

Explain three schools of thoughts sociology essay

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Structural Functionalism What is sociology? Generally, sociology is the study of society and the patterns that exist between individuals. According to Auguste Comte (father of sociology) defines sociology as the science of social phenomena " subject to natural and invariable laws, the discovery of which is the object of investigation". There are many other sociologists who give their perspective on sociology such as Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Jane Addams, and Herbert Spencer and so on and so forth. The sociological theory is the theoretical paradigm (fundamental assumptions that guides thinking) which makes use of three schools of thoughts -structural-functionalism; social-conflict and symbolic-interaction. According to structural-functionalism or functionalism, it is the framework for building theory that views society as a complex system which means the parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. The structural functionalism projects its key elements, social structure that refers to any relatively stable patterns of social behaviour found in social institutions (in the perspective of education, politics, religions and families) and social function, the consequences of a social pattern for the operation(structure) of society as a whole. The founder of structural functionalism is Emile Durkheim. Each part of a society in terms of how it contributes to the stability of the whole society is interpreted by this school of thought. Society is more than the sum of its parts; rather, each part of society is functional for the stability of the whole society. The different parts are primarily the institutions of society, each of which is organized to fill different needs and each of which has particular consequences for the form and shape of society. The parts all depend on each other. Functionalism emphasizes the consensus and order that exist in society, focusing on social stability and shared public values. From this

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perspective, disorganization in the system will lead to change because societal components must adjust to achieve stability. When one part of the system is not working or is dysfunctional, it affects all other parts and creates social problems, which leads to social change. In general, structural functionalism sees the society as an interrelated part that works together to produce a stable system while taking count its functions and dysfunctions. Structural functionalism paradigm can be found everywhere. One of them is in a school (society), primary, secondary or tertiary leveled. In order to form a stable system, the principal, teachers and the students (the society members) must work together. The education system and the stable system will be affected if even one of the part failed to function properly or dysfunction. Human society also depends on this system as well. Norms, traditions, language (the parts of society) must be acknowledged to prevent the dysfunction from occurring in the community. Therefore, even the dysfunction must not be neglected and taken into account to create a stable system. Symbolic InteractSymbolic interaction views society as the product of everyday interactions of individuals. It emphasize society is a complex, ever-changing mosaic (pieces of puzzle) of subjective meanings and it is a shared reality that people construct as they interact with one another. Max Weber (stresses that symbolic interactions is the understanding a setting from the people in it), on the other hand, initiated a large-scale study of religions around the globe. His principal interest was in large, global religions with millions of believers. He conducted in-depth studies of Ancient Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism. In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904/1958), Weber examined the impact of Christianity on Western thinking and culture. The fundamental purpose of <https://assignbuster.com/explain-three-schools-of-thoughts-sociology-essay/>

Weber's research was to discover religion's impact on social change. For example, in Protestantism, especially the "Protestant Work Ethic," Weber saw the roots of capitalism. In symbolic interactionism, religion by itself is a symbol, but as this theory focuses on micro level, on interaction of individuals in one another's presence, religion must be divided into many sets and subsets of smaller symbols. The God or Gods are usually symbols of unquestioned authority. The God or Gods are viewed as creators of the world, therefore they have the right to rule the world, to dictate how to behave, reward those who behave properly with granting an afterlife in paradise and punish those who break the rules with placing them in hell for eternal burning. Heaven is a symbol of unearthly felicity, therefore sometimes life on earth is considered short, temporary and unimportant in comparison with eternal afterlife. Social Conflict theory Social conflict theory, the third theoretical perspective, offers a view of social life as the constant struggle between classes, social groups, and individuals for power and resources on the macro level. The idea of this perspective is the conflict in human society competing with each other mainly for resources or power. In spite of, this elements are always limited which effect on lose of a particular group and benefits the entire element for another group. The term dominant group versus disadvantaged group usually rises in this conflict in which the disadvantaged group will surely be manipulated by an advantaged group and eventually causes the field of inequality to occur. Social inequality such as, race, age, class, status and sex are some field of inequality and the main approach nowadays are gender-conflict and race-conflict. Gender-conflict focuses inequality between men and women while race-conflict focuses between racial and ethnic of people or categories. Karl Marx is a sociologist

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who focuses on the importance of social class in inequality and social conflict. Based on ideas originally proposed by Karl Marx (1818-1883). Marx believed that economic power led to political power. This is the key to understanding societies. The struggle for economic power means that society is not static but ever-changing - social change is the result of a change made to the economic system. Therefore, if we want to understand society, we must understand the economic system in place. Neo-Marxists believe the economic system creates a rich class of owners and a poor class of workers. Case study to explain / elaborate each of perspective associated with each school of thoughts.

Structural Functionalism I have found a case study related on structural functionalism theory from Emile Durkheim. I chose a company either in smaller or larger scale (society) is a part of a system and plays a vital role as a part of society by having its own management. The company has its own function such provide a working place for the people and contribute to the nation's income eventually. For example, the income of the company and nation's income will be affected if the board of directors of the particular company are not performing their task or job properly or in other word dysfunctions, and it becomes worst when the company itself ignores this matter. As according to the functionalist theory, every part is connected and need to work together to form a stable system but it will not be successful when the company's condition is like this... In order to prevent this type of things from happening, every individual is responsible for its own function and dysfunctions in order to form a stable system.

Social-Conflict I found a case study on social-conflict that is divorce. Divorce, as a reality in most families today, is the dissolution of marriage - the institution that forms the core of the family as another

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social institution itself. It is the end result of marital relations where conflict has become paramount so that marriage breaks down and cannot be repaired. Conflict theory can be seen in some of the causes of why marriages fail and lead to divorce. Deriving on feminist theory, the family is a microcosm of society where the man represents the exploiter and women the exploited. Because women come to realize that her conditions can be changed but men refuse to forego their privilege, the resulting irreconcilable conflict leads to divorce. An example is when a man abuses his wife and the battered woman decides that she's had enough but the man refuses to recognize the rights and dignity of the woman. Hence, the woman has no other recourse but to end her marriage. Symbolic InteractionsI found a case study on symbolic interactions in the angle of education. It is greatly intersected with symbolic interaction as a psychological perspective. The latter determines human deeds according to the meaning of the things or people they approach. For example , if a young girl finds out that a boy whom she is in love with takes an active part in , let 's say , cross-cultural club she will most likely sign up for it too . Obviously, it means that her main wish is to be closer to him and become an apple of his eye. The same happens in education as well when a student establishes his /her priorities concerning the classes he /she are supposed to take. Symbolic interaction here plays a key role as the student will probably emphasize classes either necessary for his future career (personal interest) or to make the schedule more convenient (social objective). It would be appropriate to mention that education systems vary from culture to culture . This fact has probably originated from the historical process during which cultural values and traditional perspectives were being created. Thus, the third world countries

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are characterized by completely different education system. They start school at the age of 7 and graduate from high school when they are 19-year-old young adults.