

Definition: necessary  
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Definition: (i) According to R. M. Maclver and C. H. Page, " When the folkways have added to them conceptions of group welfare, standards of right and wrong, they are converted into mores".

(ii) Gillin and Gillin say that " Mores are those customs and group routines which are thought by the members of the society to be necessary to the group's continued existence". (iii) As Edward Sapir has pointed out, " The term " mores' is best reserved for those customs which connote fairly strong feelings of the rightness or wrongness of mode of behaviour". (iv) In simple words, we can say when the folkways clearly represent the group standards, the group sense of what is fitting, right and conducive to well-being, then they become mores. Types of Mores: A distinction is made between two kinds of mores: (i) ' positive mores', and (ii) ' negative mores'. (i) Positive Mores: Positive mores always ' prescribe' behaviour patterns. They represent the ' do's'. They give instructions and provide guidance for the people to behave in a particular way. Examples: Respecting elders, protecting children, taking care of the diseased and the aged people, loving one's country, doing service to the society, worshipping God, speaking the truth, leading a righteous life, etc.

(ii) Negative Mores: Negative mores ' prescribe' behaviour patterns. They represent the ' don ' ts They are often called ' taboos'. Taboos forbid or prohibit certain behaviour patterns. Taboos put severe restrictions on the range of one's behaviour. Examples: Don't appear before the people without dress, don't be cruel to the wife and children, don't steal, don't commit adultery, don't tell lies, don't be irreligious, don't disrespect the God, don't be unpatriotic, etc. Nature and Characteristics of Mores (i) Mores are the

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regulators of our social life: Mores represent the living character of the group or community. They are always considered as right by the people who share them. They are morally right and their violation morally wrong.

Hence, they are more compulsive in nature. They put restrictions on our behaviour. (ii) Mores are relatively more persistent: Mores are relatively long lasting than ordinary folkways. In fact, they even become conservative elements in society. They also put up resistance to changes. For example, people at one time resisted the efforts of the law-makers to abolish the so-called morals such as slavery, child marriage, human sacrifice, practice of 'sati', etc. Still it is wrong to conclude that mores are fixed things that do not change. They change subtly from age to age.

In the examples cited above considerable changes have taken place now.

(iii) Mores vary from group to group: Mores have not always been uniform. What is prescribed in one group is prohibited in another. Eskimos, for example, often practise female infanticide, whereas such a practice is strictly forbidden in the modern societies. The Mundugumor tribals of New Guinea practise cannibalism, even today, whereas such a practice is beyond our comprehension in the modern society.

Similarly, some practise strictly monogamy, whereas others practise polygamy, and so on. Further, what is right at one time may be wrong at another and vice versa. The practice of 'sati' was 'moral' then but not now. Slavery was regarded as 'right' then and not now. (iv) Mores are backed by Values and Religion: Mores normally receive the sanction and backing of values and religion.

When this occurs they become still more powerful and binding. Mores backed by religious sanctions are strongly justified by people. Ten Commandments, for example, are considered to be important and essential for the Christians, because they are backed by their religion.