


An Introduction of Sociology

Lesson No.	Title	Activity
1	An Introduction of Sociology	Explore the job prospects and further education associated with sociology as a discipline

Summary

Sociology is the study of human society and social behaviour as well as a study of social relationships and its forms. As a subject, it has important practical relevance in our life.



What is Sociology?

Sociology is the scientific study of society. It is a way of studying people

August Comte was the first scholar to use the term 'Sociology' in order to refer to the science of human association. The word 'Sociology' was derived from Latin word 'Socius (association, and the Greek Word 'logus' Theory denoted the theory of human society'. Later, many sociologists including Herbert Spencer, Hobhouse, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber focused elaborately on refining the meaning and scope of sociology.

Sociology helps us to step back from ourselves and understand and appreciate that there are diverse kinds of societies that may be very different from our own society. It helps us realize that many personal problems are often social issues. Sociology goes beyond a common sense understanding of the world.

Nature of Sociology

IS SOCIOLOGY A SCIENCE?

Science refers to the application of a systematic method of investigation.

Goals of a science are three-fold and these are: (A) to explain why something happens; (B) To make generalizations and (C) To predict future trends

Characteristics of a science

- It is theoretical: It summarizes how and why specific facts are related. It explains social behaviour in the real world.
- It is empirical: It relies on data that is produced using systematic methods of investigation.
- It is cumulative: Theories are built on one another. Research helps us to modify, add or delete the existing body of knowledge.
- It is non-ethical: Sociologists are non-judgmental. They do not pronounce phenomenon as good or bad.

Sociology of Perspectives

Positivism

Theorist- August Comte

- It emphasizes studying society using the method of the natural sciences and stresses the need for neutrality and objectivity in

Functionalism

Theorists- Herbert Spencer Emile Durkheim

- Functionalists view Society as a self-regulating and self-maintaining social system
- Focus is on maintaining social order.
- Needs of the social system are met by the various parts of society.

Conflict Perspective

Theorists-Karl Marx

- Conflict theorists view that conflict is an inherent part of society. Conflict also leads to stability and consensus in society.

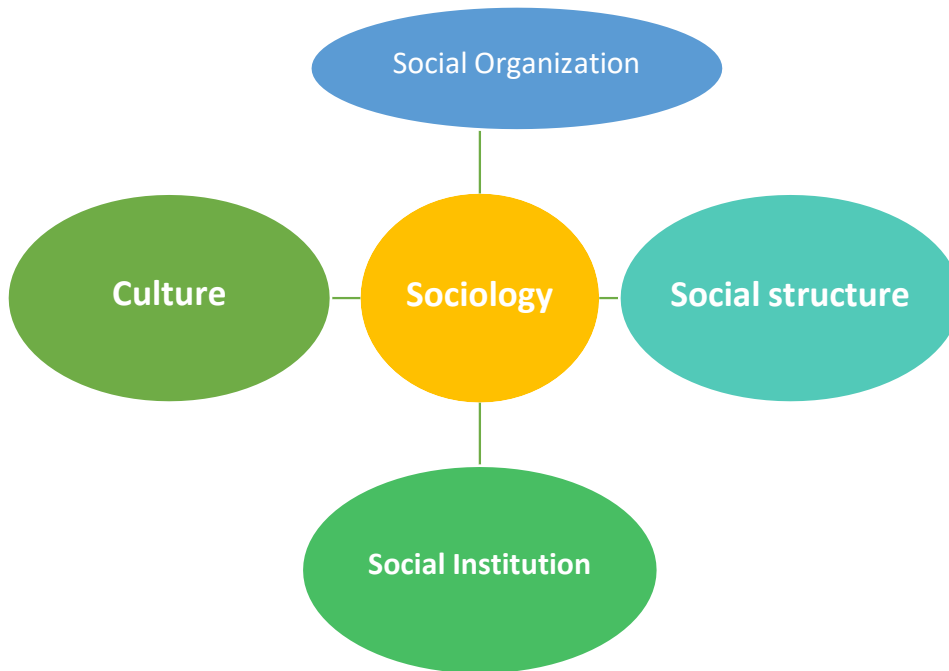
Phenomenology

Theorists-Max Weber

- It is mainly concerned with understanding how the world is experienced by individuals. Society is constructed through the viewpoint of observation of the actors

Scope of Sociology

Sociology is the study with the whole human history and it studies society in its totality. Sociologists study individual's social actions, social relationships, social process (conflict, competition, co-operation,) communities and nations and social structure (family, class and state) as basis of sociological enquiry. Sociology has a wide range of concerns and interests. We study in Sociology about social organization, social structure, institution and culture.



Relevance of Sociology

Sociology is a subject with important practical relevance in our life. It can contribute to social criticism and practical social reform in several ways. Sociology helps in:

- 1) The improved understanding of a given set of social circumstances
- 2) Providing the means of increasing our cultural sensitivities and an awareness of divergent cultural values.
- 3) Investigating the consequences of the adoption of particular policies and programmes.
- 4) overall, providing self-enlightenment offering groups and individuals an increased opportunity to alter the conditions of their own lives

Evaluate Yourself

1. Reflect on how sociology is different from common-sense?
2. How do you perceive sociology?
As a science?
3. Do you think the scope of sociology is being widened with changes and development in society? Explain
4. Evaluate the relevance of Sociology as a subject in 21st century.