There are some secondary groups like Rotary Club and the Lion Club which are almost international in character. The members of such groups are scattered over a vast area.
5. **Specific Ends or Interests:** Secondary groups are formed for the realisation of some specific interests or ends. They are called 'special interest groups'. Members are interested in the group because they have specific ends to aim at.
6. **Indirect Communication:** Contacts and communications in the case of secondary groups are almost indirect. Impersonal nature of social relationships in secondary groups is both the cause and effect of indirect communication.
7. **Nature of social control:** Informal means of social control are less effective in regulating the relations of members. Moral control is only secondary. Formal means of social control such as law, legislation, police, court etc are made use of to control the behaviour of members.
8. **Group Structure:** The secondary group has a formal structure. Secondary groups are mostly organised groups. Different statuses and roles that the members assume are specified. Distinctions based on caste, colour, region or religion, class, language etc are less rigid and the greater tolerance toward other people and groups.

□ **Conclusion:**

So, the primary group is a personal group, the secondary group an impersonal one. We have personal relations with the members of the first and status relations with the members of the second.