

# Social structure and interaction in everyday life



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

## Components of Social Structure

### Status

- Status is a socially defined position in a group or society characterized by certain expectations, rights, and duties.
- Status set comprises all the statuses that a person occupies at a given time.
- Ascribed status is a social position conferred at birth or received involuntarily later in life, based on attributes over which the individual has little or no control, such as race, ethnicity, age, and gender.
- Achieved status is a social position a person assumes voluntarily as a result of personal choice, merit, or direct effort.
- Master status is the most important status a person occupies.
- Status symbols material signs that inform others of a person's specific status.

### Role

- Role is a set of behavioral expectations associated with a given status
- Role expectation is a group's or society's definition of the way a specific role ought to be played.
- Role performance is how a person actually plays the role.
- Role conflict occurs when incompatible role demands are placed on a person by two or more statuses held at the same time.
- Role strain occurs when incompatible demands are built into a single status that a person occupies.
- Role exit occurs when people disengage from social roles that have been central to their self-identity.

## **Group**

- Social Group consists of two or more people who interact frequently and share a common identity and a feeling of interdependence.
- Primary group is a small, less specialized group in which members engage in face-to-face, emotion-based interactions over an extended period of time.
- Secondary group is a larger, more specialized group in which members engage in more impersonal, goal-oriented relationships for a limited period of time.
- Formal organization is a highly structured group formed for the purpose of completing certain tasks or achieving specific goals.

## **Social Institutions**

Social institution is a set of organized beliefs and rules that establishes how a society will attempt to meet its basic social needs.

## **Societies: Changes in Social Structure**

### **Durkheim: Mechanical and Organic Solidarity .**

- Division of labor refers to how the various tasks of a society are divided up and performed.
- Mechanical solidarity refers to the social cohesion of preindustrial societies, in which there is minimal division of a labor and people feel united by shared values and common social bonds.
- Organic solidarity refers to the social cohesion found in industrial (and perhaps postindustrial) societies, in which people perform very specialized tasks and feel united by their mutual dependence.

**Tonnies: Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft**

- Gemeinschaft is a traditional society in which social relationships are based on personal bonds of friendship and kinship and on intergenerational stability.
- Gesellschaft is a large, urban society in which social bonds are based on impersonal and specialized relationships, with little long-term commitment to the group or consensus on values.

**Industrial and Postindustrial Societies**

- Industrial societies are based on technology that mechanizes production.
- Postindustrial society is one in which technology supports a service- and information-based economy.

**Social Interaction: The Microlevel Perspective****The Social Construction of Reality**

- Social Construction of Reality - the process by which our perception of reality is largely shaped by the subjective meaning that we give to an experience.
- Self-fulfilling prophecy- a false belief or prediction that produces behavior that makes the originally false belief come true.

**Ethnomethodology**

Ethnomethodology is the study of the commonsense knowledge that people use to understand the situations in which they find themselves.

**Dramaturgical Analysis**

- Dramaturgical analysis is the study of social interaction that compares everyday life to a theatrical presentation.

- Impression management (presentation of self) refers to people's efforts to present themselves to others in ways that are most favorable to their own interests or image.
- Face-saving behavior refers to the strategies we use to rescue our performance when we experience a potential or actual loss of face.

### **Nonverbal Communication**

- Nonverbal communication is the transfer of information between persons without the use of words.
- Personal space is the immediate area surrounding a person that person claims is private.