

SOC101 SHORT HANDOUTS

MIDTERM

Lesson 01 to 05

(SOC101)Introduction to Sociology

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Lesson-01

THE ORIGIONS OF SOCIOLOGY

Topic-001: Meaning of Sociology

Question: What is sociology?

Answer: Sociology is the systematic and scientific study of society, social structures, and human behavior.

Question: How does sociology differ from other academic fields?

Answer: Sociology is not just a subject to be studied; it is a lived experience and involves examining society, social structures, and human behavior from a different perspective.

Topic-002: Scientific Thinking vs Tradition

Question: What role did the scientific revolution of the 17th century play in the development of sociology?

Answer: The scientific revolution emphasized systematic observation and empirical data, which challenged traditional beliefs and led to the development of sociology.

Question: How did sociology challenge established ways of thinking about society?

Answer: Sociology provided a logical and ordered understanding of society and human behavior, offering new perspectives on the social environment.

Topic-003: Positivism: Auguste Comte (1798-1857)

Question: Who was Auguste Comte, and what was his contribution to sociology?

Answer: Auguste Comte was a French philosopher who advocated positivism and coined the term "sociology." He sought to apply the scientific method to study society.

Question: What did Comte emphasize in terms of objectivity in sociology?

Answer: Comte believed that sociology should rely on observable evidence and approach its subject with objectivity and systematic attention, similar to the natural sciences.

Question: What is the "Law of Three Stages" proposed by Comte?

Answer: Comte's "Law of Three Stages" suggests that society evolved through theological, metaphysical, and scientific stages, with the scientific stage being the focus of sociology.

Topic-004: Social Darwinism Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)

Question: Who was Herbert Spencer, and what was his role in the development of sociology?

Answer: Herbert Spencer was an English philosopher and sociologist known for his contributions to the field. He introduced the idea of social Darwinism, which emphasized the survival of the fittest in society.

Question: What is "survival of the fittest," and how did it relate to Spencer's ideas?

Answer: "Survival of the fittest" is the concept that the strongest and smartest individuals in society survive and create a more advanced civilization, according to Spencer's ideas.

Question: How did Spencer view morality and government intervention in society?

Answer: Spencer believed that morality was shaped by society, and he opposed government intervention in private matters, especially in economics. He disapproved of organizations run by the government.

Topic-005: Capitalism: Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Question: Who was Karl Marx, and what significant work did he co-write in 1848?

Answer: Karl Marx was a German political philosopher and economist who, in 1848, co-wrote "The Communist Manifesto."

Question: How did Marx view wage labor?

Answer: Marx viewed wage labor as the commodification of labor power for the benefit of others' profit-seeking.

Question: What is alienation in the context of Marx's views on capitalism?

Answer: Alienation, according to Marx, results from the dehumanizing effect of the division of labor in capitalist societies.

Question: What was Marx's perspective on capitalism and structured inequality?

Answer: Marx believed capitalism was based on unequal private ownership of the means of production, leading to a widening economic and social gap between capitalists and workers.

Question: What is dialectical materialism, and how did Marx use it in his analysis of history?

Answer: Dialectical materialism is Marx's concept that history involves conflicts and tensions in different economic ages, leading to change through social revolution.

Topic-006: Empiricism: Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)

Question: Who was Emile Durkheim, and what was his focus in sociology?

Answer: Emile Durkheim was a French sociologist who focused on the topic of social order and the production and maintenance of social order in industrial civilization.

Question: How did Durkheim view society in terms of its structures, and what is this perspective called?

Answer: Durkheim viewed society as a complex system with interrelated structures, a perspective often called functionalism or structural functionalism.

Question: What is "Scientific Sociology" as presented by Durkheim, and how did it influence modern sociology?

Answer: Durkheim's Scientific Sociology emphasized the empirical analysis of social facts. It has had a profound impact on contemporary sociology, especially in terms of quantitative research and the study of social phenomena using data.

Question: What are "social facts," and why are they crucial in sociological research?

Answer: Social facts are collective and external ways in which society shapes, structures, and controls human behavior. They are important in sociological research because they exist objectively and can be studied independently of personal thoughts or attitudes.

Question: How did Durkheim use the study of suicide to demonstrate his sociological method?

Answer: Durkheim studied suicide rates in 19th-century Europe and investigated how social integration or regulation affected suicide rates, highlighting the empirical approach in sociology.

Question: How did Durkheim categorize different types of suicide?

Answer: Durkheim identified four major categories of suicide: altruistic suicide (due to excessive social integration), egoistic suicide (due to lack of social integration), anomic suicide (resulting from sudden social disruption), and fatalistic suicide (due to excessive regulation and control).

Question: What is the concept of "organic solidarity," and how does it relate to the division of labor in society?

Answer: Organic solidarity is the interdependence that results from the specialized division of labor, where each part functions for the benefit of the whole society. It relates to how society functions in industrial settings with a high degree of specialization.

Question: What is the "collective conscience" in Durkheim's sociology, and how does it impact social order?

Answer: The collective conscience refers to the collectively held sentiments, values, and ideals of a society. It strongly influences social order by governing individual behavior and maintaining social harmony.

Question: How did Durkheim view the relationship between religion and science in society?

Answer: Durkheim believed that both religion and science served related purposes in society. Religion provided social bonding and "moral remaking," while science supplied information. He did not see them as opposing forces but as complementary aspects of societal integration.

Question: What role does religion and other sacred activities play in maintaining social cohesion and solidarity, according to Durkheim?

Answer: Religion and other sacred activities, such as sporting events or social gatherings, bring people together and strengthen social cohesion and solidarity by providing a sense of shared experience and common values.

Lesson-02

SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Topic-007: Sociological Imagination (C. Wright Mills)

Question: What does the sociological imagination involve, according to C. Wright Mills?

Answer: The sociological imagination involves understanding the connection between personal biography and historical events in a broader societal context.

Question: How does the sociological imagination help us understand the relationship between personal issues and social problems?

Answer: The sociological imagination allows us to see the link between personal problems and social problems, helping us understand how individual experiences are shaped by broader social forces.

Topic-008: Thinking like a Sociologist: Key Questions

Question: What are some key questions that sociologists ask when thinking about human behavior and society?

Answer: Key questions include examining institutions and social structures, the impact of social norms and values, understanding inequality and power, analyzing root causes of societal issues, studying social order, and the effects of social movements and societal transformation.

Topic-009: Sociology and Common Sense

Question: How does sociology challenge common sense, and why is this important?

Answer: Sociology challenges common sense by offering systematic, evidence-based explanations for social phenomena. It is important because it helps debunk myths, reveals unexpected trends, and provides a more objective understanding of social issues.

Topic-010: Perspectivising Human Behavior

Question: What is meant by "perspectivising human behavior" in sociology?

Answer: It involves recognizing that human behavior is influenced by a variety of factors, including social, cultural, and psychological influences. Sociologists appreciate the complexity of human behavior and analyze the interaction between individual and societal factors.

Topic-011: Understanding Causality

Question: What are the three fundamental conditions that must be met to prove causality?

Answer: The three conditions are temporal order (cause precedes effect), empirical association (two phenomena occur together), and the exclusion of reasonable alternatives. A mechanism and causal chain should also be defined for a complete causal explanation.

Topic-012: Sociological Themes and Topics

Question: What are some sociological themes and topics that sociologists study?

Answer: Sociologists study a wide range of themes and topics, including race, ethnicity, and discrimination, gender and sexuality, families and kinship, education and socialization, religion and spirituality, globalization, transnationalism, and health, disease, and medicine.

Sir Zahid

Lesson-03

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIOLOGY

Topic-013: Levels of Analysis: Micro, Macro, Meso

Question: What are the levels of analysis used in sociology, and how do they differ among various theoretical approaches?

Answer: Sociology uses micro (individual-level), meso (group-level), and macro (society-level) levels of analysis. Different theoretical approaches focus on different levels, with functionalists and conflict theorists looking at

macro-level societal trends, while symbolic interactionists concentrate on the micro level of social interaction.

Topic-014: Structural Functionalism

Question: What is the fundamental tenet of structural functionalism, and how does it view society?

Answer: Structural functionalism asserts that society functions as a cohesive whole composed of interconnected parts. It views society as a system where each component has a specific purpose, and a "normal" state is when all components are working together effectively.

Question: Who is credited with coining the term "functions" in sociology, and what is the distinction between manifest and latent functions?

Answer: Robert Merton coined the term "functions." Manifest functions are intended actions that benefit a particular part of the system, while latent functions are unintended and may have hidden advantages or disadvantages.

Topic-015: Conflict Theory

Question: What does conflict theory emphasize about society, and who is its key proponent?

Answer: Conflict theory emphasizes that society is comprised of groups competing for limited resources. Karl Marx is its key proponent, focusing on the conflict between the proletariat (workers) and bourgeoisie (capitalists).

Topic-016: Symbolic Interactionism

Question: What is the central premise of symbolic interactionism?

Answer: Symbolic interactionism emphasizes that understanding how we perceive the world and interact with others depends on symbols to which we attribute meaning, and our social existence is shaped by symbols.

Topic-017: Contemporary Theoretical Approaches (Feminism, Post Colonialism, Post Modernism)

Question: What do feminism, post colonialism, and postmodernism add to the study of sociology?

Answer: Feminism examines the role of gender in social interactions, post colonialism studies the effects of colonialism on social structures, and postmodernism emphasizes the role of language and discourse in shaping social relationships and structures.

Question: Why is it important to consider multiple theoretical perspectives in sociology?

Answer: Multiple theoretical perspectives offer different interpretations and insights into social life. By considering all three perspectives (functionalism, conflict theory, symbolic interactionism), sociologists can gain a more comprehensive understanding of human behavior and society.

Lesson-04

SOCIOLOGY AS SCIENCE

Topic-018: What is Science?

Question: What is the foundation of science?

Answer: Verifiable evidence is the foundation of science, involving factual observations that can be verified by other observers through rigorous methods like weighing, counting, and accuracy checks.

Question: What are some characteristics that differentiate scientific observation from regular observation?

Answer: Scientific observation is characterized by accuracy, precision, systematic gathering of data, and objectivity, which means it is not influenced by personal values or worldviews.

Question: What are the three primary goals of science?

Answer: The three primary goals of science are explaining why something occurs, generalizing to create claims applicable to larger populations or circumstances, and predicting or defining future events based on current knowledge.

Question: Why is transparency, peer review, and replication important in scientific research?

Answer: Transparency, peer review, and replication ensure the accuracy and reliability of scientific results by allowing other experts to examine the research process, confirm its findings, and reproduce the study to validate its outcomes.

Topic-019: Theory Building Process: Inductive vs Deductive

Question: What is the key difference between inductive and deductive reasoning in theory building?

Answer: Inductive reasoning moves from specific data to formulate general theories, while deductive reasoning starts with a general theory and derives specific hypotheses to be tested.

Topic-020: Concepts and Variables

Question: What is a concept in the context of theory building?

Answer: A concept is an idea or notion that can be expressed verbally or symbolically and forms the building blocks of theory.

Question: How do we learn and define concepts in everyday life and social science?

Answer: Concepts are learned through examples, experiences, and cultural norms. We pick up many concepts informally by hearing and using them, with their meanings gradually becoming clearer through usage.

Topic-021: Causation vs Correlation

Question: What are the three conditions that must be met to establish causality between two variables?

Answer: To establish causality, the three conditions that must be met are: (1) the two variables must be related; (2) the cause must precede the effect; and (3) the relationship holds even after controlling for other relevant variables.

Question: What is a fictitious correlation, and can you provide an example?

Answer: A fictitious correlation is a seemingly meaningful relationship between variables that doesn't imply causality. For example, an increase in swimsuit sales around tax filing deadlines does not mean that paying taxes causes people to want to wear swimsuits.

Topic-022: Is Sociology a Science?

Question: Why do some people argue that sociology may not qualify as a science?

Answer: Some argue that sociology may not qualify as a science due to the complexity and subjectivity of social processes.

Question: What are the key aspects that support sociology being considered a science?

Answer: Sociology can be considered a science when it uses empirical observation, data analysis, and theory development to create testable explanations for social phenomena, undergoes peer review, and follows scientific principles and practices.

Lesson-05

RESEARCH DESIGNS IN SOCIOLOGY

Topic-023: Doing Sociology: Research Process

Question: What are the eight basic steps involved in scientific research in sociology?

Answer: The eight basic steps in scientific research in sociology are: selecting a topic, defining the problem, reviewing the literature, formulating a hypothesis, choosing a research method, collecting data, analyzing the results, and disseminating the findings.

Question: Why is sociological research necessary, and why can't we rely solely on common sense?

Answer: Sociological research is necessary to go beyond speculation and common sense, to provide evidence-based answers to questions about social life, and to find the truth.

Topic-024: Surveys

Question: What is random sampling, and why is it important in survey research?

Answer: Random sampling is a method of selecting a sample where everyone in the population has an equal chance of being included. It's important in survey research to ensure that the sample represents the population fairly.

Question: What is the role of questionnaires and interviews in survey research?

Answer: Questionnaires and interviews are tools used in survey research to collect data from respondents by asking a series of questions to understand their opinions, behaviors, or experiences.

Topic-025: Case Study

Question: What is the focus of a case study in sociological research?

Answer: A case study focuses on a single event, circumstance, or person, aiming to understand the interpersonal dynamics, power dynamics, or thought processes that contributed to the situation.

Topic-026: Observation

Question: What are the key steps involved in observational research, and why is it important?

Answer: Observational research involves collecting data on social behavior and interactions by observing subjects in their natural environment. It's

important to identify the social context, use field notes or recordings to capture data, and apply quantitative or qualitative analysis.

Topic-027: Experiments

Question: What are the three crucial steps in an experiment, and why are experiments considered artificial in a sociological context?

Answer: The three crucial steps in an experiment are formulating a causative hypothesis, changing a specific circumstance related to the cause, and comparing the results. Experiments are considered artificial in sociology because they deliberately manipulate the research environment and exclude variables unrelated to the hypothesis.

Topic-028: Secondary Data

Question: What is secondary data, and what are the strengths and limitations of using secondary data in research?

Answer: Secondary data involves collecting data from existing sources. The strengths of secondary data include saving time and resources, while the limitations include potential bias and a lack of control over data collection.

Topic-029: Research Ethics

Question: What are some of the key ethical standards in sociological research?

Answer: Ethical standards in sociological research include honesty, truth, transparency, not falsifying results, avoiding plagiarism, preventing harm to research subjects, ensuring informed consent, upholding data contributors' confidentiality, and not misrepresenting oneself.

Working on the Next Lessons

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