# BSOC-131: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

**Tutor Marked Assignments**

**Programme Code : BAG/BAM**
**Course Code: BSOC-131**
**Assignment Code: ASST/TMA / 2026-27**
**Total Marks: 100**

There are three Sections in the Assignment. You have to answer all the questions.

## Section I

**Answer the following Descriptive Category questions in about 400 words each.**

1. What are the elements of culture? Discuss. 20
2. Discuss the similarities and dissimilarities between sociology and political science. 20

## Section II

**Answer the following Middle Category questions in about 250 words each.**

3. Discuss the perspectives on social institutions. 10
4. Compare and contrast roles in simple and complex societies. 10
5. Describe the premises of functionalism. 10

## Section III

**Answer the following Short Category questions in about 100 words each.**

6. What is status? 6
7. What is informal social control? 6
8. What are culture trait and culture complex? 6
9. Differentiate between ascribed and achieved status. 6
10. What is socialization? 6

## 1. What are the elements of culture? Discuss. 20

### Answer

Culture refers to the learned and shared way of life of a group. It includes what people believe, how they behave, the things they make and the meanings they attach to everyday activities. E. B. Tylor described culture in a broad sense as a complex whole including knowledge, belief, art, morals, law and custom. This understanding is useful because culture cannot be reduced to festivals, dress or artistic performances alone. It influences family life, work, education and even the way people interpret success and failure. Its main elements are closely connected, although they can be discussed separately.

Symbols are a basic element. A symbol is anything that carries a meaning understood by members of a society. A national flag, a traffic light or folded hands used in greeting communicates something beyond its physical appearance. The meaning is not natural or fixed; it is learned within a social setting. A gesture respected in one culture may mean something different elsewhere. Symbols help people share experiences and establish a sense of belonging.

Language is an organised system of symbols through which people communicate. It allows individuals to describe events, express feelings, transmit instructions and discuss ideas that are not immediately present. Oral traditions, books, songs and digital messages preserve social experience across generations. Language also carries distinctions in age, respect and social relationships. India provides many examples of linguistic diversity: people may express similar values in different languages while retaining their own local expressions. However, a language does not mechanically determine everything its speakers can think.

Values are shared ideas about what is desirable, important or worthwhile. Honesty, hospitality, equality, education and care for elders may be valued, but their relative importance and practical meaning vary across social groups. Values offer broad standards for judging conduct. Sometimes two values come into conflict: loyalty to one's relatives, for example, may clash with the value of impartial selection for a job. Such conflicts show that a culture is not necessarily a perfectly harmonious set of beliefs.

Norms translate values into expectations about conduct. Folkways are everyday conventions, such as forms of greeting or behaviour at a meal; breaking them generally attracts mild disapproval. Mores concern conduct regarded as morally important, and breaches may provoke stronger reactions. Formal laws are rules enforced through recognised authorities, while informal expectations are maintained by families, friends and communities. Norms vary with context, and