

University of Abou Bakr Belkaid – Tlemcen –

Department of social sciences

Sociology

English module

2° LMD S : 1

Text:

1) Sociology is the study of human social life. Because human social life is so expansive, sociology has many sub-sections of study, ranging from the analysis of conversations to the development of theories to try to understand how the entire world works.

2) The social world is changing. Some argue it is growing; others say it is shrinking. The important point to grasp is: society does not remain unchanged over time. Sociology has its roots in significant societal changes (e.g., the industrial revolution, the creation of empires, and the enlightenment of scientific reasoning). Early practitioners developed the discipline as an attempt to understand societal changes.

3) The sociological imagination goes beyond common sense. Most people believe they understand the world and the events taking place within it. Humans like to attribute causes to events and attempt to understand what is taking place around them. This is why individuals have been using religious ceremonies for centuries to invoke the will of the gods - because they believed the gods controlled certain elements of the natural world (e.g., the weather). Just as the rain dance is an attempt to understand how the weather works without using empirical analysis, It is an attempt to understand how the social world works without employing scientific methods.

4) Sociologists, like all humans, have values, beliefs, and even pre-conceived notions of what they might find in doing their research. But some argued, what distinguishes the sociologist from non-scientific researchers is that the sociologist tries to see what is there. He may have hopes or fears concerning what he may find. But he will try to see, regardless of his hopes or fears. It is thus an act of pure perception.

5) Sociology, then, is an attempt to understand the social world by situating social events in their corresponding environment (i.e., social structure, culture, history) and trying to understand social phenomena by collecting and analyzing empirical data.

6) Sociology is a relatively new academic discipline. It emerged in the early 19th century in response to the challenges of modernity. Increasing mobility and technological advances resulted in the increasing exposure of people to cultures and societies different from their own.

7) The impact of this exposure was varied, but for some people included the breakdown of traditional norms and customs and warranted a revised understanding of how the world works.

8) Sociologists responded to these changes by trying to understand what holds social groups together and also explore possible solutions to the breakdown of social solidarity.