

An Article on: Social Structure and Social Changes of Marginalized Communities in the World

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E-mail id – drsanjaybundela11@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

In This article we are represented, the social structure refers to the pattern of social relationships in a society. Such structure regulates the interactions among members of the society, providing guidelines within the cultural norms for achieving the goals defined by culture values. Social structure is the institutional framework that makes for order in repetitive, rhythmic whether daily, weekly, or yearly interactions among people. The people attach emotional importance to these norms. The institutions and associations are inter-related according to these norms. The specific meaning of social change depends first on the social entity considered. Changes in a small group may be important on the level of that group itself but negligible on the level of the larger society.

Keywords: Social, Society, Structure, Culture, Cast, Communities, Life, Environment, Influence.

1. Introduction

People are influenced by the norms and beliefs of their cultures and society. This influence can take a more personal and intimate level or a more general and widespread level that affects large numbers of people. Sociologists who study the effect of social life on society use two approaches, macro sociology focusing on broad features of society) and micro sociology concentrating on small -scale, face-to-face social interactions. Functionalists and conflict theorists tend to use the macro sociological approach, while symbolic inter actionists are more likely to use the micro sociological approach. Although most sociologists specialize in one approach or the other, both approaches are necessary for a complete understanding of social life [1].

The major components of social structure include culture, social class, social status, roles, groups, and social institutions. Social structure guides people's behaviors. A person's location in the social structure (his or her social class, social status, the roles he or she plays, and the culture, groups, and social institutions to which he or she belongs) underlies his or her perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. People develop these perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors from their place in the social structure, and they act accordingly. All of these components of social structure work together to maintain social order by limiting, guiding, and organizing human behavior.

2. Social structure of social relationships in a society

Social structure refers to the pattern of social relationships in a society. Such structure regulates the interactions among members of the society, providing guidelines within the cultural norms for achieving the goals defined by culture values. Generally, social structure maintains societal stability. However, when the social structure and the societal values become incompatible, the structure must embrace social changing to allow the society to survive and continue healthy development [2]. While a variety of sociological approaches have sought to describe the development and maintenance of social structure, understanding the relationship between structure and change is necessary for the development of a peaceful world society.

Social structure is the institutional framework that makes for order in repetitive, rhythmic whether daily, weekly, or yearly interactions among people. The key to the social structure of a society lies in understanding its social institutions and their intertwining combinations. Social institutions provide the order necessary to make social structure possible.

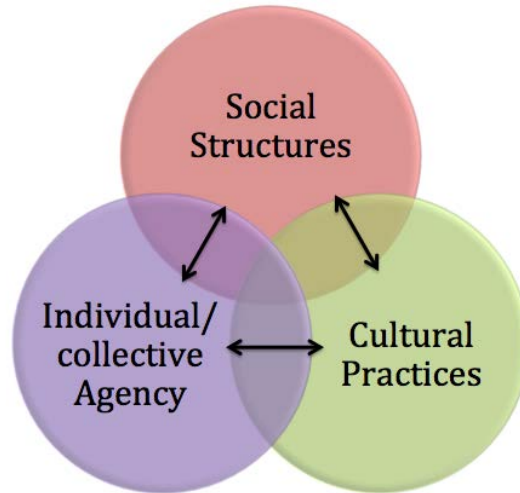


Figure 1: Social Structure in a society

There are generally two levels of analysis in society structure, which may also be regarded as branches of society: micro-structure and macro-structure (Henslin and Nelson, 1995). Micro-sociology is interested in small-scale level of the structure and functioning of human social groups; whereas macro-sociology studies the large-scale aspects of society. Macro-sociology focuses on the broad features of society. The goal of macro-sociology is to examine the large-scale social phenomena that determine how social groups are organized and positioned within the Social structure. Micro-sociological level of analysis focuses on social interaction. It analyzes interpersonal relationships, and on what people do and how they behave when they interact [3]. This level of analysis is usually employed by symbolic interactions perspective. Some writers also add a third level of analysis called meso-level analysis, which analyzes human social phenomena in between the micro- and macro-levels. Reflecting their particular academic interest sociologists may prefer one form of analysis to the other, but all levels of analysis are useful and necessary for a fuller understanding of social life in society.

3. Development of Social Structure

There is no agreement on how different types of social structure develop. Generally, social structures form hierarchies or networks. The differences between these types of social structure are related to the notion of "social stratification," i.e. whether society is separated into different strata or levels, according to social distinctions such as race, class, and gender. The social treatment of persons within the social structure is then related to their placement within the various social strata. In the hierarchical structures, stratification is vertical, with higher levels valued more than lower ones. There are those (mostly American) who claim that hierarchical social structures develop naturally. They suggest that such structures may be caused by larger system needs, such as the need for labor, management, professional, and military classes, or by conflicts among groups, such as competition among political parties or among different social classes. Others, (mainly in Europe) hold that this structuring is not the result of natural processes, but that it is socially constructed. It may have been created by those in powers seeking to retain their power, or by economic systems that place emphasis upon monopoly and

competition or cooperation and sharing [4]. The second type of structure is that of a network: people are connected, but not in pyramids. There is no "alpha male" at the top of the heap; there is not even any concept of higher and lower. In contrast to the "mechanical" solidarity of hierarchical social structure, noted for generally repressive and punitive legal systems, Emile Durkheim introduced the term "organic" solidarity to describe societies based on the network model, where law is generally recitative. This type of structure is likened to the anatomy of a living body, where all social institutions are interdependent and these connections are what naturally impose constraints and goals on each other.

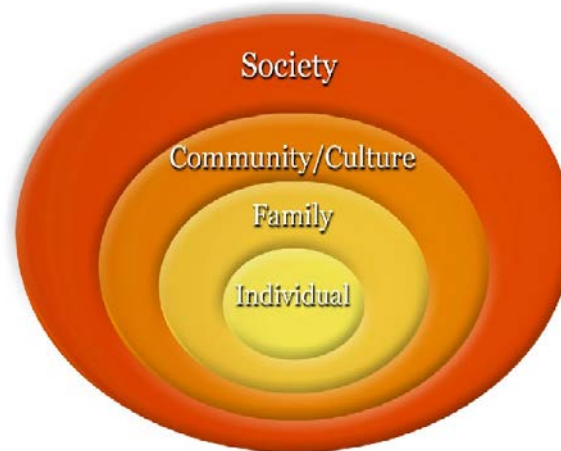


Figure 2: Development of Social Structure

4. Elements of Social Structure

Normative system presents the society with the ideals and values. The people attach emotional importance to these norms. The institutions and associations are inter-related according to these norms. The individuals perform their roles in accordance with the accepted norms of society [5]. Position system refers to the statuses and roles of the individuals. The desires, aspirations and expectations of the individuals are varied, multiple and unlimited. So these can be fulfilled only if the members of the society are assigned different roles according to their capacities and capabilities. Actually the proper functioning of social structure depends upon proper assignments of roles and statuses.

Some of the important elements of social structure are

Values

At the top level are the societal values. These are the most general or abstract normative conceptions of what the ideal society itself would be like.

Individuals or groups are found to be emotionally committed to values. These values help to integrate personality or a system of interaction.

Groups and Institutions

Social structure can be viewed in terms of inter relationships of the component parts. Social structure includes social groups and institutions. These are called the major groups and institutions. Four of these – the family, economic institutions, political institutions and religious institutions – centre upon getting food and other items of wealth, procreation, worship and ruling.

Organizations

In the larger societies of modern time, human beings deliberately establish certain organizations for the pursuit of their specific ends or purposes. These organizations, very often called associations, are group manifestations of life and common interests. To quote Maclver and Page, “The associations constitute the most conspicuous part of the social structure and they gain in coherence, definite number and efficacy as the conditions of the society grow more complex”.

Collectivities

There are specialized collectivities such as families, firms, schools, political parties etc. (Differentiated institutional patterns almost directly imply the existence of collective and role units whose activities have different kinds of functional significance).

Roles

Finally, within all such collectivities one can distinguish types of roles. “Concretely these are the relevant performances of their individual occupants. Functionally, they are contributions to collective goal attainment”. Role occupants are expected to fulfill their obligations to other people (who are also role occupants). For example, in family the husband has obligations towards his wife. According to Nodal, the elements of social structure are roles.

Norms

According to H.M. Johnson, sub-groups and roles are governed by social norms. Social norms are of two types: (i) obligatory or relational and (ii) permissive or regulative. Some norms specify positive obligations. But they are not commonly applied to all the roles and sub-groups. For example, the positive obligations of a family are not the same as those of business firm.

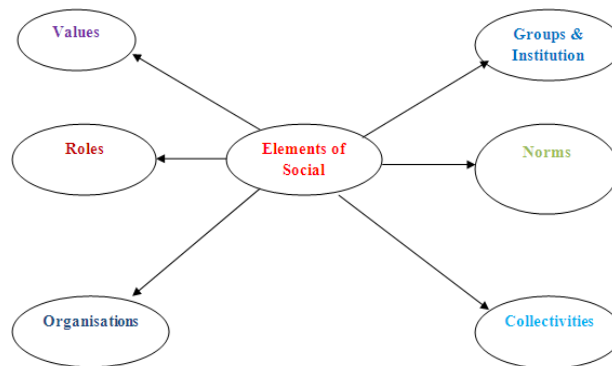


Figure 3: Elements of Social Structure

5. Social Structure and Social Change

A social structure does not, however, consist only of such institutional connections. People act upon the institutionalized role expectations and come into definite and recurrent relations with each other [6]. Although there is rarely a perfect correspondence between institutionalized expectations and actual social relations, the term, social structure “designates this crucial combination of institutions and relations as constituting the anatomy of a society. Social structure, hence, comprises both institutional structure and relational structure.

Social Change

Social change in the broadest sense is any change in social relations. Viewed this way, social change is an ever-present phenomenon in any society [7]. A distinction is sometimes made then between processes of change within the social structure, which serve in part to maintain the structure, and processes that modify the structure (societal change).

The specific meaning of social change depends first on the social entity considered. Changes in a small group may be important on the level of that group itself but negligible on the level of the larger society. Similarly, the observation of social change depends on the time span studied; most short-term changes are negligible when examined in the long run. Small-scale and short-term changes are characteristic of human societies, because customs and norms change, new techniques and technologies are invented, environmental changes spur new adaptations, and conflicts result in redistributions of power [8]. *Social change* is the significant alteration of social structure and cultural patterns through time. *Social structure* refers to persistent networks of social relationships where interaction between people or groups has become routine and repetitive. *Culture* refers to shared ways of living and thinking that include symbols and language (verbal and nonverbal); knowledge, beliefs, and values what is “good” and “bad” norms (how people are expected to behave); and techniques, ranging from common folk recipes to sophisticated technologies and material objects. Sociology began in the late 19th century as an attempt to understand the emergence of the modern world. The earliest sociological thinkers—August Comte, Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber—all tried to understand the human implications of two great transformations that produced the modern world: urbanization and industrialization. They shared a vision that the study of human societies and change could be understood in a general way, rather than as the accumulation of the accidents of history. Like other foci of study in sociology, the study of social change has macro and micro components, and they have waxed and waned in popularity over the course of the 20th century. This universal human potential for social change has a biological basis [9]. It is rooted in the flexibility and adaptability of the human species—the near absence of biologically fixed action patterns (instincts) on the one hand and the enormous capacity for learning, symbolizing, and creating on the other hand. The human constitution makes possible changes that are not biologically (that is to say, genetically) determined. Social change, in other words, is possible only by virtue of biological characteristics of the human species, but the nature of the actual changes cannot be reduced to these species traits.



Figure 4: Social Structure and Social Change

6. Conclusion

The specific meaning of social change depends first on the social entity considered. Changes in a small group may be important on the level of that group itself but negligible on the level of the larger society.

7. References

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