**State vs Society**

A state and a society are both comprised of people. “Society” and “state” are interrelated. They depend upon each other, and the progress of one influences the progress and livelihood of the other. People belonging to one society may belong to the state, and the majority of the state may comprise people of the same society. They complement each other and are dependent on each other. The social customs, traditions, philosophies, and actions of a society directly influences a state and its work ethics. No matter how complimentary they are, the basic difference between a state and a society is that in society everything happens due to voluntary actions, and there is a vast limit for flexibility and acceptability. In a state there are rules and regulations; the actions are mechanical and rigid.

***State***  
A state is an integral part of the society. It can be defined as a particular or specific part or portion of a certain society which is organized politically. This politically organized portion of society is responsible for the protection of the society and also responsible for the progress, promotion, and well-being of the society. A state is, as mentioned before, a political organization unlike a society which is not a political organization.

The state has authority to punish or award the people of society. The main strength of the state is derived from the laws that have been made and implemented. The state, unlike society, has the authority to regulate only those relationships of society which are external.

The state has sovereignty and has the power to coerce. Any kind of disobedience or non-compliance of rules by anybody in the society can be punished by the state according to its laws.

The state has territories. It has well-defined boundaries. It is referred to as a territorial organization. In the same state there might be different societies following different cultures and traditions. The state is considered an organization which is compulsory in order to maintain law and order for the proper functioning of all the societies included in it.

***Society***  
A society is basically a collection or group of people who are brought together and held together by the internal relationships amongst themselves in order to achieve common goals. The common goals may be happiness, progress, or any other well-being of all the individuals included in the society. The strength of the society depends upon its culture and traditions. All kinds of social behavior and the conduct of all individuals are regulated by common customs.

In a society, obedience has to be dictated and expected of their individuals through the power of customs, traditions, and moralities instead of through coercion. It has to be, in a way, persuaded and required by cooperation. Individuals are not punished as per some law when they do not follow dictums of society.

Society does not have any physical or geographical territories. They can expand from one state to another and commonly from one country to another. Society is an absolutely voluntary unit. No one is a part of it if they do not want to be a part of it. Society could be either broader or in some cases narrower than the state.

The main difference between state and society are :

1. Society is defined as “a collection of individuals held together by certain enduring relationship in Pursuit of common ends.” The State, on the other hand, is defined as “a particular portion of society politically organized for the protection and promotion of its common interests”. Thus, the state is a part of society The State is necessarily a political organization but society is not.

2. The society regulates all forms of social conduct the State regulates only the external relationship of men in society. While the State derives its strength mainly from laws, societies derive its strength from traditions, customs and conversions.

3. The State possesses the power of coercion. Disobedience to its law is followed by punishment. Society, on other hand, does not enjoy the power of coercion Disobedience to its rules may not be followed by any physical punishment. Thus, the only basis of the authority of society is social customs, convention and morality. Society secures the co-operation of its members by persuasion and not by coercion. The State alone possesses sovereignty.

4. The State is a territorial organization. It has well defined territory of its own. But society is not limited to any geographical area. The Jews, for example, constitute a society as they are spread all over the world. So is the case with the Hindu society or the Christian society. It has thus no territorial jurisdiction as the State always has. Its scope may over the entire world crossing the boundaries of various nations. Within a State, the people may be organized into different societies having different social traditions. Thus, society may be narrower or broader than the State.

5. The State is a compulsory organization where as society is a voluntary organization.

In spite of above differences, the State and Society have some common features as well. The State and society sometimes include practically the same persons and in most cases, an overwhelming majority of the members of a society may be included in the same State.

Hence, the State and Society go hand in hand. They help each other. Progress of society depends upon the progress of the state and the working of the state is in influence by social customs and traditions. Barker has summed up the distinction between the State and Society in the following words. “The Slate and society overlap, they blend, they borrow from one another. But roughly we may say that the area of the one is voluntary co-operation, its energy that of good will, its method that of elasticity, while the area of the other is that of mechanical action, its energy, forces, its method, rigidity.