

# Sociology assignment

Sociology



Every man has a degree of interdependency with the rest of his surroundings, which include fellow man and external influence thus the society. Within the greater society individuals form many groups at different times; this may be temporary or permanent, these groups include family, gangs (peer), corporation (work), etc. These groups are important to the sociologist; because sociology is “ the study of people in social groups” (Taylor et al, 1995). In addition these groups go a long way to shape what the individual becomes. Furthermore Sociologists argue that “ to be able to understand individual experiences we have to look beyond the personal circumstances in which they occur. ” It is important to examine the Structure of society and those institutions which reach down into their personal circumstances and shape the individual (ibid). To be able to understand such analogies we have to see things through the eyes of sociologist, the framework that explains this is Sociological imagination-C.

W Mills stated neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both” (Mills, C. W. 1959) . An example is in a society where the percentage of employment is very high the pockets of people not in employment may be seen as not trying hard enough, but in a situation where the unemployment is high ; the system will have to be looked into to see if there are opportunities and training for employment. It would be impossible to describe a group of people without knowledge of their culture, because it is the sum of their way of life; it portrays their identity thus values, norms etc. Culture also distinguishes one society from the other, again it changes over time. For instance in some African societies it is a sign of disrespect if you establish eye contact with an elderly person

when talking to them but in some western cultures lack of eye contact might be interpreted as lack of confidence or disrespectful in some cultures.

However within a cultural society, there can be groups who have different values from the core group; This is known as Subculture .

Values are beliefs that something is important and worthwhile this may include family, respect, religion , dress code , language(dialect) these values may distinguish the subgroups from the main cultural groups, eg Muslim women are expected to wear Long gowns(hijab) from head to toe that reveal only their eyes, this is a religious value they cherish not only in Muslim countries but defend the right to do so even outside the jurisdiction of these values because it has been imposed on them from when they were very young Norms on the other hand are rules which govern behavior.

For instance college students are expected to report on time for classes and also hand in their assignments on time , this norm is enshrined in the educational system is our first experience with bureaucracy, perhaps it has a hidden agenda of grooming us for the work. Status is another important concept in society because it shows our position in society, there are statuses that family bestows on us like mother, wife, husband, daughter etc. These examples are ascribed. Status can also be achieved through hard work or learning. eg doctor, manager. Roles are expected behaviors that come with a status An individual might play more than one role at any given time in society because of the expectations of their status. A person might be a wife, mother, and at the same time a daughter . Meeting the expectations of these different positions can sometimes result in a Role conflict.

The most fundamental expression of the culture is expressed at the individual level but can only be manifested after the individual has been through Colonization; it is the process by which an individual learns how to interact with others and becomes a member of society- it is a lifelong process of instilling into new members moral norms, attitudes, values, motives, social roles, language and symbols to ensure cultural continuity.

The main types of socializations are ; Primary- colonization that occur without the subjects knowledge, it is mainly carried by the family the most important agent it teaches children basic skills such as how to speak, use cutlery, toilet training etc. , then it teaches cultural values and attitudes, also the family passes on social positions in terms of race, ethnicity, religion and class in addition it socializes children into gender roles .

Secondary-one that is purposeful and to some extent obvious, agents of this colonization are The school; which enlarges children's social world to include people with social backgrounds different from their own, formal education (a wide range of skills and knowledge). There is also the hidden curriculum of conformity and bureaucracy, children are also socialized into gender roles through education.

The Peer Group; provides young people the experience in developing social relationships on their own and establishing an identity apart from their family, provides the opportunity to discuss interests not shared by adults and also a sense of belonging. The media- influences our attitudes and behavior through the images and messages it conveys, brings to light our society's

tatters of inequality and rarely challenges the status quo and reflect the values of the dominant culture Functionalist.