Sociological Methodology

Sherry Camp

Omega Graduate School

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Professor

Dr. Joshua Reichard

*Assignment #1 – Core Essential Elements*

1. Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:

1. Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited sources) during the first

week of the term. Post this document in DIAL.

1. Professor will check for quality of content and word-count requirements. Grade assigned will be Credit or No Credit (CR/NC).

Essential Element: Faith Integrated Sociological Analysis.

As a Christian school administrator, it is essential to exemplify Christian faith throughout all decisions, as I proclaim Jesus Christ to teachers, staff, students, and their families. Christian school administrators should know who they are, why they are here, what their purpose is. How to view current culture will add in giving methods to know and continue study in social issues and challenges that impact the trajectory of the future of the world, especially in Christian education.

To understand sociology is key to ministry every day. “Sociology is the discipline that studies the interactions and relationships among people—the realities and perceived realities…shedding light on questions about why people do what they do and how they are influenced by one another,” (McIntyre, 2014, p. 4). Knowing others and understanding their identity by asking them questions that cause critical thinking and logic is a dynamic way to see them in light of their faith.

Knowing what you believe, why you believe it, and its importance, is essential to a person’s identity in Christ. If one does not know their identity, they may move with the post-modern culture that leaves us with questions about personal identity. “It seems the more we try to anchor identity, the more it slips away and remains just beyond our grasp. Being IN Christ provides a new super-ordinate category for identity that outshines all previous ones,” (Heddendorf & Voss, 2010).

Of great interest in faith integrated sociological analysis are the three main sociological theories that will be necessary to remember as Christian administrators dialogue with constituents not only difficulties in the classroom, but personal challenges. Functionalism views society as a complex system of interrelated parts. Each part serves a specific function to keep order and stability (Reichard, 2024). It is interesting to note the ways in which the older generation of teachers’ classroom management style verses the new teachers just out of college and the classroom structure. What a difference! This also affects the way in which they teach biblical worldview in all academics. It is more than just a Bible verse with a concept attached as the older generation may see. With proper training both the teaching generation of the past and present may collaborate and learn together.

Conflict critical theory emphasizes the role of power. It highlights how conflict and competition can promote change (Reichard, 2024). Students who may not be well disciplined at home may believe this is the best way in which to be most powerful and have friends, but soon find out in the Christian school, to have friends one must show respect to the other.

Symbolic interactionism, however, is a sociological theory that I believe most works. It focuses on HOW a person interprets their own reality using their influence within relationships to emphasize shared meanings, things that others may relate to (Reichard, 2024). This is an excellent way to shape social behavior. It often leads to questions in which others understand. Interacting with purpose is another way of influencing others to make constructive social change. Continuing analysis on these theories will be a discipline that will be helpful as I listen to others in the school setting, realizing learning new things will take process of time.

Faith Integrated Sociological Analysis has most to do with telling others of the redemptive work of Christ and how He transforms them in relationship with Him. Making relationship with others who do not know Jesus and are broken need to know the hope in Christ. Through faith in Him and with the Holy Spirit as teacher, our stake holders can know by our example and influence societies to be transformed. This could lead to Christian cultural practices and values that change the world.

Will we be gracists to all? *In Gracism: The Art of Inclusion*, Dr. David Anderson, Chancellor of OGS, states, “Systemic gracism emerges when a person of influence takes gracism principles of strategy and extends favor to transform official policies to unofficial practices of communities they lead in order to cultivate an environment where everyone flourishes together,” (Anderson & Heiliger, 2023). This reminds me that, “…now you collectively are Christ’s body and individually you are members of it, each part severally and distinct, each with his own place and function,” (1 Corinthians 12:27). Will the Christian school accept the challenges of relating to each other no matter diversities, ethnicities, or income groups, to integrate sociology and Christianity for constructive answers to address social problems in our culture today? This scholar practioner studying sociological methodology believes, yes!

WORKS CITED

Anderson, A. & Heiliger, D. (2023). *Gracism: the art of inclusion*. Intervarsity Press.

Heddendorf, R. & Vos, M. (2010). Hidden threads: a chrsitan critique of sociological

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McIntyre, L. (2014). *The practical skeptic: Core concepts in sociology, 6th ed*., New

York: McGraw-Hill Education. **[Seminal] [Amazon - Preview].**

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