



İSTANBUL
GELİŞİM
ÜNİVERSİTESİ

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

BASIC CONCEPTS OF SOCIOLOGY

WEEK 2

Asst. Prof. Pınar KARABABA KAYALIGİL



BASIC CONCEPTS OF SOCIOLOGY

- Last week we learned about:
 - The sociological imagination which eases the complexity of relations:
 - if we do not forget to look in a comparative and historical way;
 - if we pose our questions considering the small, local aspects and their relation to larger aspects.

Avcılar Case: such as looking at Avcılar district by knowing that its conditions are related with the present condition in the country as well as the development of cities started during the Industrial revolution.



BASIC CONCEPTS OF SOCIOLOGY

- Sociology is the systematic and scientific study of social life of human groups and societies, their relations, behaviors and the institutions and systems surrounding and regulating the social life.
- The subject of sociology is the social world we live in and the social life we experience. Therefore it is comparative and historical because there are many things affecting our social lives.
- The roots of sociology lie in the 19th century and affected by political revolutions (French revolution); Developments in religion and science (explorations, discoveries); Industrial Revolution and Rise of Capitalism; Urbanizations (the appearance of the modern city structure and rural areas' losing their previous wealth); development of a workers class and the rise of Socialism.



BASIC CONCEPTS OF SOCIOLOGY

- **Society:** is composed of relations between people who share a certain culture and certain social institutions. In other words, what makes society is not the individuals but their relations with other individuals and the shared values and sets of behavior between them.
- **Society:** can be defined as a group of people who share a common culture, who are settled in a specific land and who see themselves as a united and original being. (Marshall (1999) *Sosyoloji Sözlüğü*, s. 272.)



➤ **Society**: is an accumulation of institutions defining “settled relations”. In all institutions there are institutions such as marriage, piyasa, religious rituals and law. As the societies grow these institutions get increasingly specialized and organized. (Bozkurt (2005) *Değişen Dünyada Sosyoloji*, s. 21.)



➤ Social Behaviors:

- Sociology does not deal with all the behaviors of individuals. In sociology behaviors are of concern if the behaviors of individuals:
 - Are posed according to settled and repeated behavior patterns in the society;
 - Are in a relation involving an means-ends relation with the other group of people and institutions.



Example

- Imagine a car crash:
- Two cars hit each other.
- The behaviors of the drivers would show us a specific pattern designed by that specific society and would be affected by many factors coming from the conditions of that society.



Example

- Imagine a car crash:
 - Firstly the two drivers share a common problem (means&ends). They each have broken car; they want it to be fixed; they want it to be over.
 - Assume that they come from a society in which the relations such as neighborhood, are very close and interrupting (they may start a fight).
 - Assume they are from a society where relations are more reserved (they may call the police).
 - Assume their country has economic problems and the insurance companies try not to pay (they would be concerned and stressed).
 - Assume the insurance system solves it all (they would be less stressed).
- Their sets of behavior would be affected by how these behaviors are settled in their society and how they interpret them according to the conditions they live in.



➤ **Social relations:** Weber defines social relations as behaviors shaped by affirmed meanings and directed to fulfill those meanings .

(Weber (2002) *Sosyolojinin Temel Kavramları*, s 49.)

Social relation:

Is the act of behaving socially to achieve a specific purpose. This behavior is meaningful, understandable for society because it is produced, shaped and repeated by the members of the society.



Let's think different social relations:

- _ Relations between shopkeepers,
- _ Marriage,
- _ Competition in workplace,
- _ Vendetta
- _ Relations between Student-Teacher

A lot of temporary or permanent relations take part in this network of relations.



- Social Group is a group of people whose members interact with each other.
- These members have common goals, problems and interests.
- Family, students in a class, friends, colleagues can be given as examples of social groups.



Social Role:

- Society expects people from all statuses to act in a certain way and that behavior is named as role.
- Roles are composed of rights and duties suitable for the social status.
- All people are affirmed to certain statuses (father, teacher, neighbor, policeman) and they all bear their roles.



Social personality:

- Is the sum of all the roles played by the individual,
- It is the overall role system with the help of which the individual “cope with” the society.
- A child learns not to fight with schoolmates; a worker learns not to arrive work late; a policeman learns not to take bribe because otherwise it would be hard to “cope with” the social response (exclusion, punishment)
- We play roles not to be surprised, not to feel alone, to adjust ourselves: we play roles as if we wear a dress.

The same role is played by many people in a similar fashion:

Stereotypical father role/ streetseller role/politician role etc.



An individual have as many social roles as the number of the groups s/he participates, and these roles are related with each other.

- Occupational roles
- Gender roles (man, woman)
- Family roles (mother, father, child etc.)
- Political roles (voter, bureaucrat, politician etc.)
- Education roles ...



Every person has a lot of roles. **Role repertoire** refers to all of the roles played by the individual.

If roles are played in line with each other (if they are harmonious to each other) the interactions would not have any problems.

If the roles are not compatible with each other, **role conflict** occurs.

- Husband
- Father
- Neighbor
- Member of a party
- Salesmen
- Enviromentalist



- **Role conflict:** refers to the conflict between a particular role with the other roles internalized by one person



- **Example:** If a teacher's child becomes his/her student that can cause a role conflict. This conflict is related with how these roles are designed and settled in that society.



➤ Values are standards:

- we consult when choosing our goals in life and review our behaviors
- They are socially created mutually shared standards showing us what is wrong and what is right.
- Values change from one society to the other and from a time to another.



- **Example:** Being humble can be valuable in one society however in a more competitive society it can be seen as a sign of weakness.
- In a society in the past, it can be normal to remain silent when seeing parents beating their silence. In our time it would be understood as being part of the crime.



- Norm are expectations about people's behaviors in specific situations.
- They are rules based on values and they have SANCTIONS.
- For an instance, if honesty is one of the important values of the society, rules attempt to prevent the act of lying by applying sanctions.



- **Norms have different types.**
- Weaker norms are for regulating the basics of everyday life such as selecting appropriate clothes, eating appropriately, greeting people when we come across. Their sanctions are not that serious.
- **Traditional norms:** Customs are strong and important norms for the society. They both support the continuity of the society, and both enter into conflict with transformation. They are strong and therefore their sanctions are very heavy.



- **Laws:** are designed, applied and enforced by the political authority of the society. Laws cover almost everything from exceeding the speed limit to not paying taxes; from creating pollution to murder.
- **Sanctions:** can be seen as a result selected by society to make people to obey the norms and they are applied when rules are broken.
- In other words, sanctions are used to support the implementation of standards confirmed by the society.
- Sanctions include a reward-punishment system.



- **Social Fact:** can also be named as social reality. They occur by the repetition of the social events.
- **Case 1:** A's getting marry B is a social event but marriage itself is a social fact.
- **Case 2:** A's being unemployed is not a social fact but if unemployment is a specific problem of the society, it becomes a social fact.



• Socialization:

- Is the PROCESS of INTERACTION through which individuals learn the attitudes, information and abilities (know-how) and briefly the CULTURE of that society.
- Individuals, starting from their birth, interact with their family, teachers, colleagues and they all shape the individuals' attitudes by teaching them roles, norms and values.
- Socialization has two functions: the first one is the development of the self; and the second one is to transfer the culture from one generation to the other. Societies re-produce themselves, their social behaviors and cultural heritage through transmitting them to the new generations.
- Each society expects individuals to adapt the behavior patterns through socialization for society's development and continuity.