

# Social organization

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In sociology, a **social organization** is a pattern of relationships between and among individuals and social groups.<sup>[1][2]</sup>

Characteristics of social organization can include qualities such as sexual composition, spatiotemporal cohesion, leadership, structure, division of labor, communication systems, and so on.<sup>[3][4]</sup>

Because of these characteristic of social organization, people can keep tabs on their everyday work and involvement in other activities which are controlled and determine different forms of human interactions. These interactions include: affiliation, collective resources, substitutability of individuals, and recorded control. These interactions come together to constitute common features in basic social units such as family, enterprises, clubs, or states. These are social organizations.<sup>[5]</sup>

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## Elements

Social organizations are seen in everyday life. Without realizing it, many people are a part of various social organizations. They are seen in institutional situations as well as on a smaller scale. Wide known social organizations include religious institutions.<sup>[6]</sup> In order to have a sense of identity with the social organization, being closer to one another aids in building a sense of community.<sup>[7]</sup> While organizations link many like minded people, it can also cause a separation with others not in their organization due to the differences in thought. Social organizations are structured to where there is a hierarchical system.<sup>[8]</sup> There is a hierarchical structure in social groups which influence the way a group is structured as well as if the group will remain together.

It is also determined if the group will stay together based on the four interactions that could occur. It is important for a group to have a strong affiliation amongst itself. To be affiliated with an organization means to have a connection and acceptance into that group. Affiliation means to have an obligation to come back to that organization. In order to be affiliated with an organization it must be known and recognized that you are a member. Because of these strong affiliations, it allows the organization to gain power through collective resources. Often affiliates have something invested in these resources which causes them to continue to give to make the organization better. On the other hand, the organization needs to keep in mind the substitutability of these individuals. While the organization needs the affiliates and the resources to survive, it also needs to be able to replace those individuals when the time come in order to keep the organization going. Because of all these characteristics, it can often be difficult to be organized within the organization. This is where recorded

control comes in and allows for things to be written down and made more clear and organized.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Within society

Social organizations within society are constantly changing.<sup>[9]</sup> Social organizations are seen in different forms within society such as created through institutions like schools or governments.<sup>[10]</sup> Smaller scale social organizations in society include groups forming from common interests and conversations. Social organizations are created constantly and with time change.

Smaller scaled social organizations include many everyday groups that people would not even think have these characteristics. These small social organizations can include things such as bands, clubs, or even sports teams. Within all of these small scaled groups, they contain the same characteristics as a large scale organization would. While these small social organization do not have nearly as many people as a large scale would, they still interact and function in the same way.

Looking at a common small organization, a school sports team, it is easy to see how it can be a social organization. The members of the team all have the same goals, which is to win, and they all work together to accomplish that common goal. It is also clear to see the structure in the team. While everyone has the same goal in mind, they have different roles, or positions, that play a part to get there. In order to achieve their goal they must be one, and that is what makes them a social organization.

In large-scale organizations, there is always some extent of bureaucracy. Having bureaucracy includes: a set of rules, specializations, and a hierarchical system. This allows for these larger sized organizations to try maximize efficiency. Large-scaled organizations also come with making sure managerial control is right. Typically, the impersonal authority approach is used. This is when the position of power is detached and impersonal with the other members of the organization. This is done to make sure that things run smoothly and the social organization stays the best it can be.<sup>[11]</sup>

A big social organization that everyone know about is a hospital. Within the hospital, there are also small social organization amongst the people. For example, the nursing staff or the surgery team. These smaller organizations within the large one must work closer together to accomplish more for their area which in turn makes the hospital more successful and long lasting. As a whole, the hospital contains all the characteristics of being a social organization. In a hospital, there are various relationships between all of the members of the staff and also with the patients. This is a main reason that a hospital is a social organization. There is also division of labor, structure, cohesiveness, and communication systems. In order to operate to the utmost effectiveness, a hospital needs to contain all of the characteristics of a social organization because that is what makes it strong. Without one of these things, it would be difficult for this organization to run.

Although the assumption that many organizations run better with bureaucracy and a hierarchical system with management, there are other factors that can prove that wrong. These factors are whether or not the organization is “parallel” or “interdependent”. To be parallel in an organization means that each department, or section, is not dependent on the other in order to do its job. To be Interdependent means that you do depend on others to get the job done. If an organization is parallel, the hierarchical structure would not be necessary and prove to be not as effect as it would in an interdependent organization. Because of all the different sub-structures in parallel organizations (the different departments), it would be hard for hierarchical management to be in charge due to the different jobs. On the other hand an interdependent organization would be easier to manage that way due to the cohesiveness throughout each department in the organization.<sup>[11]</sup>

## Online

Social organizations may be seen online in terms of communities. The online communities show patterns of how people would react in social networking situations.<sup>[12]</sup> The technology allows people to use the constructed social organizations as a way to engage with one another without having to physically be in the same place.

Looking at social organization online is a different way to think about it and a little challenging to connect the characteristics. While the characteristics of social organization are not completely the same for online organizations, they can be connected and talked about in a different context to make the cohesiveness between the two apparent. Online, there are various forms of communication and ways that people connect. Again, this allows them to talk and share the common interests (which is what makes them a social organization) and be apart of the organization without having to physically be with the other members. Although these online social organization do not take place in person, they still function as social organization because of the relationships within the group and the goal to keep the communities going.

## See also

- Institution
- Organization
- Social structure
- Social group
- Social networks

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