

# The importance of theories in the social world

[Society](#)



Are theories useful in understanding the social world? Of course they are. In fact theories give a better sense of understanding to the concept the researcher is looking at. Before we get into the topic, let us explore a little more about the theory and its functions. A theory is nothing but basically an Idea which is born out of inspiration, intense observations of things, frustrations of humans or even through hallucinations. So to define a theory is a little bit hard as it is abstract in nature and moreover it helps the researcher by giving a broader sense of the concept he or she is looking at and it helps him further in advancing his work in that concept.

There are few functions of theory which helps the researcher to get an entire sense of what a theory is and how it is useful for him in advancing his research in his field of study, And they are as follows:

1. General explanation of the concept
2. Acts as a guide to empirical researchers
3. Provides a cumulative study of research
4. Guides in decision making
5. Helps in predicting the future

Thus I would like to support my argument of why theory is important to understand the social world in my upcoming paragraphs with an example. The example I would like to quote here is the theory " Tragedy of Commons". Tragedy of commons is an economic theory in which people tend to exploit the shared resources to an extent where the usage exceeds the supply rate and this ends up affecting the whole lot as there will be a shortfall in that resource. To be more precise and specific about the example lets narrow it down to two topics and it would be say population growth and over fishing.

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So to study this concept in detail the researcher would definitely need the help of theory as it's really hard to determine the fact why there is an increase or decrease in the population growth just with numbers and without any facts in regard to that.

Speaking of population growth, in India the population growth rate is been steadily increasing and India is the second largest populated country in the world. The reason behind the increase in the growth rate shall be as followed:

1. Decline in death rate
2. Improved or advancement of medical facilities
3. Immigration
4. Lack of family planning

And the effects caused by these reasons are as followed:

1. Depletion of resources
2. Rise in unemployment
3. Environmental damage

So these are few causes and effects of population growth in India. With the help of this information researchers could come up with solutions that could fix this rapid growth in a country like India which is a developing democratic nation. The solutions they came up with are as follows:

1. Making people aware of family planning
2. Educating them about sex
3. Increasing the economic growth rate
4. Creating more employment opportunities

5. Providing better education facilities that are affordable by all etc.

All these solutions were drafted with the help of prior theories and the data collected and submitted by the previous researchers and this helped the researcher to develop new ideas which can control the growth effectively.

The second example under this would be over-fishing. Over-fishing generally means catching fishes from the water bodies at high rates where this leads to depletion of particular varieties of fishes or extinct the entire species and it ends up in putting the nature in a very hard situation as in how to increase their numbers.

The causes and effects of this are as follows:

1. Difficulty in regulating
2. Lack of knowledge about fish population
3. Un-reported fishing
4. Crossing boundaries
5. Removal of essential predators
6. Weakening of coral health
7. Threat to local food sources

Again as stated for the last example researches did come up with advanced solutions and they are:

1. Educating the retailers
2. Working closely with the government
3. Setting up awareness camps to educate the local fishermen
4. Reducing subsidies

Hence these researchers could come up with such productive and more advanced solutions only with the help of the previous qualitative information. It would have been difficult for them to state solutions to these kinds' problems only with quantitative information. So theory does plays an important role in understanding the social world because it helps the researcher understand the concept well, guides him in his work, gives justification as in why he came up with such a solution etc. Adding to it, It also enhances the thinking capacity of the researcher and makes him question every minute detail as in how this will affect something on a larger state in a country, what will its drawbacks be, how should I rectify this etc. and by doing so it makes him work towards the betterment of the nation by finding right answers for all his questions. Thus I rest my argument by strongly stating that Theories are the most essential part of any research and it should be given importance because it gives the person a better sense in understanding the social sector of the real world.