

Introduction to basic concepts in sociology

What is sociology?

- Study of human relationships and of human behavior
- Concerned with the effects on the individual of the ways in which other individuals think and act
- Medical sociology: the study of cultural factors and social relations in relation to illness

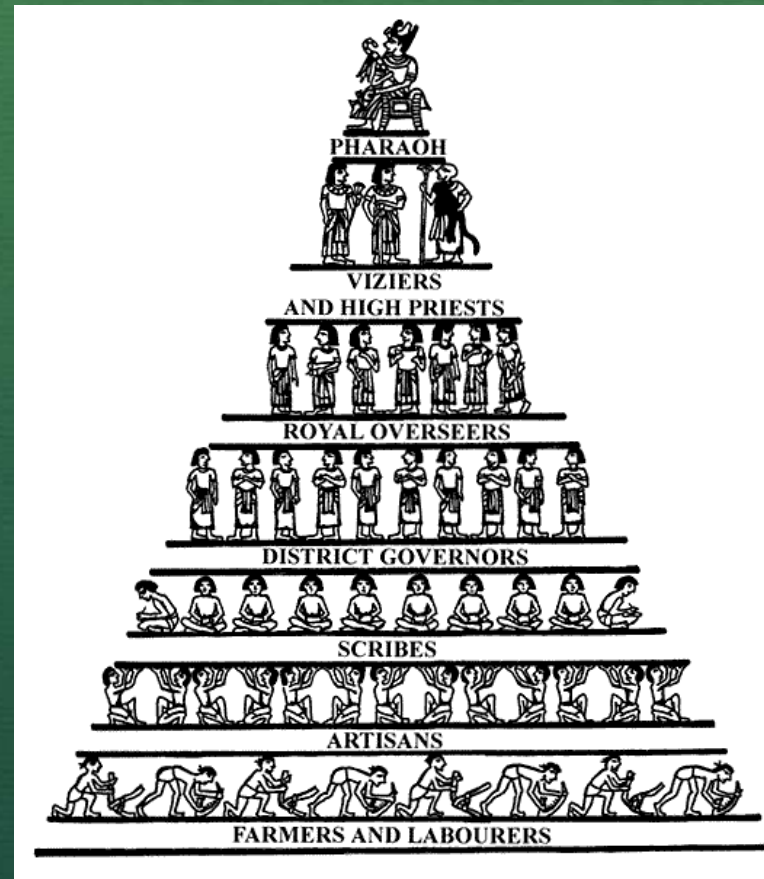


Some terms

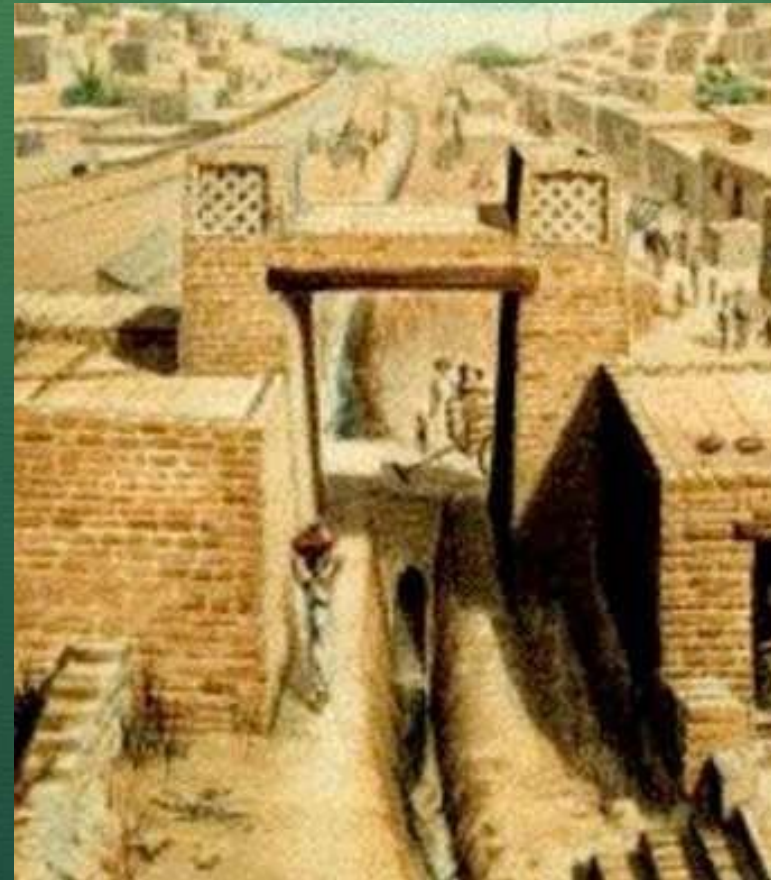
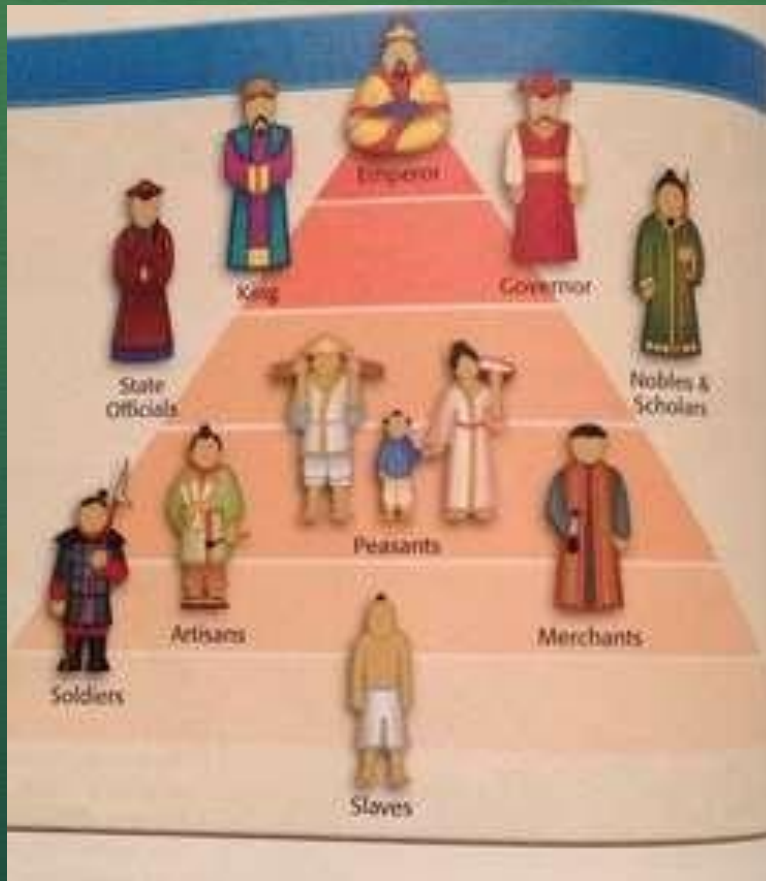
1. Society
2. Community
3. Social structure
4. Social institutions
5. Role
6. Socialism
7. Socialization
8. Social control mechanisms
9. Customs, Culture
10. Acculturation
11. Standard of living
12. Dynamics of social change
13. Social stress
14. Social problems
15. Social pathology
16. Social surveys, Case study
17. Communication
18. Social defence

Society

- Group of people settle down and organize
- System of laws and customs
- Public health is a part



Examples of society



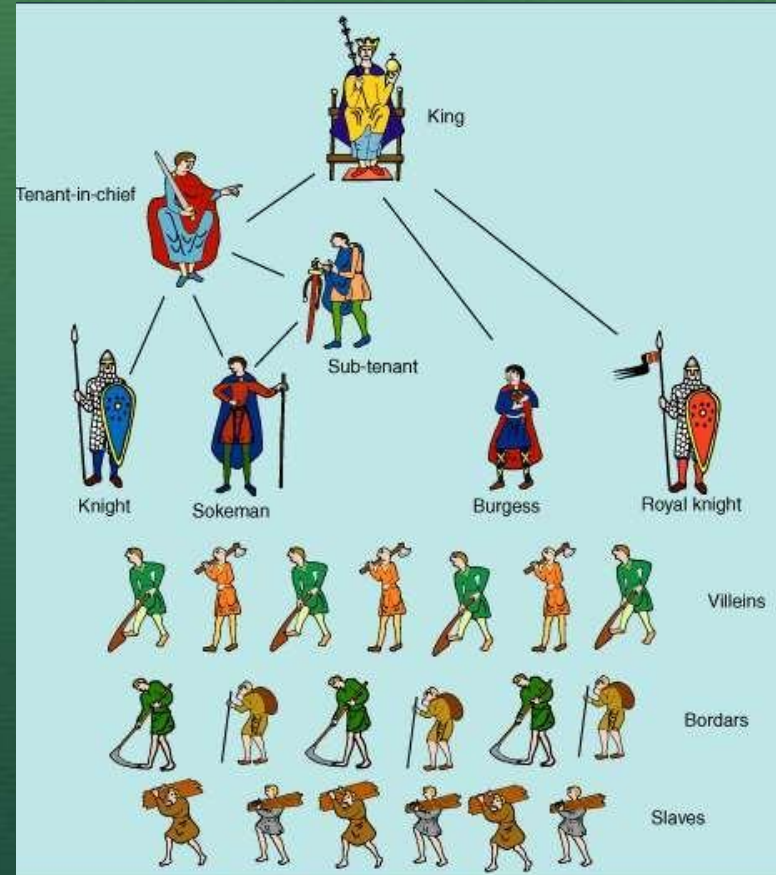
Community

- Social group determined by geographical boundaries and/or common interests

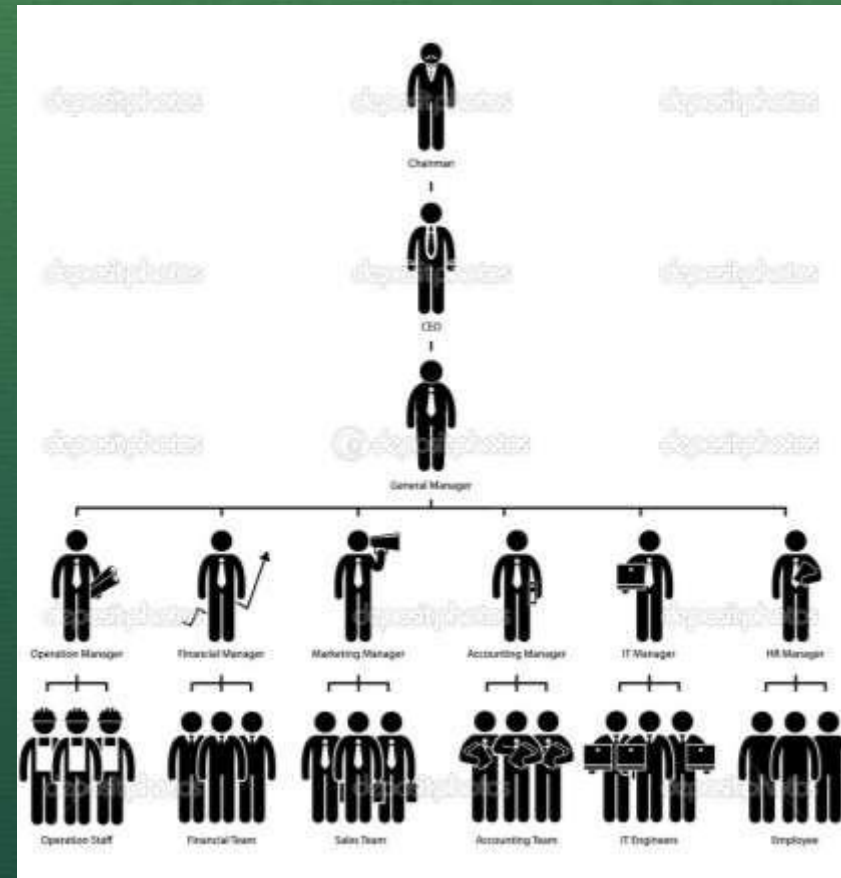


Social structure

- Pattern of inter-relations between persons

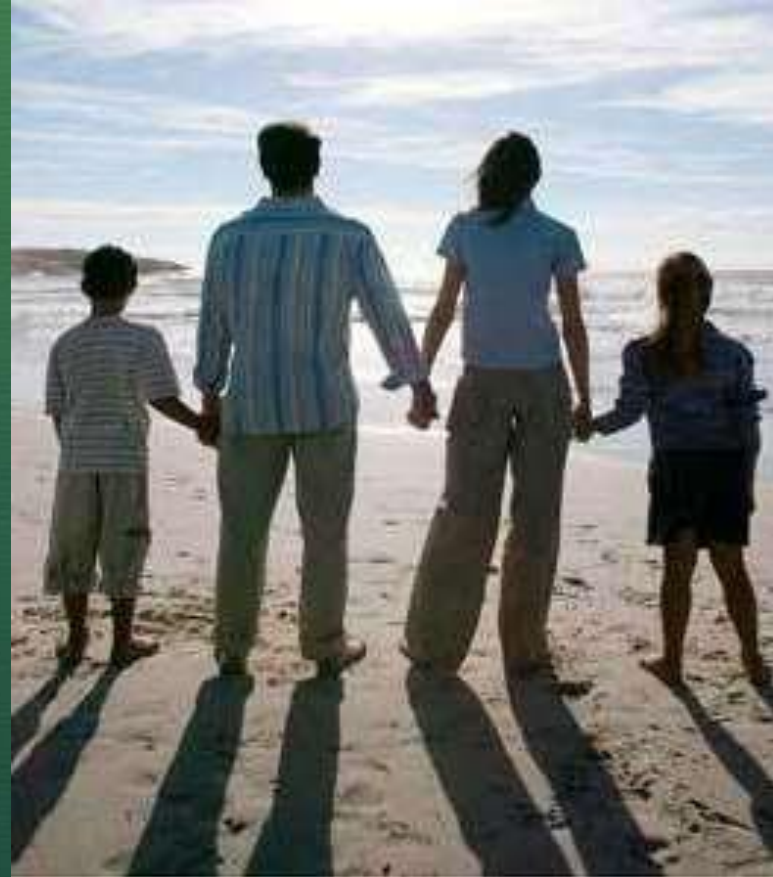


Organizational chart



Social institutions

- An organized complex pattern of behaviour in which a number of persons participate in order to further group interest
- Eg. Family, school, church



Examples of social institutions



Role

- Individuals are allocated roles as people in a drama
- Ascribed or achieved
- When a person falls ill, he assumes “sick role”



Socialism

- Any economic doctrine that favours the use of property and resources of the country for the public welfare
- Social ownership
- 'All for all' and 'each for all'



Socialization

- Process by which an individual gradually acquires culture and becomes a member of a social group



Customs

- Folkways, mores
- Public takes active part
- Convention



Acculturation

- “Culture contact”
- Trade, industrialization, religion, education, conquest



Dynamic of social change

- The interaction between social factors and health issues is complex and sometimes unpredictable
- Traditional, transitional and modern societies



Transition society



Social stress

- Conflict generated by new opportunities and societal changes
- Migration, mass media, tourism, technology
- Factor in all diseases



Social problems

- Poverty, crime and disease - common social problems
- Many public health problems are social problems like drugs, alcohol



Examples for social problems



Social pathology

- Limited in meaning
- Poverty, crime, delinquency
- Uncovered by social surveys



Examples of social pathology



Social surveys

- Objective is to study the role of social factors in the etiology of disease
- Relationship of social factors to heart disease, cancer and arthritis



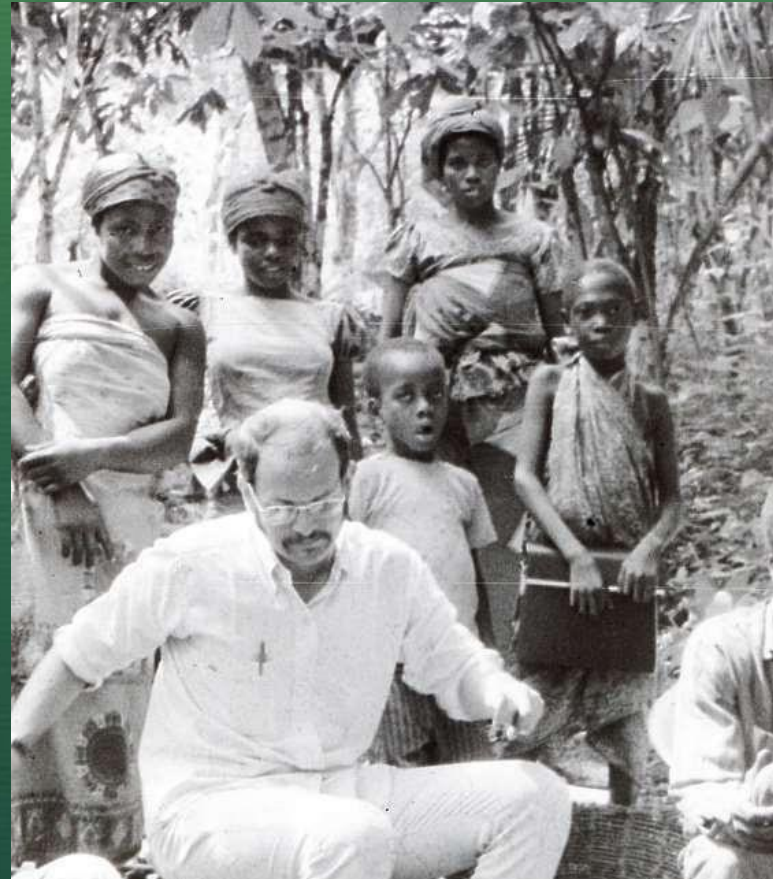
Case study

- Method of exploring and analyzing person, family, institution, community in a detailed manner
- May not be representative of a larger population



Field study

- Concerned with depth of knowledge
- Observation of people in situ.



Communication

- A social process - flow of information, circulation of knowledge and ideas, and the propagation of thoughts
- To bring about changes in behaviour



Social defence

- Preventive, therapeutic and rehabilitative services for the protection of society from antisocial, criminal or deviant conduct of man
- Juvenile delinquency, eradication of beggary, welfare of prisoners, prison reforms, elimination of prostitution, control of alcoholism, drug addiction

