

Sociology

Chapter 1

Sociology: scientific study of social

4 areas of social change that propelled soc.

1. Scientific revolution
2. Industrial tech,
3. Urban growth
4. Political change

4 benefits of the sociological perspective

1. The soc. Perspective changes familiar understandings of ourselves and of others
2. The soc. Perspective allows us to recognize both the opportunities and the constraints that characterize our lives.
3. The soc. Perspective empowers us to be active participants in our society.
4. The soc. Perspective helps us to recognize human diversity and to confront the challenges of living in a diverse world.

"THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION"

- C. Wright Mills
- The ability to think in terms of structure. Distinguish personal troubles and societal issues.
- An awareness of the relationship between an individual and the wider society, both in today and in the past.

3 Problems with the sociological perspective.

1. Does not explain every individual's behavior.
2. Society is always changing.
3. The sociological perspective can be discomfoting at times.

Sociological Theory

1. Definition of paradigm

Symbolic interaction—based on the view that society is the product of the everyday interactions of individuals.

2. Subject under focus

Interaction between individuals

3. Nature of society

Composed

5. Some key concepts

Symbols

Definition of the situation= when the fire alarm goes off, what are you going to do? Walk or run

6. Some key concepts theorists

Weber

Mead

Goffman

7. Weaknesses of paradigm

a. Ignores large structures and overlooks large-scale problems

Chapter 2

Sociological Research

Bests 4 approaches to data/research

1. The awestruck
2. The naïve
3. The cynical
4. The critic

1. The Awestruck

- do not understand where information came from and do not care
- blindly accept numbers and other information as having magic quality

2. The Naïve

- slightly more sophisticated than awestruck

- can understand basics like mean, percentages
- but can be confused easily esp. by big numbers
- do not question data and assume validity
- sometimes pass along flawed data

3. The Cynical

- suspicious, negative, or even hostile of all data/research
- "you can prove anything with statistics " attitude
- see research as flawed and simply as a means to promote agenda
- point out flaws to opponents research while rarely examining research that promotes favored cause
- often are a source of flawed data

4. The Critical

- approach data/research thoughtfully
- avoid naïve acceptance and cynical rejection
- attempt to evaluate data/research and distinguish between good (but never perfect) information and heavily flawed findings
- use data/research but appreciate limitations

Scientific method—a systematic organized series of steps that ensures maximum objectivity and consistency in researching a problem