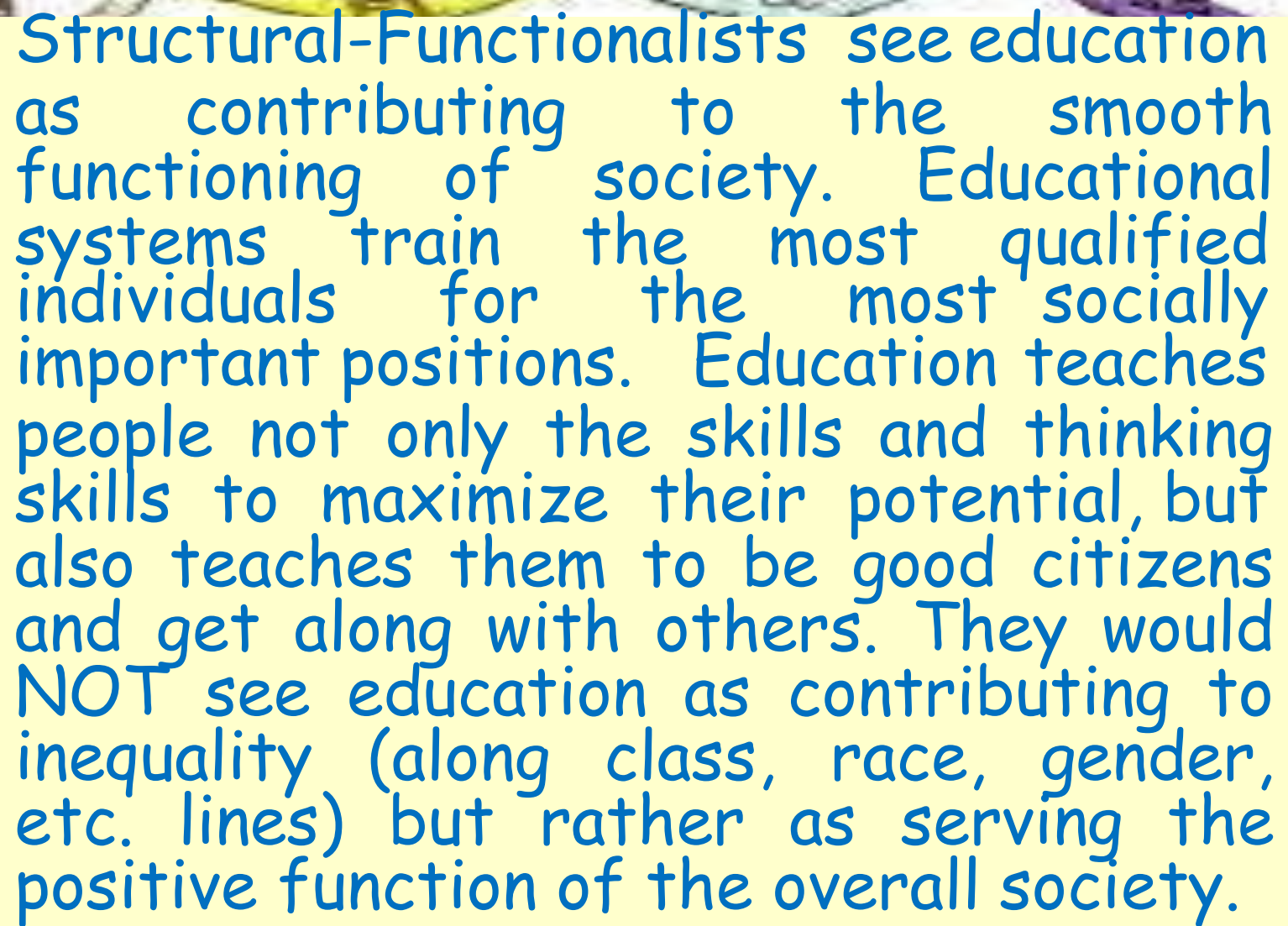


**STRUCTURAL
FUNCTIONALISM
(Talcott Parsons &
Robert Merton)**



Structural-Functionalists see education as contributing to the smooth functioning of society. Educational systems train the most qualified individuals for the most socially important positions. Education teaches people not only the skills and thinking skills to maximize their potential, but also teaches them to be good citizens and get along with others. They would NOT see education as contributing to inequality (along class, race, gender, etc. lines) but rather as serving the positive function of the overall society.



Parsons' Structural Functionalism:

- 1. **A**- adaptation
- 2. **G**- goal attainment
- 3. **I**- integration
- 4. **L**- latency





Adaptation:

– A system must cope with external situational exigencies. It must adapt to its environment and adapt environment to its needs.

e.g. #1 New Corella as an Agricultural Municipality sticks on planting Agricultural Products.

e.g. #2 Rice fields converting to banana plantation because of its demand.



Goal Attainment

- A system must define and achieve its primary goals.



Integration

- A system must regulate the interrelationship of its component parts.





Latency (pattern maintenance)

- A system must furnish, maintain, and renew both the motivation of individuals and the cultural patterns that create and sustain the motivation.



Structure of the General Action System

Cultural System

Social System

Action System

Personality System



Action System

- Handles adaptation function by adjusting to and transforming the external world



Social System

- Copes with the integration by controlling its component parts



Personality System


- Performs the goal attainment function by defining system goals and mobilizing resources to attain them.



Cultural System

- Performs the latency function by providing actors with the norms and values that motivate them for action.



A circular arrangement of diverse children holding hands, forming a ring around the central text. The children are of various ethnicities and are dressed in colorful clothing. They are all smiling and appear to be in motion, as if dancing or playing a game. The background is plain white.

Functional Requisites of a Social System

Talcott Parsons

1. Social system must be structured so that they operate compatibility with other systems.
2. To survive, the social system must have the requisite from other systems
3. The system must meet a significant proportion of the needs of its actor.

4. The system must elicit adequate participation from its members.

5. It must have at least a minimum of control over potentially disruptive behavior.

6. If conflict becomes sufficiently disruptive, it must be controlled.

7. Finally, a social system requires a language in order to survive.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE FUNCTIONALIST PERSPECTIVE

1. Interdependency

- Society is made up of interdependent parts
- Every part of society is dependent to some extent on other parts of society

2. Functions of social structure and culture

- Each part of the social system exists because it serves some function

Social structure - organization of society, including institutions, social positions & distribution of resources

Culture - set of beliefs, language, rules, values & knowledge held in common by members of society

3. Consensus and Cooperation

- Societies have a tendency towards consensus, that is to have certain basic values that nearly everyone in the society agrees upon

Cooperation - inability to cooperate will paralyze the society & people will devote more and more effort to fighting one another rather than getting anything done.

4. Equilibrium

- The characteristic of the society when it has achieved the form that is best adapted to its situation.
- Once a society has achieved the form that is best adapted to its situation, it has reached a state of balance or equilibrium, and it will remain in that condition until it is forced to change by some new condition.

