

# The subject of sociology assignment

[Sociology](#)



The Public Opinion Poll Method and techniques 12. The Persistent Approach and techniques 13. Functionalism or Structural Functional Method and techniques Conclusion The list of used literature In sociology, as in any other science, there are such major components as the knowledge and the means to obtain it (in this context are not the subjects of the research activities of scientists and research teams, but only the means and the results of their activities). The first component includes knowledge about knowledge (methodological knowledge) and knowledge about the subject.

The second component is and separate methods, and the actual sociological research. 1. The subject of sociology Different sociologists have different views on a subject of their science. How was considered by the founder of sociology O. Comet , a subject of sociological study should be the laws of social development, from which flowed practical advice, useful in all branches Of human activity. O. Comet likened the sociology of science, calling it sometimes social physics. The laws of development of society, like natural laws, are strict in his opinion, unambiguous and objective character, not dependent on the will of the people.

Max Weber (1864-1920) was considered a subject matter of sociology as the so-called social action, which correlates with the actions of other people, focused on them. The subject matter of sociology by M. Weber subjectivity, “bound” to the man. Mile Druthers (1858-1915) went the other way. He announced the subject of the science the social facts, by which he understood the rules, laws, values, views, people, public institutions, organizations and the General idea embodied in the form of, for example,

buildings, structures, etc. Each generation of individuals finds its own set of social facts, which determines the behavior of people.

Approach of E. Durkheim to the subject matter of sociology is objective character, not dependent on a particular person. Approaches of M. Weber and E. Durkheim in common is that they, like the vast number of other sociologists consider human behavior in society due to the relationships that he has with the surrounding people and objects, his previous experience, education, place in public life, public institutions, etc. Thus, the subject of sociology is social communication, public relations 2. Methods and Techniques of Sociology The term 'method' means an apt way of doing something.

Every science has to use an appropriate way or a suitable method of investigating into its field of study. Sociology is also a science. It would also therefore, use certain methods by which sociological facts could be collected, analysed and put into proper form and certain conclusions drawn from them. The question of proper methodology is of great significance in Sociology because the claim of our subject to be regarded a science depends upon the use of a methodology which can eliminate the possibility of personal bias from influencing our comprehension and evaluation of social facts.

Sociology is still in its infancy. It has not been able to find a method of its own appropriate for its researches. It has however, met with appreciable Success in analyzing the social phenomenon and its use of methods employed by other social sciences is quite proper. According to Chapin, there

are three main methods of Sociology. These are the historical method, the statistical method and field work observation method. Ellwood has mentioned five methods: anthropological or comparative method, historical method, survey method, deductive method and philosophical method. Hart also has mentioned five methods.

These are common sense method, historical method, observation method. Laboratory or experimental method and statistical method. 1 The Scientific or Experimental Method and techniques: Every science employs scientific or experimental method for the study of its material. This method consists of observation, recording classification, hypothesis, verification and prediction. Observation means “ looking at” things. It is of two kinds: 1 . Spontaneous and 2. Controlled. The former is conducted when the phenomenon in question is spontaneously happening as when an astronomer is observing the course of star or a sociologist is witnessing a riot.

Controlled observation which is also called experimentation takes place when the phenomenon can be observed in the circumstances devised by the observer himself. Experimentation can be defined as investigation in which the situation or subjects are systematically manipulated by the investigator and controlled observation made so that a definite hypothesis about the relation of variables can be tested. Sociology does observe the behavior of the people under conditions in which they live. However, every possible precaution need be taken to conceal from the subjects that observation is in progress and that measurements are being made.

The second stage in the scientific method is recording of all the data obtained in the observation. Recording must be accurate and objective. The sociologist records a situation as observed by him. The third stage in the scientific method is the classification. Once the facts are observed and recorded we must classify them in a certain order. By classification we arrange our material in such a way that those facts which possess common characteristics are grouped together. Classification thus enables us to correlate the facts that we have collected and established some relationships between them.

Next comes the stage of hypothesis which means giving some sort of possible explanation for the correlation between the facts classified. Classification has enabled us to sift the relevant from the irrelevant. The correlation found between certain events and the study of their nature and mutual interaction leads us to formulate a provisional explanation of the fact. Then comes the last stage of prediction which means that the generalization established on the basis of observation of facts would be valid in future also if the conditions specified in our principle will, prevail.

The physical science can make true prediction but Sociology can give only rough prediction as its subject-matter is so varied and complex. The Historical Method consists of a study of events, processes and institutions of past civilizations for the purpose of finding the origins or antecedents of contemporary social life and thus of understanding its nature and working. History and Sociology are so much inter-related that some of the sociologists like G. E.

Howard regard history to be past Sociology, and Sociology present History, it is evident that our present forms of social life, our customs or ways of living have their roots in the past and they can, Hereford, be best explained when they are traced back to their sources. This can be possible only with the help of History. Social heritage is another name for history. 3. The Comparative or Anthropological Method and techniques: This method involves comparisons of various kinds or groups of people in order to find out the differences as well as similarities in their ways of life and thus to find out clues to man's social behavior.

This method has been used by many sociologists to find out what elements in social life are functionally co-related. Taylor used this method in the study of the institutions connected with the family among primitive people and was able to show that the practice of mother-in-law avoidance was co-related with the custom of matrilocal residence. He showed that in all those families where the husband goes to live with his wife's people, the practice of the mother-in-law avoiding her son-in-law is found. Similarly, Weber also finds direct relation between the practical ethics of a community and character of its economic system.

But the application of this method is not as simple as it may appear. The first difficulty in the application of this method is that social units have different meanings in different countries. The institution of marriage, for instance, has different meanings for the people of India and for westerners. We consider it as an indissoluble sacred bond of union between husband and wife whereas the western people take it as a union of loose type breakable at the will of

either party. 4. Inverse Deductive Method and techniques: Sociology makes use of Inverse Deductive Method on a large scale.

This method was advocated by J. S. Mill and involves the following procedure: In the first place, it assumes that there is relation between different elements of social life. By the use of Taylor's method of tracing adhesions, we inquire what elements in social life are functionally correlated. As we have mentioned above, Taylor had applied this method to the comparative and statistical study of the institutions connected with the family among the primitive peoples and showed that the practice of mother-in-law avoidance is co-related with the custom of matricidal residence.

Similarly, it has been suggested that there is some relationship between industrialization and capitalism, between arbitration and disintegration of the family, between war and class differentiations and so on. The rise of nobility and the extensive development of serfdom appear to be correlated with the growth of the economic system. Secondly, after finding the correlation between the institutions, we come to the study of sequences I. E. , finding whether there are any regularities in the changes of the institutions, and whether the changes in any one institution are correlated with changes in other institutions, e. G. We may inquire whether changes in class structure are connected with changes in the economic organization or again whether changes in the forms and functions of the family are connected with changes in the economic order in elisions beliefs or in morals. Thirdly, fifth laws of co-relative changes or sequences are established they provide what J. S. Mill called the middle principles of sociology. Finally, such laws would not, however, yield the final explanation of social phenomenon; they would

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require to be related to more ultimate laws Of psychology and Social psychology which govern the life and evolution of human societies as such. . The Ideal Type Method and techniques: The Ideal Type Method of investigating social phenomenon has been expounded by Max Weber, Simmer and Druthers. According to this method n ideal is constructed from concrete cases and then a particular case is evaluated according to the degree of its approximation to the ideal. According to Weber, an ideal type of social behavior involves a description of certain aims and normative controls, from which springs a notion of the rational course of action. The ideal type analysis and scales of personal values have proved very valuable for descriptive and analytical studies.

This method has further been employed with profit in Marxian interpretation whether the ideal types are classes having conflicting objectives. This method can be used: a) As a means of interpreting particular situations; (b) As a generalizing concept by means officio we can disentangle a similar element from the variety of its manifestation; (c) As a means for detecting the causal force of other factors. 6. The Statistical Method and techniques: The Statistical Method is used to measure social phenomenon mathematically that is with the help of figures.

According to Bugaboos, “ Social Statistics is mathematics applied to human facts. ” Odium writes, “ Statistics which is the science of numbering and measuring phenomena objectively is an essential core of research. Explaining the meaning of statistical method, James Smith writes, “ Statistical method is a term used to describe the process of interpreting facts by the use of statistics and statistical theory. ” 7. Goniometry and <https://assignbuster.com/the-subject-of-sociology-assignment/>



techniques: A new method of goniometry has been recently evolved by some sociologists for the measurement of such nationalistically relations as envy, class conflicts, social adjustments etc.

Goniometry is a set of techniques to measure in quantitative and diagrammatic terms attractions and repulsions in interpersonal relations. The econometric test can be very helpful in the assignment of personnel to work groups in such a way as to achieve a maximum of inter-personal harmony and a minimum of inter-personal friction. 8. The Social Survey Method and techniques: The social survey method consists in the collection of data concerning the living and working conditions of people in a given area with a view to formulating practical social measures for their betterment and welfare. Social surveys are of various types.

These are: 1) General or specialized surveys; 2) Direct or indirect surveys; 3) Census survey or sample surveys; 4) Primary or secondary surveys; 5) Initial or appetitive surveys; 6) Official, semi-official or private surveys; 7) Wide-spread or limited' surveys; 8) Public or confidential surveys; 9) Postal or personal surveys; 10) Regular or dados surveys; It involves the following steps: 1) Definition of the purpose or objects; 2) Definition of the problem to be studied; 3) The analysis of this problem in a schedule; 4) The delimitation of the area or scope; 5) Examination of all documentary sources; 6) Field work; 7) Arrangement, tabulation and statistical analysis of the data; 8) The interpretation of the results; 9) Deduction; 10) Graphic expression. The Case-study Method and techniques: A case study is defined as “ an investigation of an individual or group in which the variables which are measured and whose empirical relations explored are characteristics of the individuals or

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group and not a sub-unit of it. ” It is a form of qualitative analysis involving the very careful and complete observation of a person, a situation or an institution. The case study method is employed in studying an individual case or that of a group, a community or an institution. The contention underlying it is that any case being studied is a. Representative of many, if not all, similar cases and hence will make generalizations possible. Burgess assigns it the name of social Microscope.

Some of the techniques used in the method are interviews, questionnaires, life histories, documents of all kinds having a bearing on the subject and all such material which may enable the sociologist to have a deep insight into the problem. Thoroughness is the keystone of this method. 10. Questionnaire and Interview Method and Questionnaire and interviews are very common and popular research tools of sociologists these days. The questionnaire is a list of important and pertinent questions concerning a problem. According to Lundeberg, “ Fundamentally, the questionnaire is a set of stimuli to which literate people are exposed in order to observe their verbal behavior under these stimuli. ” It is sent to persons and associations concerned, requesting them to answer the questions to the best of their knowledge and ability.

The object is to obtain knowledge about facts known to the informant but not to the investigator. From answers received to certain questions predictions are made about social behavior. 11. The public Opinion poll Method and techniques: This method is used to seek and gauge the beliefs, sentiments and attitudes of the public on any given proposition. ‘ Public poll’ is very popular in America, where data regarding public opinion about various social, economic and political situations are collected through this instrument very <https://assignbuster.com/the-subject-of-sociology-assignment/>

frequently. The public gives its views by answering ' yes', ' no' or ' do not know' to the proposition. The results of the ' public poll' help the authorities concerned in modifying their policies accordingly. 12.

The Persistent Approach and This method for the study of social phenomena has been advocated by some sociologists of whom Max Weber is perhaps the most notable. " Persistent" is German word which means " understanding' or comprehension of sociological problems. The advocates of this method maintain that the observed facts are Of little significance unless they are evaluated through discovery of their inner meaning. The American sociologist C. H. Cooley ' maintained in his Sociological Theory and Social Research that in order to grasp the significance of the behavior of individuals the observer must penetrate into their thought processes and sentiments and shares their states of mind. It is only then that the actions of the individuals can be best understood. Explaining this technique further C. H.

Cooley in his Life and Student writes that " understanding' is developed from contact with the minds of other men through communication, which sets going a process of thoughts and sentiments similar to theirs and enables us to understand them by sharing their states of mind. 13. Functionalism or Structural Functional Method and tech unique: By this method we try to interpret any part of society in terms of its functions and not in terms of its utility and origin. Functionalism, in other words, refers to the study of social phenomena from the point of view of the functions that particular institutions such as family, lass, political institutions, religion, etc. , serve in a society.

The functional method assumes that the total social system of the society is made up of parts which are inter-related and inter-dependent, each performing a function necessary to the life of the group, and these parts can best be understood in terms of the functions that they perform or in terms of the needs they meet. And since they are inter-dependent we can understand them only by investigating their relationship to other parts as well as to the whole social system. Morton has mentioned the following major procedures of functional analysis: 1) Establishment of functional requirements; 2) Explanation of structure and process; 3) Search of compensating mechanisms; 4) Detailed description of the structure; 5) Detailed description of the functional systems.

According to Morton, the following points should be carefully studied in the functional analysis of social phenomena: 1) Location of statuses of participants in the social structure; 2) Alternative modes of behavior; 3) Description of the attitude towards the pattern; 4) Motivation for participating in the pattern; 5) Associated unrecognized regularities of behavior. The functional approach was employed by sociologists like Comte, Spencer and others and anthropologists like Mammalians and Radcliff Brown. The American sociologists like Parsons and Morton have elaborated this method and given it the name of structural functional method, because of the emphasis that it lays on social structures or institutions in studying the social phenomena.