

# Introduction to Sociology

## Lecture 10 - Social Organization

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# Learning Objectives

- Social structure
- Social interaction
- Status and role
- Social construction of reality



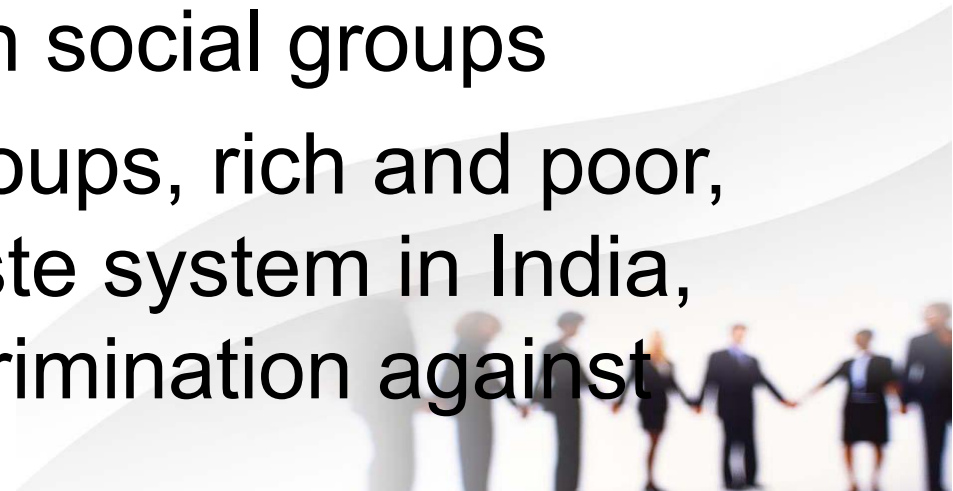
# Social Structure

- How a particular society is structured (set up)
- Social institutions - patterns of behaviour and ways of organizing things that have become formalized e.g. family, school system, religion, political system, legal system, etc.



# Social interaction

- Interactions between individuals and between groups of people. Microsociology.
- Individuals - greetings, taking turns talking, courtesy, responding to verbal cues and body language, etc
- Equal or unequal interaction between social groups
- Unequal - social hierarchy (ethnic groups, rich and poor, men and women, old and young, caste system in India, educational level, prejudice and discrimination against homosexuals)



# Status

Status - amount of social honor (prestige and deference) given to a particular person e.g. political leaders, rich people, religious leaders

High status versus low status jobs

Ascribed status - born into it, cannot be changed

Achieved status

Master status

Status inconsistency e.g. highly educated person driving a taxi to make a living



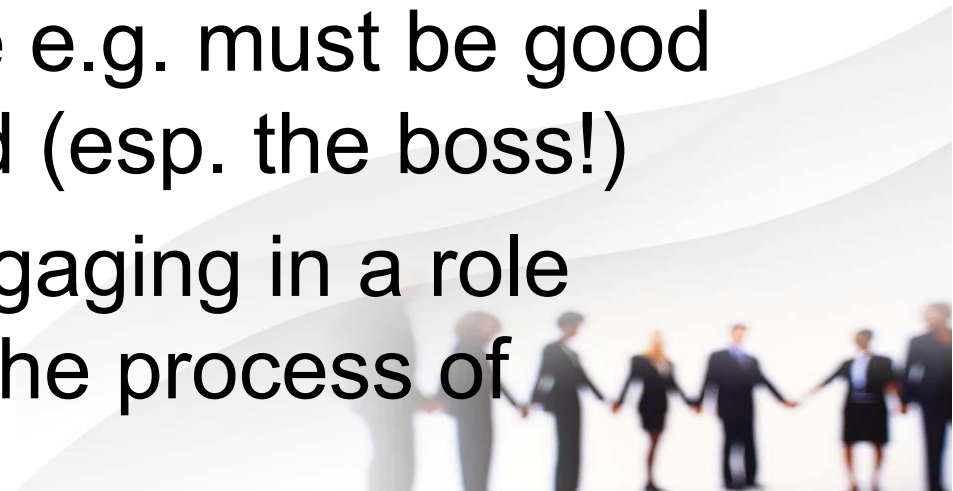
# Role

Role - expectations (e.g. expected conduct) that comes along with a social position; part played by a person in society

Role conflict - e.g. female nurse with young children

Role strain -- stress within a single role e.g. must be good worker, without making others look bad (esp. the boss!)

Role exit: When an individual stops engaging in a role previously central to their identity and the process of establishing a new identity.



# Social construction of reality

- W.I. Thomas - whatever people define to be real, will be real in its consequences e.g. “race”, prejudice and discrimination, “ethnic cleansing” (not a sociological term!) and genocide
- Misogyny
- Ageism
- Religious extremism



# Thank you

