

1 **Sociology**

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2 **Perspective, Theory and Method**

- Sociology- the systematic study of human society

3 **The Sociological Perspective**

- Seeing the **General** in the **particular**.
- Seeing the **strange** in the **familiar**.
- Seeing **individuality** in **social context**.

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- Durkheim studied the suicide rates in France in the 1800's and early 1900's.
- Found that there was a higher suicide rate in men v. women, in rich v. poor, in single v. married and Protestants v. Catholics/Jews.

5 **Benefits of Sociological Perspective**

- Helps us critically assess the truth of "common sense."
- Helps us to see opportunities and constraints in our lives.
- Empowers us to be active participants in society.
- Helps us to live in a diverse world.

6 **Theoretical Perspectives of Sociology**

- Structural Functional- Sees society as a complex system whose parts work together in promote solidarity and stability.
- Goes from...Simple---handshake...
- To complex... religious rituals...

7 **Social Functional-- con't**

- Functions within Social functional
 - Manifest functions- recognized and intended consequences of any social pattern.
 - Latent functions- unrecognized and unintended consequences of any social pattern.

8 **Social Functional-- con't**

- Main belief is that society is stable and orderly. Many sociologists today believe this perspective ignores inequalities of social class, race ethnicity and gender--- which

generate tension and conflict.

9 **Social Conflict Perspective**

- Society is an arena of inequality that generates conflict and change.

10 **Social Conflict – con't**

- Sociologists are pointed toward focusing on factors which highlight inequality and unequal treatment, (race, class, gender, ethnicity, age) and ongoing conflict between the dominant and disadvantaged groups of people which make up society.
- Ex: the inequality within school structure.

11 **Social Conflict – con't**

- Social conflict sociologists have used this perspective to reduce inequality through history.
- Ex: Karl Marx- workers
 - W.E.B. Dubois- African Americans (Blacks)

12 **Social conflict – con't**

- This perspective largely ignores how shared values and interdependence can unify members of society. Some add their belief this perspective harbors political goals and therefore loses scientific objectivity.

13 **Symbolic-Interaction Perspective**

- Sees society as a product of the everyday interactions of individuals.

14 How does “society” result from the ongoing experiences of millions of people?

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- Society is simple the reality people create for themselves as they interact with on another.
- Reality is how we define:
 - Surroundings
 - Obligations
 - identities

16 **Symbolic-Interaction—con't**

- While focusing on how individuals experience society, it misses the effects culture (ie... class, race, gender) have on the individual.

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- Sociology as a science, is based on Empirical evidence. (Facts that can be verified.) Because of this sociology often challenges “common sense” which are generally accepted.
- Ex: -Differences between men and women reflect “human nature”
 - The U.S. is a middle class society in which most people are equal
 - People marry for love

18 Correlation

- A relationship in which two (or more) variables change together.
 - Variable- a concept, (idea, event, thought) whose value changes from case to case.
 - Sociology attempts to know both how things change and why things change. (cause/ effect)
 - Measurement- a way of determining the value of a variable (ie. Items at a store; the length of rope)

19 Correlation – con’t

- Positive correlation- both variables move in the same direction, in each changing case.
- Negative correlation- each variable moves in the opposite direction of the other, in each changing case.

20 Correlation – con’t

- Reliability- is consistency in measurement.
- Validity- you are measuring what you intend to measure.
- Cause- is the Independent Variable
- Effect- is the Dependent Variable
- From correlations you can predict how one pattern of behavior will produce another.

21 Correlations – con’t

- One of the most significant problems that you must be careful to look for is that the variables may have nothing to do with one another.
 - Ex: Marriage rate /death rate in January
 - Ice cream sales / number of rapes

22 Research Methods

- Experiment: method of measuring cause/ effect under highly controlled conditions.
 - Make hypothesis
 - Measure dependent variable
 - Expose dep var to the independent var.
 - Measure the dependent variable again

23 Research Methods– con’t

- Survey: subjects respond to a series of statements or questions in a questionnaire or an interview.
- This targets a population
 - Make an hypothesis
 - Pick a sample of the population
 - Plan for questioning and recording answers

24 Research Methods– con't

- Participant observation: investigators systematically observe people while joining them in their routine activities.
- More flexible than a survey, must be prepared to adapt to unexpected circumstances in unfamiliar places. Must blend into surroundings without disturbing the routine. Can take a long time to gather sufficient data. (months/ years)

25 Research Methods– con't

- Existing sources: data already gathered by others. Most widely used source is the U. S. Census Bureau, United Nations and the World Bank.

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- Information availability in today's culture and into the future;
 - Books
 - Periodicals (Magazines, Newspapers)
 - Media (Radio, Television)
 - US Government
 - State/Local Government
 - World Wide Web