

CLASS 11TH

TERMS, CONCEPTS, AND THEIR USE IN SOCIOLOGY



RAPID REVISION

IN

20

MINUTES



*Smart Study
Better Result*



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1) Why Do We Need Terms and Concepts?

- Sociology studies **society and the interplay of individuals and social structures**; everyday words like “family” or “group” don’t capture deeper sociological meanings.
- Concepts are **tools for analysis** — they help us organise observations, ask clear questions, and link individual behaviour with broader social patterns.
- Without precise concepts, sociology would collapse into common sense.

2) Social Groups

A **social group** is a collection of people who:

- Interact regularly
- Share a **common identity**
- Have shared norms, values and expectations
- Maintain a stable pattern of relations and membership

Types of Groups

a) Primary Groups

- Small, face-to-face, intimate relationships
- Strong emotional ties and “we-feeling”
- Example: family, close friends

b) Secondary Groups

- Larger, impersonal, goal-oriented
- Formal, task focused
- Example: school class, workplace team

c) Community vs Society

- **Community:** Personal, enduring, close-knit ties; often geographically rooted
 - **Society / Association:** Impersonal, formal, based on self-interest and goals; modern urban settings
- Think of **community** ~ **primary group** and **association** ~ **secondary group**.

3) In-Groups and Out-Groups

- **In-Group:** Group with a sense of belonging (“us/we”)
- **Out-Group:** Those outside the in-group (“them/they”), sometimes facing hostility or exclusion
- **Example:** School team vs others, migrants as out-groups initially

4) Quasi-Groups vs Social Groups

- **Quasi-Group:** A collection of people who share space but not structured interaction (e.g., passengers waiting at a station)
- Over time, quasi-groups can become real social groups when shared identity and stable interaction emerge.

5) Social Stratification

- Sociologists use stratification to analyse **structured inequality** in society — differences in wealth, power, and status across groups.
- Stratification shows that societies place people in **hierarchical layers**, not just random differences.

Social Stratification – Historic Division

- **Slavery:** People treated as property; no rights; status fixed by birth.
- **Estate System:** Society divided into legally recognised estates; limited mobility.
- **Caste System:** Hierarchical groups based on birth; endogamy; rigid social rules.
- **Class System:** Based on economic position; relatively open and mobile system.

6) Status and Role

Status

- A **social position** a person occupies in society
- Can be **ascribed** (given by birth such as caste, gender) or **achieved** (earned by effort such as job or education)
- Example: student, son/daughter, teacher

Role

- The **expected behaviour** associated with a status
- Example: A student is expected to study; a teacher is expected to teach

Role Conflict and Strain

- **Role Conflict**: tension between expectations linked to two different statuses
- **Role Strain**: tension among roles within the same status

7) Social Control

Social control refers to **ways society regulates behaviour and maintains order.**

Types of Social Control

a) Informal Social Control

- Through norms, values, customs, peer pressure, ridicule, praise
- Works strongly in close groups

b) Formal Social Control

- Through institutions like law, police, courts, schools
- Written rules and sanctions

8) Why Sociological Concepts Matter

- They help us move from *everyday thinking* to *systematic investigation*.
- Concepts help compare different societies and historical periods.
- They reveal hidden patterns in social life (norms, roles, inequality, power).
- They are **tools, not absolute truths** — sociologists interpret, apply, and sometimes critique them.

Concept	Core Meaning
Social Group	People interacting, sharing identity & norms
Primary Group	Small, intimate, enduring group
Secondary Group	Large, impersonal, goal-oriented group
Community	Personal, traditional social ties
Society/Association	Formal, impersonal, goal-driven ties
In-Group	"Us" group with belonging
Out-Group	"Them" outside group
Quasi-Group	Collection without social structure
Status	Social position (ascribed or achieved)
Role	Expected behaviour linked to status
Social Control	Mechanisms to enforce norms



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