

08. SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS

Social Organisations

Anderson defined organisations as those classes of human relationship structures wherein people purposefully associate in systematically arranged units to promote and achieve some common purposes or interests that are not specifically expressed in the institution.

Each member has a formal status and role. An organisation differs from an institution by its focus on a narrowly limited purpose; it is a group of people organised to pursue a specific objective. An institution on the other hand pursues broader and more general purposes and is basically a set of socially sanctioned procedures involving patterned behaviour, norms and rules. Organisations may operate within institutions, though supporting it and, helping to achieve its objective.

The form and structure of an organisation develops as specialised activity, rules and regulations for operating, time and place of meetings, are formulated and the, organisation operates as a clearly defined entity having a specific objective with officers and membership.

Essential Characteristics of organisations

1. **Clearly defined Limits:** in keeping with a specific purpose and interest, the limits within which an organisation operates are clearly defined goals, and activity is polarised around these goals. Organisations may seek new goals to justify their existence and continuation over a long period of time. For instance, the Red Cross society, born during World War I modified its function and objectives to meet peace time needs. Organisations may vary widely in purpose, being created to serve very different interests, such as welfare, music, poetry, religion etc. The purpose is normally specified in the 'organisation's constitutions and by laws, which are often legally registered in accordance with prevailing laws and practices.

2. **Formal membership, status and Role:** There are several aspects of membership in an organisation, membership is voluntary and motivated by specialised individual interest. Organisations are almost completely government sponsored or sanctioned. Direction of these organisations is usually by government officials and membership is compulsory. Organisations that are not under 'government control' are tolerated only if the government feels that their operation is in line with the government interests, under such circumstances organisations can rarely be formed as spontaneous expressions of the interests of people in society.

Membership may involve restrictive qualifications and certain minimum requirements. These restrictions may be on the basis of sex, talents, interest occupation etc.

3. **Self contained Administrative structure:** Each organisation has its own administrative structure with roles and functions clearly defined and prescribed.

4. **Operative principles, procedures and goals:** All organisations have a carefully stated constitution and by-laws, some times required by law, embodying objectives, rules, regulations and operational procedures.

5. **Provision for control, authority and decision making:** The rules and regulations of an organisation define authority, procedure for decision making and measures for maintaining conduct and behaviour of members.

6. **An outlet for Individual interest:** An organization enables a group of persons sharing a common interest in society to associate with one another, working together towards realization of their interest.

7. **A Channel for purposeful action:** In fulfilling its goal, an organization may influence social decisions and effect or stimulate social change.

Classification of organization

1. On the basis of political structure within which they are created.
2. On the basis of motives of participation.
3. On the basis of organizational operation.

On the basis of admission to membership.