

## **The Role Of Social And Cultural Institutions**

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### **Abstract**

Social institutions are part of the social order of society, and they regulate behavior and expectations of members of society. Each subsystem carries out specific tasks and has defined responsibilities that contribute to the overall welfare and stability of the society as a whole. Nursing homes, boarding schools and prisons are all examples of total institutions. A cultural institution or cultural organization is an organization within a Culture/sub-culture that works for the preservation or promotion of culture. The term is especially used of public and charitable organizations, but its range of meaning can be very broad. Examples of cultural institutions in modern society are museums, libraries and archives, churches, art galleries. As structures or mechanisms of social order, they govern the behavior of a set of individuals within a given community. Institutions are identified with a social purpose, transcending individuals and intentions by mediating the rules that govern living behavior. The term "institution" commonly applies to both formal and informal institutions such as customs, or behavior patterns important to a society, and to particular formal institutions created by entities such as the government and public services. Examples of social institutions include economic, governmental, educational, family and religious institutions. Social institutions are comprised of a group of people who have come together for a common problem-solving goal. These institutions have defined sets of norms and structures that support society's survival. Economic institutions manage how a society generates and distributes resources, goods and services among members of the society. In many countries, economic systems are managed by government agencies. These economic systems may either be socialist or capitalist. Government institutions develop and implement rules and manage relations with other countries and stakeholders. Different countries have varying government systems including democracy, monarchy, authoritarian and totalitarian. Another important social institution in the society is the family. It is the primary socialization agent that imparts individuals with norms and values. A child learns the attitude and actions suitable for individuals of a member of a particular culture from the family. Beyond the family level, individuals join other social institutions such as schools and religious groups. At school, a child learns how to follow rules and obey those in authority. In churches and mosques, individuals are taught good virtues, including caring for others.

### **Introduction**

Social and Cultural Institutions are "stable, valued, recurring patterns of behavior". As structures or mechanisms of social order, they govern the behavior of a set of individuals within a given community. Institutions are identified with a social purpose, transcending individuals and intentions by mediating the rules that govern living behavior. The term "institution" commonly applies to both informal institutions such as customs, or behavior patterns important to a society, and to particular formal institutions created by entities such as the government and public services. Primary or meta-institutions are

institutions such as the family that are broad enough to encompass other institutions. The cultural sector constitutes an interface between differing social spheres: social structures (classes, genders, ethnic groupings, etc.) interact with cultural formations (forms of expression, styles, values, habits of reception, etc.) and simultaneously overlap with economic interests and political aspects. Cultural Institutions Studies adopted the aim of overcoming mono disciplinary approaches and has therefore been conceived as amalgamation of cultural studies, social science, economics and political science. Consequently, this new approach investigates cultural goods, processes of meaning and value creation through cultural practices, financing structures, value added formation structures, processes of (de-)institutionalization, organisational changes in the cultural sector, legal frameworks, cultural policy conceptions and instruments, etc. – each of those topics resulting from a synergetic confluence of forces, conditions, concrete intentions and local constellations.

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of this study is to collect the information about the role of social and cultural institutions in India. The present analytical and explanatory research work includes the following specific objectives

- To study the meaning and definition of social and cultural institutions
- To study the examples of institutions.
- To analyze the importance of social and cultural institutions.
- To focus on interactions and other symbolic communications within social institutions
- To explain the condition of current conflict about our religious, social, and cultural festival of Jallikattu

### **Methodology**

When it comes to data collection there are two methods in general used to collect data, primary and secondary method. If we talk about primary data it includes observation method, Interview/ questionnaire method, case study method and secondary data were collected through report writings, magazines articles government publications and internet sites.

### **Meaning and Definition of Social and Cultural Institutions**

**Social institutions** are part of the social order of society, and they regulate behavior and expectations of members of society. Each subsystem carries out specific tasks and has defined responsibilities that contribute to the overall welfare and stability of the society as a whole. Nursing homes, boarding schools and prisons are all examples of total institutions.

A **cultural institution** or **cultural organization** is an organization within a Culture/sub-culture that works for the preservation or promotion of culture. The term is especially used of public and charitable organizations, but its range of meaning can be very broad. Examples of cultural institutions in modern society are museums, libraries and archives, churches, art galleries.

People may deliberately create individual, formal organizations commonly identified as "institutions"—but the development and function of institutions in society in general may be regarded as an instance of emergence. That is, institutions arise, develop and function in a pattern of social self-organization beyond conscious intentions of the individuals involved. As mechanisms of social interaction, institutions manifest in both formal organizations, such as the U.S. Congress, or the Roman Catholic Church, and, also, in informal social order and organization, reflecting human psychology, culture, habits and customs, and encompassing subjective experience of meaningful enactments.

Formal institutions are explicitly set forth by a relevant authority and informal institutions are generally unwritten societal rules, norms, and traditions. Primary or meta-institutions are institutions that encompass many other institutions, both formal and informal (e.g. the family government, the economy, education and religion. Most important institutions, considered abstractly, have both objective and subjective aspects: examples include money and marriage. The institution of money encompasses many formal organizations, including banks and government treasury departments and stock exchanges, which may be termed, "institutions," as well as subjective experiences, which guide people in their pursuit of personal well-being. Powerful institutions are able to imbue a paper currency with certain value, and to induce millions into production and trade in pursuit of economic ends abstractly denominated in that currency's units. The subjective experience of money is so pervasive and persuasive that economists talk of the "money illusion" and try to disabuse their students of it, in preparation for learning economic analysis.

### **Examples of institutions includes**

- Marriage and the family –Sociology of the family.
- Religion and religious institutions - sociology of religion:
- Civil religion;
- Educational institutions –schools (preschool, primary/elementary, secondary, and post-secondary/higher – sociology of education)
- Research community - academia and universities: research institutes - sociology of science
- Medicine-hospitals and other health care institutions - see sociology of health and illness, medical sociology
- Psychiatric hospitals(history)
- Law and legal system – courts: judges: the legal profession (bar) - jurisprudence, philosophy of law, sociology of law
- Criminal justice or penal systems - prisons - sociology of punishment
- Military or paramilitary forces - military sociology
- Police forces
- Mass media - including the news media (television, news papers)) and the popular media - media studies
- Industry-businesses, including corporations - financial institutions, factory, capitalism, division of labour, social-class, industrial sociology.
- Civil society or NGOs- charitable organizations: advocacy groups: political parties: virtual communities

In an extended context

- Art and culture (See also: culture industry, critical theory, cultural studies, cultural sociology)
- Language (See also: linguistics, sociolinguistics, sociology of language)
- The nation-state - Social and political scientists often speak of the state as embodying all institutions such as schools, prisons, and so on. However, these institutions may be considered private or autonomous, whilst organized religion and family life certainly pre-date the advent of the nation state. In the Neo-Marxist thought of Antonio Gramsci, for instance, distinguishes between institutions of political society (police, the army, legal system, etc.), which dominates directly and coercively—and civil society (the family, education system, etc.).

**Importance of social and cultural institutions.**

**Institutions** are identified with a social purpose, transcending individuals and intentions by mediating the rules that govern living behavior. The term "**institution**" commonly applies to a custom or behavior pattern important to a society, and to particular formal organizations of the **government** and public services.

While institutions tend to appear to people in society as part of the natural, unchanging landscape of their lives, study of institutions by the social sciences tends to reveal the nature of institutions as social constructions, artifacts of a particular time, culture and society, produced by collective human choice, though not directly by individual intention. Sociology traditionally analyzed social institutions in terms of interlocking social roles and expectations. Social institutions created and were composed of groups of roles, or expected behaviors. The social function of the institution was executed by the fulfillment of roles. Basic biological requirements, for reproduction and care of the young, are served by the institutions of marriage and family, for example, by creating, elaborating and prescribing the behaviors expected for husband/father, wife/mother, child, etc.

The relationship of institutions to human nature is a foundational question for the social sciences. Institutions can be seen as "naturally" arising from, and conforming to, human nature—a fundamentally conservative view—or institutions can be seen as artificial, almost accidental, and in need of architectural redesign, informed by expert social analysis, to better serve human needs—a fundamentally progressive view. Adam Smith anchored his economics in the supposed human "propensity to truck, barter and exchange". Modern feminists have criticized traditional marriage and other institutions as element of an oppressive and obsolete patriarchy. The Marxist view—which sees human nature as historically 'evolving' towards voluntary social cooperation, shared by some anarchists—is that supra-individual institutions such as the market and the state are incompatible with the individual liberty of a truly free society.

Economics, in recent years, has used game theory to study institutions from two perspectives. Firstly, how do institutions survive and evolve? In this perspective, institutions arise from Nadshequilibria of games. For example, whenever people pass each other in a corridor or thoroughfare, there is a need for customs, which avoid collisions. Such a custom might call for each party to keep to their own right (or left—such a choice is arbitrary, it is only necessary that the choice be uniform and consistent). Such customs may be supposed to be the origin of rules, such as the rule, adopted in many countries, which requires driving automobiles on the right side of the road.

Secondly, how do institutions affect behaviour? In this perspective, the focus is on behaviour arising from a given set of institutional rules. In these models, institutions determine the rules (i.e. strategy sets and utility functions) of games, rather than arise as equilibria out of games. For example, the Cournotduolpoly model is based on an institution involving an auctioneer who sells all goods at the market-clearing price. While it is always possible to analyse behaviour with the institutions-as-equilibria approach instead, it is much more complicated.

In political science, the effect of institutions on behavior has also been considered from a meme perspective, like game theory borrowed from biology. A "memetic institutionalism" has been proposed, suggesting that institutions provide selection environments for political action, whereby differentiated retention arises and thereby a Darwinian evolution of institutions over time. public choice theory, another branch of economics with a close relationship to political science, considers how government policy choices are made, and seeks to determine what the policy outputs are likely to be, given a particular political

decision-making process and context. Purports that institutions emerge from intentional institution-building but never in the originally intended form. Instead, institutional development is endogenous and spontaneously ordered and institutional persistence can be explained by their credibility which is provided by the function that particular institutions serve.

In history, a distinction between eras or periods implies a major and fundamental change in the system of institutions governing a society. Political and military events are judged to be of historical significance to the extent that they are associated with changes in institutions. In European history, particular significance is attached to the long transition from the feudal institutions of the middle Ages to the Modern institutions, which govern contemporary life.

**Focuses on interactions and other symbolic communications within social institutions.**

- The Family: ...
- Education: ...
- Religion: ...
- Economic Institutions: ...
- Political Institutions

Examples of social institutions include economic, governmental, educational, family and religious institutions. Social institutions are comprised of a group of people who have come together for a common problem-solving goal. These institutions have defined sets of norms and structures that support society's survival. Economic institutions manage how a society generates and distributes resources, goods and services among members of the society. In many countries, economic systems are managed by government agencies. These economic systems may either be socialist or capitalist. Government institutions develop and implement rules and manage relations with other countries and stakeholders. Different countries have varying government systems including democracy, monarchy, authoritarian and totalitarian.

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**Religious, Social, and Cultural Festival of Jallikattu**

Jallikattu' is a rare sport that has been continuously played for thousands of years. A seal made of stone found at Mohenjodaro, depicts "Jallikattu" that was prevalent in the Indus Civilization. The seal, about 4,000 years old, is on display at the National Museum, New Delhi. The Sport has become an intrinsic part of the Tamil culture that it has broken all religious and caste barriers. People of all religions, caste and creed participate in this sport. The sport is usually held once a year in a village to celebrate a local temple. Jallikattu is a socio-religious festival, and not entertainment, though it has come to be seen as an entertainment sport by urban people who have started witnessing the event in recent years due to exposure by the media. But it is essentially a religious tradition. The Tamil people

conduct this festival as an offering / commitment to their gramadevata; they believe that conducting this festival brings a good harvest and negates bad omens. It is entertaining as participants display grit, determination, will, strength, and even presence of mind.

In 2014, the Supreme Court had ruled that the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, “over-shadows or overrides the so-called tradition and culture”. The court drew upon Upanishadic wisdom and advised Parliament to “elevate rights of animals to that of constitutional rights... so as to protect their dignity and honour”. Vaadivaasal is in a social space where pride is a culture and tradition in itself. It gives clues to why the ban on Jallikattu is so fiercely contested. For agrarian communities like Thevars and Maravars, Jallikattu is one of the few markers of their social standing and identity in a fast-changing world. The contest, which evidently celebrates masculinity, is almost an act of cultural resistance to an urban modernity that tends to marginalise rural and agrarian values. Jallikattu’s linkages with Pongal has lifted it above its regional and community origins and transformed it into a symbol of Tamil culture and pride. Pride in Tamil culture is central to Dravidian nationalism, which continues to shape the political discourse in Tamil Nadu. The political consensus in favour of Jallikattu is inescapable.

Tradition and culture are not immune to change. But it is facile to argue that the rights discourse can be conducted ignoring the cultural context. The argument to move from an anthropocentric vision and adopt a biocentric ethics will have to be discussed and negotiated in cultural terms as well. In the absence of such engagement, the supporters of animals rights are likely to be seen as a deracinated group that is insensitive to local culture and tradition.

We don’t have many of these valour sports in India. A well organized and regulated event will draw thousands of foreign tourists to southern Tamilnadu in the pleasant month of January. The prizes to the winning youth will increase from pots and pans to cash, bikes, and even cars. The winning bulls can also make the bull owners rich and feed into a positive economic cycle enhancing the entire livestock. **Why would we Indians want to let go of a treasure like this ?**

## **Conclusion**

Informal institutions have been largely overlooked in comparative politics, but in many countries it is the informal institutions and rules that govern the political landscape. To understand the political behaviour in a country it is important to look at how that behaviour is enabled or constrained by informal institutions, and how this affects how formal institutions are run. An informal institution tends to have socially shared rules, which are unwritten and yet are often known by all inhabitants of a certain country, as such they are often referred to as being an inherent part of the culture of a given country. Informal practices are often referred to as "cultural", for example clientelism or corruption is sometimes stated as a part of the political culture in a certain place, but an informal institution itself is not cultural, it may be shaped by culture or behaviour of a given political landscape, but they should be looked at in the same way as formal institutions to understand their role in a given country. Informal institutions might be particularly used to pursue a political agenda, or a course of action that might not be publicly popular, or even legal, and can be seen as an effective way of making up for lack of efficiency in a formal institution. For example, in countries where formal institutions are particularly inefficient, an informal institution may be the most cost effective way or actually carrying out a given task, and this ensures that there is little pressure on the formal institutions to become more efficient. The relationship between formal and informal institutions is often closely aligned and informal institutions step in to prop up inefficient institutions

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