



Notes

SOCIAL ANALYSIS: THROUGH SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION

1. Commonsense Knowledge

Meaning:

Commonsense knowledge is what people understand from personal experience, observation, and everyday life.

Features:

- Not formal or scientific knowledge.
- Based on assumptions, daily practices, and social experiences.
- Formed through observation and socialization.
- Eg: "The sun rises in the east," "Fire burns," "Teenagers are rebellious."

Limitations:

- Often **partial and unverified**.
- Can include **stereotypes and misconceptions**.
- Doesn't examine deeper social reasons.
- Based on habit, not analysis.

Example:

- "Climate change is natural." → ignores the human role.

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- “High marks come only by studying long hours.” → ignores smart study, rest, and group learning.
 - “Teenagers are irresponsible.” → a stereotype, not true for all.

👉 **Conclusion:** Commonsense knowledge gives a limited view of society and fails to explain complex social issues.

2. Social Analysis

Meaning:

The process of studying how social relationships, institutions, and structures affect individuals and society.

Purpose:

- To find **causes behind social issues**.
 - To help improve society through understanding and reform.
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3. Sociological Imagination

Definition:

A concept by **C. Wright Mills** (1959) – the ability to see how **individual problems** are connected to **larger social structures**.

Main Idea:

It helps us understand personal experiences within the context of society.

4. Importance of Sociological Imagination

1. Broadens Perspective

- Helps us see how society influences individual life.

2. Understands Social Issues Deeply

- Reveals hidden causes (e.g., gender roles affect women's employment).

3. Enables Self-Reflection

- Encourages looking at one's life with awareness of social context.

4. Develops Empathy & Tolerance

- Helps understand others' situations with compassion.

5. Builds Critical Thinking

- Encourages questioning norms and stereotypes.

6. Promotes Social Change

- Helps identify structural causes → leads to better policies and reforms.
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5. Sociological Imagination vs Commonsense Knowledge

Aspect	Commonsense Knowledge	Sociological Imagination
Basis	Personal experience	Scientific & analytical

Nature	Informal, untested	Systematic & critical
Scope	Limited to individual	Connects individual & society
Example	"Unemployment is due to laziness."	"Unemployment is due to economic structure."

6. Key Takeaways

- Commonsense = everyday beliefs, often biased.
 - Social Analysis = deep study of social systems.
 - Sociological Imagination = linking personal troubles with social causes.
 - Together, they help us **understand society clearly** and **work for change**.
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