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**Introduction**

The subject matter sociology is very diverse ranging from crime to region, from the family to the state, from the division of race and social class to the shared beliefs of a common culture and from social stability to radical change in a whole societies. Unifying the study of these diverse subject of studying is sociolinguists purpose of understanding how human action and consciousness are both shape and are shaped by surrounding cultural and social structures. This topic sociology further go a long way to analyze and explain important issues that concern personal life, our communities and the world at large.

At the personal level, sociology investigation the social causes and consequences of things like gender identity, family conflicts, deviate behavior, aging and the religious faith. Further more at the societal level, sociology examine and explain matters like crime law, poverty and wealth, schools and education amongst others and finally at the global level it looks in to such as population and migration, war and peace and economic development. Below is a detail look on the topic sociology.

**What is sociology**

Sociology is the study of social life, social change and the social causes and consequences of human behavior. A sociologist is a train personnel that works in the field sociology to investigate the structure of groups organization and societies and how people interact within these context. Sociology provide many distinctive perspective in the world, generating new ideas in addition to the old. This field of sociology also offers a range of research and technique that is of great help when applied in different aspects of social life including how people express their emotions, welfare and education, how families differ and flourish in different aspects of life. Due to it capability of addressing challenges of live most especially in our time, there is a need for the rapid expansion in the field of public whose potential is increasingly tape by those who craft policies and create programs therefore sociologist understand social inequality patterns of behaviors, forces for social change and resistance and how social system works.

**Branches of sociology**

Sociology is the study of human society and of which the society is a very vast and complicated phenomenon and therefore it is on debate on which side of the society should be studied by sociology. With the many branches of sociology at hand it will be of great help to use to analyze the important aspect of every branch. Below are the different branches we get to know in sociology.

1. **Theoretical sociology:** under this branch we get to detail in to the theory of Karl Marx, Auguste Compte and others which is base on theoretical perspective and the assumption that social system like family, roles, culture, social structure and society in general due exist and are very real. Study the “ theory of suicide “ by Emile Durkheim helps sociologist in organizing ideas and thoughts.
2. **Historical sociology**: this is considered to be the study of social facts and groups with the study of the background in this category which help us to get to know about the social events with answers to how and when the different social or organization originated examples of such is when a sociologist studies and analyzes the history or a major civilization.
3. **Sociology of knowledge**: this branch of sociology helps to know and gain knowledge of social phenomenal by bringing to conclusions how knowledge is always influence by society like the economic, religious, political and other interest save human belief and ideas
4. **Criminology**: which looks in to criminal behavior of people or group of people. Many questions are answered through these branch like getting to know the origin of the crime it types of nature, causes as well as well as law punishment police, policy and more like the efforts put in place for improvement.
5. **Sociology of religion** which helps to study the structure of religion in the social system. These religion has a lot of impact in the society and individual as no society is free from it therefore it analyze the social behavior of human being towards religion and their faith which goes along the study of religious constitution and their role in the society.
6. **Sociology of economy** which goes detail in to production, distribution, consumption and exchange of goods and services. It also further study the economic activities of the society in which the focus is given about the sociocultural factors.
7. **Rural sociology** which study the ways and activities of rural people such as behavior, beliefs culture and traditional nom values and many others
8. **Urban sociology** which get to know the way of life of urban population, like social structure and social interaction, social organization amongst others. It also looks in to the social pathology of the urban society such as discrimination, crime, rubbery, beggary, unemployment, prostitution, environmental pollution and many more
9. **Political sociology** which studies the difference political groups and activities of a society. It get to the study of the different political ideology of individuals, the Origin, development and functions. Here different political parties are considered as social institutions having various activities and behaviors of political parties are studied in this branch with a wide understanding on the factors on which the political decision are taken
10. **Sociology of demography** which get to study about the size, distribution, density, situation composition, measurements of a population. It also analyze population change in sociological perspective with the determining factors of population change and it’s trends in place
11. **Sociology of law and the legal system** are considered as an integral part of the society as law is one of the vital tool for social control law is related to other different social subsystem, moral order of the society are formulated and implementation of roles and regulations. Law and order comes under this.
12. **Industrial sociology** which is concerned with the industrial relations of human being like the industrial organization and institution as well as their interrelationship and links with other various institution of the society are all analyze.

**Sociology of health and illness**

The sociology of health and illness or the sociology of health and wellness or health sociology examines the interaction between society and health. This field is a very interesting one to all human being as health concerns all but it is more interesting to health personnel as it include all aspects of life like the contemporary as well as historical influence that impact and alter our health and wellbeing. It stands on the ground that from birth to death social processes interweave and influence our health and well-being. This influence can come up from where we were brought up, how illness is understood and frame by the immediate community members and or the impact of technology with our health. It also outline that both our health and the medical science that engage it are socially constructed that our ways of knowing illness, wellbeing and our interactions with them are socially interpreted.

The sociology of medicine, sociology of the body, sociology disease has cheap in great understanding in the field of sociology like that of the family and education as they contribute insight from their distinct focuses on the life course of our health and wellness.

**Sociology in public health**

Public health has been and remains a very applied field in sociology. It is characterized by a population Base approach to health and statistical methods which is the appropriate underlying methods for the field. It is view as a science that seek to intervene control and prevent large scale processes that negatively affect public health. By this role there is a strong logical fit of sociological principle and practices within public health but never the less sociology has not been the key social science discipline in public health. Therefore most of our concerns in the present day public health with large scale variable such as social capitals, social inequality social status and health care organizations and financing remain best suited to the sociological perspective and methodology. Therefore the emphasize in public health is thus shifting towards a sociological perspective.

**Sociological concept in public health**

Public health is reflected in the line of sociological concept that pervert the practice of public health. Social class variation within society is the key explanatory variable in the sociology including the variation in social structure to differential life experiences of health and illness and it has been proven that inequality in health are directly related to social and economic inequalities

**Sociological methods in public health**

Methodological concern are very critical to sociological research with a great concern in sociology which has been on the relative merits and role of quantitative and qualitative approaches with all the both approaches widely use and play a critical role for public health.

Within the field of public health, surveillance is seen as the main key approach to describing the distribution and dynamic of diseases and in sociological approaches to public health. The role of social as behavioral factors in health and illness is at the center.

**Sociological and evaluation in public health**

Because many sociological variable are still at the micro level so there is limited opportunities to intervene rapidly, directly or simply for example complex components such as education and occupation that remains a very vital tool of the total life course of individuals within the group is very essential therefore in a group, those factors require significant redistribute of resources of the larger social structure and this can be done only within a significant period of time and concerted effort which is needed to change such macro variable. This is how ever not dissimilar to many other challenges in public health such as the long term and time consuming efforts to change life styles and reduce behavioral risk factors related to chronic diseases. The main role of sociology in the field of public health remains the evaluation of those macro components of the society that effects public health at the level of the population. This kind of evaluation provide an understanding of why inequalities in health exist and also elaborate in the mechanism and processes that sustain this inequalities in health. It also furthers to reveal the mechanism to long term changes that may lead to a reduction in health inequalities of which the products of sociological thinking in public health is not immediate nor easily understood by those who seek quick and easy solution to the suffering of humanity

**The role of sociology in health affairs**

Sociologists work on health issues through out the year and century but medical sociology is an institutionalized specially first develop a strong educational infrastructure in the 1950s to 1960s with the support of the national institute of mental health. By then the national institute of health saw the social and behavioral science has central to development of it’s mission and the agency broadly invested in fellowship and training programs in sociology, psychology and anthropology in between the 1950s to 1960s most medical sociologist were focused on mental health issues and contributed many of the concept and research that helped transform mental health services in the U.S and most countries from a hospital to a community endeavor. They also supported the study of psychiatric, epidemiology, stress and coping, public altitude and stigma, baseline process the course of disability and the study of hospital. The national institute on aging with it broad programs if studying developmental change across the life cycle did much to promote, improve methodology and high quality data and the o support substantive research across a wide range of issues affecting health. It function and wellbeing and in similar manners the national institute of child health and human development also supported much sociological efforts in the area of population research. This institution and many more have cheap in great efforts and release lot of that supported the development in the field of behavioral medicine and health.

Medical sociology followed two streams which are sociology in medicine and sociology of medicine. Sociology of medicine focuses on testing sociological hypothesis using medicine as an arena for studying basic issues in social stratification power. Power and influence social organization, socialization and the broad context of social values within this area of work, physicians turn to control the work of other health occupation and how gender affects health interaction and finally how political and economic interest influence the structure of health care. Medical sociology has a great involvement in the medical education as medical educators seek assistant from sociologist to improve in understanding better how to structure education to deal with the stresses of training, reduce unethical behavior, improve selection processes and include more thoughtful inquiring behavior on the path of training to bring up or transform student in to better medical professionals. Esoteric concern of sociology have become common place such as the right of parents in human experimentation choices in pregnancy and child birth, the right to be inform about the nature of one’s treatment, protection against the uses of medicine for social control purposes the excessive use of medical technology, the importance of primary care, the rate of social behavior in diseases and disability and the potential of prevention.

Medical sociologist often collaborate with health care professional from other fields such as public health, medicine, nursing, epidemiology and many more but in the same way all are unique and what makes them unique is their ability to understand how social structural factors influence health outcome and treat in various ways. They are four subfields in medical sociology which are social epidemiology, social psychology of health and illness, sociology of medicine and sociology in medicine

1. **Social epidemiology** : according to CDC epidemiology is the study of the distribution and determinant of health related state and event in specified population. Social epidemiology is a branch of epidemiology that focuses on the social structural factors related to health outcome and trajectory for specified population. In line with medical sociology, social epidemiology primary manifest as a quantitative analysis of large data set that represents the population or a subset of the population. Those analysis often seek to understand how social factors such as facing adverse childhood experiences like poverty insecurity violence and more always impact health in later life
2. **Social psychology and medical sociology:** sociological social psychologists study the relationship between individual and the larger social structure that surrounds them. They investigate illness experiences of women who are diagnose with breast cancer to understand how the larger cultural and social context influences the experience of a breast cancer diagnosis. They are always also interested in interpersonal interaction around health such as the disclosure process and diagnosis of HIV/AIDS of genital herpes also social stigma and status are also likely to appear and treated under this subfield.
3. **Sociology of medicine**: a sociology of medicine study medicine from a sociological perspective which includes the assessment of health care interaction and the social or cultural effects of medical practice. They commonly interact with sociology of knowledge, science and technology studies and social epistemology
4. **Sociology in medicine**: is a label distinguishing the work of the medical sociologist base upon the goals, setting and disciplinary context of the work. It applied work that motivated by the medical establishment rather than by sociological inquiry. Those who study sociology in medicine might focus on health professions and the training that health professionals received with the main goal of developing better training programs that solve social issues present in health care. They may also give attention on hospital organization and how the organization impact patients provider and staff safety that goes further to implement change in the field.

**Epidemiology and public health**

During the current pandemic it probably wasn’t difficult to understand how medical sociologist could be important interdisciplinary team members in epidemiology and public health and seeking expert in social epidemiology and house position that could be easily filled by medical sociologist in the subfield of social epidemiology in an organization is very important

**Health services research**

Another domain in which medical sociologist can and should concentrate in working is health service research. Sociologists working in this area focus on health care delivery which includes investigating and providing patients interaction, medical decision making and putting barriers to health care access amongst other fields or topics.

**Health care policy**

Health care policy is another area where medical sociologist focus. They may work with research firms such as the center on budget and policy priority to help identify gaps in policy that may exacerbate health inequality. Policy analysis is a skill that many sociologist get during their training and medical sociologist may specialized in health care policy analysis.

**Sociology and nursing practice**

The role of sociology within nursing practice has long been a matter if attention particularly during the 1990s when it was the subject of string debate while sympathetic to sociology Cooke in 1990s argued that with nursing attempting to establish itself as an academic subject largely drawing on the biomedical model for it knowledge base.

All professions must have an understanding of their clients base if they are to deliver the best service. Nurses must understand who their service users are and who they are likely to be caring for in order to provide the best caring experience when ever needed. Therefore sociology can provide this understanding and so constitute valuable theoretical knowledge one of it key advantages is that it prepare nurses for the challenges they will encounter as professionals ( Mc Pherson,2008) . A detailed awareness of the social distribution of health provide nurses with a greater understanding of the diversity of patients they are likely to come in contact with and the health issues which is broadly associated with individuals from different societies of which the benefits of this becomes clear when attention is given to the locality where the nurse is employed. Another important factor in this field is for you as a nurse to know your social land scape, social group and social issues will also widen your knowledge of better management of your patients to enhance the quality of patients care. Understanding individual patients social context provide a significant inside in to how they experience of health and care which also allow the nurse to reflect on their actions towards patients from different social background ( Mc Pherson 2008). Sociology is essential for this as individual from different social background view the world differently and may require different caring skills and practices. Therefore it has a valuable role to play within acute context within the community a detail sociological understanding is vital for practice ( Mc Pherson 2008). So it is of particular relevance to preventative and public health

**Advantages and disadvantages of sociology**

* **Advantages of sociology**

1. Sociology provide critical inside and perspective to the solution of social problems
2. Sociology study the role of social institution which are the home, school, church and more in the development of the individual
3. Sociology shared more light on to the social nature of human
4. Sociology increases the understanding and power of social actions
5. Sociology is of great importance to the understanding of both national and international problems

* **Disadvantages of sociology**

1. Sociology alone does not study the form of social relationships other social scientists also do that
2. The distinction between the forms of social relations in their content is not practicable
3. The formalistic school has narrow down the scoop sociology
4. The conception of pure sociology is imaginary
5. The field of sociology is very broad making it very difficult to study.

**Advantages and disadvantages of sociology in public health**

* **Advantages of sociology in public health**

1. It explains how the social environment effects human health
2. It create awareness on how to reduce health risks in a population
3. It teaches us the culture of the medical community like the doctors, patients, hospital, insurances, pharmaceutical companies and many more
4. It create awareness about the social causes and consequences of health and illness
5. Medical sociologist are more relevant in the analysis of social condition of health than physicians

* **Disadvantages of sociology in public health**

1. The process of social interaction itself may place individual at risks of some communicable disease such as tuberculosis, measles acute respiratory syndrome just to name a few
2. During the phase of Covid 19 pandemic, social distances between people within a society have diminished social interaction
3. Sociology in public health deals only with some specific forms of human relationship
4. The norm and values of sociology in public health are least valuable as many consider or think
5. In the field of public health, sociology get to have shortages of jobs

**Conclusion**

Students who have been well trained in social know how to think critically about human social life and how to ask important research question. They know how to design good social research project carefully collected and analyze empirical data and formulate and present their research findings. They also know how to help other people understand the way the social world works and how it might be change for a better world. They learn how to think evaluate and communicate clearly creatively and effectively. These are all abilities of tremendous values in a wide variety of vocational callings and professions.

Sociology offer a distinctive and enlightening way if seeing an understanding the social world in which we live and which shapes our lives. Sociology looks beyond normal taken for granted views of reality to provide deeper more illuminating and challenging understanding of social life . Through it particular analytical perspective social theories and research methods, sociology is a discipline that expand our awareness and analyzes if the human social relationships, cultures and institution that profoundly shaped both our lives and human history.

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