

A sociological explanation of irish people essay

[Politics](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Introduction

The sociological concepts of various aspects of life vary to a wide extent. A sociological inquiry seeks to explain how people have developed the behaviors and characters they have. It explains the various aspects of the community and various sociological factors and issues shaping the community. Life has numerous aspects and sociological constructs and factors shaping the life of the people in those communities and countries. For example, Language is considered an aspect of culture, where a group of people share a common origin and, therefore, speak the same language. The language spoken by various groups of people has some sociological explanations specifically for the group and this case the people of Ireland can be explained in that aspect.

Values and norms are also part of the sociological blueprint that guides a group of people in a society in the acceptable way of dealing with any upcoming or extraordinary occasion or event. The ideas of how people agree collectively on what to be termed as desirable or undesirable. The values of people are some kind of unwritten statute that governs the entire social life of the people in a given locality (Keogh 1986: 27). Looking at the Irish people, we will discuss the many factors from politics, religion, the economy among others and how these factors can be socially explained. The explanations of why the Irish people live the way they do today.

The social structure of the Irish people, their norms, identity, ethnicity and many others have been subjected to the transformation of time. There, many contemporary issues of the present day that could force the change of all these sociological factors over time. The religion of the Irish people, was

predominantly catholic just like many parts of the world. However, this has inevitably been subjected to change as the world moves to an era where so many religions are coming up. It is a rare occurrence to find a one religion country in the world today. Ireland also, being part of the world, has followed suit, and this paper will attempt to provide sociological explanations of how the Irish people live the way they do. Sociological concepts are great assets, when it comes to the explanation of various aspects of life of their economy to politics and culture (Acquaviva 1979: 39).

In dealing with this topic, therefore, we will look at the various aspects of life, not strictly social but mainly social. Here, we will attempt to look at a number of factors that have directly and indirectly influenced the Irish people and how they go about their daily activities. The effects of contemporary issues and explanations on the impacts of these effects, socially speaking, are what this argument is all about. This argument will basically attempt to establish a social connection on the lifestyles of the Irish people.

Issues to address

In an effort to explain how the people of Ireland live they way they do, several aspects of the society whether contemporary or otherwise, have to be put into consideration. The factors include the Catholic Church, politics, the housing system, migration, sexuality, secularization, capitalism, homes and jobs among others. Some of these issues are the ones we are going to use to establish some possible explanations of the present day Ireland and how these Irish people live like they are currently living, particularly the social aspect of it (Acquaviva 1979: 90).

The political troubles in Northern Ireland

The political mayhems in the United Kingdom and specifically Northern Ireland have had several effects on the people of Ireland. Top on the list are the social workers who work effortlessly to deal with the effects of such violence. The Society of Northern Ireland has had to deal with emerging issues such as wars and conflict resolution is now an inevitable fact to these people now. The country in an effort to recover from war and its effects has had to come to terms with frequent curfews and heavy presence of military personnel in residential areas. The lives of these people are now, not as free and simple as they were before the war. This has led to friction between the social workers and their counterparts in the political sector who believe that the social workers need to understand the extraordinary circumstances the country has gone through and, therefore, calling for not so pleasant political measures (Cleary and Joe 2005: 28).

The constitutional and political arrangements, which have led, to the separation of Ireland into two, have forced the Irish people to adopt new lifestyles as citizens of different countries. The social and the political violence have completely changed the whole area and people now live based on their political and social affiliations. The violence changed the family and social structures significantly. Most men went to war leaving their respective wives, sister and mothers give care to the young who are left behind. This defined the role of a woman in the Ireland setting where women generally took care of the family in terms of giving care and compassion. Today, that explains why the role of women in a typical Irish society is to take care of the family although this is also changing gradually.

Catholicism and Nationalism in Ireland

The Irish people are very religious people and they are among the most religious people in the world history. The most common religion in Ireland is the catholic religion. Secularization was something unheard of, in Ireland, and the social and religious expectations for every member of the society were to uphold their religion and social norms. For a long time, this religious nature of most of the Irish people brought friction between religious leaders and the political leaders on issues such as morality (Cleary and Joe 2005: 89).

In the past over twenty years, the situation of the Church has changed considerably, both in terms of the influence of the political class and the hierarchy of political leaders. The church played a prime role in shaping and influencing the public opinion and ensuring that personal behavior meets the expectations of the society and the church. Looking at the influence of Catholicism on society and state brings about the concept of human adaptability to the change in the religious, political and social structure.

The state, because of its political nature is involved in secular activities, in the previous year's bringing about the disagreement between the state and religious leaders. In the present day, secularization has found its way in the society of the Irish people due to strong political influences and the general contemporary trends of the world (O'Mahony, Patrick and Gerard 2001: 97).

The role of Catholicism in the Irish society is rapidly going down, and the identity of the people of Ireland is no longer defined by Catholicism.

Secularization is gradually infiltrating the modern Irish society because of various reasons besides the secularization issue. Some of these issues include among others, the emergence of Protestant churches that have

<https://assignbuster.com/a-sociological-explanation-of-irish-people-essay/>

significantly brought a change in the traditional Catholicism in Ireland (Tanner 2001: 67).

The church situation in Ireland today is way different from how it in history, in the sense that the number of doctrines has grown exponentially due to the current legal systems that advocate for freedom of speech and worship for every Irish citizen. The Irish people are currently living in an era where there are multiple religions and doctrines including Islam. This has been attributed to the changes and diversities in all these sectors; religion and politics. The religious situation in Ireland right now is the heavy presence of Christian doctrines and a few cases of Islam. This is due to migrations and work related movements.

The Catholic Church was assured of an active and important role in the society in 1937 where the country obtained a new constitution. The state in Ireland was a bureaucratic one, and people began noticing this, which was among the major factors causing revolt in the country. The conflict arose where the church was so determined to retain and regain its previous influence. The church played a crucial role in ensuring that the politics of Ireland as a nation were in proper shape and observed good morals and the norms of Christianity (Tanner 2001: 27). The Catholic Church then was successful as its influence somehow impacted the politics of the country. However, in the present day, the Catholic Church has lost grip on the control of the society due to the emergence of multiple doctrines. The Irish people today have succumbed to contemporary pressure, and the situation is far different from how it used to be back then. The church lost the power to influence politics in Ireland. The Irish people now do not worship by norm but by their will and desire in any way they deem fit (Keogh 1986: 85).

<https://assignbuster.com/a-sociological-explanation-of-irish-people-essay/>

Secularization in Ireland

The Irish government has been attempting to justify the need to apply the aspect of secularization since as they claim, apply to the present day developments in Ireland. The church has been struggling to gain control over the secondary and primary education and also they wanted to influence decision making in all aspects of society through the parish priests. The church has lost the historical control on the norms and cultural values in Ireland. This role has been taken over amply by the political power and other stakeholders apart from the church (Besecke 2005: 72).

Between the 1950s and 1960s, the incorporation of Catholicism and national identity, which was the only thing that delayed secularization from taking over Ireland finally began stumbling and later on, secularization began taking over the whole of Ireland. During the industrial revolution in Great Britain and Europe, secularization began taking over most of the parts of Europe, Ireland included. Ever since, there has been an increased influence of secularization with the church's power, to influence the decisions in the society of the Irish people (Keogh 1986: 56). Modernity brought about political and cultural pluralism. Ultimately, this caused conflicts with the pre-existing traditional legislations eventually leading to liberalism. Liberalism was characterized by individuals making personal religious and social decisions without having to consult any social or religious organization. The whole issue of secularization has been subject to many arguments on whether it is worth being preferred for the church or not. Bottom line the current Irish society, which was previously religious has now changed to a liberal culture and capitalism where every person does what they wish as long as they don't violate the laws of the land (O'Mahony, Patrick and Gerard <https://assignbuster.com/a-sociological-explanation-of-irish-people-essay/>

2001: 102).

The traditional laws insisted on the most conservative of morals and collective responsibility for every member of the society to act responsibly by upholding the unwritten laws of society. In Ireland, this is a thing of the past and people has adopted the contemporary state of society worldwide where decision making on anything and anytime solely depends on an individual's preference. Interactions between people of different religious divides led to assimilations and dilution of respective beliefs and, therefore, the traditional religious culture in Ireland slowly faded away to what is observed in the present day.

These changes were happening undetected and the transformations took the society gradually, but by surprise. In Ireland today, the Catholic Church still has strong foundations there. However, its ability to make decisions and take part in making social decisions has been fading away, day in a day out (Besecke 2005: 107).

Implications of Secularization for Irish Nationalism

Although nationalism is characteristically portrayed a secular ideology, there has been that religious touch in the Irish culture. Nationalism has not entirely followed the path of secularization that is very common now in the world. The reason why the church did not follow secularization is because the Irish people desire what they call a common fate. Common fate brought about social and political cohesion, which assures a country of political and social stability (Tanner 2001: 34).

In conclusion, secularization has the tendencies to bring a country to war, since it does not entirely advocate for togetherness as opposed to

nationalism. Ireland suffered this first hand, which is why people live like they do now. The influence of the church has gone down and the Catholic Church no longer takes a prime role in the decision making process. This has been attributed to the need to accommodate contemporary issues in Ireland; issues like modernity, democracy and constitutional rights.

Ireland is a country that believes in the common fate. This however, has come to test when there was political instability that led to the splitting of Ireland into two with Northern Ireland seeking its own independence. The Irish people therefore live in some sort of technical transition, with the secularization taking root, the common fate spirit and the religious touch of the Irish people. Culture, politics, secularization and the spirit of common fate struggle to obtain some sort of equilibrium.

Bibliography

Acquaviva, S. *The Decline of the Sacred in Industrial Society*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979.

Besecke, K. ' *Seeing Invisible Religion: Religion as a Societal Conversation about Transcendent Meaning*. N. Y: Garden City: Doubleday, 2005.

Cleary, and Joe. *Introduction: Ireland and Modernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Keogh, D. *The Vatican, the Bishops and Irish Politics: Church and State in Ireland, 1919-1939*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

O'Mahony, Patrick, and Delatny Gerard. *A Century of Change*. London: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Tanner, M. *Ireland's Holy Wars: The Struggle for a Nation's Soul*,. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.