

# Primary Groups and secondary groups: Differences

## Primary Groups

- **Meaning:** Groups which are characterized by face to face relations, mutual aid and companionship are primary groups. Ex: family, neighbourhood, community, children's playgroup, local brotherhood etc.
- **Nature of social relations:** Social relations are face to face direct intimate, personal, contractual, non-specialized, non-partition and non-economic in character.
- **Size:** Primary groups are smaller in size. They are localized or limited to a definite area.
- **Group Interest:** Interest of the members are not specific but general. Everyone is interested in the welfare of everyone else.
- **Effects on Personality:** The group has a long-lasting influence upon the personality development of the members.

## Secondary Groups

- Groups which provide experience lacking in intimacy are secondary groups. Ex: political parties, trade unions, religious associations, the state, city, corporations etc.
- Social relations are indirect, impersonal, non-intimate, contractual, specialised, partisan and more economic in nature.
- Secondary groups are relatively bigger in size they are not necessarily restricted to a small area.
- Interest of the members are more specific. Hence, groups are often called special interest groups.
- The impact of the group on the personality of the members is rather limited.

## Primary Groups

- **Physical Proximity:** Groups are confined to a small geographic area.
- **Communication:** Since members stay together communication is not only direct but also quick and effective.
- **Nature of Co-operation:** Cooperation is direct. Members work together, play together, enjoy together, and in times of crisis struggles together. Cooperation is natural and spontaneous.
- **Durability:** Groups are relatively durable.
- **Nature of group control:** Primary groups control the behaviour of the members to a great extent. Informal means of social control are enough to regulate the relations.

## Secondary Groups

- Groups are not characterised by a physical area.
- Since members are spread over a vast area direct communication is difficult. It is mostly indirect in nature.
- Cooperation is mostly indirect. Cooperation is an intended act to serve a particular need. It is limited to that purpose only it is not spontaneous but deliberate and cultivated.
- Groups maybe temporary or permanent.
- Secondary groups have limited control over the behaviour of the members. Informal means are not enough and hence formal means of social control a resorted to for maintaining the group control.