

Introduction to Sociology

Science, Environment and Society

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Outline

- Basic Concepts
 - Nature, Environment and Society
- **Science and Environment**
 - **Digital, Social and Global Divide through ICT**

Society and Environment: Basics

- Nature is one of the most complex and difficult words in the English language because its dominant meaning has changed over time along with the development of societies.
 - 'Nature' can mean something that is *essential to a person or a thing*.
 - Nature came to be seen instead as a *series of forces that* directed the world and ultimately explained why things happen.
 - Nature can be seen as the whole *material world of things rather than as a series of forces*.
 - *Most often* society and nature were seen as *separate things*.

Environment

- *The environment is* assumed to mean all of the non-human, natural surroundings within which human beings exist - sometimes called the 'natural environment' -and in its widest sense this is simply planet Earth as a whole.

Society and Environment

- Sociology can help us to understand how environmental problems are distributed.
- Sociologists can provide an account of how patterns of human behaviour create pressure on the natural environment.
- Sociology can help us to evaluate policies and proposals aimed at providing solutions to environmental problems.

What are environmental issues?

- Pollution and Waste
 - Air, Water pollution
 - Solid waste
 - Hazardous waste
- Resource depletion
- Genetic modification

Science (ICT) and Society

- The digital divide
 - The debate about the Internet and inequality
 - It refers to the differential access to telecommunications and information technologies based on socioeconomic status.
 - As a result of differing levels of internet access, the process of looking for employment can be entirely different for individuals of different economic statuses.

- The social divide
 - Differences in knowledge and access within countries
 - Gender, age, race, geographical location, income, education are very significant factors in creating the social divide in internet and computer access.

- The global divide
 - Differences in knowledge and access between countries
 - Such divisions among countries may reinforce existing economic differences