

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Human Science

Level: 1st year LMD Human Science

Instructor: Ms. Saci Meriem

Module: English

Lesson n°4: Community

Introduction

The word "community" derives from the Old French *comuneté*, which comes from the Latin *communitas* "community", "public spirit". A **community** is a small or large social unit (a group of people) who have something in common, such as norms, religion, values, or identity. Communities often share a sense of place that is situated in a given geographical area (e.g., a country, village, town, or neighborhood) or in virtual space through communication platforms. Durable relations that extend beyond immediate genealogical ties also define a sense of community. People tend to define those social ties as important to their identity, practice, and roles in social institutions like family, home, work, government, society, or humanity, at large. Although communities are usually small relative to personal social ties (micro-level), "community" may also refer to large group affiliations (or macrolevel), such as national communities, international communities, and virtual communities.

I. Definitions of Community:

- “Community is a number of families residing in a relatively small area within which they have developed a more or less complete socio-cultural definitions imbued with collective identifications and by means of which they resolve problems arising from the sharing of an area” (Sutton and Kolaja, in Bell and Newby).
- “Community refers to a structure of relationships through which a localized population provides its daily requirements” (Hawley in Bell and Newby).
- “Community is a collection of people who share a common territory and meet their basic physical and social needs through daily interaction with one another” (in Allan

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Johnson, Human Arrangements, and Harcourt BraceJovanovich Publishers: Orlando, 1986).

II. Types of Community:

There are two types of communities ***Rural*** and ***Urban communities***, due to different social conditions in both rural and urban areas.

❖ *Rural Community*

Rural community is a natural phenomenon. It is present in every society of the world having distinct culture and pattern of social life. It is actually a product of natural free will of the people having extreme similarity in their objectives and ambitions of living. Agriculture is the main identity and element. People of this community mostly have. Face to face 'interaction with high degree of homogeneity in their identities. Basic urban facilities like school, hospital, market, municipal office, police station etc. are usually missing in this community.

❖ *Urban Community*

Urban community is the opposite of rural community. The urban people lifestyle is highly impersonal with each other along high degree of complexity and heterogeneity in their living style and identities. It is actually a product of rational choice. A complex division of labor with specialization in their jobs is the identity of urban community. Modern civic facilities are usually available.

III. Characteristics of Community:

- ✓ ***A group of people:*** A group of people is the most fundamental or essential characteristic or element of community. This group may be small or large but community always refers to a group of people. Because without a group of people we cannot think of a community,

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when a group of people lives together and shares a common life and binded by a strong sense of community consciousness at that moment a community is formed. Hence, a group of people is the first pre-requisites of community.

- ✓ **A definite locality:** It is the next important characteristic of a community. Because community is a territorial group. A group of people alone cannot form a community. A group of people forms a community only when they reside in a definite territory. The territory need not be fixed forever. A group of people like nomadic people may change their habitations. However, majority community is settled and a strong bond of unity and solidarity is derived from their living in a definite locality.
- ✓ **Community Sentiment:** It is another important characteristic or element of community. Because without community sentiment a community cannot be formed only with a group of people and a definite locality. Community sentiment refers to a strong sense of awe feeling among the members or a feeling of belonging together. It refers to a sentiment of common living that exists among the members of a locality. Because of common living within an area for a long time a sentiment of common living is created among the members of that area. With this the members emotionally identify themselves. This emotional identification of the members distinguishes them from the members of other community.
- ✓ **Neutrality:** Communities are naturally organized. It is neither a product of human nor will created by an act of government. It grows spontaneously. Individuals become the member by birth.

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- ✓ **Permanence:** Community is always a permanent group. It refers to a permanent living of individuals within a definite territory. It is not temporary like that of a crowd or association.
- ✓ **Similarity:** The members of a community are similar in a number of ways. As they live within a definite locality, they lead a common life and share some common ends. Among the members, similarity in language, culture, customs, and traditions and in many other things is observed. Similarities in these respects are responsible for the development of community sentiment.
- ✓ **Wider Ends:** A community has wider ends. Members of a community associate not for the fulfillment of a particular end but for a variety of ends. These are natural for a community.
- ✓ **Total organized social life:** A community is marked by total organized social life. It means a community includes all aspects of social life. Hence, a community is a society in miniature.
- ✓ **A Particular Name:** Every community has a particular name by which it is known to the world. Members of a community are also identified by that name. For example, people living in Odisha is known as odia.
- ✓ **No Legal Status:** a community has any legal status because it is not a legal person. It has no rights and duties in the eyes of law. The law of the land does not create it.
- ✓ **Size of Community:** A community is classified on the basis of its size. It may be big or small. Village is an example of a small community whereas a nation or even the world is an example of a big community. Both the type of community is essential for human life