

**University of djlali bounaama khamis miliana**

**Faculty of social sciences**

**First year bachelor's degree**

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# **Courses of English in sociology**

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**CONCEPT OF SOCIETY** The term 'society' is not easy to define. In general, it refers to people and their community. Man is a social animal who relies on others around him for his basic needs. People form society. The interaction between people brings them closer to each other and makes them mutually dependent. Society can, thus, be defined as a formal association of people having the same interests.

**British sociologist Morris Ginsberg** has defined society, thus: 'A society is a collection of individuals united by certain relations or mode of behaviours which mark them off from others who do not enter into these relations or who differ from them in behaviour.'

Well-known sociologist **R. M. MacIver** has defined society as 'Society is a web of social relationships'. The origin or emergence of society may be viewed as one of the great steps in evolution. However, this step was taken only by a few species. Like other steps, it represents a new synthesis of old materials, possessing unique qualities that are not found in old materials which are considered separately. It is, thus, a true example of what is known as an emergent evolution. To realize that society is a true emergent, one needs to trace its independent origin in countless animal types.

One merely needs to grasp the difference between it and the organisms which it is composed of. Several decades ago, it was normal to compare society with an organism. The idea was to demonstrate that a social system, after all, is a system. The analogy was helpful but never perfect.

The cells of an organism are rigidly fixed in their mutual relations, completely subordinated to the organism and too specialized to be called members of the society. They are not

spatially detached and independently mobile. So the organism is not, strictly speaking, a society of cells.

The organism possesses a consciousness, which no society possesses. Like an organism, a society is a system of relations between organisms themselves rather than between cells. Like the organism, a society has a determined structure and the parts of this structure, when in operation, contribute to the existence of the whole.

This gives it continuity, which is apart from that of the constituent individuals. It is this possession of continuity and structure of its own that makes it impossible to reduce the study of society merely to a study of its individual members. It is like a house which, though composed of bricks, nails, mortar and pieces of lumber, cannot be understood purely in terms of these materials, as it has a form and functions as a complete house. A society, or a human society, is a group of people related to each other through persistent relations, or a large social group, sharing the same geographical or virtual territory, subject to the same political authority and dominant cultural expectations. Human societies are characterized by patterns of relationships between individuals who share a distinctive institutions and culture. A given society may be described as the sum total of such relationships among its constituent members.

In social sciences, a society invariably entails stratification and hierarchy.

A society helps its members benefit in ways not possible had the members existed individually. It consists of like-minded people governed by their own values and norms. Within a society one almost always finds smaller cultures or sub societies with their own idiosyncratic set of rules. Broadly, a society may be described as a social, economic and industrial infrastructure

made up with varied kinds of people. A society may constitute of different ethnic groups, a nation state or a broader cultural group. Definitions Society has been differently defined by different sociologists. Here are a few definitions:

American sociologist Gerhard Lenski defined society as is a form of organization involving: (1) Relatively sustained ties of interaction among its members. (2) Relatively high degree of interdependence among its members. (3) A high degree of autonomy