**A Sociological Analysis of University Surveillance Policy**

Recently, our university introduced a new rule requiring all students to install a mobile application that tracks class attendance, library usage, and the amount of time spent on campus. According to the administration, this system is meant to improve student discipline and boost academic performance.

While this may sound helpful at first, many students—including myself—have concerns. We feel it crosses certain boundaries, especially when it comes to personal freedom and privacy. To better understand both sides of this issue, I explored it through four main sociological perspectives: **Evolutionary, Structural Functional, Conflict,** and **Symbolic Interactionist.**

**1. Evolutionary Perspective**

The Evolutionary Perspective views society as something that develops and adapts over time. From this angle, the use of a tracking app can be seen as part of the natural progression of education in a digital age.

Supporters of this idea might argue that as technology becomes more central to our lives, it’s normal for educational institutions to use it to improve systems like attendance and campus engagement.

However, this kind of progress isn’t always positive. Some students worry that constant tracking may become too normal, leading to a future where personal space and privacy are no longer respected—even in places meant for learning and growth.

**2. Structural Functional Perspective**

This perspective sees society as a system where every part plays a role in keeping things balanced and efficient. Using this app could be viewed as a way to support the educational structure.

From a functionalist view, tracking student activity helps the university monitor academic participation. It might help identify students who need extra help or prevent problems like absenteeism. In this sense, the app is seen as something that strengthens the institution as a whole.

However, the issue here is that not every student benefits equally. For some, this kind of monitoring feels stressful or even invasive. Instead of motivating students, it might create pressure or anxiety—especially if they already struggle with academic confidence.

**3. Conflict Perspective**

The Conflict Perspective focuses on power and inequality in society. It asks: who is making the decisions, and who is being affected?

In this case, the university holds the power, and students are expected to follow the policy without much input or discussion. From this viewpoint, the app could be seen as a form of control. It shifts the relationship between students and the administration, making it feel less like a learning environment and more like a system of surveillance.

Many students feel that this decision was made without considering their opinions or comfort. That imbalance of power is a major concern—and the conflict perspective helps bring it to light.

**4. Symbolic Interactionist Perspective**

This perspective looks at the small, everyday interactions and the meanings people attach to them. It helps us understand how individuals personally interpret things like this new app.

For some students, the app might symbolize structure and discipline. But for many others, it feels like a sign that they’re not trusted. It may cause students to question how their school views them—not as responsible adults, but as people who need constant watching.

This change in perception can affect how students interact with their peers, professors, and even the campus itself. Over time, it might create a sense of distance or discomfort that wasn’t there before.

**My Perspective**

After looking at this situation from all sides, the **Conflict Perspective** feels the most convincing to me. While I understand the university’s intentions, I believe this policy wasn’t introduced in a fair or open way. Students didn’t get the chance to share their thoughts before it was enforced, and that creates a clear power imbalance.

Education should be based on communication and mutual respect, not control. If students feel like they’re constantly being watched, it might lead to stress, not success. Good academic performance comes from feeling supported—not from being monitored.

**Conclusion**

This new tracking policy is more than just a technological update—it brings up real questions about privacy, trust, and control. Each sociological perspective helps us understand a different side of the issue. The Evolutionary and Functional views show the benefits of structure and change, while the Conflict and Symbolic Interactionist perspectives highlight the emotional and ethical concerns students face.

Sociology allows us to look beyond surface-level explanations and think deeply about how policies impact people’s lives. In this case, it reminds us that progress should never come at the cost of freedom and trust.