

# Chapter 1: Sociology - Definition, Origin, Nature, and Scope

## 1. Introduction

Sociology is the study of how people live together in a society.

- **For Law Students:**

It is important because laws are made for people. To make good laws, you must understand the people and the society first.

## 2. Definition (What is Sociology?)

The word "Sociology" is created by joining two words from different languages:

1. 'Socius' (Latin word) = This means **Companion** or **Society**.
2. 'Logos' (Greek word) = This means **Study** or **Science**.

**Simple Definition:** Sociology is the science of society. It studies human behavior in groups.

**Definitions by Famous Thinkers:**

- **Auguste Comte:** He is known as the "**Father of Sociology**". He said Sociology is the science of social order and progress.
- **Emile Durkheim:** He said Sociology is the "**science of social institutions**".
  - *Example of Institutions:* Family, School, Religion, Marriage, and Law.
- **Max Weber:** He said Sociology studies "**Social Action**".
  - *Meaning:* It studies *why* people act the way they do in a group.

## 3. Origin (How did it start?)

Sociology is a young subject. It is not as old as History or Mathematics.

- **Year of Birth:** 1838 (approximately).
- **The Founder:** Auguste Comte (from France) was the first man to use the word "Sociology".

**Why was Sociology born?** In the 19th Century, Europe was facing big problems because of two major events:

1. **The Industrial Revolution:** Big factories were built. People left villages to work in crowded cities.
2. **The French Revolution:** The old kings and political systems were removed.

**The Result:** These changes created **chaos** (confusion) in society. There was high crime, poverty, and unhappiness. **The Solution:**

Thinkers like Comte wanted a "Scientific Subject" to study these problems and fix them, just like a doctor studies a body to cure a fever. This is how

## 4. Nature of Sociology (What type of subject is it?)

To understand the nature of Sociology, we can compare it with other subjects. (Based on Robert Bierstedt's view):

1. **It is a Social Science, NOT a Physical Science.**
  - It studies *people* and *groups*. It does not study chemicals or rocks.
2. **It is Categorical, NOT Normative.**
  - *Categorical* means it tells us "what is happening" (Facts).
  - *Normative* means telling us "what should happen" (Good vs Bad).
  - **Important for Law Students:**  
Law is Normative (it judges if an act is a crime). Sociology is Categorical (it just studies why the crime happened).
3. **It is a Pure Science, NOT an Applied Science.**
  - Sociologists collect knowledge (Pure).
  - Government and Policymakers use that knowledge to make laws (Applied).
4. **It is Abstract, NOT Concrete.**
  - It studies the *concept* of things.
  - *Example:* Sociology studies "War" in general (why wars happen). History studies "World War II" (a specific concrete war).

## 5. Scope of Sociology (What are its boundaries?)

There is a debate among scholars about what Sociology should study. There are two main groups (Schools of Thought):

#### A. The Formalistic School (The Specialist View)

- **Main Thinker:** George Simmel.
- **Belief:** Sociology should be a **specific** and **narrow** subject.
- **What it studies:** It should only study the **forms** of social relationships, not the content.
- **Example:** Whether it is a business company, a football team, or a family, the *forms* of interaction are the same: Competition, Cooperation, or Hierarchy. Sociology should just study these forms.

#### B. The Synthetic School (The General View)

- **Main Thinker:** Emile Durkheim.
- **Belief:** Sociology should be a **general** and **wide** subject.
- **What it studies:** It should study **everything** in society because all parts of society are connected.
- **Reason:** You cannot understand a person's behavior without understanding their religion, their family, and their laws.
- **Durkheim's 3 Branches:**
  1. **Social Morphology:** Geography and population (Volume/Density of people).
  2. **Social Physiology:** Religion, Morals, Laws, Economics.
  3. **General Sociology:** General social laws.

#### Quick Summary for Exam

1. **Definition:** Science of Society (Socius + Logos).
2. **Father:** Auguste Comte (1838).
3. **Nature:** It is a Science, it is Factual (Categorical), and it is Abstract.
4. **Scope:** Debate between Formalistic (Specific) and Synthetic (General) schools.