

Chapter 01 – Approaches to the Study of Social Problems

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. A group is said to be an influential group if it has _____.
a. a large number of members
b. a significant impact on public debate and social policy
c. existed for more than 5 years
d. advocated for issues that affect a large number of people

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_01 What Is a Social Problem?, Understand, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

2. Personal troubles become public issues only when _____.
a. an influential group so defines them
b. it has been affecting a family for a long time
c. a social condition has caused it
d. they require economic support to be resolved

Answer: a

Question Title: TB_01_02 What Is a Social Problem?, Understand, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

3. _____ are people's ideas about what is good or bad, right or wrong.
a. Norms
b. Rules
c. Hypotheses
d. Values

Answer: d

Question Title: TB_01_03 What Is a Social Problem?, Remember, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

4. A social condition is considered to be a social problem if it _____.

- a. threatens a group's values
- b. cannot be remedied by social action
- c. poses a threat to an individual's values and beliefs
- d. affects a small number of people

Answer: a

Question Title: TB_01_04 What Is a Social Problem?, Understand, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

5. _____ are rules of conduct that guide people's behavior.

- a. Norms
- b. Values
- c. Causalities
- d. Hypotheses

Answer: a

Question Title: TB_01_05 What Is a Social Problem?, Remember, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

6. What is the difference between the way in which laypeople and sociologists view deviant behaviors?

- a. Sociologists view behaviors or characteristics as being deviant, while laypeople consider a behavior to be deviant only when some group so defines it.
- b. Sociologists view deviance as relative, while laypeople view deviance in an absolute way by comparing it with some fixed standards.
- c. Sociologists consider deviance to be a healthy group characteristic, while laypeople dislike and reproach deviance.

d. Sociologists suggest that deviant behaviors are universal, while laypeople insist that deviance can be understood only within the context of the norms and values of a particular culture.

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_06 What Is a Social Problem?, Analyze, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty: 3–Difficult

7. Some college students have joined together to form a rock band. This band consists of people who have similar interests and a passion for rock music. This group is an example of a(n) _____.

- a. subculture
- b. interest group
- c. anomie
- d. ethnic group

Answer: a

Question Title: TB_01_07 What Is a Social Problem?, Apply, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

8. A majority of the people in the state of Trecova value hard work and industriousness. They regard welfare schemes with disdain and oppose their existence. However, these schemes are welcomed by the poor and disadvantaged people who are not capable of doing much labor. This difference in interest creates a clash between the two groups and becomes a social problem. This social problem has developed because of _____.

- a. deviation from norms
- b. misuse of power
- c. influential interest groups
- d. differences between subcultures

Answer: d

Question Title: TB_01_08 What Is a Social Problem?, Apply, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

9. _____ refers to the tendency to view one's own culture or subculture as the best and to judge other cultures or subcultures in comparison to it.

- a. Recidivism
- b. Elitism
- c. Ethnocentrism
- d. Ageism

Answer: c

Question Title: TB_01_09 What Is a Social Problem?, Remember, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

10. _____ is the ability of one group to realize its will, even in the face of resistance from other groups.

- a. Fecundity
- b. Power
- c. Androgyny
- d. Pluralism

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_10 What Is a Social Problem?, Remember, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

11. _____ refers to legitimate power that is obeyed because people believe it is right and proper that they obey.

- a. Causality
- b. Autocracy
- c. Confederacy
- d. Authority

Answer: d

Question Title: TB_01_11 What Is a Social Problem?, Remember, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

12. What is the advantage of the sociological perspective?

- a. It helps to understand the changes in various cultures due to diversification.
- b. It frees people from blind submission to social forces that they do not understand.
- c. It helps to understand the changes that led to the formation of interest groups.
- d. It makes people aware of the fallacies in social research studies.

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_12 What Is a Social Problem?, Understand, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

13. The key role of theories is to _____.

- a. negate one's belief in religion
- b. explain why something occurred
- c. judge people's behaviors
- d. set norms on which a society should be based

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_13 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Understand, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

14. Which of the following observations led to the emergence of the functionalist perspective?

- a. competition between humans to attain societal resources
- b. similarities between society and biological organisms
- c. differences in the communication styles across cultures
- d. recurring patterns of violence originating from different causes

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_14 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Remember, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

15. Rita follows the functionalist perspective to study human behavior. She is most likely to argue that _____.

- a. various interrelated elements constitute a society and help maintain its stability
- b. social problems arise when an influential group defines a social condition as problematic
- c. social practices are simultaneously beneficial and detrimental to different groups
- d. observing the everyday interactions between people is the best way to understand a society

Answer: a

Question Title: TB_01_15 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Analyze, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty: 3–Difficult

16. According to the functionalist perspective, what is the difference between manifest and latent functions?

- a. Manifest functions are causative events, while latent functions are the actual results of a social action.
- b. Manifest functions are the undesirable consequences of a social action, while latent functions are the desirable consequences.
- c. Manifest functions are the intended consequences of a social action, while latent functions are the unintended or unexpected consequences.
- d. Manifest functions are the changes that take a longer time to be effective, while latent functions show immediate results of a social action.

Answer: c

Question Title: TB_01_16 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Analyze, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty: 3–Difficult

17. According to Karl Marx, the _____ consisted of those who owned the businesses, factories, and textile mills.

- a. proletariat
- b. bourgeoisie
- c. precariat
- d. proles

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_17 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Remember, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

18. A group is said to be a vested interest group if it _____.

- a. encourages social reforms that would change its current position
- b. advocates policies that are supported by a majority of people
- c. benefits from existing policies, practices, and social arrangements
- d. succeeds in achieving its goals and policy changes

Answer: c

Question Title: TB_01_18 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Understand, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

19. The interactionist perspective is considered more of a supplement to the functionalist and conflict perspectives because it _____.

- a. exemplifies the theories discussed in other perspectives
- b. shows how societies can constitute of independent elements that are stable and remain in equilibrium
- c. provides the assumptions that form the foundations of other perspectives
- d. shows how the social processes described in other perspectives enter people's lives

Answer: d

Question Title: TB_01_19 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Understand, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

20. According to the interactionist perspective, a central part of social interaction is _____.

- a. the frequency of interactions between people
- b. people's interpretations or definitions of others' behavior
- c. people's willingness to conform to societal norms
- d. the context of a discussion

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_20 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Remember, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

21. Ivan is a conflict theorist. The government in his country has decided to increase the tax on luxury goods so that the additional revenue generated can be used to improve the living conditions of the poor. Though this decision is encouraged by most people, it is also opposed by some. According to Ivan, this change in the tax policy will become a social problem if _____.

- a. it leads to an increase in social disruption or social disorganization
- b. a group of people do not believe that its interests are being met
- c. the conflict between the underprivileged and elite people for resources increases after this change
- d. people do not see a long-term benefit from this change

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_21 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Analyze, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty: 3–Difficult

22. _____ are tentative statements that can be tested regarding relationships between two or more factors.

- a. Theories
- b. Norms
- c. Hypotheses
- d. Theorems

Answer: c

Question Title: TB_01_22 Research on Social Problems, Remember, LO 1.3

Learning Objective: 1.3 Describe how the scientific method and research are used to understand social problems, elaborate on the different types of research that are used, and characterize the problems and pitfalls of scientific research.

Topic: Research on Social Problems

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

23. _____ are controlled methods of collecting evidence that give people confidence in stating that one factor caused another to happen.

- a. Theories
- b. Experiments
- c. Hypotheses
- d. Causalities

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_23 Research on Social Problems, Remember, LO 1.3

Learning Objective: 1.3 Describe how the scientific method and research are used to understand social problems, elaborate on the different types of research that are used, and characterize the problems and pitfalls of scientific research.

Topic: Research on Social Problems

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

24. Martin is conducting a research on more effective ways to control foot-and-mouth disease in animals. He has developed a detailed research design, and it has been reviewed by other experts. He has also conducted the necessary experiments and drawn inferences from the resulting data. Based on the systematic steps followed by researchers while conducting a scientific study, which of the following should be done next?

- a. The experts should review the research design to make sure the researcher has used the most modern and effective methods for studying the problem.
- b. Martin should publicly disseminate his research and its results through publication in a book or professional journal.
- c. Martin should formulate the research problem and review it for its feasibility.
- d. The experts should review if the conclusions made are accurate and warranted.

Answer: d

Question Title: TB_01_24 Research on Social Problems, Apply, LO 1.3

Learning Objective: 1.3 Describe how the scientific method and research are used to understand social problems, elaborate on the different types of research that are used, and characterize the problems and pitfalls of scientific research.

Topic: Research on Social Problems
Skill Level: Apply What You Know
Difficulty: 3–Difficult

25. What is the advantage of using the systematic steps followed by scientists for conducting scientific research?
- a. It guarantees accuracy of a research work.
 - b. It makes the scientific method more likely than other methods to give an accurate knowledge of the world.
 - c. It ensures that all research problems, including those that cannot be solved by scientific investigation, are also pursued.
 - d. It provides a means for researchers to conduct their observation without the need to get their work reviewed prior to publishing it.

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_25 Research on Social Problems, Understand, LO 1.3
Learning Objective: 1.3 Describe how the scientific method and research are used to understand social problems, elaborate on the different types of research that are used, and characterize the problems and pitfalls of scientific research.
Topic: Research on Social Problems
Skill Level: Understand the Concepts
Difficulty: 2–Moderate

26. _____ consist of elements that are taken from a group or population and that serve as a source of data.
- a. Hypotheses
 - b. Anomie
 - c. Samples
 - d. Ghettos

Answer: c

Question Title: TB_01_26 Research on Social Problems, Remember, LO 1.3
Learning Objective: 1.3 Describe how the scientific method and research are used to understand social problems, elaborate on the different types of research that are used, and characterize the problems and pitfalls of scientific research.
Topic: Research on Social Problems
Skill Level: Remember the Facts
Difficulty: 1–Easy

27. A spurious relationship is said to exist between two events if _____.
- a. one event occurred before the other
 - b. they are independently related to another event

- c. they occurred at the same point of time
- d. one event occurs only if the other occurs

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_27 Research on Social Problems, Understand, LO 1.3

Learning Objective: 1.3 Describe how the scientific method and research are used to understand social problems, elaborate on the different types of research that are used, and characterize the problems and pitfalls of scientific research.

Topic: Research on Social Problems

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

28. _____ is the technique of using famous and respected people to support a program or policy as a means of engendering public support.

- a. Research
- b. Testimonial
- c. Modernization
- d. Social stratification

Answer: b

Question Title: TB_01_28 Research on Social Problems, Remember, LO 1.3

Learning Objective: 1.3 Describe how the scientific method and research are used to understand social problems, elaborate on the different types of research that are used, and characterize the problems and pitfalls of scientific research.

Topic: Research on Social Problems

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

29. The government of Castleton is in the process of formulating a new policy to address the problem of child labor. They have assessed the possible positive and negative outcomes of various policy alternatives and have formulated a policy that they believe would achieve the desired goals in an effective manner. According to the stages in the process of policy formulation, what is the next stage in the process of formulating this new policy?

- a. policy formulation
- b. policy implementation
- c. evaluation
- d. closure

Answer: c

Question Title: TB_01_29 Future Prospects: Solving Social Problems, Apply, LO 1.4

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the things that sociologists do to address social problems, discuss the role of social policy in this process, compare and contrast the interventionist and laissez-faire approaches to this process, and analyze why this process benefits by focusing on social problems in other societies and cultures.

Topic: Future Prospects: Solving Social Problems

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

30. The term _____ refers to the belief that government should intervene as little as possible in people's lives or the workings of society.

- a. laissez-faire
- b. politics
- c. causality
- d. cross-dependence

Answer: a

Question Title: TB_01_30 Future Prospects: Solving Social Problems, Remember, LO 1.4

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the things that sociologists do to address social problems, discuss the role of social policy in this process, compare and contrast the interventionist and laissez-faire approaches to this process, and analyze why this process benefits by focusing on social problems in other societies and cultures.

Topic: Future Prospects: Solving Social Problems

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

Short Answers

1. How do norms contribute to a society?

Answer: Norms are rules of conduct that guide people's behavior. They serve as a script for how to behave, and they enable one, to an extent, to predict how others will behave and to coordinate one's behavior with theirs. Thus, values and norms lend stability and orderliness to society.

Question Title: TB_01_31 What Is a Social Problem?, Understand, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

2. Define a subculture and discuss its importance in the study of social problems.

Answer: A subculture is a group within a culture that shares some of the beliefs, values, and norms of the larger culture but also has some that are distinctly its own. Subcultural diversity is an important element in the study of social problems because it points to the potential for conflict between groups: The values of one group may clash with the values of another. Such conflicts are also enhanced by ethnocentrism.

Question Title: TB_01_32 What Is a Social Problem?, Remember, LO 1.1

Learning Objective: 1.1 Define when a condition is and is not a social problem, identify the social context of social problems, and explain what sociological imagination is.

Topic: What Is a Social Problem?

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

3. What is the role played by theories in the study of social problems?

Answer: Theories help to organize the data from research into a meaningful whole. The key role of theories is to tell people why something occurred. Some sociological theories focus on specific social problems, such as the causes of juvenile delinquency or the explanations for divorce, while some other theories offer broader explanations of social reality.

Question Title: TB_01_33 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Understand, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

4. What are symbols, and how do people attach meaning to symbols?

Answer: A symbol is something that stands for, represents, or takes the place of something else. Anything—any object, event, or word—can serve as a symbol. The meaning attached to a symbol is derived from social consensus; people simply agree that a particular object will represent something.

Question Title: TB_01_34 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Remember, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

5. According to the interactionist perspective, when does the need for social change arise and what happens during this process?

Answer: According to the interactionist perspective, symbols and labels influence how we relate to others and define ourselves. Interactionists consider that developing consensus on expected behavior is

important. If this consensus breaks down, some sort of change must occur. For interactionists, this change involves developing some new consensus with different meanings and expectations.

Question Title: TB_01_35 Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems, Understand, LO 1.2

Learning Objective: 1.2 Define the three theoretical perspectives on social problems, compare them with one another, and explain how social problems are socially constructed.

Topic: Theoretical Perspectives on Social Problems

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

6. What is the importance of hypotheses in verifying a theory?

Answer: Scientific theories are linked to scientific research through hypotheses. Hypotheses are statements whose accuracy can be assessed through observation. If hypotheses are verified through observation, this provides support for the theory; if they are not, one's confidence in the theory is reduced. The more empirical support there is for a theory, the more useful it is in attacking social problems.

Question Title: TB_01_36 Research on Social Problems, Understand, LO 1.3

Learning Objective: 1.3 Describe how the scientific method and research are used to understand social problems, elaborate on the different types of research that are used, and characterize the problems and pitfalls of scientific research.

Topic: Research on Social Problems

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

7. What was Karl Marx's stand on the influence of the personal values of researchers on their works?

Answer: Karl Marx was a strong champion of the cause of the poor and the downtrodden, and he wanted to use science to improve their plight. He argued that social scientists should bring strong moral commitments to their work and use science to change inequitable or immoral social conditions.

Question Title: TB_01_37 Research on Social Problems, Remember, LO 1.3

Learning Objective: 1.3 Describe how the scientific method and research are used to understand social problems, elaborate on the different types of research that are used, and characterize the problems and pitfalls of scientific research.

Topic: Research on Social Problems

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

8. How can one establish causality between two factors?

Answer: One can infer causality from the observation of associations or correlations between things in the world. If changes in one factor are regularly associated with changes in the other factor, then the first factor may be causing those changes.

Question Title: TB_01_38 Research on Social Problems, Understand, LO 1.3

Learning Objective: 1.3 Describe how the scientific method and research are used to understand social problems, elaborate on the different types of research that are used, and characterize the problems and pitfalls of scientific research.

Topic: Research on Social Problems

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 1–Easy

9. What is the purpose of preventive or intervention programs that focus on social reform to address social problems?

Answer: Programs that focus on social reform involve significant change in some social institutions or social practices. Social reform suggests that the problem stems, at least in part, from some serious failings in social organization or social institutions. Social reform programs aim to reduce the prevalence of such social conditions, and thereby reduce the occurrence of social problems.

Question Title: TB_01_39 Future Prospects: Solving Social Problems, Understand, LO 1.4

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the things that sociologists do to address social problems, discuss the role of social policy in this process, compare and contrast the interventionist and laissez-faire approaches to this process, and analyze why this process benefits by focusing on social problems in other societies and cultures.

Topic: Future Prospects: Solving Social Problems

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 2–Moderate

10. With respect to people's opinion about government intervention in addressing social issues, what was the change observed between the Occupy Wall Street and Tea Party movements?

Answer: The Occupy Wall Street movement was characterized by a considerable support for the government to take responsibility for trying to solve social problems such as crime, poverty, and environmental pollution. The Tea Party movement resulted from pressure due to increasing belief that government can be a hindrance to the solution of many problems and should play only a limited role in attacking them. Some supporters of this movement even promoted the privatization of government services and activities, with businesses and corporations doing many things that government once did.

Question Title: TB_01_40 Future Prospects: Solving Social Problems, Understand, LO 1.4

Learning Objective: 1.4 Identify the things that sociologists do to address social problems, discuss the role of social policy in this process, compare and contrast the interventionist and laissez-faire approaches to this process, and analyze why this process benefits by focusing on social problems in other societies and cultures.

Topic: Future Prospects: Solving Social Problems

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty: 2–Moderate