

Effects of suicide



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What insights people to commit an action? Is it of their own design or perhaps from an influence or lack of an influence that insights this action? As human beings living in a society with the diverse influences of others, our decisions and actions tend to be the reflection of society whether they be positive or negative, rather than of our own creation. According to Emile Durkheim, social forces of influence that exist within our society are what have an effect on one's likelihood to commit suicide. Durkheim developed this general explanation of suicidal behavior and sought to expound his theory.

Emile Durkheim lived from the mid eighteenth hundreds to the early nineteen hundreds; a time when the act of suicide was still a debated question of why the act was in fact committed. Despite the previous notions that people inherited the desire to kill themselves, Durkheim was not satisfied with this biological explanation of a chemical imbalance within an individual. He developed a theory that people commit suicide due to the lack of social connections and or obligations that would prevent them from committing this final individualistic act.

Therefore his formulated hypothesis was: " Suicide varies inversely with the degree of integration of the social groups of which the individual forms a part. " (Witt pg. 10 para. 5) With this interpretation of why people commit suicide in accordance to their lack of social affiliations, provides the relevant severity that social bonds have on the individuals within that society. Durkheim claimed that one's religious, and relationship affiliations were superior factors in determining one's social integration.

His studies and analysis showed that people who were either Protestant, unmarried or didn't have children were more likely to commit suicide due to the lack of social interaction within their life. As a theorist from an interactionalist perspective, Durkheim also stressed and emphasized the severity and significance that social order plays in a society. His interactionalist perspective on society gives light to his theories on the social interactions by which shared meanings establish a social order. Through this perspective he theorized that an increase in the division of labor would result in individuals that shared fewer commonalities.

While workers would specialize in their own tasks, they in turn would in fact distance themselves from the interaction of others within their fields, resulting in what Durkheim called an anomie. " Anomie is the loss of direction that is felt in a society when social control of individual behavior has become ineffective. " (Witt pg. 13 para 7) Upon further analysis, anomie would increase the probability of loneliness, isolation and despair would in turn cause a lack of social integration. This effect of anomie can hinder and even change the norms or values we live by.

This in turn brings Durkheim's theory on suicide full circle. With these theories expressed through Durkheim's interactionalist perspective has given light to the importance of the social connections, and integration within a society in order to assure the success of that society functioning properly based on the happiness of the individuals of that society. On February 27, 2012 in Chardon Ohio, some thirty miles from Cleveland, a student by the name of T. J Lane went to school with a loaded . 22 caliber pistol and knife with the intention to kill.

He then unloaded ten shots at a group of students sitting at a cafeteria table. Five of the students were hit, one Daniel Parmertor was pronounced dead a few hours after the incident. Two more of the wounded students Russell King and Demetrius Hewlin were pronounced dead later that Wednesday the twenty ninth. Nick Walczak remains in the hospital while Joy Rickers was released. He however admits that he randomly chose his victims.

Lane the seventeen year old is currently being charged with murder as an adult. With testimony from some of Lane's peers, they divulged that there seemed nothing wrong with T. J that he seemed like a normal kid, however; one of his close friends posted on Facebook a day later saying " I wanted so bad to try and help you but i could see in your eyes you didn't care anymore. I'm sorry buddy. " Apparently there is something wrong, for the prosecutor James Joyce claims " This is not about bullying. This is not about drugs. This is someone who is not well. " (<http://abcnews.go.com>) In the eyes of an interactionalist perspective such as Durkheim, the agent responsible for this boy's actions seems to be his lack of social integration.

Seventeen year old Lane was known as an outcast who had been bullied; this is the deciding factor for his behavior. One of his friends quoted he'd seen a change in him, " He was a good student in school, then he just turned Goth, and his grades started dropping. " (<http://www.huffingtonpost.com>) In reference to another, Lane's parents have a history of domestic violence. " His father was charged with attempted murder in 2002," stated the abc News reporter Reena Ninan. (<http://abcnews.go.com>) This teenage boy who had been picked on and suffered this violence from his peers and parents expressed the division of individuals within a society.

He had snapped, and instead of committing suicide he acted out with deviance and anger. This lack of connection to society and correct influence left him with the feeling of despair, and isolation, and being uneducated and unconnected he acted out in the wrong way. He was in fact suffering the effects of an anomie. " Society is the product of our everyday interactions by which we establish shared meanings and construct social order. " This interactionalist perspective constitutes the relationship between the environment (society) in which Lane received and perceived these interactions of his own.

Through the interactionalist perspective of Emile Durkheim, we as humans and individuals of this society, influence one others thoughts, and actions. Whether that influence is negative or positive, it is important for us to feel that connection to society and that emit that sense of belonging. These social forces that connect us to others around us is essential and reflects the makeup of norms values in our society. This in fact represents our interconnections with other individuals who we can influence and have influence on us.