

# **Module for B.Ed Primary/Junior High School Programme**

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PROGRAMME FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS**



**Ministry of Finance**



**Trade Union Congress**



**Institute of Education, UCC**

**SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF GHANA**  
**UNIT I: SESSION 1**

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# SESSION 1: DEFINITION OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE

- Social structure has been defined differently by different writers and different scholars and from different angles.
- Social structure in sociology is the distinctive, stable arrangement of institutions whereby human beings in a society interact and live together.
- Social structure is often treated together with the concept of social change, which deals with the forces that change the social structure and the organization of society.
- Social structure in sociology also means the relationships or bonds between groups of individuals in a society.

# DEFINITION OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE

- ❑ Individuals always associate themselves in groups according to their interests, occupation, social status, etc.
- ❑ These groups will interact with each other in a society.
- ❑ Together it will form a network of interactions and makes the social structure of a society.
- ❑ Social structure can also be said to mean the social patterns through which a society is organized and can be **horizontal or vertical**.
- ❑ **Horizontal social structure** refers to the social relationships and the social and physical characteristics of communities to which individuals belong, while
- ❑ **Vertical social structure**, more commonly called social inequality, refers to ways in which a society or group ranks people in a hierarchy.

# DEFINITION OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE

- According to Talcott Parsons, Social structure is a term applied to the particular arrangement of the interrelated institutions, agencies and social patterns as well as the statuses
- It also refers to roles which each person assumes in the group.
- Talcott Parsons has tried to explain the concept of social structure in abstract form.
- All the units of social structure, i.e. institutions, agencies, social patterns, statuses and roles are invisible and intangible and hence are abstract.
- He has emphasized that the statuses and roles of individuals are determined by customs, traditions and conventions of society.
- These statuses give birth to different institutions, agencies and patterns.
- All these when interrelated and organised in a particular manner build the social structure of society

# Levels of Social Structure

- It is helpful to think about social structure as operating on three levels within a given society: the macro, meso, and micro levels. These levels are broadly categorised as follows:
- **(1) Social Structure: The Macro Level of Society:** This is the level of Social relations outside your circle of intimates and acquaintances.
- When sociologists use the term "social structure" they are typically referring to macro level social forces including social institutions and patterns of institutionalized relationships.
- The major social institutions recognized by sociologists include family, religion, education, media, law, politics, and economy.
- These institutions organize our social relationships to others and create patterns of social relations when viewed on a large scale.
- For example, the institution of family organizes people into distinct social relationships and roles, including mother, father, son, daughter, husband, wife, etc.

# Levels of Social Structure

- ❑ **(2) Social Networks: The Meso Level Manifestation of Social Structure.**
- ❑ This is the level between the macro and the micro levels.
- ❑ It is also known as social networks and are organized by the social institutions institutionalized social relationships.
- ❑ For example, systemic racism fosters segregation within U.S. society, which results in some racially homogenous networks.
- ❑ The majority of white people in the U.S. today have entirely white social networks.
- ❑ Our social networks are also a manifestation of social stratification, whereby social relations between people are structured by class differences, differences in educational attainment, and differences in levels of wealth.

# Levels of Social Structure

- **(3) Social Interaction: Social Structure at the Micro Level of Everyday Life.**
- Social structure manifests at the micro level in the everyday interactions we have with each other in the forms of norms and customs.
- We can see it present in the way patterned institutionalized relationships shape our interactions within certain institutions like family and education.
- It is present in the way institutionalized ideas about race, gender, and sexuality shape what we expect from others, how we expect to be seen by them, and how we interact together.



# Principles of Social Structure

- ❑ **(1) Normative System:** Normative system presents the society with the ideals and values. The people attach emotional importance to these norms.
- ❑ The individuals perform their roles in accordance with the accepted norms of society
- ❑ **(2) Position System:** Position system refers to the statuses and roles of the individuals.
- ❑ Status may be said to mean any position in the social structure either high or low that determines where a person fits into the society and how he/she is expected to relate to other people.
- ❑ **(3) Sanction System:** For the proper enforcement of norms, every society has a sanction system.
- ❑ The integration and coordination of the different parts of social structure depend upon conformity to social norms.
- ❑ The stability of a social structure depends upon the effectiveness of its sanction systems

# Principles of Social Structure

- **(4) A System of Anticipated Response:** The anticipated response system calls upon the individuals to participate in the social system. ‘
- His preparation sets the social structure in motion.
- The successful working of social structure depends upon the realisation of his duties by the individual and his efforts to fulfil these duties.
- **(5) Action System:** It is the object or goal to be arrived at by the social structure. The whole structure revolves around it.
- The Action is the root cause which weaves the web of social relationships and sets the social structure in motion.

# Types of Social Structure

- **(1) The Universalistic-Achievement Pattern:** This is the combination of the value patterns which sometimes are opposed to the values of a social structure built mostly about kinship, community, class and race.
- Under this type of social structure, the choice of goal by the individual must be in accord with the universalistic values
- **(2) The Universalistic-Ascription Pattern:** Under this type of social structure, the elements of value-orientation are dominated by the elements of ascription.
- Therefore, in such a social structure, strong emphasis is laid on the status of the individual, rather than on his specific achievements.

# Types of Social Structure

- **(3) The Particularistic-Achievement Pattern:** This type combines achievement values with particularism.
- The primary criterion of valued achievement is found not in universalistic terms such as conformity to a generalized ideal or efficiency but these are focused on certain points of reference within the relational system itself.
- **(4) The Particularistic-Ascriptive Pattern:** In this type also the social structure is organised around the relational reference points
- It tends to be traditionalistic and emphasis is laid on its stability

# Characteristics of Social Structure

- ❑ **(1) Abstraction of empirical reality:** Empirical reality has a large number of details about the functioning of society.
- ❑ The construction of social structure removes unnecessary details and brings out abstraction
- ❑ **(2) Exist Independently of the individual:** In a social structure, individuals do not matter, they come and go.
- ❑ Social structure is independent of any individual big or small.
- ❑ **(3) Retains continuity:** There may be a change in social structure but there is an ordered arrangement of parts which are relatively invariant.
- ❑ The parts themselves are variable but the nature of the social structure is invariable.
- ❑ **(4) Origin of Society:** Social structure is the origin of society. It is the matrix of society. It is the sum total of all the statuses of society.

# Characteristics of Social Structure

- **(5) Not concerned with a particular or unique:** One very important aspect of social structure is that it does not relate to the unusual or unique.
- Social structure is therefore concerned with the usual or general and not specific or particular
- **(6) Connected with social personality:** The connection of social structure with social personality with very human being living in society is in two things: he is an individual and also a person.
- **(7) Usually, social organization carries within it the social structure of society.** In a broader way it is said that social structure is like an organism which has different parts to maintain the body system.

**SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF GHANA**  
**UNIT I: SESSION 2**

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## SESSION 2: **ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE**

- **(1) Statuses:** In simple language, we use the term “status” to mean prestige. However, status may be said to mean any position in the social structure either high or low
- **(2) Values:** At the top level of the structure are the societal values. These are the most general or abstract, normative conceptions of what the ideal society itself would be like.
- **(3) Role:** It is behavior expected of an individual who occupies a given social position or status.
- **(4) Groups** constitute a vital component of social structure. “No man is an island onto himself”.
- Two types of groups namely; primary and secondary groups are identified.



## SESSION 2: ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE

- (5) Social networks consist of people linked by various social ties.
- (6) Social structure includes social groups and institution.
- (7) Organization: In the larger societies of modern time, human beings deliberately establish certain organizations for the pursuit of their specific ends or purposes.
- (8) Norms: Sub-groups and roles and governed by social norms. Social norms are of two types: (i) obligatory or relational and (ii) permissive or regulative.

**SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF GHANA**  
**UNIT I: SESSION 4**

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# SESSION 4: SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

- Every society puts its citizens into groups based on certain values.
- This may include gender, age, class, power and ethnic affiliation.
- Social stratification is the hierarchical arrangement of large social groups based on their control over basic resources (Feagin and Feagin, 2008).
- Stratification involves patterns of structural inequality that are associated with members in each these groups as well as the ideologies that support inequality.

# Systems of Social Stratification

- **Ascribed status:** social position assigned to person without regard for that person's unique characteristics or talents.
- **Achieved status:** Social position attained by persons largely through their own effort or achievement(s).
- **Slavery:** Most extreme form of legalized social inequality, which varied from time to time.
- **Castes system:** It is a system of social inequality in which people's status is permanently determined at birth based on their parent's ascribed characteristics.
- **Estate system:** Associated with feudal societies in the Middle Ages.
- It required peasants to work land leased to them by nobles (owned the lands) in exchange for military protection and other services

# Systems of Social Stratification

- **Social class System:** Social ranking based primarily on economic position in which achieved characteristics can influence social mobility.
- **Class:** This class is largely viewed as a statistical category (occupation, education, income, place of residence).
- **Prestige:** respect and admiration an occupation holds in society,

**SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF GHANA**  
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# SESSION 5: SOURCES OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

- **Political stratification:** Levels of political stratification are traditional authority (royalty) and partisan politics.
- **Religious Stratification:** includes Orthodox vs New Religious Movements, Emergence of New Religious Movement and the characteristics of their membership.
- **Marriage & Family System:** These are Nucleation of the family, Metropolis and satellite relationship (urban vs Rural), Restricted
- **Education:** Hierarchy of primary and secondary education system (high, middle, low class).

*THANK*

*YOU*

*FOR YOUR*

*ATTENTION!!!*

