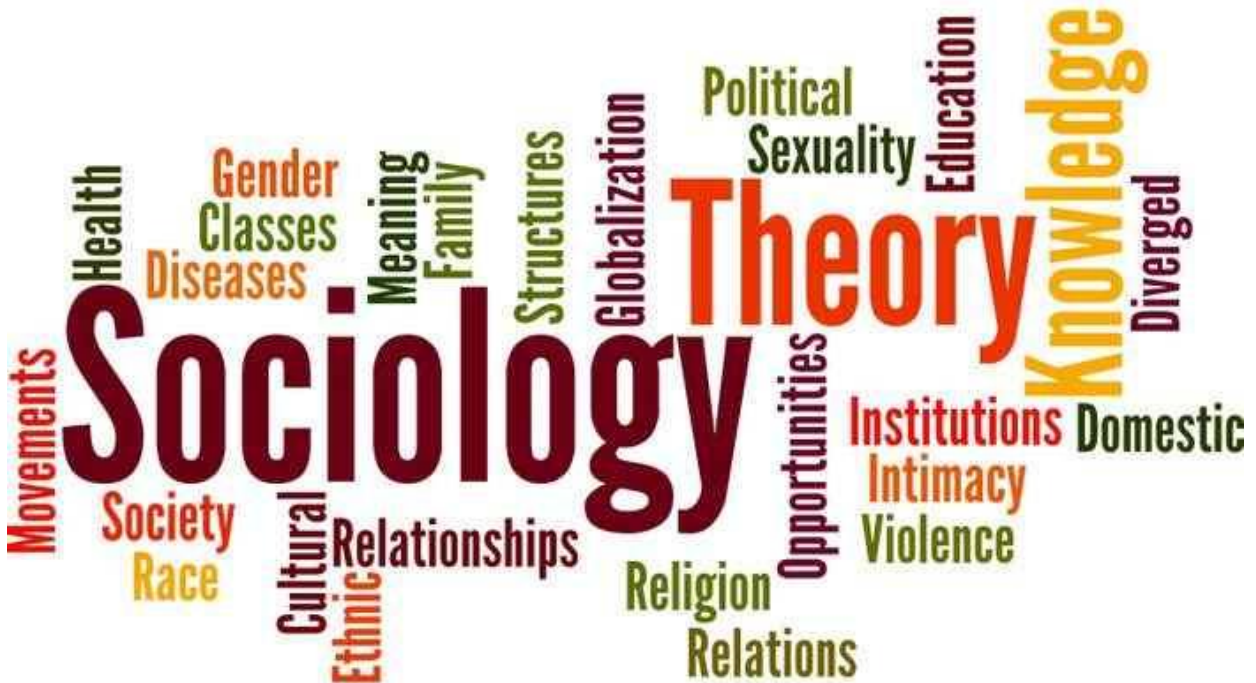


Principles of Sociology

STUDENT SOLUTIONS HUB

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to Sociology



In this unit, you will be introduced to the discipline of sociology. You will learn about the development of sociology as a field of research and discover various theoretical perspectives central to the study of society. You will learn the major theoretical compositions that support the field of Sociology. In addition, you will learn why it is worthwhile to study sociology and how sociology can be applied in the real world. Your task as Social Scientist student is to apply Sociological theories to the Zimbabwean context and develop a critical mind when analyzing society highlight how each theory/body of work supports how society is moving in the 21st Century.

Sociologists study all aspects and levels of society. A society is a group of people whose members interact, reside in a definable area, and share a culture. A culture includes the group's shared practices, values, beliefs, norms and artifacts. All sociologists are interested in the experiences of individuals and how those experiences are shaped by interactions with social groups and society as a whole. To a sociologist, the personal decisions an individual makes do not exist in a vacuum. Cultural patterns and social forces put pressure

on people to select one choice over another. Sociologists try to identify these general patterns by examining the behavior of large groups of people living in the same society and experiencing the same societal pressures.

Understanding the relationship between the individual and society is one of the most difficult sociological problems,

Definition of Sociology

Sociology is the scientific study of society, including patterns of social relationships, social interaction, and culture. The term sociology was first used by Frenchman Auguste Comte in the 1830s when he proposed a synthetic science uniting all knowledge about human activity. In the academic world, sociology is considered one of the social sciences.

A dictionary defines sociology as the systematic study of society and social interaction. The word “sociology” is derived from the Latin word socius (companion) and the Greek word logos (speech or reason), which together mean “reasoned speech about companionship”. How can the experience of companionship or togetherness be put into words or explained? While this is a starting point for the discipline, sociology is actually much more complex. It uses many different methods to study a wide range of subject matter and to apply these studies to the real world.

The sociologist Dorothy Smith (1926) defines the social as the “ongoing concerting and coordinating of individuals’ activities”. Sociology is the systematic study of all those aspects of life designated by the adjective “social.” These aspects of social life never simply occur; they are organized processes. They can be the briefest of everyday interactions—moving to the right to let someone pass on a busy sidewalk, for example—or the largest and most enduring interactions—such as the billions of daily exchanges that constitute the circuits of global capitalism. If there are at least two people involved, even in the seclusion of one’s mind, then there is a social interaction that entails the “ongoing concerting and coordinating of activities.” Why does the person move to the right on the

sidewalk? What collective process lead to the decision that moving to the right rather than the left is normal? Think about the T-shirts in your drawer at home. What are the sequences of linkages and social relationships that link the T-shirts in your chest of drawers to the dangerous and hyper-exploitive garment factories in rural China or Bangladesh? These are the type of questions that point to the unique domain and puzzles of the social that sociology seeks to explore and understand.

Sociology is the scientific study of society. As such, it closely examines human interactions and cultural phenomena, including topics like inequality, gender and urbanization and the effects of these on groups and individuals.

Development of Sociology

Sociologists believe that our social surroundings influence thought and action. For example, the rise of the social sciences developed in response to social changes. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Europeans were exploring the world and voyagers returned from Asia, the Americas, Africa, and the South Seas with amazing stories of other societies and civilizations. Widely different social practices challenged the view that European life reflected the natural order of God.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Western Europe was rocked by technical, economic, and social changes that forever changed the social order. Science and technology were developing rapidly. James Watt invented the steam engine in 1769, and in 1865 Joseph Lister discovered that an antiseptic barrier could be placed between a wound and germs in the atmosphere to inhibit infection. These and other scientific developments spurred social changes and offered hope that scientific methods might help explain the social as well as the natural world. This trend was part of a more general growth in rationalism.

The industrial revolution began in Britain in the late eighteenth century. By the late nineteenth century, the old order was collapsing “under the twin blows of industrialism and revolutionary democracy” (Nisbet, 1966: 21). Mechanical industry was growing, and thousands of people were migrating to cities to work in the new factories. People once rooted in the land and social communities where they farmed found themselves crowded into cities. The traditional authority of the church, the village, and the family were being undermined by impersonal factory and city life. Capitalism also grew in Western Europe in the nineteenth century. This meant that relatively few people owned the means of production—such as factories—while many others had to sell their labor to those owners. At the same time, relatively impersonal financial markets began to expand. The modern epoch was also marked by the development of administrative state power, which involved increasing concentrations of information and armed power (Giddens, 1987: 27).

Finally, there was enormous population growth worldwide in this period, due to longer life expectancy and major decreases in child death rates. These massive social changes lent new urgency to the development of the social sciences, as early sociological thinkers struggled with the vast implications of economic, social and political revolutions. All the major figures in the early years of sociology thought about the “great transformation” from simple, preliterate societies to massive, complex, industrial societies.

Sociology was taught by that name for the first time at the University of Kansas in 1890 by Frank Blackmar, under the course title Elements of Sociology, where it remains the oldest continuing sociology course in the United States. The first academic department of sociology was established in 1892 at the University of Chicago by Albion W. Small, who in 1895 founded the American Journal of Sociology

The first European department of sociology was founded in 1895 at the University of Bordeaux by Émile Durkheim, founder of *L'Année Sociologique* (1896). The first sociology department to be established in the United Kingdom was at the London School of Economics and Political Science (home of the *British Journal of Sociology*) in 1904.

International cooperation in sociology began in 1893 when René Worms founded the Institut International de Sociologie, which was later eclipsed by the much larger International Sociological Association (ISA), founded in 1949. In 1905, the American Sociological Association, the world's largest association of professional sociologists, was founded, and in 1909 the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie (German Society for Sociology) was founded by Ferdinand Tönnies and Max Weber, among others.

Theoretical perspective central to the study of society

Sociologists' views basically fall into two camps: macro-sociology and micro-sociology. Macro-sociologists focus on the big picture, which usually means such things as social structure, social institutions, and social, political, and economic change. They look at the large-scale social forces that change the course of human society and the lives of individuals. Micro-sociologists, on the other hand, study social interaction. They look at how families, coworkers, and other small groups of people interact; why they interact the way they do; and how they interpret the meanings of their own interactions and of the social settings in which they find themselves. Often macro- and micro-sociologists look at the same phenomena but do so in different ways. Their views taken together offer a fuller understanding of the phenomena than either approach can offer alone.

The four main Theoretical frameworks linked to Sociology are Functionalism, Conflict Theory, Symbolic Interactionism and Utilitarianism.

- Functionalism – this field of thought argues that social stability is necessary to have a strong society, and adequate socialization and social integration are necessary to achieve social stability. Society's social institutions perform important functions to help ensure social stability. Slow social change is desirable, but rapid social change threatens social order. Functionalism is a macro theory.
- Conflict theory -- Society is characterized by pervasive inequality based on social class, gender, and other factors. Far-reaching social change is needed to reduce or eliminate social inequality and to create an egalitarian society. An egalitarian

society is a society that believes in treating people equally through giving people equal rights and opportunities. This belief is referred to as egalitarianism, which advocates human equality, with respect to economic, political and social rights. Conflict theory is a macro theory.

- Symbolic interactionism -- People construct their roles as they interact; they do not merely learn the roles that society has set out for them. As this interaction occurs, individuals negotiate their definitions of the situations in which they find themselves and socially construct the reality of these situations. In so doing, they rely heavily on symbols such as words and gestures to reach a shared understanding of their interaction. Symbolic interactionism is a micro theory.
- Utilitarianism (rational choice theory or exchange theory) -- People act to maximize their advantages in a given situation and to reduce their disadvantages. If they decide that benefits outweigh disadvantages, they will initiate the interaction or continue it if it is already under way. If they instead decide that disadvantages outweigh benefits, they will decline to begin interacting or stop the interaction if already begun. Social order is possible because people realize it will be in their best interests to cooperate and to make compromises when necessary. Utilitarianism is a micro theory.

Why study Sociology?

The quest to understand society is urgent and important, for if we cannot understand the social world, we are more likely to be overwhelmed by it. We also need to understand social processes if we want to influence them. Sociology can help us to understand ourselves better, since it examines how the social world influences the way we think, feel, and act. It can also help with decision-making, both our own and that of larger organizations. Sociologists can gather systematic information from which to make a decision, provide insights into what is going on in a situation, and present alternatives.

Sociologists study all things human, from the interactions between two people to the complex relationships between nations or multinational corporations. While sociology assumes that human actions are patterned, individuals still have room for choices. Becoming aware of the social processes that influence the way humans think, feel, and behave plus having the will to act can help individuals to shape the social forces they face.

STUDENT SOLUTIONS HUB

CHAPTER 2

Culture, the Socialized Self, and the Individual in Society

Culture



To get the ball rolling, we'll start with culture. According to many anthropologists, culture can be defined as the set of learned behaviors and beliefs that characterize a people group. Putting it simply, it's what makes a population into a people group. It's their beliefs, attitudes, and ideals. From their diet, to their religion, to their family structure, to their jobs, to even their entertainment, it's what makes them them. Culture is a term used by social scientists, like anthropologists and sociologists, to encompass all the facets of human experience that extend beyond our physical fact. Culture refers to the way we understand ourselves both as individuals and as members of society, and includes stories, religion, media, rituals, and even language itself.

It is critical to understand that the term culture does not describe a singular, fixed entity. Instead, it is a useful heuristic, or way of thinking, that can be very productive in understanding behavior. As a student of the social sciences, you should think of the word culture as a conceptual tool rather than as a uniform, static definition.

Culture necessarily changes, and is changed by, a variety of interactions, with individuals, media, and technology, just to name a few. Adding to this definition, most anthropologists would agree that people sort of define or label themselves through their culture. Think about it. If you go to a party, what usually fills the conversation? It's not deep emotional stuff. Instead, its things like where people work, what they do in their free time, and maybe even where they choose to worship. Whether we give clues about our national culture of say, being African, or our subculture of being Zimbabwean, we're still discussing the beliefs and attitudes that make us be who we are.

Culture

Characteristics

- Culture is Learnt
- Culture is Social
- Culture is Shared
- Culture is Transmissive
- Culture is Continuous and cumulative
- Culture is consistent and integrated
- Culture is dynamic and adaptive
- Culture is gratifying
- Culture is varies from Society
- Culture is Super organic and ideational

Culture

While at the party, we'll also exhibit our culture. For instance, for those of us who grew up in the Westernized world, we'll probably not remove our shoes at a party. Even though it'd be more comfortable to kick them off and walk around in our socks, we probably won't. However, if the party took place at my aunt's home, who just so happens to be Shona/ Ndebele, we would all remove our shoes. You see, in the Shona/ Ndebele culture, it's considered disrespectful and dirty to wear outdoor shoes inside.

Although my aunt considers herself part of the national culture of Africa, she still holds to many parts of her homeland's national culture as well. Now notice, when talking about culture, we're talking about things that are sort of tangible, almost like objects. They're our language, our technology, and our institutions - things like our churches, our schools, or even our houses. However, culture is also intangible; it's our values and our behaviors. Using an anthropological term, our culture includes our norms, the standards or rules about acceptable behavior. And with this definition finished, we'll move onto our other term, society.

Society

Unlike culture, which encompasses the tangible and intangible things of a people group, society is defined as a group of people who occupy a particular territory and who share a culture. Stating it simply, we would say that a society is a people of a culture. Whereas culture is what makes them them, society is, for lack of a better way of saying it, the actual them. It's the people living and interacting with one another in order to create a culture. Its people bonded together by their shared beliefs, attitudes, languages, and institutions; in other words, by their culture.

In saying all this, it's important to note that people can belong to the same society, while also differing in their, shall we say, layers of culture. For instance, a Shona Harare and a Ndebele living in Harare as well. However, one identifies himself with the subculture of being a Ndebele while never having set foot in Bulawayo. With this example it is clear how the two people can be in the "Harare society" but coming from two different cultural backgrounds.

Ethnocentrism and cultural relativism

Ethnocentrism, a term coined by William Graham Sumner, is the tendency to look at the world primarily from the perspective of your own ethnic culture and the belief that that is in fact the "right" way to look at the world.

This leads to making incorrect assumptions about others' behavior based on your own norms, values, and beliefs. For instance, reluctance or aversion to trying another culture's cuisine is ethnocentric. Ethnocentrism is the idea that one's own culture is the main standard by which other cultures may be measured. An ethnocentric is concerned with how similar others' cultural practices, symbols, and beliefs are to their own. For instance, Ethan is ethnocentric; he considers others' beliefs and practices to be savage or corrupt, or he is often confused by other people's cultures. Very often, people that are ethnocentric don't know they are using their culture to judge another's. The culture of an ethnocentric person is considered the 'normal' way that things are done, just as Ethan believes.

Ethnocentrism, as a term, can be understood by breaking it into two parts. The first, "ethno," implies ethnicity or nationality. "-Centrism" is the idea that something is central to experience or perhaps is the most important factor in a person's perspective. Altogether, ethnocentrism is the attitude that one's own cultural, ethnic, or national experience is the hegemonic experience or the most important. Often, when people act or think in a way that is ethnocentric, they aren't doing so on purpose—a lack of contact with alternate cultural experiences hasn't "opened their eyes," so to speak. On the other hand, people can quite willfully engage in ethnocentrism by asserting that their way of life is better or more important than all others'.

Social scientists strive to treat cultural differences as neither inferior nor superior. That way, they can understand their research topics within the appropriate cultural context and examine their own biases and assumptions at the same time. This approach is known as "cultural relativism." Cultural relativism is a framework popular in philosophy, morality studies, and anthropology. This idea asserts that any particular act, object, feeling, or belief only makes sense in the context of the culture in which it originates. That is, cultural practices must be understood and respected as part of their culture, even if someone disagrees with the practice. A great example of cultural relativism can be drawn from talking about differing food taboos from around the world. Many Westerners are grossed out by the idea of eating insects, snakes, or animals like squirrels or turtles.

These are common food items throughout the world, however, so I respect that other people want to eat bugs, even though I don't.

Cultural relativism is the principle that an individual person's beliefs and activities should be understood by others in terms of that individual's own culture. A key component of cultural relativism is the concept that nobody, not even researchers, comes from a neutral position. The way to deal with our own assumptions is not to pretend that they don't exist but rather to acknowledge them, and then use the awareness that we are not neutral to inform our conclusions. A competing idea, cultural relativism is the belief that the culture of people serves particular needs and must be looked at in terms of the world the people inhabit. This is often the perspective of social scientists who work with people and is the result of the work of anthropologist Franz Boas. For instance, Casey is a cultural relativist; she prefers to look at other cultures in terms of what their practices bring to them. She believes that if a tribe paints their faces for religious ceremonies, there must be a good reason why they do that. Is there a practical reason for it, or is it symbolic? If symbolic, where do the symbols come from? These questions allow a closer examination of the practices of others than ethnocentrism. This doesn't imply that a relativist, like Casey, doesn't have strong beliefs of her own. Rather, other cultures are simply not judged with reference to one's own culture. Again, this often has to be trained into people.

An example of cultural relativism might include slang words from specific languages (and even from particular dialects within a language). For instance, the word "tranquilo" in Spanish translates directly to "calm" in English. However, it can be used in many more ways than just as an adjective (e.g., the seas are calm). Tranquilo can be a command or suggestion encouraging another to calm down. It can also be used to ease tensions in an argument (e.g., everyone relax) or to indicate a degree of self-composure (e.g., I'm calm). There is not a clear English translation of the word, and in order to fully comprehend its many possible uses, a cultural relativist would argue that it would be necessary to fully immerse one's self in cultures where the word is used.

Cultural relativism and ethnocentrism both rely on a cognitive dissonance between "Us" and "Them." It is easy to fool ourselves into thinking that culture, especially our own, is a very fixed phenomena and anything that isn't a part of our culture simply falls into the realm of 'other.' While this kind of thinking is easy to do, it isn't necessarily true or helpful. Culture exists more like a grab-bag of beliefs and behaviors that evolve throughout time. An 'Us versus Them' mentality is not likely to foster understanding or positive discourse. With ethnocentrism, it is quite obviously problematic to consider one's own culture as the only or the best way for things to be. Even cultural relativism is problematic because it does not encourage a discussion of the true value of cultural practices or give attention to the fact that our own feelings about certain beliefs or behaviors, while valid, are also culturally constructed.

In short, cultural relativism and ethnocentrism are similar in their use in the humanities, reliance on an 'Us versus Them' mentality, and the fact that they are quite limiting frameworks. Neither idea encourages open, unbiased discussions about culture.

Culture and different types of societies

Preindustrial revolution and the extensive use of heavy machinery, societies were very small, rural and dependent on the natural resources. In preindustrial societies occupations and division of labor was non-existent; the first job of men was hunter-gatherer. Following are the types of preindustrial societies, hunter gatherer, pastoral, horticultural, agricultural and feudal society.

Hunter-gatherer Society;

It is the basic structure of human society about ten to twelve thousand year ago. Such societies are based on kinship and tribes. People of the society were completely dependent upon their surrounding for survival. Hunter-gatherers hunt animals and look for the uncultivated plants for food. They were nomads when the resources for survival became scarce they would move to another place. Few of such societies still exist in Australia and Congo. "Aborigines", the indigenous Australian tribe and "Bambuti" the tribe of Congo are the contemporary examples of hunter-gatherer society.



Pastoral Society;

About seven thousand year ago, people learned how to tame and breed animals and cultivate plants. Pastoral society's survival was dependent upon the domestication and cultivation of plant. Hunter-gatherers relied upon the existing resources, however, pastoral were able to bread animals and use them for different purposes such as, food, transportation and clothing. They were also nomads, because they needed fresh feeding ground to breed animals. During the epoch of pastoral society specialized occupation began to develop, they started trading with other local groups.

Horticultural Society;

During the rise of pastoral society another society emerge, which developed the new capabilities for the people to cultivate and grow plants without moving from one place to another. Pastoral and hunter gatherer societies were nomads, they move from one place to another; due to resources depletion. However, horticulture societies were developed in the areas where environment allowed them to cultivate land constantly. It was the first revolution in human survival, permanent settlement allowed them to create more goods and stability.

Agricultural Society;

Former societies used inferior tools such as hoes and sticks for cultivating plants and lands were not fully utilized, limited crops were grown on their lands. However, in agriculture society people learned and developed sophisticated and permanent tools for cultivation. They learned how to cultivate land in different seasons and rescue the byproduct such as fertilizers, which lead to bigger surplus of food. Small settlement grew into cities and towns, which promoted trade and commerce. This was the epoch when people have leisure time on their hands; the time was utilized by engaging in thoughtful, innovative and creative activities, such as music, writing philosophy, poetry and crafting. Craftsman supported themselves by creating aesthetic objects and writing. This era was referred to as “dawn of civilization”.

Feudal Society;

During the ninth century, new type of society came into being feudal society. In feudal society the nobles who owned the lands was called lords. Lords handed over the piece of lands to vassals in return of security. Vassals were supposed to fight for their liege lords in return of the resources the land provide. Peasants were supposed to maintain and cultivate the land in return of place for living and food. However, economic system of feudal society failed and replaced by capitalism and industrial society.

Industrial Society;

In Europe, eighteenth century marked the era of industrial revolution. What made this era special was the innovation and invention, which had positive influence on people daily lives. The tasks which were accomplished in months were now possible to be accomplished in days. Before industrial revolution the work was completely dependent upon workers and horses to power mill and drive pumps. The invention of steam engine in 1772 by, James watt and Matthew Bolton changed the game, the work which was done by 12 horses, would be performed by steam engine by itself. Due to the advancement in technology life became easy for peasants, workers and students.

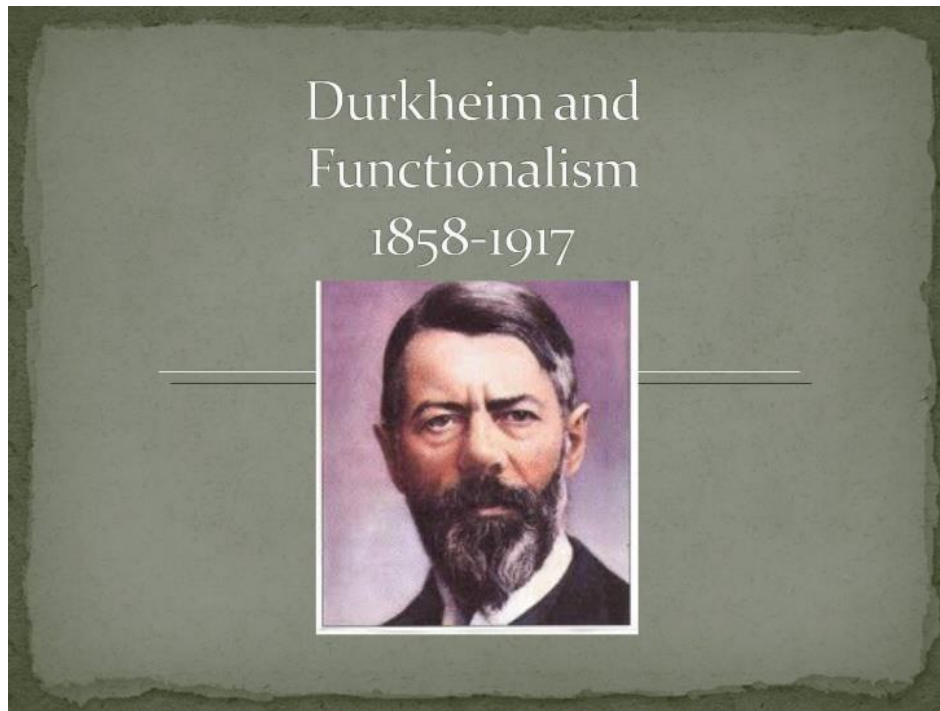
Postindustrial Society

Postindustrial society is also known as information society or digital society. Industrial society focus was on the efficient production of material goods. However, information society is focused on production of information and services. Steve jobs and Bill gates are the James watt and Matthew Bolton of digital society. Those individuals who are skilled in programming, software development and hardware development are likely to succeed in digital society.



STUDENT SOLUTION

Durkheim's Functionalist Perspective



The functionalist perspective is based largely on the works of Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons, and Robert Merton. According to functionalism, society is a system of interconnected parts that work together in harmony to maintain a state of balance and social equilibrium for the whole. The functionalist perspective emphasizes the interconnectedness of society by focusing on how each part influences and is influenced by other parts. For example, the increase in single-parent and dual-earner families has contributed to the number of children who are failing in school because parents have become less available to supervise their children's homework. As a result of changes in technology, colleges are offering more technical programs, and many adults

Functionalists use the terms functional and dysfunctional to describe the effects of social elements on society. Elements of society are functional if they contribute to social stability and dysfunctional if they disrupt social stability. Some aspects of society can be both functional and dysfunctional. For example, crime is dysfunctional in that it is associated with physical violence, loss of property, and fear. But according to Durkheim and other

functionalists, crime is also functional for society because it leads to heightened awareness of shared moral bonds and increased social cohesion.

This general framework reached fruition in the writings of Émile Durkheim (1858–1917), a French scholar largely responsible for the sociological perspective as we now know it. Adopting the conservative intellectuals' view of the need for a strong society, Durkheim felt that human beings have desires that result in chaos unless society limits them. He wrote, "To achieve any other result, the passions first must be limited...But since the individual has no way of limiting them, this must be done by some force exterior to him" (Durkheim, 1897/1952, p. 274). This force, Durkheim continued, is the moral authority of society.

Durkheim would argue that society was characterized by an existence of order, control and constraint of individuals' need to reference with the individual being viewed as less important than the entire group as a whole. It is a Logical and Systematic analysis: It treats us all as being the same and offers no explanation for differences. It explains how society has maintained its existence over time and it tries to influence the children of tomorrow by forcing past beliefs and decisions on them.

Durkheim believes socialization is important to keep society functioning well and that we should pass our rules, norms and values through generations and changes nothing to maintain social stability. Durkheim theorizes that we all depend on each other and our institutions need each other in order to survive, this is known as Interdependence. Durkheim explains this by his Organic Analogy, for example like the human body if the heart stops working it has a knock on effect onto the lungs, brain and the rest of the organs. This theory can be observed within the recent happenings of the global financial crisis which caused the threat and total collapse of the world's largest financial institutions; so when the major banks actually did collapse it had a negative effect on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and damaged employment, education, housing, borrowing and private business around the world.

How does society limit individual aspirations? Durkheim emphasized two related social mechanisms: socialization and social integration. Socialization helps us learn society's rules and the need to cooperate, as people end up generally agreeing on important norms and values, while social integration, or our ties to other people and to social institutions such as religion and the family, helps socialize us and integrate us into society and reinforce our respect for its rules. In general, Durkheim added, society comprises many types of social facts, or forces external to the individual, that affect and constrain individual attitudes and behavior. The result is that socialization and social integration help establish a strong set of social rules—or, as Durkheim called it, a strong collective conscience—that is needed for a stable society. By so doing society 'creates a kind of cocoon around the individual, making him or her less individualistic, more a member of the group' (Collins, 1994, p. 181). Weak rules or social ties weaken this "moral cocoon" and lead to social disorder. In all of these respects, says Randall Collins (1994, p. 181), Durkheim's view represents the "core tradition" of sociology that lies at the heart of the sociological perspective.

Durkheim used suicide to illustrate how social disorder can result from a weakening of society's moral cocoon. Focusing on group rates of suicide, he felt they could not be explained simply in terms of individual unhappiness and instead resulted from external forces. One such force is anomie, or normlessness, which results from situations, such as periods of rapid social change, when social norms are weak and unclear or social ties are weak. When anomie sets in, people become more unclear about how to deal with problems in their life. Their aspirations are no longer limited by society's constraints and thus cannot be fulfilled. The frustration stemming from anomie leads some people to commit suicide (Durkheim, 1897/1952).

To test his theory, Durkheim gathered suicide rate data and found that Protestants had higher suicide rates than Catholics. To explain this difference, he rejected the idea that Protestants were less happy than Catholics and instead hypothesized that Catholic doctrine provides many more rules for behavior and thinking than does the Protestant doctrine. Protestants' aspirations were thus less constrained than Catholics' desires.

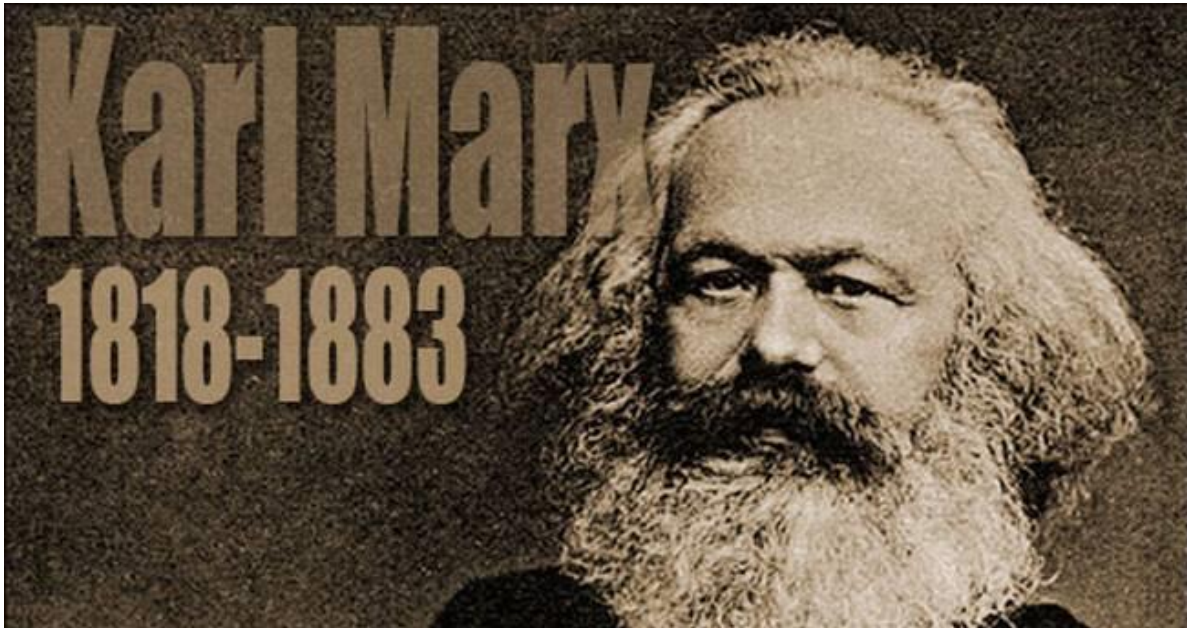
In times of trouble, Protestants also have fewer norms on which to rely for comfort and support than do Catholics. He also thought that Protestants' ties to each other were weaker than those among Catholics, providing Protestants fewer social support networks to turn to when troubled. In addition, Protestant belief is ambivalent about suicide, while Catholic doctrine condemns it. All of these properties of religious group membership combine to produce higher suicide rates among Protestants than among Catholics.

Today's functionalist perspective arises out of Durkheim's work and that of other conservative intellectuals of the 19th century. It uses the human body as a model for understanding society. In the human body, our various organs and other body parts serve important functions for the ongoing health and stability of our body. Our eyes help us see, our ears help us hear, our heart circulates our blood, and so forth. Just as we can understand the body by describing and understanding the functions that its parts serve for its health and stability, so can we understand society by describing and understanding the functions that its "parts"—or, more accurately, its social institutions—serve for the ongoing health and stability of society. Thus functionalism emphasizes the importance of social institutions such as the family, religion, and education for producing a stable society.

Similar to the view of the conservative intellectuals from which it grew, functionalism is skeptical of rapid social change and other major social upheaval. The analogy to the human body helps us understand this skepticism. In our bodies, any sudden, rapid change is a sign of danger to our health. If we break a bone in one of our legs, we have trouble walking; if we lose sight in both our eyes, we can no longer see. Slow changes, such as the growth of our hair and our nails, are fine and even normal, but sudden changes like those just described are obviously troublesome. By analogy, sudden and rapid changes in society and its social institutions are troublesome according to the functionalist perspective. If the human body evolved to its present form and functions because these made sense from an evolutionary perspective, so did society evolve to its present form and functions because these made sense. Any sudden change in society thus threatens its stability and future. By taking a skeptical approach to social change, functionalism supports the status quo and is thus often regarded as a conservative perspective.

Functionalist theory has weaknesses as it assumes everyone has the same choices and decisions to make in life when in actual fact rich people have more options than poor people: if we consider different nations we observe that poor people in Africa can only afford to eat one bowl of porridge a day whereas rich people in America can eat five times a day whatever they want, also some countries only offer boys education when in other countries education is compulsory for both males and females. It states that we have no free will and that our paths in life are set out for us by our genealogy, meaning the traits and genetics we inherit from our ancestors. Another negative of this theory is it does not explain conflict in our society and does not accept that we are all different and states when people disagree with the consensus they are classed as being “dysfunctional”, this is unfair to those people as they could form a sub group within our society yet are unable to have a voice or share their opinion for example a functionalist would argue that Gay relationships don’t fit in with the nuclear family ideal as a functionalist society these people and their beliefs are excluded and their differences ignored.

Karl Marx's Conflict Perspective



The functionalist perspective views society as composed of different parts working together. In contrast, the conflict perspective views society as composed of different groups and interests competing for power and resources. The conflict perspective explains various aspects of our social world by looking at which groups have power and benefit from a particular social arrangement. For example, feminist theory argues that we live in a patriarchal society—a hierarchical system of organization controlled by men. Although there are many varieties of feminist theory, most would hold that feminism “demands that existing economic, political, and social structures be changed” (Weir and Faulkner 2004).

The origins of the conflict perspective can be traced to the classic works of Karl Marx. Marx suggested that all societies go through stages of economic development. As societies evolve from agricultural to industrial, concern over meeting survival needs is replaced by concern over making a profit, the hallmark of a capitalist system. Industrialization leads to the development of two classes of people: the bourgeoisie, or the owners of the means of production (e.g., factories, farms, businesses); and the proletariat, or the workers who earn wages. The division of society into two broad classes of people—the “haves” and the “have-nots”—are beneficial to the owners of the means of production.

The workers, who may earn only subsistence wages, are denied access to the many resources available to the wealthy owners.

According to Marx, every society is divided into two classes based on the ownership of the means of production (tools, factories, and the like). In a capitalist society, the bourgeoisie, or ruling class, owns the means of production, while the proletariat, or working class, does not own the means of production and instead is oppressed and exploited by the bourgeoisie. This difference creates an automatic conflict of interests between the two groups. Simply put, the bourgeoisie is interested in maintaining its position at the top of society, while the proletariat's interest lies in rising up from the bottom and overthrowing the bourgeoisie to create an egalitarian society.

As Marx explains, the predominant class conflict within society occurs between the proletariat (lower class) and the bourgeoisies (upper class). Marx argues that this is due to the bourgeoisie being the owners of production; they therefore own the means to create work by owning the tools, material, trade and stability for their workers. This creates requirement of the bourgeoisie for the proletariat as they require the trade, work and wages in order to feed their families. However the tension is created due to the proletariat being low paid with usually bad standards of work environment and long hours of work. The workers were made to work hard and meet targets every day in order to turn a profit for the owners of production knowing that if their work wasn't up to scratch or they disobeyed the rules they could lose their jobs, the bourgeoisie knew they could replace a worker quiet easily so had the power to make these decisions without thought for the workers. This relationship as Marx describes is reliant on each other and is apparent within all aspects of the economy even today in our present society. Due to such high unemployment and an economy in recession, wages and salaries have been frozen for a few years now and not rising with inflation causing more tension between the lower class and upper classes of society and government.

According to Marx, the bourgeoisie use their power to control the institutions of society to their advantage. For example, Marx suggested that religion serves as an “opiate of the masses” in that it soothes the distress and suffering associated with the working-class lifestyle and focuses the workers’ attention on spirituality, God, and the afterlife rather than on such worldly concerns as living conditions. In essence, religion diverts the workers so that they concentrate on being rewarded in heaven for living a moral life rather than on questioning their exploitation.

In many ways, conflict theory is the opposite of functionalism but ironically also grew out of the Industrial Revolution, thanks largely to Karl Marx (1818–1883) and his collaborator, Friedrich Engels (1820–1895). Whereas conservative intellectuals feared the mass violence resulting from industrialization, Marx and Engels deplored the conditions they felt were responsible for the mass violence and the capitalist society they felt was responsible for these conditions. Instead of fearing the breakdown of social order that mass violence represented, they felt that revolutionary violence was needed to eliminate capitalism and the poverty and misery they saw as its inevitable result (Marx, 1867/1906; Marx & Engels, 1848/1962).

In a capitalist society, Marx and Engels wrote, revolution is inevitable because of structural contradictions arising from the very nature of capitalism. Because profit is the main goal of capitalism, the bourgeoisie’s interest lies in maximizing profit. To do so, capitalists try to keep wages as low as possible and to spend as little money as possible on working conditions. This central fact of capitalism, said Marx and Engels, eventually prompts the rise among workers of class consciousness, or an awareness of the reasons for their oppression. Their class consciousness in turn leads them to revolt against the bourgeoisie to eliminate the oppression and exploitation they suffer.

Over the years, Marx and Engels’s views on the nature of capitalism and class relations have greatly influenced social, political, and economic theory and also inspired revolutionaries in nations around the world.

However, history has not supported their prediction that capitalism will inevitably result in a revolution of the proletariat. For example, no such revolution has occurred in the United States, where workers never developed the degree of class consciousness envisioned by Marx and Engels. Because the United States is thought to be a free society where everyone has the opportunity to succeed, even poor Americans feel that the system is basically just. Thus various aspects of American society and ideology have helped minimize the development of class consciousness and prevent the revolution that Marx and Engels foresaw.

Despite this shortcoming, their basic view of conflict arising from unequal positions held by members of society lies at the heart of today's conflict theory. This theory emphasizes that different groups in society have different interests stemming from their different social positions. These different interests in turn lead to different views on important social issues. Some versions of the theory root conflict in divisions based on race and ethnicity, gender, and other such differences, while other versions follow Marx and Engels in seeing conflict arising out of different positions in the economic structure. In general, however, conflict theory emphasizes that the various parts of society contribute to ongoing inequality, whereas functionalist theory, as we have seen, stresses that they contribute to the ongoing stability of society. Thus, while functionalist theory emphasizes the benefits of the various parts of society for ongoing social stability, conflict theory favors social change to reduce inequality. In this regard, conflict theory may be considered a progressive perspective.

Marx explains that this relationship was/is oppressive to the working class individuals due to the low wages, the working classes are restricted in their social mobility as well as their ability to move up through the academic or employment ladder. This is almost certainly relevant in today's society for example mortgages are only available to a small margin of those able to pay large deposits to secure loans and in England educational attainment comes at a high price.

Marxist sociologists believe that the education system has been designed and constructed as a training ground for the children of the proletariat. It is dominated by the ruling class to socialize them to accept that individual competition and inevitable inequality is the only system that works

For Marxists this is a powerful form of social control that will legitimize the capitalists economic forms of production and the legitimate political leadership of a capitalist ruling class (hegemony) with this Marxists do not believe that the education system provides equal opportunities for the children, even though it comes across as fair and equal, children are often split into groups based on merit and ability. Marxist sociologists would refer to the learning of rules, norms, routines and regulations as the hidden curriculum, Marxists see this as a way of reinforcing the class system to ensure, that pupils learn the skills more suited to their class background. Marx fully believed that in order for this relationship to change that the masses had to come together to overthrow the bourgeoisie from power and take control to make it a fairer society (socialism).

Max Weber's Symbolic Interactionist Perspective



Both the functionalist and the conflict perspectives are concerned with how broad aspects of society, such as institutions and large social groups, influence the social world. This level of sociological analysis is called macro sociology: It looks at the big picture of society and suggests how social problems are affected at the institutional level. Micro sociology, another level of sociological analysis, is concerned with the social psychological dynamics of individuals interacting in small groups. The symbolic interaction perspective, also called symbolic interactionism, is a major framework of sociological theory. This perspective relies on the symbolic meaning that people develop and rely upon in the process of social interaction. Although symbolic interactionism traces its origins to Max Weber's assertion that individuals act according to their interpretation of the meaning of their world, the American philosopher George Herbert Mead introduced this perspective to American sociology in the 1920s. Symbolic interactionism emphasizes that human behavior is influenced by definitions and meanings that are created and maintained through symbolic interaction with others.

Symbolic interaction theory analyzes society by addressing the subjective meanings that people impose on objects, events, and behaviours. Subjective meanings are given primacy because it is believed that people behave based on what they believe and not just on what is objectively true. Thus, society is thought to be socially constructed through human interpretation. People interpret one another's behaviour and it is these interpretations that form the social bond. These interpretations are called the "definition of the situation."

For example, why would young people smoke cigarettes even when all objective medical evidence points to the dangers of doing so? The answer is in the definition of the situation that people create. Studies find that teenagers are well informed about the risks of tobacco, but they also think that smoking is cool, that they themselves will be safe from harm, and that smoking projects a positive image to their peers. So, the symbolic meaning of smoking overrides those actual facts regarding smoking and risk.

Weber's essential focus on the structure of society lay in the components of class, status, and power. Like Marx, Weber saw class as economically determined. Society was split in the middle of owners and labourers. Status, then again, was focused around noneconomic factors, for example, education, family relationship, and religion. Both status and class determined an individual's influence or power over ideas. Dissimilar to Marx, Weber believed that these ideas framed the base of society.

Weber's analysis of modern society focused on the idea of rationalization. A rational society is one constructed around efficiency and logic instead of profound tradition or mortality. To Weber, capitalism is completely rational. In spite of the fact that this prompts proficiency and merit-based achievement, it can have a negative impact when taken to the extreme. In some modern societies, this is seen when strict design and rigid routines lead to a mechanized work environment and a concentrate on producing indistinguishable products in every area.

Symbolic interactionism also suggests that our identity or sense of self is shaped by social interaction. We develop our self-concept by observing how others interact with us a label us. By observing how others view us, we see a reflection ourselves that Cooley calls the 'looking glass self.' Herbert Blumer (1969), a sociologist at the University of Chicago, built on their writings to develop symbolic interactionism, a term he coined. Drawing on Blumer's work, symbolic interactionists feel that people do not merely learn the roles that society has set out for them; instead they construct these roles as they interact. As they interact, they "negotiate" their definitions of the situations in which they find themselves and socially construct the reality of these situations. In so doing, they rely heavily on symbols such as words and gestures to reach a shared understanding of their interaction.

An example is the familiar symbol of shaking hands. In the United States and many other societies, shaking hands is a symbol of greeting and friendship. This simple act indicates that you are a nice, polite person with whom someone should feel comfortable. To reinforce this symbol's importance for understanding a bit of interaction, consider a situation where someone refuses to shake hands.

This action is usually intended as a sign of dislike or as an insult, and the other person interprets it as such. Their understanding of the situation and subsequent interaction will be very different from those arising from the more typical shaking of hands.

Now let's say that someone does not shake hands, but this time the reason is that the person's right arm is broken. Because the other person realizes this, no snub or insult is inferred, and the two people can then proceed to have a comfortable encounter. Their definition of the situation depends not only on whether they shake hands but also, if they do not shake hands, on why they do not. As the term symbolic interactionism implies, their understanding of this encounter arises from what they do when they interact and their use and interpretation of the various symbols included in their interaction. According to symbolic interactionists, social order is possible because people learn what various symbols (such as shaking hands) mean and apply these meanings to different kinds of situations. If you visited a society where sticking your right hand out to greet someone was interpreted as a threatening gesture, you would quickly learn the value of common understandings of symbols.

Social interaction

In sociology, social interaction is a dynamic, changing sequence of social actions between individuals or groups. A social interaction is an exchange between two or more individuals and is a building block of society. Social interaction can be studied between groups of two (dyads), three (triads) or larger social groups. By interacting with one another, people design rules, institutions and systems within which they seek to live. Symbols are used to communicate the expectations of a given society to those new to it. The empirical study of social interaction is one of the subjects of microsociology. Methods include symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology as well as later academic sub-divisions and studies such as psychosocial studies, conversational analysis and human-computer interaction.

With symbolic interactionism, reality is seen as social, developed interaction with others. Ethnomethodology questions how people's interactions can create the illusion of a shared social order despite not understanding each other fully and having differing perspectives.

A social interaction is a social exchange between two or more individuals. These interactions form the basis for social structure and therefore are a key object of basic social inquiry and analysis. Social interaction can be studied between groups of two (dyads), three (triads) or larger social groups. Social structures and cultures are founded upon social interactions. By interacting with one another, people design rules, institutions and systems within which they seek to live. Symbols are used to communicate the expectations of a given society to those new to it, either children or outsiders. Through this broad schema of social development, one sees how social interaction lies at its core.

Groups

In the social sciences, a social group is two or more humans who interact with one another, share similar characteristics, and have a collective sense of unity. This is a very broad definition, as it includes groups of all sizes, from dyads to whole societies. A society can be viewed as a large group, though most social groups are considerably smaller. Society can also be viewed as people who interact with one another, sharing similarities pertaining to culture and territorial boundaries.

A social group exhibits some degree of social cohesion and is more than a simple collection or aggregate of individuals, such as people waiting at a bus stop or people waiting in a line. Characteristics shared by members of a group may include interests, values, representations, ethnic or social background, and kinship ties. One way of determining if a collection of people can be considered a group is if individuals who belong to that collection use the self-referent pronoun “we;” using “we” to refer to a collection of people often implies that the collection thinks of itself as a group. Examples of groups include: families, companies, and circles of friends, clubs, local chapters of fraternities and sororities, and local religious congregations.

Renowned social psychologist Muzafer Sherif formulated a technical definition of a social group. It is a social unit consisting of a number of individuals interacting with each other with respect to:

- Common motives and goals;
- An accepted division of labor;
- Established status relationships;
- Accepted norms and values with reference to matters relevant to the group; and
- The development of accepted sanctions, such as raise and punishment, when norms were respected or violated.

Explicitly contrasted with a social cohesion-based definition for social groups is the social identity perspective, which draws on insights made in social identity theory. The social identity approach posits that the necessary and sufficient conditions for the formation of social groups are ‘awareness of a common category membership’ and that a social group can be ‘usefully conceptualized as a number of individuals who have internalized the same social category membership as a component of their self concept.’ Stated otherwise, the social cohesion approach expects group members to ask “who am I attracted to? The social identity perspective expects group members to simply ask “who am I?”

Sociologists distinguish between two types of groups based upon their characteristics. A primary group is typically a small social group whose members share close, personal, enduring relationships. These groups are marked by concern for one another, shared activities and culture, and long periods of time spent together. The goal of primary groups is actually the relationships themselves rather than achieving some other purpose. Families and close friends are examples of primary groups.

The concept of the primary group was introduced by Charles Cooley, a sociologist from the Chicago School of sociology, in his book *Social Organization: A Study of the Larger Mind* (1909).

Primary groups play an important role in the development of personal identity. Cooley argued that the impact of the primary group is so great that individuals cling to primary ideals in more complex associations and even create new primary groupings within formal organizations. To that extent, he viewed society as a constant experiment in enlarging social experience and in coordinating variety. He, therefore, analyzed the operation of such complex social forms as formal institutions and social class systems and the subtle controls of public opinion. A primary group is a group in which one exchanges implicit items, such as love, caring, concern, support, etc. Examples of these would be family groups, love relationships, crisis support groups, and church groups. Relationships formed in primary groups are often long lasting and goals in themselves. They also are often psychologically comforting to the individuals involved and provide a source of support and encouragement.

Unlike first groups, secondary groups are large groups whose relationships are impersonal and goal oriented. People in a secondary group interact on a less personal level than in a primary group, and their relationships are generally temporary rather than long lasting. Some secondary groups may last for many years, though most are short term. Such groups also begin and end with very little significance in the lives of the people involved. Secondary relationships involve weak emotional ties and little personal knowledge of one another. A secondary group is one you have chosen to be a part of. They are based on interests and activities. They are where many people can meet close friends or people they would just call acquaintances. Secondary groups are also groups in which people exchange explicit commodities, such as labor for wages, services for payments, etc. Examples of these would be employment, vendor-to-client relationships, a doctor, a mechanic, an accountant, and such. A university class, an athletic team, and workers in an office all likely form secondary groups. Primary groups can form within secondary groups as relationships become more personal and close. In contrast to primary groups, secondary groups don't have the goal of maintaining and developing the relationships themselves. Secondary groups generally develop later in life and are much less likely to be influential on one's identity. Since secondary groups are established to perform functions, people's roles are more interchangeable.

Groups are prevalent in our social lives and provide a significant way to understand and define ourselves—both through groups we feel a connection to and those we do not. Groups also play an important role in society. As enduring social units, they help foster shared value systems and are key to the structure of society as we know it.

In-Groups and Out-Groups

One of the ways that groups can be powerful is through inclusion, and its inverse, exclusion. In-groups and out-groups are subcategories of primary and secondary groups that help identify this dynamic. Primary groups consist of both in-groups and out-groups, as do secondary groups. The feeling that one belongs in an elite or select group is a heady one, while the feeling of not being allowed in, or of being in competition with a group, can be motivating in a different way. Sociologist William Sumner (1840–1910) developed the concepts of in-group and out-group to explain this phenomenon (Sumner 1906). In short, an in-group is the group that an individual feels he or she belongs to, and believes it to be an integral part of who he or she is. An out-group, conversely, is a group someone doesn't belong to; often there may be a feeling of disdain or competition in relation to an out-group. Sports teams, unions, and secret societies are examples of in-groups and out-groups; people may belong to, or be an outsider to, any of these.

While these affiliations can be neutral or even positive, such as the case of a team-sport competition, the concept of in-groups and out-groups can also explain some negative human behavior, such as white supremacist movements like the Ku Klux Klan, or the bullying of gay or lesbian students. By defining others as “not like us” and inferior, in-groups can end up practicing ethnocentrism, racism, sexism, ageism, and heterosexism—manners of judging others negatively based on their culture, race, sex, age, or sexuality. Often, in-groups can form within a secondary group. For instance, a workplace can have cliques of people, from senior executives who play golf together, to engineers who write code together, to young singles who socialize after hours. While these in-groups might show favoritism and affinity for other in-group members, the overall organization may be unable or unwilling to acknowledge it. Therefore, it pays to be wary of the politics of in-groups, since members may exclude others as a form of gaining status within the group.

A reference group is a group that people compare themselves to—it provides a standard of measurement. In Canadian society, peer groups are common reference groups. Children, teens, and adults pay attention to what their peers wear, what music they like, what they do with their free time—and they compare themselves to what they see. Most people have more than one reference group, so a middle-school boy might look not only at his classmates but also at his older brother’s friends and see a different set of norms. And he might observe the antics of his favorite athletes for yet another set of behaviors.

Some other examples of reference groups can be one’s church, synagogue, or mosque; one’s cultural centre, workplace, or family gathering; and even one’s parents. Often, reference groups convey competing messages. For instance, on television and in movies, young adults often have wonderful apartments, cars, and lively social lives despite not holding a job. In music videos, young women might dance and sing in a sexually aggressive way that suggests experience beyond their years. At all ages, we use reference groups to help guide our behavior and show us social norms. So how important is it to surround yourself with positive reference groups? You may never meet or know a reference group, but it still impacts and influences how you act. Identifying reference groups can help you understand the source of the social identities you aspire to or want to distance yourself from.

Organizations

Formal Organizations

The formal structure of a group or organization includes a fixed set of rules of procedures and structures, usually set out in writing, with a language of rules that ostensibly leave little discretion for interpretation. In some societies and organizations, such rules may be strictly followed; in others, they may be little more than an empty formalism.

Characteristics of Formal Organization

A formal organization has its own set of distinct characteristics. These include well-defined rules and regulation, an organizational structure, and determined objectives and policies, among other characteristics.

Distinction from Informal Organization

Formal rules are often adapted to subjective interests giving the practical everyday life of an organization more informality. Practical experience shows no organization is ever completely rule-bound: all real organizations represent some mix of formal and informal characteristics. When attempting to create a formal structure for an organization, it is necessary to recognize informal organization in order to create workable structures. Tended effectively, the informal organization complements the more explicit structures, plans, and processes of the formal organization. Informal organization can accelerate and enhance responses to unanticipated events, foster innovation, enable people to solve problems that require collaboration across boundaries, and create paths where the formal organization may someday need to pave a way.

Informal Organization

The informal organization is the interlocking social structure that governs how people work together in practice. It is the aggregate of behaviors, interactions, norms, and personal/professional connections through which work gets done and relationships are built among people. It consists of a dynamic set of personal relationships, social networks, communities of common interest, and emotional sources of motivation. The informal organization evolves organically in response to changes in the work environment, the flux of people through its porous boundaries, and the complex social dynamics of its members.

Key Characteristics of Informal Organizations

The nature of the informal organization becomes more distinct when its key characteristics are juxtaposed with those of the formal organization. The informal organization is characterized by constant evolution; grass roots; being dynamic and responsive; requiring insider knowledge to be seen; treating people as individuals; being flat and fluid; being covered by trust and reciprocity; and being difficult to pin down.

Functions of Informal Organizations

Keith Davis suggests that informal groups serve at least four major functions within the formal organizational structure.

- First, they perpetuate the cultural and social values that the group holds dear. Certain values are usually already commonly held among informal group members. Day-to-day interaction reinforces these values that perpetuate a particular lifestyle and preserve group unity and integrity. For example, a college management class of 50 students may contain several informal groups that constitute the informal organization within the formal structure of the class.
- Second, they provide social status and satisfaction that may not be obtained from the formal organization. In a large organization, a worker may feel like an anonymous number rather than a unique individual. Members of informal groups share jokes and gripes, eat together, play and work together, and are friends—contributing to personal esteem, satisfaction, and a feeling of worth.
- Third, the informal group develops a communication channel to keep its members informed about what management actions will affect them in various ways. Many astute managers use the grapevine to “informally” convey certain information about company actions and rumors.
- Finally, they provide social control by influencing and regulating behavior inside and outside the group. Internal control persuades members of the group to conform to its lifestyle. For example, if a student starts to wear a coat and tie to class, informal group members may convince the student that such attire is not acceptable

Deviance

Sociologists use the term deviance to refer to any violation of rules and norms. From a sociological perspective, deviance is relative. Definitions of “what is deviant” vary across societies and from one group to another within the same society. Howard S. Becker described the interpretation of deviance as “not the act itself, but the reactions to the act, that makes something deviant.” This coincides with the symbolic interactionist view. In some cases, an individual need not do anything to be labeled a deviant. He or she may be falsely accused or discredited because of a birth defect, race, or disease. Even crime is relative when interpreting the deviance of the actor.

Deviance is based on adherence to and violation of norms. Human groups need norms to exist. By making behavior predictable, norms make social life possible. Consequently, all human groups develop a system of social control, which involves formal and informal means of enforcing norms. Those who violate these norms face the danger of being labeled “deviant.” Violators can expect to experience negative sanctions for the violation of norms. Members of society who conform to societal norms, especially those who go above and beyond what is commonly expected, receive positive sanctions.

Socio-biologists, psychologists, and sociologists have different perspectives on why people violate norms. Biosocial explanations focus on genetic predispositions, psychologists concentrate on abnormalities within the individual (commonly known as personality disorders), and sociologists look at social factors outside the individual. Symbolic interactionists interpret deviance through the following social theories: differential association theory (people learn deviance from the groups with whom they associate), control theory (people generally avoid deviance because of an effective system of inner and outer controls), and labeling theory (people are directed toward or away from deviance by the labels others pin on them).

Functionalists contend that deviance is functional for society; it contributes to the social order by clarifying moral boundaries, promoting social unity, and initiating social change. Furthermore, according to “strain theory,” people are likely to experience strain, which, in turn, can lead some people to choose deviant and/or criminal behavior rather than conforming to cultural goals and/or engaging in legitimate institutional means. In addition to strain theory, functionalists stress theories addressing illegitimate opportunity structure in society. Power plays a central role in determining which behaviors are defined as crimes, as well as in how actively “criminal behaviors” are prosecuted and/or punished. For example, although street crime is given the greatest attention by the media because of the violence associated with it, white-collar crime actually costs the American taxpayers more. Even cases of gross negligence that cause death are funneled into administrative hearings that, at times, result in little more than a fine for the corporation.

Conflict theorists note that power plays a central role in defining and punishing deviance. The group in power imposes its definitions of deviance on other groups, and then uses the law and criminal justice system to maintain its power and privilege over those other groups.

As we have noted, deviance is generally perceived to be disruptive in society. It can weaken established social norms, and create division and disorder. But it also has other functions which are not necessarily harmful and may actually be beneficial to society.

- It is one way that social change occurs. If a deviant act becomes more accepted it soon may be considered legitimate. For example, many companies used to have dress codes for their workers-- (Managers were required to dress-up, suits, etc. In the late 1980s and early 1990s more and more managers were showing up to work informally dressed. Soon, companies began to implement "casual days." Today, many American corporations have done away with the business suit altogether). Most fine restaurants have also relaxed dress codes today.
- Deviance helps people adjust to change. It provides examples of alternate lifestyles and eases the shock of social change because "deviants" introduce these changes

gradually. Over time individuals get used to seeing different styles of dress, behavior, etc.

- Deviance has a way of promoting social solidarity by distinguishing "us" from "them." In this way it increases social cohesion in the larger society by establishing social boundaries defining what acceptable behavior is.
- Deviance provides a way in which some individuals and groups can introduce their agendas to the rest of society, and elevate their own personal status while doing it. Parents Anonymous is a group in Richmond that has gone to extraordinary efforts to publicize the problems of child abuse and provide a mechanism to stop it by providing a support network city-wide. Their efforts in publicizing this form of deviance (and crime) have done a service for the city, (and its parents) as well as providing status to their own organization

Social Control

Societies have various mechanisms of social control, that is, systematic practices developed by social groups to encourage conformity and to discourage deviance. Society has different ways in making its members conform and behave according to its norm and standards. The process of making its members play their roles as expected of them is termed social control. According to Landis, social control is a process, planned or unplanned, by which people are made to conform to collective norms. Social control also refers to the measures and pressures designed to ensure conformity to the approved standards of behaviors in a group or society. There are two basic control processes:

- Internalization of group norms as a result of the socialization process. Internalization occurs when individuals accept the norms and values of their group and make conformity to these norms part of their self concept.
- Social reactions through external pressures in the form of sanctions whenever there are deviations from the norms. People fear the negative reactions from others once norms are violated like condemnation or being the object of gossip.

- There are different ways of controlling the members to fill their roles expected of them. These are the informal and formal social control.
- Informal – informal social control can best be observed in a primary group or small society like remote rural areas where everyone knows everyone. Informal social control is a self-restraint exercise because of fear of what others will think. Informal social control brings with it sanctions and punishments when one fails to follow accepted behavior. Sanctions may either be in the form of ridicules, criticism and ostracism.
- Formal – When society becomes more complex, formal social control is needed to maintain control over the behavior of its members. Under this means, rules are written down and laws specified. Members are then expected to know, obey and follow the rules. Failure to conform means punishment. These may range from fines, imprisonment or even the death penalty.

Media and Technology

Technology and the media are interwoven, and neither can be separated from contemporary society in most core and semi-peripheral nations. Media is a term that refers to all print, digital, and electronic means of communication. From the time the printing press was created (and even before), technology has influenced how and where information is shared. Today, it is impossible to discuss media and the ways societies communicate without addressing the fast-moving pace of technology change. Twenty years ago, if you wanted to share news of your baby's birth or a job promotion, you phoned or wrote letters. You might tell a handful of people, but you probably wouldn't call up several hundred, including your old high school chemistry teacher, to let them know. Now, you might join an online community of parents-to-be even before you announce your pregnancy via a staged Instagram picture. The circle of communication is wider than ever and when we talk about how societies engage with technology, we must take media into account, and vice versa.

Technology creates media. The comic book you bought your daughter is a form of media, as is the movie you streamed for family night, the web site you used to order takeout, the billboard you passed on the way to pick up your food, and the newspaper you read while you were waiting for it. Without technology, media would not exist, but remember, technology is more than just the media we are exposed to.

Anderson and Tushman (1990) suggest an evolutionary model of technological change, in which a breakthrough in one form of technology leads to a number of variations. Once those are assessed, a prototype emerges, and then a period of slight adjustments to the technology, interrupted by a breakthrough. For example, floppy disks were improved and upgraded, then replaced by Zip disks, which were in turn improved to the limits of the technology and were then replaced by flash drives. This is essentially a generational model for categorizing technology, in which first-generation technology is a relatively unsophisticated jumping-off point that leads to an improved second generation, and so on.

VIOLENCE IN MEDIA AND VIDEO GAMES: DOES IT MATTER?

A glance through popular video game and movie titles geared toward children and teens shows the vast spectrum of violence that is displayed, condoned, and acted out. As a way to guide parents in their programming choices, the motion picture industry put a rating system in place in the 1960s. But new media—video games in particular—proved to be uncharted territory. In 1994, the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) set a ratings system for games that addressed issues of violence, sexuality, drug use, and the like. California took it a step further by making it illegal to sell video games to underage buyers. The case led to a heated debate about personal freedoms and child protection, and in 2011, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the California law, stating it violated freedom of speech (ProCon 2012).

Children's play has often involved games of aggression—from cowboys and Indians, to cops and robbers, to fake sword fights. Many articles report on the controversy surrounding the suggested link between violent video games and violent behavior. Is the link real? Psychologists Anderson and Bushman (2001) reviewed forty-plus years of

research on the subject and, in 2003, determined that there are causal linkages between violent video game use and aggression. They found that children who had just played a violent video game demonstrated an immediate increase in hostile or aggressive thoughts, an increase in aggressive emotions, and physiological arousal that increased the chances of acting out aggressive behavior (Anderson 2003).

Ultimately, repeated exposure to this kind of violence leads to increased expectations that violence is a solution, increased violent behavioral scripts, and an increased cognitive accessibility to violent behavior (Anderson 2003). In short, people who play a lot of these games find it easier to imagine and access violent solutions than nonviolent ones, and they are less socialized to see violence as a negative. While these facts do not mean there is no role for video games, it should give players pause. In 2013, The American Psychological Association began an expansive meta-analysis of peer-reviewed research analyzing the effect of media violence.

Types of Media and Technology

Media and technology have evolved hand in hand, from early print to modern publications, from radio to television to film. New media emerge constantly, such as we see in the online world.

Print Newspaper

Early forms of print media, found in ancient Rome, were hand-copied onto boards and carried around to keep the citizenry informed. With the invention of the printing press, the way that people shared ideas changed, as information could be mass produced and stored. For the first time, there was a way to spread knowledge and information more efficiently; many credit this development as leading to the Renaissance and ultimately the Age of Enlightenment. This is not to say that newspapers of old were more trustworthy than the Weekly World News and National Enquirer are today. Sensationalism abounded, as did censorship that forbade any subjects that would incite the populace.

The invention of the telegraph, in the mid-1800s, changed print media almost as much as the printing press. Suddenly information could be transmitted in minutes.

As the nineteenth century became the twentieth, U.S. publishers such as Hearst redefined the world of print media and wielded an enormous amount of power to socially construct national and world events. Of course, even as the media empires of William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer were growing, print media also allowed for the dissemination of countercultural or revolutionary materials. Internationally, Vladimir Lenin's *Irksa* (The Spark) newspaper was published in 1900 and played a role in Russia's growing communist movement (World Association of Newspapers 2004).

The shift away from newspapers as a source of information has profound effects on societies. When the news is given to a large diverse conglomerate of people, it must maintain some level of broad-based reporting and balance in order to appeal to a broad audience and keep them subscribing. As newspapers decline, news sources become more fractured, so each segment of the audience can choose specifically what it wants to hear and what it wants to avoid. Increasingly, newspapers are shifting online in an attempt to remain relevant. It is hard to tell what impact new media platforms will have on the way we receive and process information.

Increasingly, newspapers are shifting online in an attempt to remain relevant. It is hard to tell what impact new media platforms will have on the way we receive and process information. The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism (2013) reported that audiences for all the major news magazines declined in 2012, though digital ad revenue increased. The same report suggested that, while newspaper circulation is holding steady at around \$10 billion after years of decline, it is digital pay plans that allow newspapers to keep their heads above water, and the digital ad revenue that is increasing for news magazines is not enough to compensate for print revenue loss in newspapers.

A 2014 report suggested that U.S. adults read a median of five books per year in 2013, which is about average. But are they reading traditional print or e-books? About 69 percent of people said they had read at least one printed book in the past year, versus 28 percent who said they'd read an e-book (DeSilver 2014).

Is print more effective at conveying information? In recent study, Mangen, Walgermo, and Bronnick (2013) found that students who read on paper performed slightly better than those who read an e-book on an open-book reading comprehension exam of multiple-choice and short-answer questions. While a meta-analysis of research by Andrews (1992) seemed to confirm that people read more slowly and comprehend less when reading from screens, a meta-analysis of more recent research on this topic does not show anything definite (Noyes and Garland 2008).

- Television and Radio

Radio programming obviously preceded television, but both shaped people's lives in much the same way. In both cases, information (and entertainment) could be enjoyed at home, with a kind of immediacy and community that newspapers could not offer. For instance, many people in the United States might remember when they saw on television or heard on the radio that the Twin Towers in New York City had been attacked in 2001. Even though people were in their own homes, media allowed them to share these moments in real time. This same kind of separate-but-communal approach occurred with entertainment too. School-aged children and office workers gathered to discuss the previous night's installment of a serial television or radio show.

Right up through the 1970s, U.S. television was dominated by three major networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC) that competed for ratings and advertising dollars. The networks also exerted a lot of control over what people watched. Public television, in contrast, offered an educational nonprofit alternative to the sensationalization of news spurred by the network competition for viewers and advertising dollars. Those sources—PBS (Public Broadcasting Service), the BBC (British Broadcasting Company), and CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Company)—garnered a worldwide reputation for high-quality programming and a global perspective. Al Jazeera, the Arabic independent news station, has joined this group as a similar media force that broadcasts to people worldwide.

The impact of television on U.S. society is hard to overstate. By the late 1990s, 98 percent of U.S. homes had at least one television set, and the average person watched between two and a half and five hours of television daily. All this television has a powerful socializing effect, providing reference groups while reinforcing social norms, values, and beliefs.

- Film

The film industry took off in the 1930s, when color and sound were first integrated into feature films. Like television, early films were unifying for society: as people gathered in theaters to watch new releases, they would laugh, cry, and be scared together. Movies also act as time capsules or cultural touchstones for society. From Westerns starring the tough-talking Clint Eastwood to the biopic of Facebook founder and Harvard dropout Mark Zuckerberg, movies illustrate society's dreams, fears, and experiences. While many consider Hollywood the epicenter of moviemaking, India's Bollywood actually produces more films per year, speaking to the cultural aspirations and norms of Indian society. Increasingly, people are watching films online via Netflix, Hulu, Amazon, and other streaming services. While most streaming video companies keep their user data secret, Nielsen estimated that 38 percent of U.S. citizens accessed Netflix in 2013. In 2013, Google, Inc. reported that YouTube served 1 billion unique viewers every month—an impressive number, considering that it amounts to one-third of the estimated 3 billion accessing the Internet every month (Reuters 2013; International Telecommunication Union 2014).

New media encompasses all interactive forms of information exchange. These include social networking sites, blogs, podcasts, wikis, and virtual worlds. Clearly, the list grows almost daily. However, there is no guarantee that the information offered is accurate. In fact, the immediacy of new media coupled with the lack of oversight means we must be more careful than ever to ensure our news is coming from accurate sources.

One approach to explain poverty is to blame the poor - that the poor are responsible for their own poverty. There is some evidence to support this theory, because the main reason people are poor is the lack of employment. According to this view, society has plenty of opportunities for people to realize the American dream, and people are poor because they lack the motivation, skills, or schooling to find work.

Another approach to explain poverty is to blame society - that society is responsible for poverty. While it is true that unemployment is a main contributor to poverty, the reasons people don't work are more in line with this approach. Loss of jobs in the inner city is a major contributor to poverty.

Global and national inequality

In 2000, the world entered a new millennium. In the spirit of a grand-scale New Year's resolution, it was a time for lofty aspirations and dreams of changing the world. It was also the time of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a series of ambitious goals set by UN member nations. The MDGs, as they became known, sought to provide a practical and specific plan for eradicating extreme poverty around the world. Nearly 200 countries signed on, and they worked to create a series of 21 targets with 60 indicators, with an ambitious goal of reaching them by 2015. The goals spanned eight categories:

To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

To achieve universal primary education

To promote gender equality and empower women

To reduce child mortality

To improve maternal health

To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases

To ensure environmental sustainability

To develop a global partnership for development (United Nations 2010)

The resolution of the United Nations that launched the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the successor of the MDGs in September 2015 reaffirmed this commitment to improved global equality.

17	Sustainable Development Goals
Goal 1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Goal 4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Goal 7	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
Goal 9	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10	Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and

	sustainable
Goal 12	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*
Goal 14	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Goal 16	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Goal 17	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Just as North America's wealth is increasingly concentrated among its richest citizens while the middle class slowly disappears, global inequality involves the concentration of resources in certain nations, significantly affecting the opportunities of individuals in poorer and less powerful countries. But before we delve into the complexities of global inequality, let us consider how the three major sociological perspectives might contribute to our understanding of it.



A functionalist might focus on why we have global inequality and what social purposes it serves. This view might assert, for example, that we have global inequality because some nations are better than others at adapting to new technologies and profiting from a globalized economy, and that when core nation companies locate in peripheral nations, they expand the local economy and benefit the workers. Many models of modernization and development are functionalist, suggesting that societies with modern cultural values and beliefs are able to achieve economic development while traditional cultural values and beliefs hinder development. Cultures are either functional or dysfunctional for the economic development of societies.

A critical sociologist would likely address the systematic inequality created when core nations exploit the resources of peripheral nations. For example, how many Canadian companies move operations offshore to take advantage of overseas workers who lack the constitutional protection and guaranteed minimum wages that exist in Canada? Doing so allows them to maximize profits, but at what cost?

The symbolic interaction perspective studies the day-to-day impact of global inequality, the meanings individuals attach to global stratification, and the subjective nature of poverty.

Someone applying this view to global inequality might focus on understanding the difference between what someone living in a core nation defines as poverty (relative poverty, defined as being unable to live the lifestyle of the average person in your country) and what someone living in a peripheral nation defines as poverty (absolute poverty, defined as being barely able, or unable, to afford basic necessities, such as food).

Immanuel Wallerstein: World Systems Approach

Wallerstein's (1979) world systems approach uses an economic and political basis to understand global inequality. Development and underdevelopment were not stages in a natural process of gradual modernization, but the product of power relations and colonialism. He conceived the global economy as a complex historical system supporting an economic hierarchy that placed some nations in positions of power with numerous resources and other nations in a state of economic subordination. Those that were in a state of subordination faced significant obstacles to mobilization.

Core nations are dominant capitalist countries, highly industrialized, technological, and urbanized. For example, Wallerstein contends that the United States is an economic powerhouse that can support or deny support to important economic legislation with far-reaching implications, thus exerting control over every aspect of the global economy and exploiting both semi-peripheral and peripheral nations. The free trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) are examples of how a core nation can leverage its power to gain the most advantageous position in the matter of global trade.

Peripheral nations have very little industrialization; what they do have often represents the outdated castoffs of core nations, the factories and means of production owned by core nations, or the resources exploited by core nations. They typically have unstable government and inadequate social programs, and they are economically dependent on core nations for jobs and aid. There are abundant examples of countries in this category. Check the label of your jeans or sweatshirt and see where it was made. Chances are it was a peripheral nation such as Guatemala, Bangladesh, Malaysia, or Colombia.

You can be sure the workers in these factories, which are owned or leased by global core nation companies, are not enjoying the same privileges and rights as Canadian workers.

Semi-peripheral nations are in-between nations, not powerful enough to dictate policy but nevertheless acting as a major source for raw material. They are an expanding middle-class marketplace for core nations, while also exploiting peripheral nations. Mexico is an example, providing abundant cheap agricultural labour to the United States and Canada, and supplying goods to the North American market at a rate dictated by U.S. and Canadian consumers without the constitutional protections offered to U.S. or Canadian workers.

We begin with the observation that these inequality processes operate within two different social systems—one national and one international—and that the theoretical dynamics driving these two dimensions of global inequality may not be the same. The most well understood dynamics are the national ones, being the object of stratification theory from classical economics through Marx and Weber

We begin with the assumption that the gap between persons within countries and the gap between countries themselves may have separate logics such that a widening gap within nations may not be correlated with a widening gap between nations. For example, one can imagine an egalitarian world-system where inequality between countries or zones of countries, like the core and periphery, would be low, while at the same time they could vary in terms of how that wealth is distributed. Therefore, there could be high degrees of international and national inequality: great distances between countries and between persons within those countries. The opposite of this would be a global condition of low inequality between countries and persons. This would represent the idealized condition of a more egalitarian world order. There is also the possibility of high inequality between countries accompanied by low inequality between individuals within those countries, and the opposite condition: low inequality between countries and high inequality between persons. These possibilities raise the question of whether such inequalities systematically co-vary

Institutionalized inequalities

Racism



Racism can be defined as prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior. Micro social theories which consider interpretative meaning in the social interactions of everyday life can illuminate micro-level radicalization. Face-to-face encounters and recognizing the agential element of individual action has traditionally been considered within an interactionist framework, with phenomenological approaches attending to subjective views of reality, rather than objective factors (Roberts, 2006). Micro-level radicalization, then, is inextricably framed by the influence of familial socialization and shared cultural values which are manifest in individuals positioned within various ethnic, classed and gendered groups. These are themselves shifting rather than static, shaping and shaped by interactions with other identity groups, and influenced significantly by local environmental conditions.

Building on this further, the meso-analytical level is particularly concerned with situating and contextualizing factors which are temporally and spatially specific.

In this middle-range of theorizing, the following can be considered, although this is by no means an exhaustive list: (i) socio-economic disadvantage; (ii) neighborhood composition and effects; (iii) political, media and popular discourses; (iv) political incorporation and empowerment; and (v) institutional processes and practices.

A focus on socio-economic disadvantage and class has always been central to social policy's epicenter of work examining poverty, inequality and redistribution. Social policy analysts have also considered neighborhood-level processes and the specific composition of communities, acknowledging the area-based experience of social, economic and political inequality (see for example Lupton, 2003a). Political, media and popular discourses addressing race/ethnicity, inequality and racism often contribute to 'commonsense' understandings of social life, which inform processes of micro-level radicalization. Migrationary flows into both urban and rural areas, for example, have been accompanied by sentiments carefully concealed in ministers' speeches, political statements and policy documents which underline racial Otherness and project multiple negative traits on to unwelcome migrants and asylum-seekers that are viewed as welfare-dependent opportunists, rather than as potential economically profitable contributors (Schuster and Solomos, 2004). Finally, institutional radicalization recognizes cumulative disadvantage experienced across interrelated welfare experiences (housing, education, employment and so on), produced through institutions' routine operations, regardless of the intentionality of individual actors (J. Williams, 1985).

Structural determinants of material conditions provide the frame through which institutional processes and practices at the meso level are enacted. Globalizing forces, which have produced fundamental changes in the mode of economic production, transnational politics and the unequal distribution of resources, structure social relations in Britain as elsewhere.

Major demographic changes wrought by migration flows within and between North and South states have resulted in diverse social groups seeking welfare services.

The nature of welfare more broadly, and housing, education and employment specifically, have also been transformed in the post-industrialised late modern world. Deindustrialization, technological change, casualisation and part-time working, educational credentialism, marketisation, increased owner-occupation, the residualisation of social housing, the rise of the consumer/client, and entrenched inequalities of wealth, income and power have all influenced the context in which social welfare is provided and services are delivered. Added to this, the neo-liberal stamp of decentralized governance and public managerialism have dramatically altered the way in which public sector organizations are managed, which is then translated in front-line operational practices.

Goldberg's (2001) insights on the formation of the modern racial state are also valuable for our interpretive understanding at the macro level. Through its apparatuses, modern states, it is argued, shaped articulations of race and racist exclusion, through definition, regulation, management, economic controls and the mediation of social relations. Ethnic monitoring, the surveillance and criminalization of racially identified populations, their limited access to economic resources and the extent to which such groups interacted, all served the modern racial state. Imbued within political and popular culture, such expressions of race (typically hierarchical) are deeply rooted in Enlightenment thinking (Eze, 1997 as cited in Coretta 2011) and are acted upon, albeit reflexively, within institutions.

Sexism

By definition sexism is prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, typically against women, on the basis of sex. Sexism refers to prejudiced beliefs that value one sex over another. Sexism varies in its level of severity. In parts of the world where women are strongly undervalued, young girls may not be given the same access to nutrition, health care, and education as boys.

Further, they will grow up believing that they deserve to be treated differently from boys (Thorne 1993; UNICEF 2007). While illegal in Canada when practiced as discrimination, unequal treatment of women continues to pervade social life. It should be noted that discrimination based on sex occurs at both the micro- and macro-levels. Many sociologists focus on discrimination that is built into the social structure; this type of discrimination is known as institutional discrimination (Pincus 2008).

According to Jones et al (2008, p109), institutional sexism refers to invidious sexual inequalities in the explicit rules and implicit norms governing and structuring social institutions. Researchers often differentiate between three major types of sexism: (1) individual, (2) societal/cultural, and (3) institutional. Institutional sexism refers to gender discrimination reflected in the policies and practices of organizations such as governments, corporations (workplaces), public institutions (schools, health care), and financial institutions. These practices derive from systemic sexist beliefs that women are inferior to and therefore less capable than men. An example of institutional sexism is the differential pay rate between men and women, even when occupying the same role: National statistics show that in the United States, on average, women make \$0.77 for every \$1.00 men earn. Institutional sexism affects people's self-concept and can shape their work identity and professional aspirations, making it extremely relevant to the topic of psychology and gender.

Religious institutions provide a useful example of how explicit rules and implicit norms structure institutions. In the Catholic Church, for instance, it is an explicit rule that all priests are men and all nuns are women. Only priests can run the church hierarchy, and priests outrank nuns in most decision-making situations. While it is clear how explicit rules can govern and structure institutions, this example can also help us to see that implicit norms also structure Catholic experience and create sexual inequality. While it is no longer widely accepted as an explicit rule that in heterosexual marriage the man is the head of the household and the woman is the helpmeet, it is implied by the relative rank of priests and nuns in the church and by its sacred writings.

This implicit norm positions men above women in marriage (as in all other social institutions in which both sexes are present), clearly an invidious sexual inequality. In addition to the more explicitly rule-governed institutions of government, religion, family, health care, and education, there are crucially important informally or implicitly structured institutions prime among them being language, and the sites of cultural and artistic production. To say that sexism is a systematic social injustice based on one's sex, or a discriminatory sex-role differentiation, is to speak of institutional sexism. Sexism, then, must be understood as a part of the social order, similar to the economic order of capitalism or the political order of liberalism.

Ageism

Robert Butler coined the term ageism in 1969. Much like racism or sexism, ageism refers to stereotypes of and discrimination against people based on a single trait: their older age. Butler indicated ageism is shown at both the individual and institutional level. Ageism includes stereotypes, myths, outright disdain and dislike, avoidance of contact, and discrimination in housing, employment, and services of many kinds. For example, I was recently shopping at a store on a busy Saturday. I was in the self-checkout lane. I heard a person behind me make a remark about the age of the person using the register. While I did not hear exactly what was said, it was evident the slow progress of the line was attributed to the age of the person using the checkout system.

Like other forms of discrimination, ageism negatively impacts individual people. Research suggests people with more negative views on aging experience poorer health. Unlike other forms of discrimination, we subtly accept ageism with little comment or concern. For example, we have all seen the advertisements for anti-aging products. Imagine the uproar that would ensue if companies were marketing anti-feminine or anti-race products. What's more, ageism is the only form of prejudice we will all experience, if we live long enough.

- Attributing forgetting to our age.

To forget is to be human. We don't think twice about misplacing our keys in our 20s. We might experience frustration, but we would hardly attribute the loss of our keys to a "senior moment". As we get older, we start attributing memory lapses to our age. Research tells us that perceptions of age-related memory loss are overblown.

- Ninety percent of marketing dollars target people younger than 50!

What's shocking about this figure is that one-third of Americans are age 50 or older. Even more ironic is that older people have more income at their disposal than younger people and the number of adults 50 and older is projected to increase!

- "Old people go there!"

In my time as a professional, I have heard this statement in various ways and most often from people the venue is designed to serve. Most recently I was told about a 90+ woman who didn't want to go to a senior center because that's where old people go. Discerning her exact meaning is difficult, but her statement tells us that being around "old people" is undesirable.

- Benevolent ageism refers to assigning protection/benefits to people because older age is assumed to identify need.

Three out of every five people see older people as lonely. Many believe they have been abandoned by their families. While connection to the family is essential to preventing loneliness in older people, only one out of eight older people reported feeling lonely.

Disability is also assumed to be common among people age 65 and older. While more common in older people than younger people, it is not as prevalent as one might assume based on aging stereotypes. In 2012, nearly two-thirds of people age 65 and older are reported to have had no disability.

- Emphasis on looming healthcare crisis as the boomers age.

Research shows the divide between expert knowledge and public understanding on aging. Among the general public, loss of control and deterioration are assumed to be natural parts of the aging process. In contrast, experts emphasize that features of our communities and homes are the key to maintaining health and independence as we age. Discussing the healthcare system without including social determinants of health (e.g. food access, walk ability, crime, etc.) omits valuable pieces of the puzzle that explain how we experience aging.

Prejudices and Interactions

While dictionary definitions of the term prejudice often indicate either positive or negative bias, the use of the term in the social sciences has been largely restricted to indicating negative biases, the information available on positive racial bias, or positive prejudice, is minimal. Apparent examples of the phenomenon of positive racial bias are becoming relatively common, however. For example, when a university begins actively to recruit black students whose academic credentials would not normally be acceptable, then a specific instance of positive racial discrimination is occurring, possibly indicating a form of positive racial prejudice. The problem of various definitions of prejudice goes beyond the simple issue of positive or negative bias, the great variability of definition at the operational level has resulted in problems in the interpretation of specific studies and in a lack of closure on some of the issues which have received attention in the recent literature.

Sociological explanations of prejudice incorporate some of the principles and processes discussed earlier. One popular explanation emphasizes conformity and socialization (also called social learning theory). In this view, people who are prejudiced are merely conforming to the culture in which they grow up, and prejudice is the result of socialization from parents, peers, the news media, and other various aspects of their culture. Supporting this view, studies have found that people tend to become more prejudiced when they move to areas where people are very prejudiced and less prejudiced when they move to locations where people are less prejudiced (Aronson, 2008).

If people in the South today continue to be more prejudiced than those outside the South, as we discuss later, even though legal segregation ended more than four decades ago, the influence of their culture on their socialization may help explain these beliefs.

A second sociological explanation emphasizes economic and political competition and is commonly called group threat theory (Quillian, 2006; Hughes & Tuch, 2003). In this view prejudice arises from competition over jobs and other resources and from disagreement over various political issues. When groups vie with each other over these matters, they often become hostile toward each other. Amid such hostility, it is easy to become prejudiced toward the group that threatens your economic or political standing. A popular version of this basic explanation is Susan Olzak's (1992) ethnic competition theory, which holds that ethnic prejudice and conflict increase when two or more ethnic groups find themselves competing for jobs, housing, and other goals.

Growing evidence suggests that news media coverage of people of color helps fuel racial prejudice and stereotypes. By presenting people of color in a negative light, the media may unwittingly reinforce the prejudice that individuals already have or even increase their prejudice (Larson, 2005).

Sex and Gender



According to Macionis (1989), sex refers to the division of humanity into biological categories of male and female. As a biological distinction, sex is determined at the moment a child is conceived. Sex is also defined as the biological differences between men and women, that is, "...their physical characteristics: external genitalia, internal genitalia, gonads (the organs which produce sex cells), hormonal states and secondary sex characteristics." (Haralambos and Holborn, 2004: 94). Sex is therefore a fact of biology, which is the physiological distinctiveness or state of being male or female.

Sex refers to the anatomical and other biological differences between females and males that are determined at the moment of conception and develop in the womb and throughout childhood and adolescence. Females, of course, have two X chromosomes, while males have one X chromosome and one Y chromosome. From this basic genetic difference spring other biological differences. The first to appear are the different genitals that boys and girls develop in the womb and that the doctor (or midwife) and parents look for when a baby is born (assuming the baby's sex is not already known from ultrasound or other techniques) so that the momentous announcement, "It's a boy!" or "It's a girl!" can be made. The genitalia are called primary sex characteristics, while the other differences that develop during puberty are called secondary sex characteristics and stem from hormonal differences between the two sexes. In this difficult period of adolescents' lives, boys generally acquire deeper voices, more body hair, and more muscles from their flowing testosterone. Girls develop breasts and wider hips and begin menstruating as nature prepares them for possible pregnancy and childbirth. For better or worse, these basic biological differences between the sexes affect many people's perceptions of what it means to be female or male.

If sex is a biological concept, then gender is a social concept. It refers to the social and cultural differences a society assigns to people based on their (biological) sex. A related concept, gender roles, refers to a society's expectations of people's behavior and attitudes based on whether they are females or males. Gender refers to human traits linked by culture to each sex (Haralambos and Holborn, 2004). Within a society; males are socialized to be masculine as females are taught to be feminine. Walter and Manion (1996) maintain that gender is the difference that sex makes within a society, guiding how we are to think of ourselves, how we interact with others, the social opportunities, occupations, family roles and prestige allowed males and females.

"Gender can also be defined as a set of characteristics, roles and behavior patterns that distinguish women from men which are constructed not biologically but socially and culturally" (Gita Sen in Towards Earth Summit 2002:1).

Like the variable concepts of class, race, ethnicity, culture and economics, gender is an analytical tool for understanding social processes that affect human beings. The following table 1.1 helps you differentiate between gender and sex.

Sex roles

Sex roles are duties, activities, tasks or responsibilities that males and females perform or undertake that are an inevitable product of one's biology, for example, breastfeeding for females and impregnating for the males. Like sex, these assignments are biologically determined, fixed, universal and exclusive to a particular sex.

Gender roles

Gender roles are duties, chores, tasks, responsibilities or assignments that a particular cultural group consider appropriate for its males and females on the basis of the meaning attached to their sexual identity. These roles are not a direct or an inevitable product of males' or females' biology e.g. caring for children by females and mending a puncture for males.

They are learnt, vary within and among cultures, dynamic, interchangeable and can be affected by factors like class, religion, age, race, education, geographical location and ethnicity.

Gender identity and sexuality

Gender Identity

'...it is how an individual adapts the prescribed sex role to his or her individual identity.' Gender identity can also be defined as the extent to which one identifies as being either masculine or feminine (Diamond 2002). It is an individual's self-conception of being male or female based on his or her association with masculine or feminine gender roles. Individuals who identify with the role that is the opposite of their biological sex are called transgendered. Transgendered males, for example, have such a strong emotional and psychological connection to the feminine aspects of society that they identify their gender as female. The parallel connection to masculinity exists for transgendered females.

Sexuality

In the area of sexuality, sociologists focus their attention on sexual attitudes and practices, not on physiology or anatomy. Sexuality is viewed as a person's capacity for sexual feelings. Studying sexual attitudes and practices is a particularly interesting field of sociology because sexual behaviour is a cultural universal. Throughout time and place, the vast majority of human beings have participated in sexual relationships (Broude 2003). Each society, however, interprets sexuality and sexual activity in different ways. Many societies around the world have different attitudes about premarital sex, the age of sexual consent, homosexuality, masturbation, and other sexual behaviours that are not consistent with universally cultural norms (Widmer, Treas, and Newcomb 1998). At the same time, sociologists have learned that certain norms (like disapproval of incest) are shared among most societies. Likewise, societies generally have norms that reinforce their accepted social system of sexuality.

What is considered "normal" in terms of sexual behaviour is based on the norms and values of the society. Societies that value monogamy, for example, would likely oppose extramarital sex. Individuals are socialized to sexual attitudes by their family, education system, peers, media, and religion. Historically, religion has been the greatest influence on sexual behaviour in most societies, but in more recent years, peers and the media have emerged as two of the strongest influences, particularly with North American teens (Potard, Courtois, and Rusch 2008). Let us take a closer look at sexual attitudes in Canada and around the world.

Theoretical Perspectives on Sex and Gender

Biological (Sex) Theories

Biology has been the most widely accepted explanation for inequalities between men and women for a long time.

Scientists observe natural differences ranging from hormones, chromosomes, brain size and genetics as responsible for innate differences in behavior of women and men (Giddens, 2001). Even stereotypical behaviors like men's physical strength, superior intelligence aggression women's softness, care, passivity and love are all attributed to biological determinism.

Biologists argue that the above characteristics are evident across cultures. However, critics of biological theories reveal that the level, for example of passivity of women and aggression of males vary depending on cultures. They argue that, if a trait is not universal, then it cannot be natural. Giddens (2001), notes that such theories neglect the vital role of social interaction in shaping human behavior.

- **Brain Laterisation and Hormonal Explanations**

Scientists believe that behavior, personality and emotional disposition are controlled by hormones in males and females. Studies by Nicholson showed that there is correlation between levels of testosterone and male aggression. Girls with high levels of estrogen exhibit 'tomboy' characteristics. John Nicholson cited in Haralambos and Holborn (2004) argue that the Right and left wings of the brain specialize in different tasks because of hormones which have effects on the brain. The right specializes in visio-spatial abilities while the left specializes in verbal and language skills. This is supported by Gray and Buffery (Ibid) who pointed out that the left is dominant in girls hence girls have verbal ability, while boys perform better in mathematical texts. However, not all boys score higher in math and lower in languages. Similarly not all girls score low marks in math and higher in language. There are also differences in ability at infant stage where girls score higher in all subjects. This shows that there are other factors that influence ability.

- **Psycho-analytic theory (by Sigmund Freud)**

Freud in Giddens (2001) argues that gender differences at infant are centred on the presence or absence of the penis.

Having a penis is equivalent to being a boy while being a girl means one lacks a penis. The boy views the father as a rival in the affection of the mother. The boy suppresses feelings for the mother and identifies with the father in fear of threats, discipline and demand for autonomy by the father. Girls suffer from penis envy and devalue the mother who does not have one. She identifies with the mother and takes dependency and submissive attitudes. The above theory assumes that the penis is superior to the vagina and that gender learning is concentrated at the age of 4-5 years. There are more factors and processes that contribute to gender learning, genetic factors are not enough.

- **Sociobiology**

The theory was propounded by William (1975) and applied to gender by David Barash (Haralambos and Holborn, 2004). Barash argues that genetics are governed by instructions to maximize the chances of passing on the genes to future generations from breeding. Males produce more sperms hence have interest in making many females pregnant. As a result males are likely to be promiscuous than females. Men compete for scarce reproductive capacities of females. Females invest more time and energy in one off-spring and gestate the foetus in her womb. Women are sure that children are genetically theirs hence devote time to child care. It is assumed that women can tolerate men's infidelity more readily than men. The theory falls short of the realization that human behaviour is governed by the environment not instincts. It is conservative and views human behaviour as natural, inevitable and universal.

- **Biology and Practicality**

George Murdock in Haralambos and Holborn (2004) views males and females differences in physical strength, as leading to differences in roles. Sexual division of labour is taken to be the most efficient way of organizing society. He points out that a survey of 224 societies showed that men's tasks were those demanding physical strength eg, mining, hunting, quarrying etc. Women were limited to less strenuous tasks like fetching water, cooking, gathering firewood, preparing clothes.

Women were tied to the home, child bearing and care. To Murdock, physical strength and child bearing are biological and determine roles and spheres of operation in the home and public place. The findings from the survey of 224 societies are not enough to conclude that sexual division of labour is biological. Societies construct roles but these roles are not universal. What would be the biological explanation in these societies which do not stick to the roles given above?

- **Biology: Expressive and Instrumental Roles (Talcott Parsons)**

Though a sociologist, Parsons starting point in explaining sexual division of labour was in biology. He argues out that childbearing and early nursing is linked to biology. The male is achievement oriented; playing instrumental role that has stress and anxiety. The woman's role is expressive, that is providing warmth, emotional support and stabilizing adult personalities. She relieves stress by providing the breadwinner with love, consideration and understanding. Clear sexual division of labour is for efficiency as a social system. Expressive and instrumental roles complement each other and promote family solidarity. Each sex is biologically suited for these tasks. Parsons did not foresee the future of the modern industrial society where women also perform instrumental roles that are stressful. Mothers can have substitutes in childcare for love and affection (O'Donnell, 1992). This is because although child bearing is biological, child rearing is not. In a modern industrial society even the type of work has changed and sexual division of labour is not universal.

Summary

Biological theories assume that nature is more significant than one's social experiences. They focus on sex hence are heavily criticized by sociologists and feminists who are interested in gender instead. Sociologists and feminists feel that the differences between men and women are socially rather than biologically produced. Feminist theories were a reaction to the shortfalls of biological theories. There has been a shift from biological explanations to psychosocial patterns of socialization.

Biology alone is not enough to explain social, economic, political and religious differences between men and women.

Gender theories

- **Liberal theory**

Origin

It is the first documented form of feminism. According to Gaidzanwa in Meena (1992), liberal feminism dates back to the 18th Century Britain. The proponent, Mary Wollstonecraft questioned views about women which were damaging and discriminatory. The theory rose as a result of the following;

Industrial Revolution in Europe especially Britain that created structural changes in the methods of production and social relations. For example, women joined wage labour but were not treated as their male counter parts;

Democratic political ideas in capitalist USA that emphasized 'Equality, Liberty and Fraternity';

Ideas of Scholars of Enlightenment for example, Rousseau, Aristotle among others;

Influence of the modernization theory and Women in Development (WID) approach to Development which emphasized borrowing of Western ideas and did not revamp economic and social structures of society;

Philosophy of liberalism with the belief in individual rights for example, right to freedom and autonomy.

The second wave of feminism was widespread in the 1950s. The 1960s ushered in new rights in many countries that were gaining independence, especially third world countries (Tandon, 1996). These included rights to independence, vote, work, protection, dignity and freedom. Liberal feminism was based on the belief that women possess reason and as such are entitled to full human rights and are free to choose their role in life, explore their potential and compete with men.

Major Exposition

Giddens (2001:692) defines liberal theory as a:

Feminist theory that believes gender inequality is produced by reduced access for women and girls to civil rights and allocation of social resources such as education and employment.

Liberal feminists believe:-

- ✓ In individual rights for women.
- ✓ That women's discrimination is based on prejudice, sexism and socialization (Magezis, 1996).
- ✓ Those women have mental capacities as their male counterparts and should be given the same opportunities in political, economic and social spheres.
- ✓ Those women are constrained by social legal and cultural institutions.
- ✓ That there should be fairness, justice, equal opportunities and equal participation in the management of society.
- ✓ That attitudes, stereotypes and biases against females constrain women
- ✓ Confinement of women to the private sphere and dependency on men.

Limitations of the Theory.

The liberal Theory is mainly criticized by socialist and radical feminists who argue that liberals:

- ✓ Do not address underlying causes of women's oppression (Bryson, 1992).
- ✓ Ignore power relations (structural inequalities) prevailing in society
- ✓ Do not goes deeper into explaining causes of women's subordination hence cannot offer solutions for an unknown cause
- ✓ Do not offer strategy to counter traditional norms and values that constrain women.
- ✓ Is reformist in nature moving in a gradual process to influence the government to pass laws (Magezis, 1996). No major structural changes are made in the socio-economic arrangement of the society.

- ✓ View women as a homogeneous category ignoring class, race and ethnicity.
- ✓ Its calls for access to education, health, employment, legal instruments leave out lower class women.
- ✓ It's blending well with the WID approach to development; its welfare and anti-poverty approaches compromise women rights, access and control of resources.

- **Marxist- Feminist Theory**

Origin

Marxist Feminists are a variety of scholars who were applying the Marxist theory of economic determinism in explaining the oppression of women. These were drawing from Karl Max and Fredrick Engels' writings, for example: 'The origin of the family, private property and the State. (O'Donnell 1992). The theory rose in the 1970s owing to the Women and Development (WAD) approach to development and as a critic of the liberal feminist theory, modernization theory and Women in development approach.

Women and Development (WAD) approach had been influenced by the critics of the modernization theory, which were dependency theorists and Under-development scholars of the Third World especially Latin America. These were the likes of Walter Rodney, Dos Antos and Gunder Frank. The proponents of the Marxist Feminists are Sue Sharpe, Juliet Mitchel and Marynard among others.

Marxist-Feminist Expositions

- ✓ Gender inequalities are rooted in capitalism and its ownership of private property (Bryson, 1992).
- ✓ They challenge attempt to isolate gender from social class.
- ✓ Men are powerful because they own the means of production (dominant class)
- ✓ Women do not own the means of production hence are a subordinate class that is oppressed, exploited just like the proletariats.
- ✓ The base determines relations between men and women.

- ✓ Women's position in a capitalist society is economically determined
- ✓ Capitalism divides work into private (home) and public sphere (workplace).
- ✓ Capitalism values men's labour and devalue that of women by giving low wages.
- ✓ Women enter wage labour from a subordinate position.
- ✓ Women are a reserve army of labour, that is, they can be recruited any time to replace males at a low cost.

Sharpe in O'Donnell (1992; 172) argues that;

Employers Frequently regard women as mere temporary labour, and consider that they should be thought lucky to have the opportunity to earn some money for themselves. They can be used as surplus labour force, to be employed or laid off at will.

Men are viewed as bread winners' hence higher wages while women are viewed as appendages of men (Bryson, 1992).

Women suffer double exploitation, for example, they produce in factories and produce future labourers at no cost.

Domestic work in the private sphere is not remunerated.

Women are alienated (separated) from their production, reproduction and sexuality. This means women do not own and control what they produce in the public sphere, at home and even that which relates to their sexuality (children and their bodies).

Mitchel in O' Donnell (ibid.) argues that oppression in the family produces:

...A tendency to small-mindedness, petty, jealousy, irrational emotionally and random violence, dependency competitive selfishness, possessiveness, passivity, a lack of vision and conservatism....

These characteristics are embedded in women's objective conditions and a sexist society.

Women serve the interest of capitalism through the management of the family. They provide productive, psychological and social needs.

Solutions

- ✓ Marxist-Feminists propose the following as some of the solutions to women's problems;
- ✓ Marxist Feminists stress the need to overthrow capitalist economic system. They call for a socialist Revolution that would change the structure and ownership of the means of production.
- ✓ There must be an ideological change first in the consciousness of both sexes. (Pilcher and Whelehan, 2004)
- ✓ Females should free themselves from dependence and traditional gender roles that confine them to the private sphere.
- ✓ Participation of women in the public sphere is the key to their liberation.
- ✓ Men and women should struggle against capitalist oppressors.
- ✓ Class and gender struggles should take place at the same time.
- ✓ Abolition of private property and setting up of a communally owned means of production in a communist society.
- ✓ Household work should be paid for.

Applicability of the Marxist-Feminist Theory.

In SADC countries as patriarchal societies, men own private property more than women e.g. land, capital, houses, machinery and labour. Most of the productive forces are registered on male names. As a result men become powerful, oppress and dominate women. The one who owns decides and has final judgement over resources. Domestic work in the home is either not paid for or low wages are given to maids. Women employed in the public sphere mostly do domestic work which has been transferred from the private sphere to the public sphere for example nursing (caring), teaching (socializing), and catering (servicing) and being secretaries for bosses who are mostly males. Women are employed in large numbers in export processing as well as textile industries for low wages.

These careers are characterized by low wages. The children produced belong to the father in a traditional family and what the woman produces from her labour is controlled by the husband. Patriarchy, culture and religion are ideologies that legitimate inequalities making them appear normal, natural and unchangeable. State institutions e.g. education, reproduces patriarchal values. Ownership of the means of production does determine one's (women's) position and power in a capitalist society. Schools in a capitalist society re-enforce social inequalities by producing a workforce divided by class. Schools in Zimbabwe, for example, can be classified into private, former group A, former group B, mission schools and what used to be called upper-tops. Products from these schools still exhibit glaring class and gender differences.

Limitations

Marxist-Feminist criticism is based on the following:

Society has changed from the classes and conditions observed by Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels. Some women these days own private property.

Some SADC countries have come up with national gender policies and legal instruments that enable women to access property, capital, loans and land.

Entry into wage labour by women from the 18th Century to today does not prove to be key to their liberation. It has instead increased women's labour burdens.

Experiences in Socialist countries, for example, Soviet Union, Cuba, China and the former Eastern Block, did not show that women's positions in these societies were any better. These societies are still male dominated with powerful posts in male hands.

In countries like Zimbabwe, most women find themselves in the informal sector with low unreliable income. They are not part of the proletariat working in public places. The majority of women are in rural areas. The theory did not look at majority of women in Third World countries.

Marxist- feminists are gender blind. They failed to focus on power relations of males and females as independent from social class. They did not explain why men exploit and oppress women even in socialist societies.

They also fail to explain subordinate position of women before the advent of Capitalism.

Marxist-Feminists ignore patriarchy and male control of women's sexuality, culture, violence, race and ethnicity.

The economic factor is not enough to explain gender inequalities; other sources of inequalities are ignored.

- **Radical theory**

Origin

Radical feminism is a movement that rose in the 1960s – 80s as a breakaway of Marxists who were frustrated by the inability to apply social class in analyzing gender oppression. It also emerged as a reaction to the liberal theory (Meena, 1992: Bryson, 1992). Its impetus came from women's experiences in the Civil Rights, anti war, new-left and student movements in North America, Europe and Australia. The first radical group was influenced by the Maoist ideas and the need to develop political strategies for women's liberation. Their slogan was the 'Personal is political' (Bryson, 1992) meaning that no aspect of life lacked a political dimension (power relations). Political struggles can take many new forms. It was important to break the silence through consciousness rising. The theory is radical in nature, that is it is violent, fast, uncompromising and strongly oppose patriarchal systems. Some of the proponents are Kate Millet, Shulamith Firestone and Ortner. These demand radical transformation of oppressive gender relations. Mannathoko in Meena (1192:75) cites that radicals:

... Launched a wholesale onslaught against male dominated society and consider men as the enemy.

Solutions

Radicals prescribe the following solutions for the liberation of women:

- ✓ Women are to struggle on their own for their own liberation against their oppressors (males). This is evidenced by the quotation...Radicals reject assistance by males because men are viewed as enemies of the liberation.

- ✓ They are blamed for being responsible for all the other problems of women, for example, Conflict, war, destruction of the environment, and abuse. A war should be raged against men.
- ✓ Reject gender roles and call for child care facilities.
- ✓ Radicals are of the view that gender differences can be reduced by taking desirable characteristics of males and females because these are socially constructed.
- ✓ However, cultural feminists (Extremists) celebrate feminine characteristics like interdependence and sharing:

...It is better to be feminine than to be masculine. Thus women should not try to be like men. (Tong in Haralambos and Holborn, 2004:103).

- ✓ Call for total restructuring of society. To them doing away with male domination is a means of eliminating women's oppression.
- ✓ Demand women's empowerment in education, politics and sexuality.
- ✓ Focus on violence against women, for example, rape, sexual harassment, incest, pornography and domestic violence.
- ✓ Challenge also men's control and monopoly over the production and use of knowledge, for example, in the mass media.

Applicability of the Radical Feminist Theory

Unlike the liberals who fight for equal educational opportunities, radicals have challenged both the quality and quantity of education being offered to women. Their ideas have significantly influenced changes in the curriculum which has resulted in the eliminating of gender stereotyping that impact negatively on women's academic achievement. This gender stereotyping is evident in subjects as sciences, maths, commercials and social studies that were male dominated. These have been made available to women. Women are also empowered health wise e.g. use of birth control measures of their choices, use of protection (female condom),

There are women's pressure groups, for example, Women's Action Group (WAG), Affirmative Action Group(AAG) and Women Of Zimbabwe Arise(WOZA) fight for rights of women and girls. Other women facilities include the Girl Child Network, scholarships for girl children and victim friendly courts for abused children.

The passing of the sexual offences Act, HIV AIDS Act, Domestic Violence Act and stiffer penalties for rape perpetrators are all efforts of radical feminists. Organizations like Msasa Project have protected women experiencing gender domestic violence of any kind in Zimbabwe. A shelter for such women was set up in Harare. Single sex schools, women's University and women's Institute of Governance are all products of radical feminists. Women have been made to access legal instruments that allow them to abort under special circumstances like rape, incest, mental health or anything that endangers the woman's health. Radical feminists have also influenced the setting up of childcare institutions, and introduction of new reproductive technologies like donation of sperms, artificial insemination, surrogate motherhood and making choices of family planning methods. All these enable women to control their bodies.

Limitations

The following can be cited as limitations of the Radical Feminist Theory:

- ✓ It is criticized as Western, for example, in Africa, abortion is male dominated (males decide) and it touches religious and moral issues. As a result the theory is heavily criticized and opposed.
- ✓ It emphasizes differences between men and women making peaceful co-existence and co-operation impossible.
- ✓ It is hostile towards the man who is also victims of socialization.
- ✓ Separatists and their rejection of marriage and relationships with males can lead to the end of the human race.
- ✓ Views women as passive victims and assumes that all women are good and all males are bad.
- ✓ That all males are able to oppress all women, ignoring the fact that some men are oppressed by women or by both

- ✓ The theory fails to explain the origins of patriarchy and its power.
- ✓ It leaves out other factors like race, class and ethnicity.

- **Socialist Feminist Theory**

Socialist Feminism is not a theory on its own, but a critique of the Marxist and radical feminist theories. Bryson (1992:234) argues that:

It refers to recent attempts to synthesize the insights of Marxists and radical feminism to build a new theory combining the best of both. It rose in the 1960s.

Some of the proponents are Heidi, Jaggar and Ann Ferguson. The socialist- Feminists differ from Marxist- Feminists in that their explanation for gender inequalities extend from capitalism to patriarchy. Unlike Marxists, they looked at women in both the public and the private spheres. Marxists focused more at the workplace.

Major Expositions

The modern society is viewed as both capitalist and patriarchal. Socialist- feminists believe that the subordination of women is rooted in the two evils of capitalism and patriarchy:

The theory is dualistic in nature with two evils mutually reinforcing.

Sometimes the two systems conflict – for example,. Capitalist demand for labour is opposed by patriarchal demand for personal services in the home. However, both capitalist and patriarchal men benefit from the above arrangement that subordinate women.

Marxists are criticized for focusing only on capital ignoring relations of men and women.

To socialist feminists, women's subordinates go beyond capitalism to patriarchy that pre-dates capitalism.

Patriarchy is based on men's control over women's labour and this is part of the productive process. Capitalism is based on the capitalist control of labour in the productive process.

Ferguson feels that patriarchy is semi-autonomous, while Young views patriarchy and capitalism as not dual but unified systems (Bryson, 1992).

To support the above, Jaggar says the two are inseparable. For both, oppression of women touches issues of reproduction and production, for example, patriarchy controls reproduction of women and their labour in the production process. Patriarchy benefits from the control of the produce from reproduction (children) and women's labour (products). Capitalism like patriarchy benefits from reproduction of future workers and produce from women's labour.

Vogel says maintenance and production of the working class are essential requirements of capitalism. Hence, the two systems of domination are 'inextricably entangled' (Bryson, 1992:247). Socialist-feminist argue that entry into wage labour by women cannot be key to their liberation as Marxists suggested. Women entered wage labour during the industrial revolutions in Europe, for example, Britain (1800) France (1830), Germany (1850) but the position of women did not change in homes and workplace. Again, during world wars (WWI 1914- 1918) and (WW II 1939-1945) women participated in industries but this did not usher the fruits they expected.

Class analysis by Marxists is not enough. They ignore patriarchy and over estimate the power of capital.

Socialist Feminists focus on women's question and make demands as both workers and women.

Men have vested interest in the subordination of women because they benefit socially and materially.

Women produce, reproduce, socialize and service families at no cost. Women reproduce workers for capitalists. They also reproduce heirs as well as workers for their husbands.

Education is seen as reproducing both class and gender inequalities. (Stromquist 1989; Sanderson, 1988). Schools through socialization reproduce capitalists and patriarchal values, habits of passivity, conformity among girls as well as children from lower class background.

Capitalism and patriarchy legitimizes class and gender inequalities.

Capitalism and patriarchy work hand in hand in the exploitation of women. Male supremacy is embedded in economic structures. These are strengthened by patriarchal relations.

Solutions

The following are solutions suggested by Socialist- Feminists:

- ✓ A revolution that challenges the two ideologies leading to uprooting of both capitalism and patriarchy;
- ✓ Women struggle should focus on conditions of production, reproduction, reproductive rights, sexuality, and new forms of family organization.
- ✓ Women should be united by their experiences, disputes, race, class, ethnicity or religion.
- ✓ All class and cultural forces of oppression should be ended in order to liberate women.
- ✓ Women should work side by side with men.

Applicability of the Socialist- Feminist Theory

The Socialist- Feminist Theory has led to Gender and Development (GAD) Approach where men and women work side by side with men in political, economic and social development. (Refer to Unit 3). It has made development agencies or governments to focus on inequalities in the private and public spheres. Economic ownership, reproduction, family organization and reproductive rights are now areas of focus in some SADC countries. This has led to introduction of laws that enable women to access property, health care, and reproductive rights and to choose marriage types (forms of family organization). Some governments in the SADC like Zimbabwe have crafted national gender policies for development. These policies look at men and women's access to land, education and training, housing, water, health, political decision making, natural resources. The policies encourage participation of women and men in all spheres of life.

Limitations

The following have been identified as weaknesses of the Socialist- Feminist Theory:

- ✓ It focuses on working middle class women leaving out peasants..
- ✓ Socialist- Feminists do not explain the origins of patriarchy and give no suggestions of how it can be uprooted.
- ✓ Socialist- Feminists do not offer a theory of their own but only critique existing theories.
- ✓ Patriarchy can work in other modes of production besides capitalism, for example, pre-capitalist and socialist modes of production.
- ✓ Patriarchy can be strengthened and supported by other ideologies beside capitalism, for example, culture, religion and socialization.

▪ **Third World Countries Political Economy Approach (Post Modernism)**

Origins

It is important for us to note that the traditional feminist theories (liberal, Marxist, radical and socialist feminist) focused on the concerns of middle class women. They also viewed women as a homogeneous group. Gaidzanwa in Meena (1992) refer to these theories as 'bourgeoisie theories'. Women's concerns did not transcend class and race. Wollenstone craft's liberal feminism belonged to the bourgeoisie class concerned with bourgeoisie women. Women of the other creeds, religion, age, class and ethnicity were excluded.

The proponents of third world economy approach are third world feminists who offer a critique of the (traditional dominant) feminist theories. Third world political approach is part of post modernist theories. Post modernism is a reaction to modernist theories' failure to account for different changes in society. Post modernists argue that:

- ✓ It is not possible to study society and develop unified conclusions.
- ✓ Human behavior is characterized by heterogeneity rather than homogeneity
- ✓ Positivism and generalizations are not accurate in human behavior

The Third World Political approach looks at the following factors as explanations for the subordinate position of women especially in Third World Countries:

Location on the Globe (first, second and third world)

International/ Global economy

History of colonization

Race

Class

Patriarchy

Ethnicity

Religion

Age

Gender among others.

Major Tenants

The theory focuses on the 3rd world minorities of women previously ignored. These are unrepresented black, rural, disabled, and younger and lower class women among others.

Women are viewed as fragmented or heterogeneous because of ethnicity, race, religion, age, disability, class, nationality, marital status, history and multiple identities.

As a result women do not have shared experiences as suggested by traditional feminist theories. Marcus and Duckling (1998:59) argues that social theory can not offer general and inclusive views of the social world.

A feminist theory is not possible especially in 3rd world countries like Africa where women are divided by a lot of factors listed above.

Subordination of 3rd world women should be situated in their histories and their location within neo-colonial nations.

It looks at multicultural or global feminism where all other differences are recognized not just gender.

It also looks at intersection of gender with race, class and issues of colonization and exploitation of women in the developing world

According to the 3rd world feminist writers, women in the 3rd world countries are subordinated in many ways: they are subordinated and oppressed as:

1. Third World women

The relationship that exists between the first world (developed industrial nations) and the 3rd world (underdeveloped nations) is in such a way that the first world exploits third world resources and labour. The periphery (satellites that is third world countries supply the metropolis (core), the first world with resources and labour (Gunder Frank and Dos Santos in Anderson (1995). Zimbabwe is a third world country and women are subordinated as third world women.

2. Globalization of Economy

Third world economies, Zimbabwe included are incorporated into capitalist economies of the developed world. Transnational capitalists who are mostly the patriachs control world economy through trade. A system of dependency of 3rd world countries on the economies of the first world has been created. There is dependency ‘...when the first society (economy is organized by persons in the foreign society so as to benefit primarily the foreign economy (Sanderson, 1995:217). Developed nations extracted raw materials from third world countries, exported them to be manufactured in Europe and brought back as finished goods expensive to the Africans. The third world people become depended on the west for manufactured goods, technology and technological knowhow. New dependency arose after the Second World War that is financial dependency with multinational corporations that invested in 3rd world countries. Only a third is reinvested. The profits are repatriated. Peripheral market conditions of the developed nations dictate the terms of trade (Dos Santos in Sanderson 1995). Zimbabwean women are part of this dependency and exploitation by the first world’s multinational companies and trade.

3. Class

Women in a capitalist global economy like men are part of the proletariats. Their labour is exploited for low wages. In this global oppression, peasants farmers and urban workers are the most exploited. Women are the producers of raw materials in the periphery but are alienated from what they produce.

They are exploited by both global capitalists and capitalist elites in their nations. In Zimbabwe women belong to a lower class that has no power or control of the means of production.

4. Race

Women especially in third world Africa Zimbabwe included are further subordinated as a black race. White women in the first world are the capitalists and consumers of what the black race produces. The voices of the black women are not heard. The concerns of the traditional (modernist) feminist theories did not take into account issues of race. White women and black women do not have same experiences hence cannot speak with one voice. Black women are subordinated by both white males and females of the first and 3rd world. The situation of women during the colonial and post colonial has not changed much in relation to racial issues in most African countries.

5. Gender

Women in third world countries are also subordinated and exploited as women by males. In patriarchal societies where males dominate, ownership of property, movable and immovable is largely in the hands of males. Such resources are land, livestock, cars, tractors, capital, and homesteads among others. Studies conducted by Women and Law in Zimbabwe (2000) reveal that women have access to the resources but do not have control over them. Women are exploited as labourers and child bearers. Most African cultures legitimize this male dominance.

6. By other women

Women are further subordinated by other women depending on age, position of power and relationships (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003)

Generally, elderly women subordinate younger women. They dictate to them and subject them to initiation ceremonies and cultural norms and values that trap younger women in their subordination. Other women assume cultural and patriarchal power that enables them to oppress other women.

Examples of such women are mothers in law and sisters in law. Senior women in polygamous and non polygamous families enjoy a higher status as grandmothers, sisters and sisters in law (gogo, sisi, maiguru and tete). They make sure their commands are carried by junior women. They impart to them traditions and norms that support male dominance and female subordination. In pre-colonial Zimbabwe, Lozikheyi Dlodlo, Lobengula's senior wife kept younger women under her Nabuiza, the first wife of the Mutapa in the seventeenth century lived in the palace and served by personal servants like (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003).

7. Ethnicity

Ethnicity like race is a serious factor in issues of subordination, the world over. Different ethnic groups have different statuses in their countries. A woman who belongs to the lowest ethnic group is the most subordinated. She is subordinated by males and females of other superior ethnic groups and her husband. She is looked down upon for ethnicity and gender. For example a Nguni woman would always be the first wife during the reign of Mzilikazi and Lobengula (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003). Her firstborn son would always be an heir even if the husband had many wives and sons before her. Wives from royal families did not work in the fields but had other women working for them while they participated in public affairs

8. As rural women

The majority of women in third world countries are in rural areas. These make the majority of illiterate women who lack access to information, technology, technological know-how, training, health etc (Welshenman, et al, 1997 and McFadden, 1992). Most such women do not own the means of production e.g. land, machinery and capital despite changes in legal instruments. Historically, these women were affected by colonial peasantisation. They made up 90% of agricultural workers (). However, they had no access to and control of land, seeds, credit facilities etc. These were registered in male names. Males took produce of single crops like maize, cotton, palms and tobacco to marketing boards (Marcus and Dunklin 1998).

Money became a medium of exchange in the colonial era, but women were not part of that money economy. Women produced for commercial purposes but only controlled crops that had to do with subsistence (consumption)

9. Religion

Almost all religions in the world subordinate women. In an Islamic religion, a devout Muslim would stop praying when a strange woman or a donkey appears (Acker, 1997). A prayer by devout Jewish reads; I thank God that I am a Jew and not a gentile, am a man and not a woman.

In Christianity, it is believed that a woman was not created from the dust of the earth but from Adam's independent person. Adam was given dominion over creation and a man is the head of the family as Christ is head of the church. In traditional religion women do not speak to the ancestral spirit (midzimu) but can talk to stray spirits (mashavi). Ancestral spirits from the mother's side are not important as those of the father's side. Women do not make important religious decisions in the families. They cannot appease angry ancestral spirits. This is done by fathers, brothers or brother's children

Applicability of the Theory

Indeed Third World women, like men are trapped in the global capitalist system of dependency and exploitation.

Women like man are producers but do not benefit from what they produce. They are exploited as a class of workers and women.

The condition of women especially the black race is worse than that of other races. During the colonial period, most whites had black women as their maids and nannies'. This has not changed much in the post colonial period.

In patriarchal societies, majority of women do not own immovable property like houses and land for homesteads especially in rural areas. They also do not own movable properties like cars, scotch carts, cattle especially the married ones.

Women are further subordinated by other women for example, in Shona and Ndebele cultures of Zimbabwe a muroora/ Umalukazana/wife has to take without questioning instructions from the husband's mother (vamwene/umamazala) and from the husband's sister (vatete/ubabakazi). These decide on muroora/umalukazana's fate in marriage and the custody of children.

Elderly women in these cultures dictate and subject younger women to initiation ceremonies and cultural norms that trap younger women in their subordination. For example: Women should be quite whatever happens in her marriage she should allow the husband to access what he paid bride price (lobola) for (sexuality) at whatever cost and circumstances. A women should endure (persevere) in marriage to avoid breaking up of the marriage (kuputsa imba yake/ ukudiliza umuzi). In Zimbabwe, for example, most rural women are engaged in agriculture. They produce for both subsistence and commercial agriculture. However, few women have access to credit facilities, technology, technological know-how and marketing facilities. Culture and patriarchy continue to maintain the status quo despite introduction of legal instruments and policies on access to resources and opportunities

Limitations

- ✓ Third world political approach tends to focus on capitalism and post colonialism.
- ✓ It does not focus on patriarchal and cultural constraints before capitalism.
- ✓ It ignores biological or reproductive constraints.
- ✓ It divides women weakening their struggles because of emphasis of women diversity.
- ✓ Argue that homogenizing women is colonizing women denying them their histories, cultures, identities and nationalities.

Micro-Theories of gender inequalities

Post modernism has seen a shift from large scale theories with universal explanations of gender relations, that is, patriarchy, capitalism, socialism and biology to issues of age, class, race, and ethnicity among others.

- ***Black Feminism***

The Third world political approach focuses on heterogeneity of women. It is a theory of third world women by third world women dissatisfied with other types of feminisms. Black feminism looks at women affected by race especially the black women in the western world who are excluded by macro theories. These are black women who are in industrialized nations as a result of slavery, employment, studies, and refugee status.

Black feminists argue that versions of other feminists do not apply equally to white and non-white women. Black women have particular problems of segregation or exclusion in civil rights movements in industrialized nations. Race is viewed as the most/only relevant label for identification. Womanhood is less than race. As a result black women have not been central in women's liberation movement. Where characteristics of women are measured, those of white women are used as a yardstick (Hooks in Giddens, 2001)

Solutions

Theories of feminism should take into account issues of racism. Concentration should not be on experiences and ideas of white women.

Applicability

Black women, the world over, are subordinated by the race issue. However, their situation is worse in the western world. Their voices are unheard because of race, class and gender.

- ***Eco-feminism***

Eco-feminism was propounded by the likes of Vandana Shiva, Susan Griffin and Carolyn Merchant. It emerged in western scholarship in the 1970s as a result of realization of connection between women, human rights and the exploitation of nature.

Eco-feminists believe that male domination is harmful to both women and environment earth.

Men desire to control both women and the environment in order to have complete power. An attempt to control women and the environment leads to the destruction of the environment. Women like nature are viewed as objects to control, manipulate and plunder (Shiva, 1999). Power of patriarchy and colonialism depends on the exploitation and control of nature, animals and human beings especially women. (Plumwood, 1994). Eco-feminists believe that there is a deep connection between earth and women hence the terms mother nature or mother earth (Shiva, 1999).

Solutions

Merchant (1995) feels that women have a central role in preserving and understanding nature. They are called to lead an ecological revolution to save the planet. However, this can be done if women's role in the construction of environmental knowledge is recognised (Shiva, 1998). It is unfortunate that patriarchal power has made women to turn against the environment instead of living in harmony with it. Women have little access and control of environmental knowledge and the natural environments e.g. wild vegetation, plantations, wild life, resort areas among others (Macgregor in Morse and Stocking, 1995)

Women do not participate actively in the conservation and management of resources. For example natural forests are viewed by women as fire hood land, wild animals as danger or game meat, physical features like mountains as sources of rocks for bricks, grinding stones or refuge places in terms of war. It is also unfortunate that women's knowledge of the environment is not considered scientific by western scientific standards (Momsen, 2004).

Their indigenous knowledge of farming, forests and trees is viewed as linked to intuition or supernatural, therefore excluded despite environmentalists movements of the late 20th century (Njiro,1999). Women's projects fail because they are either based on western model or because they lack females (Fortman,1986).

For sustainable development to be achieved, women should be involved in the conservation of the natural environment just as they are involved in the tapping of the resources.

Applicability

Women in Africa are left out in development projects (Macgregor, 1991). It is for this reason that the ZNGP, (2004) has called for the involvement of women in environmental issues and RM structures. Women also need to take studies that relate to environmental issues. The ZNGP also promotes equitable access to control and ownership of productive resources including the natural resources. Dissemination of environmental information to both males and females is crucial if our environments are to be preserved. It can be concluded therefore that eco-feminism unifies gender and environmental issues. The purpose of the unity is for conservation of nature for sustainable development. In Africa women constitute the majority and annihilate the environment as they search for fire wood, nuts, mushroom, vegetables, fibers, fruits and soils hence they need to understand processes of the landscape degradation (Morse and Stocking, 1995). Zimbabwe's rate of deforestation, partly caused by women has been estimated at 2% a year with fuel deficit in 5 out of 9 provinces including Matabeleland North and South, Midlands, Masvingo and parts of Mashonaland East (Jackson, 1995). With the current land reform and resettlement programme, the figure is likely to be much higher.

- **Cultural**

Cultural feminism has origins in the feminist theory by extremists or separatists (Haralambos and Holborn, 2004). Among these are Card Gilligars and Mary Daly. Cultural feminism believes in the superiority of the feminine (Momsen, 2004). According to them, the fundamental differences between men and women should be celebrated. Their argument is that, women are inherently kind and gentle. If women were to rule the world, there would be no war but peace. The women's way is viewed as the right way and that women can live on their own in a society made of women. Men on the other hand are viewed negatively even their values.

It is believed men value ideas of independence, hierarchy, competition and dominating. These lead to conflict, wars and chaos, while females value dependence, cooperation, relationships community, sharing, trust and peace. These also encourage peaceful co-existence. Women's' reproduction is seen as a source of power which men are jealous of. Men want to control women's' reproduction as technology through the use of technology.

Applicability

In Zimbabwe women are viewed as reproductive technology for child bearing. They are also a source of labour and they reproduce future labourers. This is a source of power for women and who ever controls them controls reproduction and labour.

- **Multicultural Feminism**

Multicultural feminism arose as a result of dissatisfaction with global feminism in a multicultural society. It has roots in the third world feminists' theories and other post modernist theories.

Third world feminists argue that there must be a multicultural theory that recognizes all other differences within which gender is contextualized.

Gender inequalities manifest themselves differently in different cultures. Cultural differences like class, ethnicity, religion, age and disability shape gender differences in different societies.

A multicultural theory should focus on inclusion of other oppressions and consider intersection of gender with race, colonisation and exploitation of women in the developing world (Momsen, 2004).

Applicability

Zimbabwe is a multicultural society made of the following ethnic groups

Venda, Ndebele, Kalanga, Karanga, Tonga, Shangani, Sotho, Korekore, Zezuru and Manyika among others. Zimbabwe also has different religions, for example Christianity with its different denomination.

Christian Churches are grouped into Pentecostal, missionary established, African Independent Churches. Parallel to these is traditional religion, Islam etc. A multicultural theory should take these differences into consideration, even solutions to women's problems. Women are treated differently in each religion, denomination and ethnic group. Zimbabwe again is made of different classes, the upper class, middle class and lower class that can be divided further into formal workers, informal workers, and house wives.

Structural Functionalism

Structural functionalism has provided one of the most important perspectives of sociological research in the twentieth century and has been a major influence on research in the social sciences, including gender studies. Viewing the family as the most integral component of society, assumptions about gender roles within marriage assume a prominent place in this perspective.

Functionalists argue that gender roles were established well before the pre-industrial era when men typically took care of responsibilities outside of the home, such as hunting, and women typically took care of the domestic responsibilities in or around the home. These roles were considered functional because women were often limited by the physical restraints of pregnancy and nursing and unable to leave the home for long periods of time. Once established, these roles were passed on to subsequent generations since they served as an effective means of keeping the family system functioning properly.

When changes occurred in the social and economic climate of the United States during World War II, changes in the family structure also occurred. Many women had to assume the role of breadwinner (or modern hunter-gatherer) alongside their domestic role in order to stabilize a rapidly changing society. When the men returned from war and wanted to reclaim their jobs, society fell back into a state of imbalance, as many women did not want to forfeit their wage-earning positions (Hawke 2007).

Conflict Theory

According to conflict theory, society is a struggle for dominance among social groups (like women versus men) that compete for scarce resources. When sociologists examine gender from this perspective, we can view men as the dominant group and women as the subordinate group. According to conflict theory, social problems are created when dominant groups exploit or oppress subordinate groups. Consider the Women's Suffrage Movement or the debate over women's "right to choose" their reproductive futures. It is difficult for women to rise above men, as dominant group members create the rules for success and opportunity in society (Farrington and Chertok 1993).

Friedrich Engels, a German sociologist, studied family structure and gender roles. Engels suggested that the same owner-worker relationship seen in the labor force is also seen in the household, with women assuming the role of the proletariat. This is due to women's dependence on men for the attainment of wages, which is even worse for women who are entirely dependent upon their spouses for economic support. Contemporary conflict theorists suggest that when women become wage earners, they can gain power in the family structure and create more democratic arrangements in the home, although they may still carry the majority of the domestic burden, as noted earlier (Risman and Johnson-Sumerford 1998).

Feminist Theory

Feminist theory is a type of conflict theory that examines inequalities in gender-related issues. It uses the conflict approach to examine the maintenance of gender roles and inequalities. Radical feminism, in particular, considers the role of the family in perpetuating male dominance. In patriarchal societies, men's contributions are seen as more valuable than those of women. Patriarchal perspectives and arrangements are widespread and taken for granted. As a result, women's viewpoints tend to be silenced or marginalized to the point of being discredited or considered invalid.

Sanday's study of the Indonesian Minangkabau (2004) revealed that in societies some consider to be matriarchies (where women comprise the dominant group), women and men tend to work cooperatively rather than competitively regardless of whether a job is considered feminine by U.S. standards. The men, however, do not experience the sense of bifurcated consciousness under this social structure that modern U.S. females encounter (Sanday 2004).

Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism aims to understand human behavior by analyzing the critical role of symbols in human interaction. This is certainly relevant to the discussion of masculinity and femininity. Imagine that you walk into a bank hoping to get a small loan for school, a home, or a small business venture. If you meet with a male loan officer, you may state your case logically by listing all the hard numbers that make you a qualified applicant as a means of appealing to the analytical characteristics associated with masculinity. If you meet with a female loan officer, you may make an emotional appeal by stating your good intentions as a means of appealing to the caring characteristics associated with femininity.

Because the meanings attached to symbols are socially created and not natural, and fluid, not static, we act and react to symbols based on the current assigned meaning. The word gay, for example, once meant "cheerful," but by the 1960s it carried the primary meaning of "homosexual." In transition, it was even known to mean "careless" or "bright and showing" (Oxford American Dictionary 2010). Furthermore, the word gay (as it refers to a homosexual), carried a somewhat negative and unfavorable meaning fifty years ago, but it has since gained more neutral and even positive connotations. When people perform tasks or possess characteristics based on the gender role assigned to them, they are said to be doing gender. This notion is based on the work of West and Zimmerman (1987). Whether we are expressing our masculinity or femininity, West and Zimmerman argue, we are always "doing gender." Thus, gender is something we do or perform, not something we are.

In other words, both gender and sexuality are socially constructed. The social construction of sexuality refers to the way in which socially created definitions about the cultural appropriateness of sex-linked behavior shape the way people see and experience sexuality. This is in marked contrast to theories of sex, gender, and sexuality that link male and female behavior to biological determinism, or the belief that men and women behave differently due to differences in their biology.

STUDENT SOLUTIONS HUB

CHAPTER 4

INSTITUTIONS

Social Institutions



In sociological terms, an institution is much more than an organization, such as a hospital, firm, or university. It is a set of complementary social practices and meanings that form “taken-for-granted” background rules that shape social life. Institutions consist of tacitly agreed-upon practices, routines, and scripts that shape behavior and give meaning to social life. An institution need not have a brick-and-mortar manifestation and can be as varied as marriage, wage labor, the vacation, the forty-hour work week, or Tuesday. Neo-institutionalist perspectives in sociology draw on social constructivist theories of social organization to elaborate the concept of institution. In this view, institutions have a number of distinctive characteristics. First, institutions can be both normative and cognitive structures. They are normative in the sense that they not only describe the way various social activities are typically done, but also come to be seen as the accepted way things should be done.

That is, people come to believe that institutionalized practices are correct, fair, and appropriate—in short, normal.

Institutions can also be cognitive, in the sense that choices shaped by institutions cease to be a matter of conscious thought. Institutions give rise to background templates that shape social interactions such that compliance with these background rules is largely unconscious and routine. These mental templates cut down on conscious decisions, which facilitates cognitive efficiency but also implicitly constrains the available choices. Second, new institutionalists contend that institutions are the product of a historical process through which human beings construct patterns of conduct and interaction. As Berger and Luckmann note, "It is impossible to understand an institution adequately without an understanding of the historical process in which it was produced. Institutions also, by the very fact of their existence, control human conduct by setting up predefined patterns of conduct, which channel it in one direction as against the many other directions that would theoretically be possible."

These patterns come to be perceived as objective features of the external world and thus recede into the background of everyday life. What were once emerging patterns of conduct, which participants initially viewed as nothing more than an ad hoc consensus, become expected and come to seem natural and inevitable. Third, neo-institutionalist perspectives view institutions as both social and socially constructed. Institutions consist of shared social understandings that cut across organizational and group boundaries. They are "both supra-organizational patterns of activity through which humans conduct their material life in time and space, and symbolic systems through which they categorize that activity and infuse it with meaning." Social actors must recognize and comply with institutions to get along in the social world, as others expect them to behave consistent with shared social understandings. Once institutions are established, they invisibly structure social life in ways that reinforce and recreate themselves.

Everyday social interactions that conform to institutions generate regular patterns of behavior that support the existing social order. This collective compliance gives meaning to social life and reproduces and reinforces the patterns of behavior that make up social structure. Although institutions may seem real, objective, and autonomous, they do not exist apart from the social interactions that continually recreate them. An institution's socially constructed nature is largely invisible, however, because the social practices associated with it have become routine, rationalized, and taken for granted. It can be difficult to imagine how social change comes about once social practices become institutionalized. Yet institutions are variable and changeable. When the social conditions that gave rise to and supported those institutions start to erode, institutions can become destabilized and vulnerable to challenge. If underlying social conditions change, institutions can develop contradictions with their environments, with other institutions, or with underlying social behavior.

Institutions then may become ineffective or even dysfunctional, and, as a result, the contradictions between institutionalized assumptions and existing social conditions become more visible. Some theorists contend that when these contradictions become apparent, human agents "can (or are forced to) improvise or innovate in structurally shaped ways that significantly reconfigure the very structures that constituted them." Human action thus has the potential to change institutions even when agency is constrained and shaped by those institutions.

The Family as an Institution

A key concept in the social sciences, and especially in demography and sociology, is that of the family. The family is generally regarded as a major social institution and a locus of much of a person's social activity. It is a social unit created by blood, marriage, or adoption, and can be described as nuclear (parents and children) or extended (encompassing other relatives).

Family has been characterized by a number of sociologists and anthropologists. Society characterizes family as a social group bound by a common house, financial co-operation and rearing of children. Family consist of two married adults, one of both sexes, who engage in a socially supported sexual relationship and one or more children Adults who are not married and living together and are sexually involved, this type of household is considered to be the living arrangement of a family unit.

Family institutions are cast into two groups by the sociologists. The nuclear family is one group, which consists of two adults and their children, often referenced as the immediate family. The second group is the extended family consisting of an older style family system which has close relationships of two or three and possibly four generations of relatives, such as grandparents, daughters, sons, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews and their husbands and wives (Bilton et. al., 1996; Giddens, 1993).

It is generally assumed today that the modern family has undergone significant transformations in its structure. We are told that societal changes have contributed to a sharp reduction in the percentage of classical "typical" families, principally "nuclear" families. Replacing these, we are made to understand, are childless families, one-parent families, other family configurations, and quasi-family units based on non-marital cohabitation. This argument of the decline has been advanced for a number of decades, but little research has been conducted to test the premise. Bane (1976) disagreed with that conclusion and pointed out that family sizes were getting smaller and mobility was splitting up some families, but the family remained as a functional social institution.

The institution of Family has three important functions:

To provide for the rearing of children

To provide a sense of identity or belonging among its members

To transmit culture between generations

In Western societies, they tend to think of a family as consisting of a mother, father, and children living under one roof: a Nuclear Family. Before societies modernize, families usually consist of several generations and branches of Extended Family living in the same dwelling, or in the same village. As modernization occurs, young people tend to move away from the villages in which they were raised in search of jobs, leaving the older generations behind. They relocate to cities and meet people they probably never would have met had they stayed home. People in modernized, urbanized societies meet spouses on their own, rather than being introduced by family members, and marry and settle down in locations that are often far from their original communities.

Marriage

Marriage, a foundation of family life, exists in all cultures, with some variations:

Endogamy: Marriage between members of the same category, class, or group

Exogamy: Marriage between members of different categories, classes, or groups

Monogamy: Marriage between one man and one woman

Polygamy: Marriage between one man and more than one woman

Polyandry: Marriage between one woman and more than one man

In some cultures, after marriage, a couple lives in the wife's family's household—a practice called Matrilocality. When couples live in the husband's family's household, the practice is called Patriolocality. If they go out and get their own place to live, they practice Neolocality.

According to some sociologists family plays an important role and considered the backbone of society. Family as a social institution performs the following functions.

Biological & Psychological Functions

- **Reproduction:** Reproduction provide the chance to give birth to the children. These children are the nucleus of society and perpetuates human race.
- **Provision of Food, Housing and Clothing:** Family provide its member the facilities and requirements of basic needs like food supply, house and clothing. These things are to be provided by the family to its members.

- **Love and Affection:** Love and affection for its members is necessary especially for children. The socialization of a child depends on love and affection which leads to personality development. If there is no love and affection, the children would be socially and mentally retarded. So, it is the basic institution which regulates these outstanding duties.
- **Security:** Security from all outside and internal dangers is necessary for its members. So, the shelter, Security and protection is provided to its members.

Protection and Care

As child is a helpless being, for which the protection and care is necessary. For this purpose it is the only place to provide protection and care to the children.

Economic and Social Functions

- **Division of Labour:** Mostly male members are doing outdoor jobs while female members are assigned to do indoor jobs. This division of labour is given by family to its members according to their physical and mental abilities and capabilities.
- **Arrangement of Income:** In rural areas male arrange these activities for the fulfillment of basic needs of the dependents while in urban female are educated and perform this duty. She may bring the daily use things for its members and save the money properly.
- **Organization and care of Property:** Most of the families have property in the form of cash money, farms or house. The equal distribution and care of this property is the fundamental role of family members.
- **Status Establishment:** Status determines the sex identification and status.
- **Socialization:** It is the primary and basic school for a child to learn initial knowledge within it. It is the imparting place of knowledge and learning. Child socialization takes place within it and thus his personality can be developed.

- **Social Control:** It keeps its members within control and aware them from rules and regulations. It told the members about the importance of the social norms within a society.
- **Mate- Selection:** Mate- selection is very difficult but family solve this problems. It gives chance to its members for selection of life partners.
- **Imparting basic Education:** Impart knowledge to its members about every little thing. Members seeks the same language is family. If also helps in solving the basic conflicts among the members.
- **Care of old Members:** Old members are always helpless and want the supports of others. So, family gives support to the old age members and provide them love and affection.
- **Name to New born:** It is also responsibility for giving names to the new born members. It is a type of property which is provided by its members to their children.
- **Health Care:** Family also performs the duty to provide care in health. When any one of its members fell ill, it provides its members basic first aid and medical care. The other members give then proper food and at proper time.

Religion

In the wake of 19th century European industrialization and secularization, three social theorists attempted to examine the relationship between religion and society: Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Karl Marx. They are among the founding thinkers of modern sociology.

As stated earlier, French sociologist Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) defined religion as a “unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things” (1915). To him, the sacred meant extraordinary—something that inspired wonder and which seemed connected to the concept of “the divine.” Durkheim argued that “religion happens” in society when there is a separation between the profane (ordinary life) and the sacred (1915). A rock, for example, isn’t sacred or profane as it exists.

But if someone makes it into a headstone, or another person uses it for landscaping, it takes on different meanings—one sacred, one profane.

Durkheim is generally considered the first sociologist who analyzed religion in terms of its societal impact. Above all, Durkheim believed that religion is about community: it binds people together (social cohesion), promotes behavior consistency (social control), and offers strength for people during life's transitions and tragedies (meaning and purpose). By applying the methods of natural science to the study of society, he held that the source of religion and morality is the collective mind-set of society and that the cohesive bonds of social order result from common values in a society. He contended that these values need to be maintained to maintain social stability.

Religion then provided differing degrees of “social cement” that held societies and cultures together. Faith provided the justification for society to exist beyond the mundane and partial explanations of existence as provided in science, even to consider an intentional future: “for faith is before all else an impetus to action, while science, no matter how far it may be pushed, always remains at a distance from this.” (Durkheim 1915, p. 431).

But what would happen if religion were to decline? This question led Durkheim to posit that religion is not just a social creation but something that represents the power of society: when people celebrate sacred things, they celebrate the power of their society. By this reasoning, even if traditional religion disappeared, society wouldn't necessarily dissolve.

Because it is such an important social institution, religion has long been a key sociological topic. Émile Durkheim (1915/1947) observed long ago that every society has beliefs about things that are supernatural and awe-inspiring and beliefs about things that are more practical and down-to-earth. He called the former beliefs sacred beliefs and the latter beliefs profane beliefs. Religious beliefs and practices involve the sacred: they involve things our senses cannot readily observe, and they involve things that inspire in us awe, reverence, and even fear.

Durkheim did not try to prove or disprove religious beliefs. Religion, he acknowledged, is a matter of faith, and faith is not provable or disprovable through scientific inquiry. Rather, Durkheim tried to understand the role played by religion in social life and the impact on religion of social structure and social change. In short, he treated religion as a social institution.

He argued that beneath the irrationalism and the “barbarous and fantastic rites” of both the most primitive and the most modern religions is their ability to satisfy real social and human needs. “There are no religions which are false” (Durkheim 1912) he said. Religion performs the key function of providing social solidarity in a society. The rituals, the worship of icons, and the belief in supernatural beings “excite, maintain or recreate certain mental states” (Durkheim 1912) that brings people together, provide a ritual and symbolic focus, and unify them. This type of analysis became the basis of the functionalist perspective in sociology. He explained the existence and persistence of religion on the basis of the necessary function it performed in unifying society.

German philosopher, journalist, and revolutionary socialist Karl Marx (1818–1883) also studied the social impact of religion. He believed religion reflects the social stratification of society and that it maintains inequality and perpetuates the status quo. For him, religion was just an extension of working-class (proletariat) economic suffering: “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions; it is the opium of the people” (1844).

For Durkheim, Weber, and Marx, who were reacting to the great social and economic upheaval of the late 19th century and early 20th century in Europe, religion was an integral part of society. For Durkheim, religion was a force for cohesion that helped bind the members of society to the group, while Weber believed religion could be understood as something separate from society. Marx considered religion inseparable from the economy and the worker. Religion could not be understood apart from its ideological role in perpetuating or mystifying the inequalities of capitalist society. Despite their different views, these social theorists all believed in the centrality of religion to society.

Religion has historically been a major impetus to social change. In early Europe, the translation of sacred texts into everyday, non-scholarly language empowered people to shape their religions. Disagreements between religious groups and instances of religious persecution have led to mass resettlement, war, and even genocide. To some degree, the modern sovereign state system and international law might be seen as products of the conflict between religious beliefs as these were founded in Europe by the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), which ended the Thirty Years War.

Emile Durkheim postulated the following to be the functions of religion in society:

(i) In disciplinary function religious rituals prepare men for social life by imposing self-discipline and a certain measure of asceticism.

(ii) In cohesive function religious ceremonies bring people together and thus serve to reaffirm their common bonds and to reinforce social solidarity.

(iii) In vitalizing function religious observance maintains and revitalizes the social heritage of the group and helps transmit its enduring values to future generations.

(iv) Finally religion has a euphoric functions in that it serves to counteract feelings of frustration and loss of faith and certitude by re-establishing the believers sense of well being, their sense of the essential Tightness of the moral world of which they are a part.

The School

The school is an artificial institution set up for the purpose of socialization and cultural transmission. The school can be regarded as a formally constituted community as opposed to mutual communities.

Among the most important agencies of socialization is the school; i.e. other than the home the school is the other important institution in which socialization takes place. Schooling

has been defined by Biddle as “the appearance of organized instructional activity in which the position of the teacher is differentiated from other positions in the system and given the explicit task of socializing neophytes”,

In terms of socialization, the school has, in recent years, come to take over some of the forms or functions of the family and community i.e. the school has become a primary agency of socialization. The school is the first large-scale organization of which the child becomes a member. The school is a miniature reflecting what goes on in the wider society.

One way of appreciating the school’s potential for socialization lies in the simple reckoning of the amount of time the youngsters spend in school and in activities related to the school. The youngsters spend the major part of their active hours of the day in school, from morning to evening in case of a day school and boarding schools they stay for duration of about nine months in a year. Obviously, during this time student acquires a lot from the teachers and fellow students. Due to this fact the school becomes an important agent of socialization.

The school is said to be next to the family in terms of importance as far as socialization is concerned. The school combines the formal (e.g. classroom teaching, fines caning, suspension expulsions official mention, prizes) and informal (e.g. peer group influences/pressure) approaches in its socializing function.

How the school performs the function of socialization.

Through the curriculum, the school in a formal way provides the child with:

- ✓ Knowledge of basic intellectual skills such as reading, writing, verbal expression, quantitative and other cognitive abilities, Education teaches languages and allows people communicate with each other according to positions in society.
- ✓ Cultural achievements of one’s society.
- ✓ Opportunities to acquire social and vocational abilities which are necessary in order to make one a social, useful and economically productive member of the society.
- ✓ Gender roles as perceived as suitable roles by the society.

- ✓ Educational systems socialize students to become members of society, to play meaningful roles in the complex network of independent positions.
- ✓ Education helps in shaping values and attitudes to the needs of the contemporary society.
- ✓ Education widens the mental horizons of pupils and teaches them new ways of looking at themselves and their society.
- ✓ Education offers young people opportunities for intellectual, emotional and social growth. Thus education can be influential in promoting new values and stimulating adaptation of changing conditions.
- ✓ Informally and especially through social clubs, the school enables the child to learn a number of other social roles and skills which are also important for his/ her overall development as a member of society. For example:
 - Education teaches the laws, traditions and norms of the community, the rights that individuals will enjoy and the responsibilities that they will undertake.
 - Education teaches how one is to behave toward his/ her play- mates and adults.
 - Education teaches how to share things and ideas.
 - Education teaches how to compete responsibly
 - Schooling teaches how to cooperate
 - Schooling instills the community's pattern of respect; thus how to relate to others well and obey rules.

- Schooling enables one to internalize the culture of one's society.
- Education leads toward tolerant and humanitarian attitudes. For example, college graduates are expected to be more tolerant than (high school graduates in their attitudes toward ethnic and social groups.

The school is a secondary socializing force and the teachers are the chief socialising agents. The school operates on two levels, that is, the intentional and official and the unintentional and none examined both of which gender differentiated (Dekker and Lemmer 2003.) Gordon (1995) says that teachers don't explicitly teach gender, but gender emerges on its own in the curriculum. What the school pupils' eyes see, what their ears hear and what their minds in turn believe in through:

- the school management structure
- the ways teachers talk ,organize and treat the pupils
- the portrayal of men and women in the texts and reading books
- the learning media
- the subject allocations
- the teachers' teaching methodologies
- the teachers' attitudes and expectations
- The extra curricula activities the sort of carrier guidance offered among other things, discerns a gender social code on the pupils.

There is only a relationship of violence or force. One central question sociological analysis asks therefore is: Why do people obey, especially in situations when it is not in their objective interests to do so? “Why do men fight for their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation?” as Gilles Deleuze once put it (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, p. 29). This entails a more detailed study of what we mean by power.

Max Weber defined power (1) as “the chance of a man or of a number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action” (Weber 1919a, p. 180). It is the varying degrees of ability one has to exercise one’s will over others. When these “chances” become structured as forms of domination, the give and take between power and resistance is fixed into more or less permanent hierarchical arrangements. They become institutionalized. As such, power affects more than personal relationships; it shapes larger dynamics like social groups, professional organizations, and governments. Similarly, a government’s power is not necessarily limited to control of its own citizens. A dominant nation, for instance, will often use its clout to influence or support other governments or to seize control of other nation states. Efforts by the Canadian government to wield power in other countries have included joining with other nations to form the Allied forces during World Wars I and II, entering Afghanistan in 2001 with the NATO mission to topple the Taliban regime, and imposing sanctions on the government of Iran in the hopes of constraining its development of nuclear weapons.

Politics and power are not “things” that are the exclusive concern of “the state” or the property of an individual, ruling class, or group. At a more basic level, power (2) is a capacity or ability that each of us has to create and act. As a result, power and politics must also be understood as the collective capacities we have to create and build new forms of community or “commons” (Negri 2004). Power in this sense is the power we think of when we speak of an ability to do or create something—a potential. It is the way in which we collectively give form to the communities that we live in, whether we understand this at a very local level or a global level. Power establishes the things that we can do and the things that we cannot do.

The words politics and political refer back to the ancient Greek polis or city-state. For the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384–322 BCE), the polis was the ideal political form that collective life took. Political life was life oriented toward the “good life” or toward the collective achievement of noble qualities. The term “politics” referred simply to matters of concern to the running of the polis. Behind Aristotle’s idea of the polis is the concept of an autonomous, self-contained community in which people rule themselves. The people of the polis take it upon themselves to collectively create a way of living together that is conducive to the achievement of human aspirations and good life. Politics (1) is the means by which form is given to the life of a people. The individuals give themselves the responsibility to create the conditions in which the good life can be achieved. For Aristotle, this meant that there was an ideal size for a polis, which he defined as the number of people that could be taken in in a single glance (Aristotle 1908). The city-state was for him therefore the ideal form for political life in ancient Greece.

As Max Weber defines it, politics (2) is the activity of “striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state” (Weber 1919b, p. 78). This might be too narrow a way to think about politics, however, because it often makes it appear that politics is something that only happens far away in “the state.” It is a way of giving form to politics that takes control out of the hands of people.

Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) is the early modern English political philosopher whose *Leviathan* (1651) established modern thought on the nature of sovereignty. Hobbes argued that social order, or what we would call today “society” (“peaceable, sociable and comfortable living” (Hobbes 1651, p.146), depended on an unspoken contract between the citizens and the “sovereign” or ruler. In this contract, individuals give up their natural rights to use violence to protect themselves and further their interests and cede them to a sovereign. In exchange, the sovereign provides law and security for all (i.e., for the “commonwealth”). For Hobbes, there could be no society in the absence of a sovereign power that stands above individuals to “over-awe them all” (1651, p. 112).

Life would otherwise be in a “state of nature” or a state of “war of everyone against everyone” (1651, p. 117). People would live in “continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man [would be] solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” (1651, p. 113).

With respect to the ruling of nations, some of the most commonly identified types of governmental and political structures include:

- Aristocracy. This word literally means "rule by the best" aristocracy. Though often aligned with plutocracy, or governments ruled by the wealthy, it does not solely have to do with wealth. It may also deal with elitism or other forms of ruling power.

While the term was born out of ancient Greek times when those exhibiting bravery were viewed as being the best, it later was applied to the rulers of the British upper class and then to the Yanks and Blue Bloods of America.

- Autocracy. This is a political system governed by a single individual. The origin and meaning of "autocrat" can be traced back to a Greek term that when translated into English means, "self-ruler."

Essentially, autocracy is identical to a dictatorship wherein one person is deemed as the absolute ruler or power. Yet, because no one person is able to effectively manage an entire population, it is necessary that autocrats have loyal groups of followers or supporters to whom they delegate power while retaining the ultimate decision-making ability.

In the majority of autocracies, the duties tend to be spread among persons known as noblemen, religious figures, military leaders, or family members.

Note: Autocratic ruling structures have also been referred to as monarchies, dictatorships, totalitarian, and fascist societies.

- Coalition. Typified as a form of government that usually involves the collaboration of several party groups, it is said that coalitions tend to be common among countries engaging in war. This is because during wartime, no party is controlling the government and, in order to retain some degree of structure, parties collaborate to provide direction and stability.

Ironically, though, people opposed to coalition-style governments view them as being composed of an ad hoc assemblage of groups with vastly different beliefs that serve to create disharmony as opposed to unity.

- Communism. In communist societies, the dominant feature is the push to equalize the social conditions of life by abolishing the rights and possessions of its citizens. While this structure is presented as a method for accomplishing productivity, it is in fact a system under which individuals are not permitted to own anything privately. Rather, all properties are owned and distributed by the government with the equal utility of goods being the intended purpose.

As many know, freedom of expression and dissemination of information against the government are both forbidden acts within communist societies. In the view of their legislatures, this is to maintain the integrity of the collective society.

- Conservatism. More of a philosophy than a governmental system, conservatism reinforces the sentiments currently held by the majority; thus, it tends to encourage change only in moderate doses. As conservatism upholds the value of tradition, it serves a vital role in the preservation of favorable aspects of the past.

In his writings, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), Irishman Edmund Burke compared society to a living organism that has been given ample time to grow and mature. From his vantage point, such an organism should not be suddenly uprooted, for to do so would gravely damage its unique character and structure. In his words, "It is with infinite caution that any man ought to venture upon pulling down an edifice that has answered in any tolerable degree for ages the common purposes of society."

- Democracy. Although this may be the form of government with which we in the United States are the most familiar, it still is a concept that proves hard to define. The complexity of the term "democracy" is due to the dramatic reformation it has gone through over time.

The formalized definition of the word is as follows: "government by the people in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system." This explains the inclusive approach, as opposed to the exclusionary ruling style favored by many countries throughout the world.

Yet, perhaps, the most singularly famous definition of democracy may very well be by Abraham Lincoln, who proclaimed the democracy form of government as being "of the people, by the people, and for the people."

According to democratic terminology, the two terms "freedom" and "democracy," though not synonymous, can and are frequently used interchangeably. The close association of the two terms stems from the idea that democracy puts forth societal ideals dealing with the concept of freedom. However, democracy also embodies eras in the past when freedom was not a prevalent right within society.

How the two have been connected is that democracy is the institutionalization of freedom or, in other words, democracy encompasses the time-tested fundamentals pervasive throughout government, such as human rights' issues, equality among mankind, and non-restrictive ruling powers. Thus, in order for a society to carry the label of democracy, it must adhere to the above criteria in terms of the presence of freedoms in all areas.

There are two main categories of democracies, direct and representative. In a direct democracy, all citizens can participate in the decision-making process free of intermediaries or dealings with government officials. Direct democracies are truly only practical when contending with small numbers of people.

Modern society, however, due of its mammoth size and vast complexity, requires what is known as a representative democracy, where citizens elect officials who, in turn, make political decisions, formulate laws, and administer programs for the benefit of the public good.

- Imperialism. This is the policy that aims to build and maintain an empire in which many states and peoples spread over a wide geographical area are controlled by one dominant state.

Much of the 20th century history of the Third World, for example, is of the dismantling of the legacy of 19th century European imperialism. An imperialist state can also be any other type of collectivist nation but not a type of individualist one.

In Britain, the growth of classical liberalism can be said to have contributed to the negation of the belief in imperialism as being good.

- Pluralism. This is a form of democracy in which governing is carried out by means of a series of bargaining and compromising between competing leadership groups, such as business executives, labor parties, government officials, and others.

Those who support pluralism claim that in a modern society, that structure is the best at serving the democratic ideal because it allows individuals to participate at each stage of the decision-making process.

Opposed to communism, in pluralism, individual rights and interests are protected by an additional layer of constitutional checks and balances that have been built into the system. With pluralism, no one group holds all of the power; rather, the power is constantly alternating between various power entities.

Note: Whereas some feel that America is a pluralistic society, others consider pluralism to be a myth and America to be an elitist society.

- Socialism. Even though the word "socialism" sounds like a positive idea wherein ruling structures are formulated based upon the shared ideals of the people, upon implementation, it more closely mirrors the structure of communism than that of pluralism.

In reality, socialism is a political system in which the majority of activities are governed by the state or ruling body. Though the manufacture, distribution, and exchange of goods and services are intended to benefit the people, they are regulated by the state.

In all fairness, though, socialism is an attempt by the legislators to implement a more equal and equitable system for distribution of wealth than occurs under capitalism. Yet, some view it as a system in which wealth remains in the hands of a few, as opposed to being spread among the general public.

Americans tend to shun the idea of socialism, but the system does have a strong level of acceptance in Europe, with the exception of Britain. Apparently, the British have adopted a more sovereign ideal in which they make their own decisions and are the masters of their own lives.

- Theocracy. Still to this day, some societies have retained the religious ideal of theocracy, whereby they are comfortable with the idea of putting their governance in the hands of religious persons, such as priests or clergy. A recent theocratic example is that of Iran, whereby immediately following the overthrow of the Shah in 1979, it was the Ayatollah Khomeini who was anointed to power.

In Islamic fundamentalist societies, theocracies are gaining in both numbers and in strength. In the West, the influence of theocracy is nearly nonexistent outside of the minor exception of some religious right activists, or zealots, who are following suit.

Functionalism

According to functionalism, the government has four main purposes: planning and directing society, meeting social needs, maintaining law and order, and managing international relations. According to functionalism, all aspects of society serve a purpose. Functionalists view government and politics as a way to enforce norms and regulate conflict. Functionalists see active social change, such as the sit-in on Wall Street, as undesirable because it forces change and, as a result, undesirable things that might have to be compensated for. Functionalists seek consensus and order in society. Dysfunction creates social problems that lead to social change. For instance, functionalists would see monetary political contributions as a way of keeping people connected to the democratic process. This would be in opposition to a conflict theorist who would see this financial contribution as a way for the rich to perpetuate their own wealth.

Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism, as it pertains to government, focuses its attention on figures, emblems, or individuals that represent power and authority. Many diverse entities in larger society can be considered symbolic: trees, doves, wedding rings. Images that represent the power and authority of the United States include the White House, the eagle, and the

American flag. The Seal of the President of the United States, along with the office in general, incites respect and reverence in many Americans.

Symbolic interactionists are not interested in large structures such as the government. As micro-sociologists, they are more interested in the face-to-face aspects of politics. In reality, much of politics consists of face-to-face backroom meetings and lobbyist efforts. What the public often sees is the front porch of politics that is sanitized by the media through gatekeeping. Symbolic interactionists are most interested in the interaction between these small groups who make decisions, or in the case of some recent congressional committees, demonstrate the inability to make any decisions at all. The heart of politics is the result of interaction between individuals and small groups over periods of time. These meetings produce new meanings and perspectives that individuals use to make sure there are future interactions.

Overall, symbolic interactionists are not interested in large structures such as “the government” or “the state” as if they existed independently of the ongoing interactions that constitute them. One side of this, as we have seen, is their attention to the ongoing creation of symbols that give meaning to political life and activity. But as micro-sociologists, they are also interested in the face-to-face aspects of politics. In reality, much of politics consists of face-to-face backroom meetings and lobbyist efforts. What the public often sees is the front stage of politics that is sanitized by the media through gatekeeping. Symbolic interactionists are most interested in the meaningful interaction between the small groups who make decisions, or in the case of some recent parliamentary committees, who demonstrate the inability to interact meaningfully. The heart of politics is the result of small-scale exchanges between individuals and small groups over periods of time.

Conflict Theory

Conflict theory focuses on the social inequalities and power difference within a group, analyzing society through this lens. Philosopher and social scientist Karl Marx was a seminal force in developing the conflict theory perspective; he viewed social structure, rather than individual personality characteristics, as the cause of many social problems,

such as poverty and crime. Marx believed that conflict between groups struggling to either attain wealth and power or keep the wealth and power they had was inevitable in a capitalist society, and conflict was the only way for the underprivileged to eventually gain some measure of equality.

C. Wright Mills (1956) elaborated on some of Marx's concepts, coining the phrase power elite to describe what he saw as the small group of powerful people who control much of a society. Mills believed the power elite use government to develop social policies that allow them to keep their wealth. Contemporary theorist G. William Domhoff (2011) elaborates on ways in which the power elite may be seen as a subculture whose members follow similar social patterns such as joining elite clubs, attending select schools, and vacationing at a handful of exclusive destinations.

Work and the Economy

In sociology, economy refers to the social institution through which a society's resources are exchanged and managed. The earliest economies were based on trade, which is often a simple exchange in which people traded one item for another. While today's economic activities are more complex than those early trades, the underlying goals remain the same: exchanging goods and services allows individuals to meet their needs and wants. In 1893, Émile Durkheim described what he called "mechanical" and "organic" solidarity that correlates to a society's economy. Mechanical solidarity exists in simpler societies where social cohesion comes from sharing similar work, education, and religion. Organic solidarity arises out of the mutual interdependence created by the specialization of work. The complex U.S. economies, and the economies of other industrialized nations, meet the definition of organic solidarity. Most individuals perform a specialized task to earn money they use to trade for goods and services provided by others who perform different specialized tasks. In a simplified example, an elementary school teacher relies on farmers for food, doctors for healthcare, carpenters to build shelter, and so on. The farmers, doctors, and carpenters all rely on the teacher to educate their children. They are all dependent on each other and their work.

Economy refers to the social institutions through which a society's resources (goods and services) are managed. Goods are the physical objects we find, grow, or make in order to meet our needs and the needs of others. Goods can meet essential needs, such as a place to live, clothing, and food, or they can be luxuries—those things we do not need to live but want anyway. Goods produced for sale on the market are called commodities. In contrast to these objects, services are activities that benefit people.

The Agricultural Revolution

The first true economies arrived when people started raising crops and domesticating animals. Although there is still a great deal of disagreement among archeologists as to the exact timeline, research indicates that agriculture began independently and at different times in several places around the world. The earliest agriculture was in the Fertile Crescent in the Middle East around 11,000–10,000 years ago. At first, most goods and services were traded as gifts or through bartering between small social groups (Mauss 1922). Exchanging one form of goods or services for another was known as bartering. This system only works when one person happens to have something the other person needs at the same time. To solve this problem, people developed the idea of a means of exchange that could be used at any time: that is, money. Money refers to an object that a society agrees to assign a value to so it can be exchanged for payment. In early economies, money was often objects like cowry shells, rice, barley, or even rum. Precious metals quickly became the preferred means of exchange in many cultures because of their durability and portability.

The Industrial Revolution

Up until the end of the 18th century, most manufacturing was done using manual labour. This changed as research led to machines that could be used to manufacture goods. A small number of innovations led to a large number of changes in the British economy. In the textile industries, the spinning of cotton, worsted yarn, and flax could be done more quickly and less expensively using new machines with names like the Spinning Jenny and the Spinning Mule (Bond et al. 2003).

Another important innovation was made in the production of iron: coke from coal could now be used in all stages of smelting rather than charcoal from wood, dramatically lowering the cost of iron production while increasing availability (Bond 2003). James Watt ushered in what many scholars recognize as the greatest change, revolutionizing transportation and, thereby, the entire production of goods with his improved steam engine. As people move to cities to fill factory jobs, factory production also changed. Workers did their jobs in assembly lines and were trained to complete only one or two steps in the manufacturing process. These advances meant that more finished goods could be manufactured with more efficiency and speed than ever before.

The Industrial Revolution also changed agricultural practices. Until that time, many people practiced subsistence farming in which they produced only enough to feed themselves and pay their taxes. New technology introduced gasoline-powered farm tools such as tractors, seed drills, threshers, and combine harvesters. Farmers were encouraged to plant large fields of a single crop to maximize profits. With improved transportation and the invention of refrigeration, produce could be shipped safely all over the world. The Industrial Revolution modernized the world. With growing resources came growing societies and economies. Between 1800 and 2000, the world's population grew sixfold, while per capita income saw a tenfold jump (Maddison 2003). While many people's lives were improving, the Industrial Revolution also birthed many societal problems. There were inequalities in the system. Owners amassed vast fortunes while labourers, including young children, toiled for long hours in unsafe conditions. Workers' rights, wage protection, and safe work environments are issues that arose during this period and remain concerns today.

Postindustrial Societies and the Information Age

Postindustrial societies, also known as information societies, have evolved in modernized nations. One of the most valuable goods of the modern era is information. Those who have the means to produce, store, and disseminate information are leaders in this type of society. One way scholars understand the development of different types of societies (like agricultural, industrial, and postindustrial) is by examining their economies in terms of four sectors: primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary. Each has a different focus. The

primary sector extracts and produces raw materials (like metals and crops). The secondary sector turns those raw materials into finished goods. The tertiary sector provides services: child care, health care, and money management. Finally, the quaternary sector produces ideas; these include the research that leads to new technologies, the management of information, and a society's highest levels of education and the arts (Kenessey 1987).

Modernization theory proposes a model of quasi-natural economic development, from undeveloped economies to advanced, to explain the difference in distribution of these sectors around the globe. In underdeveloped countries, the majority of the people work in the primary sector. As economies develop, more and more people are employed in the secondary sector. In well-developed economies, such as those in Canada, the United States, Japan, and Western Europe, the majority of the workforce is employed in service industries. In Canada, for example, more than 75 percent of the workforce is employed in the tertiary sector (Statistics Canada 2012). The rapid increase in computer use in all aspects of daily life is a main reason for the transition to an information economy. Fewer people are needed to work in factories because computerized robots now handle many of the tasks. Other manufacturing jobs have been outsourced to less-developed countries as a result of the developing global economy. The growth of the internet has created industries that exist almost entirely online. Within industries, technology continues to change how goods are produced.

CHAPTER 5

Social change and Social issues



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Social change in the broadest sense is any change in social relations. Viewed this way, social change is an ever-present phenomenon in any society. A distinction is sometimes made then between processes of change within the social structure, which serve in part to maintain the structure, and processes that modify the structure (societal change). The specific meaning of social change depends first on the social entity considered. Changes in a small group may be important on the level of that group itself but negligible on the level of the larger society. Similarly, the observation of social change depends on the time span studied; most short-term changes are negligible when examined in the long run. Small-scale and short-term changes are characteristic of human societies, because customs and norms change, new techniques and technologies are invented, environmental changes spur new adaptations, and conflicts result in redistributions of power.

systems; inefficiency in resource allocation and use and weak national health information and research systems.

Secondly, extreme shortages of health workers exist in 57 countries of which 36 are in Africa. The crisis has been exacerbated by inequities in workforce distribution and brain drain. Thus, the delivery of effective public health interventions to people in need is compromised particularly in remote rural areas.

Thirdly, there is rampant corruption in medical products and technologies procurement systems, unreliable supply systems, unaffordable prices, irrational use, wide variance in quality and safety. This has contributed to current situation where 50% the population in the Region lack of access to essential medicines.

Fourthly, there is a dearth of information and communications technology (ICT) and mass Internet connectivity, compounded by a paucity of ICT-related knowledge and skills limiting capacities of national health management information systems (HMIS) to generate, analyze and disseminate information for use in decision-making.

Fifthly, health financing in the Region is characterized by low investment in health, lack of comprehensive health financing policies and strategic plans, extensive out-of-pocket payments, lack of social safety nets to protect the poor, weak financial management, inefficient resource use, and weak mechanisms for coordinating partner support.

Finally, in terms of service delivery, the lack of effective organization and management of health services combined with the above indicated challenges have in tandem led to the current situation where 47% of the population have no access to quality health services, 59% of pregnant women deliver babies without the assistance of skilled health personnel. In relation to water and sanitation which contribute to reducing burden of communicable diseases, 64% of the population lack sustainable access to improved sanitation facilities, and 42% lack sustainable access to an improved water source.

Urbanization

Urbanization is the study of the social, political, and economic relationships in cities, and someone specializing in urban sociology studies those relationships. In some ways, cities can be microcosms of universal human behavior, while in others they provide a unique environment that yields its own brand of human behavior. There is no strict dividing line between rural and urban; rather, there is a continuum where one bleeds into the other. However, once a geographically concentrated population has reached approximately 100,000 people, it typically behaves like a city regardless of what its designation might be.

According to sociologist Gideon Sjoberg (1965), there are three prerequisites for the development of a city: First, good environment with fresh water and a favorable climate; second, advanced technology, which will produce a food surplus to support non-farmers; and third, strong social organization to ensure social stability and a stable economy. Most scholars agree that the first cities were developed somewhere in ancient Mesopotamia, though there are disagreements about exactly where. Most early cities were small by today's standards, and the largest was most likely Rome, with about 650,000 inhabitants (Chandler and Fox 1974). The factors limiting the size of ancient cities included lack of adequate sewage control, limited food supply, and immigration restrictions.

All the main urban areas were developed along the line of rail for marketing, industrial, administrative, communication and security purposes, for example Harare, Bulawayo, Gweru, Kwekwe, Kadoma, Chinhoyi, Marondera, Mutare, Masvingo, and at mining extraction points at the head of the railways, eg Hwange, Bindura, and Zvishavane. The two main axes of urban development were established between Harare and Bulawayo, and between Harare and Mutare. As Teedon and Drakakis-Smidi (1986:311) observe,

"The urban system per se was a creation of settler colonialism. It functioned primarily in a comprador capacity to facilitate the export of various primary commodities and the import of consumer goods. It has always accommodated the majority of the white population, whose urban proportion has steadily risen from 5296 in 1911 to over 8036 today."

With the growth of the towns and the expansion of wage employment, blacks gradually migrated to the urban areas. Initially they migrated into towns for short periods, i.e. for sufficient time to acquire what cash and goods they needed, returning to the rural areas after such periods. Although some internal migration is due to non-economic factors like rural violence, drought and the desire to break away from traditional role requirements, most researchers agree that the economic motive predominates. Moller (1978) notes that circulatory migration between town and country prevailed until the late 1960s and early 1970s when a situation of 'quasi-stabilisation' (a stay in town during working age, with eventual retirement to the communal lands) emerged and became common.

Since the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980, the movement of the black population into the urban areas has increased. This can be attributed to a number of factors including the removal of the influx control legislation; the migration of the families of 'single' men who, as a result of legislative restriction and for economic reasons, had remained in the rural areas; the pressure of population in much of the communal lands; the stagnation of employment opportunities on commercial farms; the fact that average incomes for blacks in the urban areas are much higher than in the communal lands, and opportunities for employment are perceived to be greater in the urban areas; the impact of the drought on the rural areas; and the increased security of urban living resulting from the Mugabe government's extension of home ownership to occupants of formerly publically owned rental housing stock (Patel: 1984).

One of the most fundamental problems confronting Zimbabwe is that of employment creation. As Sandbrook (1982) has pointed out for other countries, increase in urbanisation is occurring without any concomitant increase in industrialisation. When the 'formal' sector of the economy cannot provide enough urban and rural employment, and the process of underdevelopment of the peasant economy has rendered it incapable of adequately supporting the entire population, potential wage labourers have to do the best they can to find a means of subsistence. This they find in the largely unplanned 'informal' sector, which is proliferating in the cities of Zimbabwe.

Considerable demands are placed on the urban social and physical infrastructure by the increasing urban population. One such example is in the area of housing where a critical demand for housing is being reached, a demand which manifests itself in spontaneous settlements. Now overcrowding has reached a state where the existing housing stock cannot absorb additional people.

Overcrowded high density housing schemes generally correlate with poor health, thus the following conditions are common in these areas: malnutrition, acute respiratory infections, communicable diseases of childhood, tuberculosis, digestive problems, inflammatory and noninflammatory diseases of the skin, and mental illness and most recently cholera and typhoid outbreaks. Co-existing with overcrowding is the problem of inadequate refuse collection, and insufficient water supplies and sanitation, which creates further health hazards. Also, with increasing urbanisation, general environmental pollution becomes a problem. Water pollution, noise pollution, air pollution and solid wastes all contribute to a deterioration of the environment not only in the urban areas but also in the surrounding rural areas.

Sociology of Health

The sociology of health encompasses social epidemiology, disease, mental health, disability, and medicalization. The principle insight of sociology is that health and illness cannot be simply regarded as biological or medical phenomena. They are perceived, organized, and acted on in a political, economic, cultural, and institutional context. Moreover, the way that we relate to them is in constant evolution. As we learn to control existing diseases, new diseases develop. As our society evolves to be more global, the way that diseases spread evolves with it.

Many medical sociologists contend that illnesses have both a biological and an experiential component, and that these components exist independently of each other. Our culture, not our biology, dictates which illnesses are stigmatized and which are not, which are considered disabilities and which are not, and which are deemed contestable (meaning

some medical professionals may find the existence of this ailment questionable) as opposed to definitive (illnesses that are unquestionably recognized in the medical profession) (Conrad and Barker 2010).

For instance, sociologist Erving Goffman (1963) described how social stigmas hinder individuals from fully integrating into society. The stigmatization of illness often has the greatest effect on the patient and the kind of care he or she receives. Many contend that our society and even our health care institutions discriminate against certain diseases—like mental disorders, AIDS, venereal diseases, and skin disorders (Sartorius 2007). Facilities for these diseases may be sub-par; they may be segregated from other health care areas or relegated to a poorer environment. The stigma may keep people from seeking help for their illness, making it worse than it needs to be.

The idea of the social construction of the illness experience is based on the concept of reality as a social construction. In other words, there is no objective reality independent of our own perceptions of it. The social construction of the illness experience deals with such issues as the way some patients control the manner in which they reveal their disease and the lifestyle adaptations patients develop to cope with their illnesses.

In terms of constructing the illness experience, culture and individual personality both play a significant role. For some people, a long-term illness can have the effect of making their world smaller, more defined by the illness than anything else. For others, illness can be a chance for discovery, for re-imagining a new self (Conrad and Barker 2010). Culture plays a huge role in how an individual experiences illness. Widespread diseases like AIDS or breast cancer have specific cultural markers that have changed over the years and that govern how individuals—and society—view them.

Social epidemiology is the study of the causes and distribution of diseases. Social epidemiology can reveal how social problems are connected to the health of different populations. These epidemiological studies show that the health problems of high-income nations differ greatly from those of low-income nations.

Some diseases, like cancer, are universal. But others, like obesity, heart disease, respiratory disease, and diabetes are much more common in high-income countries, and are a direct result of a sedentary lifestyle combined with poor diet. High-income nations also have a higher incidence of depression (Bromet et al. 2011). In contrast, low-income nations suffer significantly from malaria and tuberculosis.

Mental Health

People with mental disorders (a condition that makes it more difficult to cope with everyday life) and people with mental illness (a severe, lasting mental disorder that requires long-term treatment) experience a wide range of effects.

Disability refers to a reduction in one's ability to perform everyday tasks. The World Health Organization makes a distinction between the various terms used to describe handicaps that's important to the sociological perspective. They use the term impairment to describe the physical limitations, while reserving the term disability to refer to the social limitation.

Medicalization refers to the process by which previously normal aspects of life are redefined as deviant and needing medical attention to remedy. Historically and contemporaneously, many aspects of women's lives have been medicalized, including menstruation, pre-menstrual syndrome, pregnancy, childbirth, and menopause. The medicalization of pregnancy and childbirth has been particularly contentious in recent decades, with many women opting against the medical process and choosing a more natural childbirth. Fox and Worts (1999) find that all women experience pain and anxiety during the birth process, but that social support relieves both as effectively as medical support. In other words, medical interventions are no more effective than social ones at helping with the difficulties of pain and childbirth. Fox and Worts further found that women with supportive partners ended up with less medical intervention and fewer cases of postpartum depression. Of course, access to quality birth care outside of the standard medical models may not be readily available to women of all social classes.

Population, Urbanization and the Environment

There are important societal issues connected to the environment and how and where people live. Sociologists begin to examine these issues through demography, or the study of population and how it relates to urbanization, the study of the social, political, and economic relationships in cities. Environmental sociologists look at the study of how humans interact with their environments. Today, as has been the case many times in history, we are at a point of conflict in a number of these areas. The world's population reached seven billion between 2011 and 2012. When will it reach eight billion? Can our planet sustain such a population? Cities and city living create new challenges for both society and the environment that make interactions between people and places of critical importance.

Population



Thomas Malthus (1766–1834) was an English clergyman who made dire predictions about earth's ability to sustain its growing population. According to Malthusian theory, three factors would control human population that exceeded the earth's carrying capacity, or how many people can live in a given area considering the amount of available resources. Malthus identified these factors as war, famine, and disease (Malthus 1798).

He termed them “positive checks” because they increase mortality rates, thus keeping the population in check. They are countered by “preventive checks,” which also control the population but by reducing fertility rates; preventive checks include birth control and celibacy. Thinking practically, Malthus saw that people could produce only so much food in a given year, yet the population was increasing at an exponential rate. Eventually, he thought people would run out of food and begin to starve. They would go to war over increasingly scarce resources and reduce the population to a manageable level, and then the cycle would begin anew.

Of course, this has not exactly happened. The human population has continued to grow long past Malthus’s predictions. So what happened? Why didn’t we die off? There are three reasons sociologists believe we are continuing to expand the population of our planet. First, technological increases in food production have increased both the amount and quality of calories we can produce per person. Second, human ingenuity has developed new medicine to curtail death from disease. Finally, the development and widespread use of contraception and other forms of family planning have decreased the speed at which our population increases. But what about the future? Some still believe Malthus was correct and that ample resources to support the earth’s population will soon run out.

Of course, some theories are less focused on the pessimistic hypothesis that the world’s population will meet a detrimental challenge to sustaining itself. Cornucopian theory scoffs at the idea of humans wiping themselves out; it asserts that human ingenuity can resolve any environmental or social issues that develop. As an example, it points to the issue of food supply. If we need more food, the theory contends, agricultural scientists will figure out how to grow it, as they have already been doing for centuries. After all, in this perspective, human ingenuity has been up to the task for thousands of years and there is no reason for that pattern not to continue (Simon 1981).

Urbanization



Urbanization is the study of the social, political, and economic relationships in cities, and someone specializing in urban sociology studies those relationships. In some ways, cities can be microcosms of universal human behavior, while in others they provide a unique environment that yields its own brand of human behavior. There is no strict dividing line between rural and urban; rather, there is a continuum where one bleeds into the other.

During the Industrial Era, there was a growth spurt worldwide. The development of factories brought people from rural to urban areas, and new technology increased the efficiency of transportation, food production, and food preservation. For example, from the mid-1670s to the early 1900s, London's population increased from 550,000 to 7 million (Old Bailey Proceedings Online 2011). Global favorites like New York, London, and Tokyo are all examples of postindustrial cities. As cities evolve from manufacturing-based industrial to service- and information-based postindustrial societies, gentrification becomes more common. Gentrification occurs when members of the middle and upper classes enter and renovate city areas that have been historically less affluent while the poor urban underclass are forced by resulting price pressures to leave those neighborhoods for increasingly decaying portions of the city.

Globally, 54 percent of the world's 7 billion people currently reside in urban areas, with the most urbanized region being North America (82 percent), followed by Latin America/the Caribbean (80 percent), with Europe coming in third (72 percent). In comparison, Africa is only 40 percent urbanized. With 38 million people, Tokyo is the world's largest city by population. The world's most densely populated cities are now largely concentrated in the global south, a marked change from several decades ago when the biggest cities were found in the global north. In the next forty years, the biggest global challenge for urbanized populations, particularly in less developed countries, will be to achieve development that occurs without depleting or damaging the natural environment, also called sustainable development (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division 2014).

Cities provide numerous opportunities for their residents and offer significant benefits including access to goods to numerous job opportunities. At the same time, high population areas can lead to tensions between demographic groups, as well as environmental strain. While the population of urban dwellers is continuing to rise, sources of social strain are rising along with it. The ultimate challenge for today's urbanites is finding an equitable way to share the city's resources while reducing the pollution and energy use that negatively impacts the environment.

Environment



The subfield of environmental sociology studies the way humans interact with their environments. This field is closely related to human ecology, which focuses on the relationship between people and their built and natural environment. This is an area that is garnering more attention as extreme weather patterns and policy battles over climate change dominate the news. A key factor of environmental sociology is the concept of carrying capacity. While you might be more familiar with the phrase “global warming,” climate change is the term now used to refer to long-term shifts in temperatures due to human activity and, in particular, the release of greenhouse gases into the environment. The planet as a whole is warming, but the term climate change acknowledges that the short-term variations in this process can include both higher and lower temperatures, despite the overarching trend toward warmth.

World systems analysis suggests that while, historically, core nations (like the United States and Western Europe) were the greatest source of greenhouse gases, they have now evolved into postindustrial societies. Industrialized semi-peripheral and peripheral nations are releasing increasing quantities of carbon emissions. The core nations, now post-industrial and less dependent on greenhouse-gas-causing industries, wish to enact strict protocols regarding the causes of global warming, but the semi-peripheral and peripheral

nations rightly point out that they only want the same economic chance to evolve their economies. Since they were unduly affected by the progress of core nations, if the core nations now insist on "green" policies, they should pay offsets or subsidies of some kind. There are no easy answers to this conflict. It may well not be "fair" that the core nations benefited from ignorance during their industrial boom.

Pollution describes what happens when contaminants are introduced into an environment (water, air, land) at levels that are damaging. Environments can often sustain a limited amount of contaminants without marked change, and water, air, and soil can "heal" themselves to a certain degree. However, once contaminant levels reach a certain point, the results can be catastrophic.

In 30 seconds, two children die from lack of access to clean drinking water. Access to safe water is one of the most basic human needs, and it is woefully out of reach for millions of people on the planet. Many of the major diseases that peripheral countries battle, such as diarrhea, cholera, and typhoid, are caused by contaminated water. Often, young children are unable to go to school because they must instead walk several hours a day just to collect potable water for their family. The situation is only getting direr as the global population increases. Water is a key resource battleground in the twenty-first century.

As every child learns in school, 70 percent of earth is made of water. Despite that figure, there is a finite amount of water usable by humans and it is constantly used and reused in a sustainable water cycle. The way we use this abundant natural resource, however, renders much of it unsuitable for consumption and unable to sustain life. For instance, it takes two and a half liters of water to produce a single liter of Coca-Cola. The company and its bottlers use close to 300 billion liters of water a year, often in locales that are short of useable water (Blanchard 2007).

As a consequence of population concentrations, water close to human settlements is frequently polluted with untreated or partially treated human waste (sewage), chemicals, radioactivity, and levels of heat sufficient to create large "dead zones" incapable of

supporting aquatic life. The methods of food production used by many core nations rely on liberal doses of nitrogen and pesticides, which end up back in the water supply. In some cases, water pollution affects the quality of the aquatic life consumed by water and land animals. As we move along the food chain, the pollutants travel from prey to predator. Since humans consume at all levels of the food chain, we ultimately consume the carcinogens, such as mercury, accumulated through several branches of the food web.

China's fast-growing economy and burgeoning industry have translated into notoriously poor air quality. Smog hangs heavily over the major cities, sometimes grounding aircraft that cannot navigate through it. Pedestrians and cyclists wear air-filter masks to protect themselves. In Beijing, citizens are skeptical that the government-issued daily pollution ratings are trustworthy. Increasingly, they are taking their own pollution measurements in the hopes that accurate information will galvanize others to action. Given that some days they can barely see down the street, they hope action comes soon (Papenfuss 2011).

Humanity, with its growing numbers, use of fossil fuels, and increasingly urbanized society, is putting too much stress on the earth's atmosphere. The amount of air pollution varies from locale to locale, and you may be more personally affected than you realize. How often do you check air quality reports before leaving your house? Depending on where you live, this question can sound utterly strange or like an everyday matter. Along with oxygen most of the time we are also breathing in soot, hydrocarbons, carbon, nitrogen, and sulfur oxides.

Much of the pollution in the air comes from human activity. How many college students move their cars across campus at least once a day? Who checks the environmental report card on how many pollutants each company throws into the air before purchasing a cell phone? Many of us are guilty of taking our environment for granted without concern for how everyday decisions add up to a long-term global problem. How many minor adjustments can you think of, like walking instead of driving, that would reduce your overall carbon footprint?

Environmental racism refers to the way in which minority group neighborhoods (populated primarily by people of color and members of low socioeconomic groups) are burdened with a disproportionate number of hazards, including toxic waste facilities, garbage dumps, and other sources of environmental pollution and foul odors that lower the quality of life. All around the globe, members of minority groups bear a greater burden of the health problems that result from higher exposure to waste and pollution. This can occur due to unsafe or unhealthy work conditions where no regulations exist (or are enforced) for poor workers, or in neighborhoods that are uncomfortably close to toxic materials.

The statistics on environmental racism are shocking. Research shows that it pervades all aspects of African Americans' lives: environmentally unsound housing, schools with asbestos problems, facilities and playgrounds with lead paint. A twenty-year comparative study led by sociologist Robert Bullard determined "race to be more important than socioeconomic status in predicting the location of the nation's commercial hazardous waste facilities

How do sociologists study population and urbanization issues?

Functionalist sociologists might focus on the way all aspects of population, urbanization, and the environment serve as vital and cohesive elements, ensuring the continuing stability of society. They might study how the growth of the global population encourages emigration and immigration, and how emigration and immigration serve to strengthen ties between nations. Or they might research the way migration affects environmental issues; for example, how have forced migrations, and the resulting changes in a region's ability to support a new group, affected both the displaced people and the area of relocation?

A conflict theorist, interested in the creation and reproduction of inequality, might ask how peripheral nations' lack of family planning affects their overall population in comparison to core nations that tend to have lower fertility rates. Or, how do inner cities become ghettos, nearly devoid of jobs, education, and other opportunities? A conflict theorist might also study environmental racism and other forms of environmental inequality. For example, which parts of Harare were the most responsive to the cholera outbreak?

A symbolic interactionist interested in the day-to-day interaction of groups and individuals might research topics like the way family-planning information is presented to and understood by different population groups, the way people experience and understand urban life, and the language people use to convince others of the presence (or absence) of global climate change. For example, some politicians wish to present the study of global warming as junk science, and other politicians insist it is a proven fact. Migration is carried by the decision of a person or group of persons. The changes occurring in the birth rate and death rate do not affect the size and structure of the population on a large scale, while migration, at any time, may cause large scale changes in the size and structure of the population.

Migration



The study of migration is of vital importance because the birth rate, death rate and migration determine the size of population, the population growth rate and thus the structure of population. In addition, migration plays an important role in determining the distribution of population and supply of labour in the country. Thus, the study of migration is also useful for formulating economic and other policies by the government, economists, sociologists, politicians, and planners along with demographers.

Migration shows the trends of social changes. From the historical viewpoint during the process of industrialisation and economic development, people migrate from farms to industries, from villages to cities, from one city to another and from one country to another. In modern times, technological changes are taking place in Asia, Africa and Latin America due to which these regions are witnessing large-scale migration from rural to urban areas.

Economists are interested in the study of migration because migration affects the supply of skilled and semi-skilled labourers, development of industries and commerce causing changes in the employment structure of the migrated people. Formulation of economic policies has a close relation with the process of migration because migration affects the economic and social development of a country.

Out of the many side effects of the population growth in India and other developing countries, an important effect of industrialisation and economic development is the internal migration of the population on a large scale, which has drawn the attention of planners and formulators of economic policies. Thus, migration is a demographic event, whose long term effects fall on the socioeconomic and cultural development of any region or country.

Migration is the movement of people between regions or countries. It is the process of changing one's place of residence and permanently living in a region or country. According to the Demographic Dictionary of United Nations, "Migration is such an event in which people move from one geographical area to another geographical area. When people leaving their place of residence go to live permanently in another area then this is called migration."

Migration is of the following types:

(i) Immigration and Emigration:

When people from one country move permanently to another country, for example, if people from India move to America then for America, it is termed as Immigration, whereas for India it is termed as Emigration.

(ii) In-migration and Out-migration:

In-migration means migration occurring within an area only, while out-migration means migration out of the area. Both types of migration are called internal migration occurring within the country. Migration from Bihar to Bengal is in-migration for Bengal, while it is out-migration for Bihar.

(iii) Gross and Net Migration:

During any time period, the total number of persons coming in the country and the total number of people going out of the country for residing is called gross migration. The difference between the total number of persons coming to reside in a country and going out of the country for residing during any time period is termed as net migration.

(iv) Internal Migration and External Migration:

Internal migration means the movement of people in different states and regions within a country from one place to another. On the other hand, external or international migration refers to the movement of people from one country to another for permanent settlement

Concepts Relating to Migration:

✓ *Migration Stream:*

Migration stream means the total number of people migrating from one region to another or from one country to another for residing during a time period. It is, in fact, related to the movement of people from a common area of origin to a common area of a destination. For example, migration of Indians to America during a time interval.

✓ *(ii) Migration Interval:*

Migration may occur continuously over a period of time. But to measure it correctly, the data should be divided into intervals of one to five or more years. The division relating to a particular period is known as migration interval.

✓ (iii) *Place of Origin and Place of Destination:*

The place which people leave is the place of origin and the person is called an out-migrant. On the other hand, the place of destination is the place where the person moves and the person is called an in-migrant.

✓ (iv) *Migrant:*

Migrant is the labour which moves to some region or country for short periods of time, say several months or a few years. It is regarded as a secondary labour force.

Effects of Migration:

Internal migration affects the place where from people migrate and the place to which they migrate. When the migrants move from rural to urban areas, they have both positive and negative effects on the society and economy.

▪ **Effects on Rural Areas:**

Migration affects rural areas (the place of origin) in the following ways:

Economic Effects:

When population migrates from rural areas, it reduces the pressure of population on land, the per worker output and productivity on land increases and so does per capita income. Thus family income rises which encourages farmers to adopt better means of production thereby increasing farm produce.

Those who migrate to urban areas are mostly in the age group of 18-40 years. They live alone, work and earn and remit their savings to their homes at villages. Such remittances further increase rural incomes which are utilised to make improvements on farms which further raise their incomes. This particularly happens in the case of emigrants to foreign countries who remit large sums at home.

Moreover, when these migrants return to their villages occasionally, they try to raise the consumption and living standards by bringing new ideas and goods to their homes. Modern

household gadgets and other products like TV, fridge, motor cycles, etc. have entered in the majority of rural areas of India where larger remittances flow from urban areas.

Further, with the migration of working age persons to urban areas the number of farm workers is reduced. This leads to employment of underemployed family members on the farm such as women, older persons and even juveniles.

Further, out-migration widens inequalities of income and wealth in rural area families which receive large remittances and their incomes rise. They make improvements on their farms which raise productivity and production. These further increase their incomes. Some even buy other farm lands. Thus such families become richer as compared to others, thereby widening inequalities.

Demographic Effects:

Migration reduces population growth in rural areas. Separation from wives for long periods and the use of contraceptives help control population growth. When very young males migrate to urban areas, they are so influenced by the urban life that they do not like to marry at an early age. Their aim is to earn more, settle in any vocation or job and then marry. Living in urban areas makes the migrants health conscious. Consequently, they emphasize on the importance of health care, and cleanliness which reduces fertility and mortality rates.

Social Effects:

Migration also affects the social set-up of rural communities. It weakens the joint family system if the migrants settle permanently in urban areas. With intermingling of the migrants with people of different castes and regions in cities, they bring new values and attitudes which gradually change old values and customs of ruralites. Women play a greater role in the social setup of the rural life with men having migrated to towns.

▪ **Effects on Urban Areas:**

Migration affects urban areas (or the place of destination) in the following ways:

Demographic Effects:

Migration increases the population of the working class in urban areas. But the majority of migrants are young men between the ages of 15 to 24 years who are unwed. Others above this age group come alone leaving their families at home.

This tendency keeps fertility at a lower level than in rural areas. Even those who settle permanently with their spouses favour small number of children due to high costs of rearing them. The other factor responsible for low fertility rate is the availability of better medical and family planning facilities in urban areas.

Economic Effects:

The effects of migration on income and employment in urban areas are varied depending upon the type of migrants. Usually the migrants are unskilled and find jobs of street hawkers, shoeshine boys, carpenters, masons, tailors, rickshaw pullers, cooks and other tradesmen, etc.

These are “informal sector” activities which are low paying. But, according to the ILO, the evidence suggests that the bulk of employment in the informal sector is economically efficient and profit-making. Thus such migrants earn enough to spend and remit to their homes.

Other migrants who are educated up to the secondary level find jobs as shophelpers, assistants, taxi drivers, repairing machines and consumer durables, marketing goods and in other informal activities that are small in scale, labour intensive and unregulated. Their earnings are sufficient to bring them in the category of a common urbanite with an income level higher than the unskilled workers.

Another class of migrants that is very small is of those who come for higher education in colleges and institutes to towns. They find good job in the “formal sector”, get good salaries, and follow a good standard of living. These are the persons who remit large sums to their homes and help in modernising the rural scenario.

Adverse Effects of Rural-Urban Migration:

Migration from rural to urban areas has a number of adverse effects. Towns and cities in which the migrants settle, face innumerable problems. There is the prolific growth of huge slums and shantytowns. These settlements and huge neighbourhoods have no access to municipal services such as clean and running water, public services, electricity, and sewage system.

There is acute housing shortage. The city transport system is unable to meet the demand of the growing population. There are air and noise pollutions, and increased crime and congestion. The costs of providing facilities are too high to be met, despite the best intentions of the local bodies.

Besides, there is massive underemployment and unemployment in towns and cities. Men and women are found selling bananas, groundnuts, balloons and other cheap products on pavements and in streets. Many work as shoeshines, parking helpers, porters, etc. Thus, urban migration increases the growth rate of job seekers relative to its population growth, thereby raising urban supply of labour. On the demand side, there are not enough jobs available for the ruralities in the formal urban sector for the uneducated and unskilled rural migrants. Consequently, this rapid increase in labour supply and the lack of demand for such labour lead to chronic and increasing urban unemployment and underemployment.

Social Movements

Social movements are broad alliances of people who are connected through their shared interest in social change. Social movements can advocate for a particular social change, but they can also organize to oppose a social change that is being advocated by another entity. These movements do not have to be formally organized to be considered social movements. Different alliances can work separately for common causes and still be considered a social movement.



Sociologists draw distinctions between social movements and social movement organizations (SMOs). A social movement organization is a formally organized component of a social movement. Therefore, it may represent only one part of a particular social movement. For instance, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) advocates for vegan lifestyles along with its other aims. However, PETA is not the only group that advocates for vegan diets and lifestyles; there are numerous other groups actively engaged toward this end. Thus, promoting veganism would be considered the social movement, while PETA would be considered a particular SMO (social movement organization) working within the broader social movement.

Modern social movements became possible through the wide dissemination of literature and the increased mobility of labor, both of which have been caused by the industrialization of societies. Anthony Giddens, a renowned sociologist, has identified four areas in which social movements operate in modern societies:

- democratic movements that work for political rights
- labor movements that work for control of the workplace
- ecological movements that are concerned with the environment
- peace movements that work toward peace

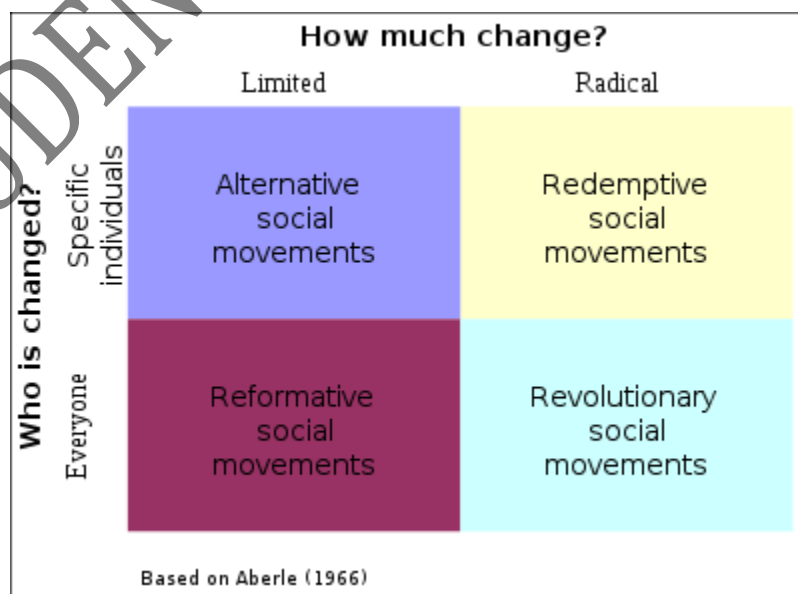
It is interesting to note that social movements can spawn counter movements. For instance, the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s resulted in a number of counter

movements that attempted to block the goals of the women's movement. In large part, these oppositional groups formed because the women's movement advocated for reform in conservative religions.

Types of Social Movements

Social movements occur when large groups of individuals or organizations work for or against change in social and/or political matters. Social movements are a specific type of group action in which large informal groups of individuals or organizations work for or against change in specific political or social issues.

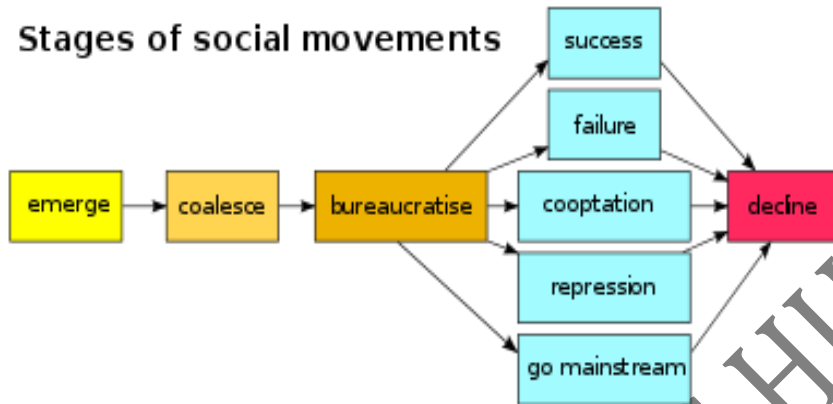
- *revolutionary social movements*: Revolutionary movement is a specific type of social movement dedicated to carrying out revolutionary reforms and gain some control of the state. If they do not aim for an exclusive control, they are not revolutionary.
- *reformative social movements*: A reformative social movement advocates for minor changes instead of radical changes. For example revolutionary movements can scale down their demands and agree to share powers with others, becoming a political party.
- *redemptive social movements*: A redemptive social movement is radical in scope but focused on the individual.



Other categories have been used to distinguish between types of social movements.

- *Scope*: A movement can be either reform or radical. A reform movement advocates changing some norms or laws while a radical movement is dedicated to changing value systems in some fundamental way. A reform movement might be a trade union seeking to increase workers' rights while the American Civil Rights movement was a radical movement.
- *Type of Change*: A movement might seek change that is either innovative or conservative. An innovative movement wants to introduce or change norms and values while a conservative movement seeks to preserve existing norms and values.
- *Targets*: Group-focused movements focus on influencing groups or society in general; for example, attempting to change the political system from a monarchy to a democracy. An individual-focused movement seeks to affect individuals.
- *Methods of Work*: Peaceful movements utilize techniques such as nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience. Violent movements resort to violence when seeking social change.
- *Range*: Global movements, such as Communism in the early 20th century, have transnational objectives. Local movements are focused on local or regional objectives such as preserving an historic building or protecting a natural habitat.

Charles Tilly defines social movements as a series of contentious performances, displays and campaigns by which ordinary people make collective claims on others. For Tilly, social movements are a major vehicle for ordinary people's participation in public politics. Sidney Tarrow defines a social movement as *collective challenges [to elites, authorities, other groups or cultural codes] by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interactions with elites, opponents and authorities*. He specifically distinguishes social movements from political parties and advocacy groups. The term "social movements" was introduced in 1848 by the German Sociologist Lorenz von Stein in his book *Socialist and Communist Movements since the Third French Revolution* (1848).



Adapted from Blumer (1969), Mauss (1975), and Tilly (1978)

Social movements are not eternal. They have a life cycle: they are created, they grow, they achieve successes or failures and, eventually, they dissolve and cease to exist.

Blumer, Mauss, and Tilly have described the different stages that social movements often pass through. Firstly, movements emerge for a variety of reasons (and there are a number of different sociological theories that address these reasons). They then coalesce and develop a sense of coherence in terms of membership, goals and ideals. In the next stage, movements generally become bureaucratized by establishing their own set of rules and procedures. At this point, social movements can then take any number of paths, ranging from success to failure, the cooptation of leaders, repression by larger groups (e.g., government), or even the establishment of a movement within the mainstream.

Social scientists have cited 'relative deprivation' as a potential cause of social movements and deviance. Relative deprivation is the experience of being deprived of something to which one feels to be entitled. It refers to the discontent that people feel when they compare their positions to those around them and realize that they have less of that which they believe themselves to be entitled. Social scientists, particularly political scientists and sociologists, have cited 'relative deprivation' (especially temporal relative deprivation) as a potential cause of social movements and deviance. In extreme situations, it can lead to

political violence such as rioting, terrorism, civil wars and other instances of social deviance such as crime.

Feelings of deprivation are relative, as they come from a comparison to social norms that are not absolute and usually differ from time and place. This differentiates relative deprivation from objective deprivation (also known as absolute deprivation or absolute poverty), a condition that applies to all underprivileged people. This leads to an important conclusion: while the objective deprivation (poverty) in the world may change over time, relative deprivation will not, as long as social inequality persists and some humans are better off than others. Relative deprivation may be temporal; that is, it can be experienced by people that experience expansion of rights or wealth, followed by stagnation or reversal of those gains. Such phenomena are also known as unfulfilled rising expectations.

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THE END

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