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understanding of an individual's social actions may choose ethnographic participant observation or open-ended interviews. Studies will commonly combine, or "triangulate," quantitative and qualitative methods as part of a "multi-strategy" design. For instance, a quantitative study may be performed to obtain statistical patterns on a target sample, and then combined with a qualitative interview to determine the play of agency [115] The beam machine, designed by early social research methodologist Sir Francis Galton to demonstrate the normal distribution, which is important to much quantitative hypothesis testing[116] Quantitative methods are often used to ask questions about a population that is too large to make a census, such as the general public. Sampling is also used to select a representative group from a larger one. While it is usually best to sample randomly, concern with differences between specific sub-populations sometimes calls for stratified sampling. Conversely, the impossibility of random sampling sometimes necessitates nonprobability sampling, such as convenience sampling or snowball sampling [117] The following list of research methods is neither exclusive nor exhaustive: Archival research (or the Historical method). Draws upon the secondary data located in historical archives and records, such as biographies, memoirs, journals, and so on. Content analysis: The content of interviews and other texts is systematically analysed. Often data is 'coded' as a part of the 'grounded theory' approach using qualitative data analysis (QDA) software, such as Atlas.ti, MAXQDA, NVivo, or QDA Miner. Experimental research: The researcher isolates a single social process and reproduces it in a laboratory (for example, by creating a situation where unconscious sexist judgements are possible), seeking to determine whether or not certain social variables can cause, or depend upon, other variables (for instance, seeing if people's feelings about traditional gender roles can be manipulated by the activation of contrasting gender stereotypes).[120] Participants are randomly assigned to different groups that either serve as controls—acting as reference points because they are tested with regard to the dependent variable, albeit without having been exposed to any independent variables of interest—or receive one or more treatments. Randomization allows the researcher to be sure that any resulting differences between groups are the result of the treatment. Longitudinal study: An extensive examination of a specific person or group over a long period of time.[citation needed] Observation: Using data from the senses, the researcher records information about social phenomenon or behaviour. Observation techniques may or may not feature participation. In participant observation, the researcher goes into the field (e.g. a community or a place of work), and participates in the activities of the people being observed. Participant observation is closely related to ethnography, which is a form of participant observation that includes a greater emphasis on understanding the culture of the people being observed. Systematic observation involves collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about projects, policies and programs.[121] particularly about their effectiveness and efficiency. In both the public and private sector, stakeholders often want to know whether the programs they are funding, implementing, voting for, or objecting to are producing the intended effect. While program evaluation first focuses on this definition, important considerations often include how much the program costs per participant, how the program could be improved, whether the program is worthwhile, whether there are better alternatives, if there are unintended outcomes, and whether the program goals are appropriate and useful. [122] Survey research: The researcher gathers data using interviews, questionnaires, or similar feedback from a set of people sampled from a particular population of interest. Survey items from an interview or questionnaire may be open-ended or closed-ended.[30]:40 Data from surveys is usually analysed statistically on a computer. A social network diagram: individuals (or 'nodes') connected by relationships Main article: Computational sociology Sociologists increasingly draw upon computationally intensive methods to analyse and model social phenomena.[123] Using computer simulations, artificial intelligence, text mining, complex statistical methods, and new analytic approaches like social network analysis and social sequence analysis, computational sociology develops and tests theories of complex social processes through bottom-up modelling of social interactions.[10] Although the subject matter and methodologies in social science differ from those in natural science or computer science, several of the approaches used in contemporary social simulation originated from fields such as physics and artificial intelligence.[124][125] By the same token, some of the approaches that originated in computational sociology have been imported into the natural sciences, such as measures of network centrality from the fields of social network analysis and network science. In addition, the development of agent-based models has allowed researchers to simulate social systems at a microscopic level, rather than the macroscopic level of a computational model in the form of an "artificial society", by which researchers can analyse the structure of a social system.[128][129] For a topical guide, see Outline of sociology. Max Horkheimer (left, front), Theodor Adorno (right, front), and Jürgen Habermas (right, back), 1965 Main articles: Sociology of culture, Cultural criminology, and Cultural studies Sociologists approach to culture can be divided into "sociology of culture" and "cultural sociology"—terms which are similar, though not entirely interchangeable. Sociology of culture is an older term, and considers more subjects and objects as more or less "cultural" than others. Conversely, cultural sociology sees all social phenomena as inherently cultural.[130] Sociology of culture often attempts to explain certain cultural phenomena as a product of social processes, while cultural sociology sees culture as a potential explanation of social phenomena.[131] For Simmel, culture referred to "the cultivation of individuals through the agency of external forms which have been objectified in the course of history." [74] While early theorists such as Durkheim and Mauss were influential in cultural anthropology, sociologists of culture are generally distinguished by their concern for modern (rather than primitive or ancient) society. Cultural sociology often involves the hermeneutic analysis of words, artefacts and symbols, or ethnographic interviews. However, some sociologists employ historical-comparative or quantitative techniques in the analysis of culture. Weber and Bourdieu for instance. The subfield is sometimes allied with critical theory in the vein of Theodor W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and other members of the Frankfurt School. Loosely distinct from the sociology of culture is the field of cultural studies. Birmingham School theorists such as Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall questioned the division between "producers" and "consumers" evident in earlier theory, emphasizing the reciprocity in the production of texts. Cultural Studies aims to examine its subject matter in terms of cultural practices and their relation to power relations. It is concerned with the way in which culture is produced, disseminated, consumed, and contested. It is a multidisciplinary approach, drawing on insights from literary studies, film studies, media studies, and communication studies. The Society of Film, and Sociology of music Sociology of literature, film, and art is a subset of the sociology of culture. This field studies the social production of artistic objects and its social implications. A notable example is Pierre Bordieus Les Règles de l'Art: Genèse et Structure du Champ Littéraire (1992)[132] None of the founding fathers of sociology produced a detailed study of art, but they did develop ideas that were subsequently applied to literature by others. Marx's theory of ideology was directed at literature by Pierre Macherey, Terry Eagleton and Fredric Jameson, Weber's theory of modernity as cultural rationalization, which he applied to music, was later applied to all the arts, literature included, by Frankfurt School writers such as Theodor Adorno and Jürgen Habermas. Durkheim's view of sociology as the study of externally defined social facts was redirected towards literature by Robert Escarpit. Bourdieu's own work is clearly indebted to Marx, Weber and Durkheim.[citation needed] Main articles: Criminology, Sociology of law, Sociology of punishment, Deviance, and Social disorganization theory Criminologists analyse the nature, causes, and control of criminal activity, drawing upon methods across sociology, psychology, and the behavioural sciences. The sociology of deviance focuses on actions or behaviours that violate norms, including both infringements of formally enacted rules (e.g., crime) and informal violations of cultural norms. It is the remit of sociologists to study why these norms exist; how they change over time; and how they are enforced. The concept of social disorganization is when the broader social systems leads to violations of norms. For instance, Robert K. Merton produced a typology of deviance, which includes both individual and system level causal explanations of deviance.[133] The study of law played a significant role in the formation of classical sociology. Durkheim famously described law as the "visible symbol" of social solidarity.[134] The sociology of law refers to both a sub-discipline of sociology and an approach within the discipline of jurisprudence. It concerns the relationship between legal systems and other aspects of societies. In the United States over the last 30 years is due to changes in law and policing and not to an increase in crime, and that this increase has significantly contributed to the persistence of racial stratification.[135] The sociology of communications and information technologies includes "the social aspects of computing, the Internet, new media, computer networks, and other communication and information technologies." [136] Main article: Sociology of the Internet The Internet is of interest to sociologists in various ways, most practically as a tool for research [137] The sociology of the Internet in the broad sense concerns the analysis of online communities (e.g. newsgroups, social networking sites) and virtual worlds, meaning that there is often overlap with community sociology. Online communities may be studied statistically through network analysis or interpreted qualitatively through virtual ethnography. Moreover, organizational change is catalysed through new media, thereby influencing social change at-large, perhaps forming the framework for a transformation from an industrial to an informational society. One notable text is Manuel Castells' The Internet Galaxy—the title of which forms an inter-textual reference to Marshall McLuhan's The Gutenberg Galaxy [138] Closely related to the sociology of the Internet is digital sociology, which expands the scope of study to address not only the internet but also the impact of the other digital media and devices that have emerged since the first decade of the twenty-first century.[citation needed] Main article: Media studies As with cultural studies, media study is a distinct discipline that owes to the convergence of sociology and other social sciences and humanities, in particular, literary criticism and critical theory. Though neither the production process nor the critique of aesthetic forms is in the remit of sociologists, analyses of socializing factors, such as ideological effects and audience reception, stem from sociological theory and method. Thus the sociology of the media is not a subdiscipline of media studies, but rather a perspective on media studies. Newer approaches to media studies include the study of the political economy of mass media, the cultural politics of media, and the semiotics of media. The analysis of economic phenomena, emphasizing class relations and modernity as a philosophical concept. The relationship between capitalism and modernity is a salient issue, perhaps best demonstrated in Weber's The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (1905) and Simmel's The Philosophy of Money (1900). The contemporary period of economic sociology, also known as new economic sociology, was consolidated by the 1985 work of Mark Granovetter titled "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness". This work elaborated the concept of embeddedness, which states that economic relations between individuals or firms take place within existing social relations (and are thus structured by these relations as well as the greater social structures of which those relations are a part). Social network analysis has been the primary methodology for studying this phenomenon. Granovetter's theory of the strength of weak ties and Ronald Burt's concept of structural holes are two of the best known theoretical contributions of this field.[citation needed] Main articles: sociology of work and Industrial relations The sociology of work, or industrial sociology, examines "the direction and implications of trends in technological change, globalization, labour markets, work organization, managerial practices and employment relations to the extent to which these trends are intimately related to changing patterns of inequality in modern societies and to the changing experiences of individuals and families the ways in which workers challenge, resist and make their own contributions to the patterning of work and shaping of work institutions." [140] Main article: Sociology of education The sociology of education is the study of how educational institutions determine social structures, experiences, and other outcomes. It is particularly concerned with the schooling systems of modern industrial societies.[141] A classic 1966 study in this field by James Coleman, known as the "Coleman Report", analysed the performance of over 150,000 students and found that the quality of the school had little effect on student achievement. The report led to the creation of the National Education Policy Institute in England. The Coleman Report is considered a landmark study in the sociology of education, and served as a catalyst for desegregation busing in American public schools.[citation needed] Main articles: Environmental sociology and Sociology of disaster Environmental sociology is the study of human interactions with the natural environment, typically emphasizing human dimensions of environmental problems, social impacts of those problems, and efforts to resolve them. As with other sub-fields of sociology, scholarship in environmental sociology may be at one or multiple levels of analysis, from global (e.g. world-systems) to local, societal to individual. Attention is paid also to the processes by which environmental problems become defined and known to humans. As argued by notable environmental sociologist John Bellamy Foster, the predecessor to modern environmental sociology is Marx's analysis of the metabolic rift, which influenced contemporary thought on sustainability. Environmental sociology is often interdisciplinary and overlaps with the sociology of risk, rural sociology and the sociology of disaster.[citation needed] Main articles: Human ecology, Architectural sociology, Visual sociology, Sociology of space, and Urban sociology Human ecology deals with interdisciplinary study of the relationship between humans and their natural, social, and built environments. In addition to Environmental sociology, this field overlaps with architectural sociology, urban sociology, and to some extent visual sociology. In turn, visual sociology—which is concerned with all visual dimensions of social life—overlaps with media studies in that it uses photography, film and other technologies of media.[citation needed] Social pre-wiring deals with the study of fetal social behavior and social interactions in a multi-fetal environment. Specifically, social pre-wiring refers to the ontogeny of social interaction. Also informally referred to as, "wired to be social" The theory questions whether there is a propensity to socially oriented action already present before birth. Research in the field concludes that newborns are born with a predisposition to social interaction, and that this predisposition is shaped by genetic and environmental factors. Newborns are also able to recognize facial gestures. This observed behavior cannot be attributed to any current form of socialization or social construction. Rather, newborns most likely inherit to some extent social behavior and identity through genetics [143] Principal evidence of this theory is uncovered by examining Twin pregnancies. The main argument is, if there are social behaviors that are inherited and developed before birth, then one should expect twin foetuses to engage in some form of social interaction before they are born. Thus, ten foetuses were analyzed over a period of time using ultrasound techniques. Using kinematic analysis, the results of the experiment were that the twin foetuses would interact with each other for longer periods and more often as the pregnancies went on. Researchers were able to conclude that the performance of movements between the co-twins were not accidental but specifically aimed.[143] The social pre-wiring hypothesis was proved correct.[143] The central advance of this study is the demonstration that 'social actions' are already performed in the second trimester of gestation. Starting from the 14th week of gestation twin foetuses plan and execute movements specifically aimed at the co-twin. These findings force us to predate the emergence of social behavior: when the context enables it, as in the case of twin foetuses, other-directed actions are not only possible but predominant over self-directed actions. Main articles: Sociology of the family, Sociology of childhood, Sociology of gender, Feminist sociology, Feminist theory, Queer theory "Rosie the Riveter" was an iconic symbol of the American homefront and a departure from gender roles due to wartime necessity. Family, gender and sexuality form a broad area of inquiry studied in many sub-fields of sociology. A family is a group of people who are related by kinship ties - Relations of blood / marriage / civil partnership or adoption. The family unit is one of the most important social institutions found in some form in nearly all known societies. It is the basic unit of social organization and plays a key role in the transmission of culture and values from one generation to the next. The family is a social institution to which one may apply sociological perspectives, the sociology of the family is a common component on introductory academic curricula. Feminist sociology, on the other hand, is a normative sub-field that observes and critiques the cultural categories of gender and sexuality, particularly with respect to power and inequality. The primary concern of feminist theory is the patriarchy and the systematic oppression of women apparent in many societies, both at the level of small-scale interaction and in terms of the broader social structure. Feminist sociology also analyses how gender intersects with race and class to produce and perpetuate social inequalities.[144] "How to account for the differences in definitions of femininity and masculinity and in sex role across different societies and historical periods" is also a concern.[145] Main articles: Sociology of health and illness and Medical sociology The sociology of health and illness focuses on the social effects of, and public attitudes toward, illnesses, diseases, mental health and disabilities. This sub-field also overlaps with gerontology and the study of the ageing process. Medical sociology, by contrast, focuses on the inner-workings of the medical profession, its organizations, its institutions and how these can shape knowledge and interactions. In Britain, sociology was introduced into the medical curriculum following the Goodenough Report (1944).[146][147] The sociology of the body and embodiment[148] takes a broad perspective on the idea of "the body" and includes "a wide range of embodied dynamics including human and non-human bodies, morphology, human reproduction, anatomy, body fluids, biotechnology, genetics". This often intersects with health and illness, but also theories of bodies as political, social, cultural, economic and ideological productions.[149] The ISA maintains a Research Committee devoted to the Body in the Social Sciences. [150] A subfield of the sociology of health and illness that overlaps with cultural sociology is the study of death, dying and bereavement.[151] Sometimes called thanatology, this sub-field of sociology examines the social and cultural aspects of death, dying, and bereavement. It is a highly specialized sub-field which examines issues related to service personnel as a distinct group with coerced collective action based on shared intention linked to survival in violation and combat, with purposes and values that are more defined and narrower than within civil society. Military sociology also concerns civilian-military relations and interactions between other groups or governmental agencies. Topics include the dominant assumptions held by those in the military, changes in military members' willingness to fight, military unionization, military professionalism, the increased utilization of women, the military industrial-ac



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