

Group

In the human field by groups we mean any collection of human beings who are brought in social relationship with one another. Or when two or more persons are in the state of interaction, it is called a “group”.

Sociologists, however, define the term more explicitly such as according to **A. W. Green**, “An aggregate of individuals which persists in time, which has one or more interests or activities in common and which is organized is known as social group.”

(Or)

According to **Ogburn & Nimkoff**, “Whenever two or more individuals come together and influence one another, they may be said to constitute a group.”

In other words a group is something more than the collection of individuals, because each individual has affected every other individual in such a way that their behaviour is spoken of as characteristics of the group.

Characteristics of the Group:

Some important characteristics of social group are:

- Reciprocal relations
- Sense of unity
- We-feeling
- Common interest
- Similar behaviour
- Group norms

Types of Groups:

The classification of groups is done mainly for functional convenience to emphasize the predominant focus and purpose of a group at a given point of time rather than to indicate mutually exclusive categories. So the important types of groups include:

1. According to Size:

According to size, a group can be classified into three categories:

a. Diad:

A group consisting of two members is called Di-ad Group.

b. Triad:

A group consisting of three members is called Tri-ad Group.

c. Polyad:

A group consisting of more than three individuals is called Poliad Group.

2. According to Membership:

Under this classification, there are two types of groups:

a. Compulsory Group:

In such group, members have compulsory membership and they do not have any choice or option to join or leave the group. The group cannot exclude any member even if he/she violates the norms of group. The best example of this group as given by sociologists is that of a family.

b. Optional Group:

Unlike the compulsory group, in these groups, members have optimum choice of joining or leaving the group.

3. According to Life of the Group:

According to life, group can be enlisted as:

a. Temporary Group:

In temporary groups, individuals get together for a limited time period to meet some objectives. When the objectives are gained they dispersed, e.g. buyer and seller.

b. Permanent Group:

These groups function for relatively longer period of time. Mostly members have permanent membership. Or in other cases, members may change but the group always remains.

4. According to Functioning:

a. Formal Group:

A formal group refers to the structure and activities that are rationally organized. These groups are organized for a specific goal and have standardized rules to be followed, e.g. regarding joining and leaving the group, timing, attendance, etc.

b. Informal Group:

It is a small, spontaneous and casual group having no standardized rules. Interaction among members is based on common interest and intimate relations. There are no uniform rules

but mutual understanding and personal loyalty work effectively in the functioning of such groups.

5. According to Relationships:

According to relations, groups can be classified as:

a. Primary Group:

A primary group is the simplest and most common form of social organization. In such groups, there is a high degree of emotional attachment among members. They are intimate, personal and informal to each other and show cohesiveness in group environment. There is integration; unity and cooperation prevail and members express strong “we feelings” in the group.

b. Secondary Group:

In secondary groups, the relationships of individuals are less personal. Their contacts are casual and not based upon permanent footing. The individuals in such groups meet one another with some specific purpose and their interaction is temporary and short-lived. In such groups, individuals can be substituted or replaced without creating much disturbance in the structure and functions of the group.