

Reshaping Societies: The Vital Role of Sociological Studies amid Globalization

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ABSTRACT

The swift and profound societal changes triggered by the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic have necessitated rapid adaptations in individual behaviors within daily life routines. This study addresses the vital role of sociological studies in reshaping societies amid globalization within the New Normal Era. Employing a sociological lens grounded in Talcott Parsons' functionalism theory, this study employs a meticulous and rigorous descriptive qualitative research design. This study investigation draws upon an extensive and systematic collection of diverse bibliographic sources, encompassing previous scholarly research that sheds light on behavioral shifts before and after the pandemic, alongside credible information from mainstream media outlets. The intricate dynamics of societal metamorphosis during the New Normal epoch are intricately intertwined with the inherent complexities of the prevailing social system, actively grappling with the diverse and enduring aftermath of the coronavirus. Notably, Parsons' AGIL framework emerges as pivotal in facilitating the establishment of a fresh and adaptive social equilibrium. The realization of the New Normal paradigm hinges on the ethical evaluation and calibration of precisely defined indicators, fostering seamless collaboration and integration among diverse community constituents. Ultimately, this study underscores sociological studies' indispensable and central role in deeply understanding, critically analyzing, and effectively reshaping societies amidst the profound and multifaceted challenges posed by globalization and the transformative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19 Pandemic; New Normal; Societal Transformations; Sociological Studies; Talcott Parsons' Functionalism

1. Introduction

The global COVID-19 pandemic emerged in 2019 and has generated profound and far-reaching indirect impacts that span various dimensions of social existence, encompassing economic, social, and environmental domains (Chakraborty & Maity, 2020; Mofijur et al., 2021). As the 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) evolved into a worldwide pandemic in 2020, its repercussions have been unparalleled. These repercussions have prompted swift responses, including government-enforced lockdowns and restrictions on economic and social activities. While the immediate aftermath of these measures reverberated through economies and fundamental societal structures, they also engendered a cascade of indirect effects. Addressing these effects, Abubakar et al. (2021) conducted a focused exploration emphasizing the advancement of environmental sustainability. Their study highlights that the overall impact has yielded positive outcomes, decreasing greenhouse gas emissions, reducing oil exploration activities, and lowering pollution levels. Moreover, these shifts have improved the environmental health of ecosystems that were previously vulnerable to disruption.

Governments worldwide have taken measures to combat the spread of infections, including curtailing outdoor activities and implementing collective quarantines. Amid quarantine periods, it becomes crucial to strategize ways to promote physical activity within the confines of one's home and encourage adherence to a wholesome diet. It's worth noting that quarantine measures can have enduring implications for cardiovascular health, often linked to unhealthy lifestyle practices and elevated anxiety levels. As quarantine periods close, initiating a global initiative to advocate for healthy dietary habits and physical activity becomes pivotal. This initiative will motivate individuals to reintegrate positive and health-conscious routines into their daily lives (Mattioli et al., 2020). The rapid changes brought about by this virus have altered living conditions and lifestyles globally (Ratten, 2020; Saadat et al., 2020).

Since the outset of 2020, Indonesia has been grappling with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, with the virus circulating within the population. The government's response has encompassed strategies such as Large-Scale Social Restrictions and the Adoption of New Habits to mitigate the virus's spread, aiming to align actions with established health protocols.

Viewed from a sociological lens, the COVID-19 pandemic has catalyzed unforeseen societal shifts – spontaneous transformations that lack communal intent (Ratten, 2020). These shifts can give rise to complications and disturbances in individuals' lives. The unpreparedness of communities to navigate the pandemic has led to widespread social disruption, impacting various dimensions of human existence. However, it's essential to recognize that society embodies dynamism and undergoes continuous evolution. Society doesn't remain static; it embodies a perpetual process characterized by varying rates, intensities, rhythms, and tempos (Zinn, 2021).

The swift changes and unprecedented circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic caught people unprepared for the shift to the "New Normal." This upheaval has rattled established social values and norms previously embraced by the community, prompting the need for reevaluation. Some long-standing values and norms must be restructured or revitalized to pave the way for a new social framework. As part of the evolving regulations, the government has encouraged online learning, remote work, and home-based worship in

response to the emergence of the COVID-19 virus in Indonesia. Adapting to enforced social restrictions has become necessary even for those accustomed to close social interactions. Implementing physical and social distancing measures has transformed various aspects of community behavior, replacing traditional in-person interactions with virtual patterns.

As a field of study, sociology delves into the intricate nature of societies, human behavior, and community development. Originating from the French scientist Auguste Comte, who is often referred to as the “Father of Sociology”, the discipline explores the impact of society on human lives. However, it was Emile Durkheim who successfully institutionalized sociology in France. Functioning as a scientific body of knowledge, sociology comprises the outcomes of systematic scientific inquiry scrutinized by peers and the general public.

Etymologically, the term “sociology” is derived from the Latin words “*Socius*,” signifying friend or togetherness, and “*Logos*,” meaning talk or discourse. This combination aptly characterizes sociology as a study centered on society and the dynamics of communal interactions. The roots of sociology trace back to Auguste Comte’s publication of “*Cours De Philosophie Positive*” in 1838, while Herbert Spencer’s work “*Principles of Sociology*” published in 1876, further popularized the discipline (Andreski, 2014; Schlechtriemen, 2021).

Sociology delves into various aspects of human existence within society, encompassing communities and broader societal contexts. Consequently, multiple perspectives emerge in the analysis of society. Each perspective offers a distinct vantage point, leading to diverse inquiries and varying conclusions about societal dynamics.

Certain parallels with the early days of modernity can be observed within this landscape – common trends that emphasize functional determinism over shared ethical and ideological foundations. However, the current situation diverges fundamentally. Modern sociology initially aimed to comprehend, elucidate, and even guide societal shifts during the transition from premodern to modern societies. The gradual fading of premodern societies and the traditional definition of societies rendered their rationales obsolete. Today’s sociology grapples with elucidating the transformation of modern societies into what can be termed transmodern societies. However, this endeavor faces challenges, as modern sociology remains intertwined with the concept of modernity itself, hindering an unbiased exploration. Consequently, those departing from the notion of modernity are left with the options of reverting to premodernity or delving into speculative and inconclusive futurology.

Amid this backdrop, the question arises: Does a “global society” truly exist, and how can its theories be formulated? It is increasingly acknowledged that the concept has reached a juncture where it defies easy explanations. The idea of a globalized society was commonly interpreted as the “end of society,” drawing parallels with the “end of history.” In light of these considerations, this study addresses the vital role of sociological studies in reshaping societies amid globalization within the New Normal Era. This investigation aims to illuminate the social transformation induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The study’s objectives encompass identifying the social changes and associated impacts occurring within the New Normal era while analyzing these changes through the sociological lens of Talcott Parsons.

2. Research Methodology

This study employs qualitative research methods to explore the effectiveness of sociological studies in forming Talcott Parson’s adaptive society in the New Normal Era. Qualitative research is chosen due to its descriptive nature, allowing for a deeper understanding of interconnected, dynamic, and interactive variables contributing to meaning-making. The specific approach utilized in this study is the phenomenological approach. This approach aims

to elucidate the meaning of a concept or phenomenon of experience based on the awareness that emerges within individuals or groups (Sugiyono, 2013). The rationale behind selecting the phenomenological approach lies in its suitability for capturing the nuanced perceptions and experiences related to the research question.

The participant selection process involves carefully considering the criteria that align with the research focus. A purposeful sampling technique will be employed to identify participants who can provide rich insights into the phenomenon under investigation. The sample size will be determined based on achieving data saturation, where new information ceases to emerge.

Data collection will be conducted through an extensive review of relevant literature, encompassing academic sources and reputable mainstream mass media outlets. This comprehensive approach captures a holistic understanding of behavioral shifts before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, ethical considerations will be upheld throughout the study, ensuring proper permissions for utilizing sources and maintaining the confidentiality of participants' experiences.

The data analysis will involve thematic analysis, where recurring patterns and themes within participants' experiences will be identified and interpreted. This process will contribute to the in-depth exploration of the research topic, and the findings will be triangulated with existing literature to enhance the credibility and validity of the study.

Addressing potential researcher bias, it's acknowledged that the researcher's background and perspective may influence the study. Efforts will be made to maintain objectivity and reflexivity throughout the research process.

By integrating these considerations into the research methodology, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the vital role of sociological studies amid globalization in reshaping society within the context of the New Normal Era.

3. Results and Discussion

Auguste Comte's pivotal role as the father of sociology underscores his indelible influence on the evolution of sociological theory. Comte's era stands as a hallmark in the trajectory of sociological development. Comte's enduring legacy is encapsulated in his conceptual division of sociology into static and dynamic sociology (Soekanto, 1982). The former delves into the unchanging laws underlying societal existence premised on the interconnectedness of all social phenomena. This perspective asserts that isolating these phenomena for individual study holds limited value. The nucleus of societal structure is not the individual but the family unit, where bonds of sympathy intertwine. This sympathy must evolve into cooperation for societal progress, contingent on establishing a division of labor.

In contrast, dynamic sociology pertains to developmental theories. Comte envisioned the advancement of society towards a state of perfection. Notably, Comte's emphasis lay more on the transformation of ideals rather than the external form of society.

3.1. Transformation of Sociology in Response to 20th-Century Changes and Challenges

The rapid growth of modern sociology took place predominantly in North America, specifically the United States and Canada, rather than its birthplace in Europe. This surge coincided with the onset of the 20th century, marked by a significant influx of immigrants to North America (Johnson, 2008). This demographic shift led to accelerated population expansion, the rise of new industrial urban centers, an uptick in criminal activities, and various other changes. As a result of these transformative social dynamics, substantial shifts within societies became inevitable.

These societal transformations prompted deep contemplation among social scientists, revealing the inadequacy of adhering to the traditional European-style approach to sociology. Recognizing the need for an approach resonating with the prevailing societal circumstances, they embarked on shaping modern sociology. This paradigm shift involved reevaluating and adapting medieval sociological principles to the contemporary context. In a departure from prior sociological viewpoints, the modern approach leaned towards a micro-level orientation characterized by empirical investigation. This methodology allowed the study of societal changes by observing emerging social facts and deciphering their patterns. Analyzing these social facts, one can conclude the broader changes within society as a whole.

This transformation paved the way for a renewed appreciation of the significance of research in sociology, particularly empirical research. It underscored the importance of systematically studying real-world phenomena to comprehend the intricate fabric of societies undergoing rapid evolution. Since then, the role of research, especially empirical investigations, has been recognized as pivotal in driving the advancement of sociology's understanding and addressing the challenges posed by dynamic societal shifts.

3.2. The Evolution of Sociology in Indonesia: From Cultural Integration to Scholarly Acknowledgment

The evolution of global sociology is intricately intertwined with the pivotal role played by the United States. In the 19th century, as the industrial age dawned upon America, it created an era of societal inequalities. Before this period, agricultural landownership was widespread within predominantly rural communities. However, the onset of industrialization triggered a seismic shift, leading once-quiet villages to swiftly metamorphose into bustling cities, subsequently diminishing the expanse of agricultural land (Johnson, 2008).

This urban expansion created a phenomenon marked by new interactions as people from diverse regions converged. These interactions indirectly fostered the emergence of fresh norms and behavioral codes, distinct from the traditional ones that each resident previously upheld. Concurrently, depopulation in adaptive society areas became noticeable, igniting concerns of a humanitarian nature. Around the turn of the 20th century, the drive to enhance the lives of those grappling with adaptation gathered momentum.

This pressing issue spurred the establishment of courses addressing adaptive societal matters at esteemed institutions such as the Universities of Chicago, Michigan, and North Carolina. Moreover, it catalyzed the Commission on Rural Life formation, spearheaded by President Roosevelt and influenced by Sir Horace Plunkett's research on Irish village life (Johnson, 2008).

The commission's findings captivated American sociologists, who fervently deliberated village life during a pivotal 1912 gathering of the American Sociological Society. The swift societal evolution culminated in founding of the Rural Sociology Society in 1937, specializing in studying adaptive societies. However, the rapid industrial development during the Industrial Revolution in the United States caused the decline of traditional villages, prompting American sociologists to shift their research focus. Thus, they redirected their inquiries to South American realms such as Peru, Mexico, El Salvador, Cuba, and Brazil—regions where adaptive societies still held sway (Johnson, 2008).

Inherent contradictions and dynamism are embedded within social structures, even during periods of relative stability. Individual adaptations emerge during instability and conflict, as established institutionalized pathways to goal attainment might not yield the expected outcomes. Robert King Merton's categorization of individual adaptation approaches

underscores adaptation's individualistic and typical nature. This highlights that adaptation isn't uniform, encompassing various interpretations, definitions, standards, and indicators (Messner et al., 2019).

Turning to Indonesia, sociological studies are advancing rapidly. Although Indonesian scholar and leaders might not have formally delved into sociological theory, they have seamlessly woven sociological concepts into their teachings. For instance, Sri Paduka Mangkunegoro IV's Wulang Reh teachings explored inter-group dynamics within Javanese society. Similarly, Ki Hajar Dewantara laid the cornerstone for Indonesian leadership and kinship within the framework of the Taman Siswa educational organization (Irwan et al., 2021).

This progression firmly underscores the maturation of sociology within Indonesia. Foreign scholars, such as Snouck Hurgronje, C van Vollenhoven, Ter Haar, Duyvendak, and others, have directed their scholarly gaze toward Indonesian society, accentuating its significance. However, it's important to note that sociology wasn't accorded the same level of recognition as a scientific pursuit during that era (Irwan et al., 2021).

In the academic landscape of pre-World War II Indonesia, the Rechtshogeschool Law School in Jakarta stood as the lone university offering sociology courses. Regrettably, these lectures were discontinued in 1934/1935, a decision that emanated from the professor's authority, deeming sociological studies unrelated to legal proceedings (Irwan et al., 2021).

3.3. Societal Transformations and the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Adapting to Change

In the contemporary landscape, the repercussions of the 2019 COVID-19 pandemic are compelling communities to adapt to myriad shifts in the social fabric. Various pre-existing issues are acting as a catalyst for the transformation of societal norms. The prospect of a markedly different trajectory and structure of human life and order post-pandemic cannot be dismissed. The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic may usher in a new global paradigm, forever altering the familiar. Consequently, all communal activities and endeavors pursued before the pandemic are now required to adhere to the standardized health protocols set by governmental bodies. This is a formidable challenge, given the pandemic's swift infiltration into every facet of social existence. Previously, societal life found its grounding in established routines and repetitive behaviors, a structure that communities upheld.

Moreover, amidst the proliferation of the COVID-19 pandemic, technological advancements have begun to shape government policies to regulate human behavior and customs. Various communal behaviors necessitating physical distancing during social interactions, such as implementing physical distancing policies, have transformed. In this context, the customary behaviors and habits prevalent in pre-pandemic societies have been redefined and reshaped by virtual modes of interaction. This realization underscores technology's pivotal role as a mediator of social connections in the era dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The landscape of the pandemic has spurred the emergence of novel practices, manifesting as alterations in the social conduct of individuals from diverse backgrounds. A survey conducted by BPS - Statistics Indonesia in 2020, drawing from the COVID-19 Impact Socio-Demographic Survey results, indicates that approximately 72% of respondents have consistently practiced physical distancing over the past week (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020).

Furthermore, around 82.52% of respondents reported consistently adhering to handwashing with soap and mask-wearing, while 42% stated their avoidance of public transportation, including online transport services, due to COVID-19 concerns (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020). While responding to the COVID-19 crisis, governments are implementing a set

of policies termed the “New Normal.” Consequently, these varying policies directly influence the social changes unfolding within societies.

It is essential to acknowledge that the “New Normal” concept inherently instigates social change, thereby influencing behavioral patterns and the dynamics of social interactions within society. To simplify, the “New Normal” underscores behavioral adjustments to enable continued participation in customary activities while still adhering to health protocols, thus inculcating new habits. Given the fluctuating COVID-19 case statistics, this notion becomes especially relevant, revealing that the optimal implementation of the New Normal is contingent on a robust sense of communal discipline. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitates societal acclimatization to an array of transformations, with the “New Normal” potentially heralding the emergence of a distinct cultural ethos. The reality of the coronavirus has catalyzed changes not only in individual behavior but also in the cohesiveness of society. Existing methods, habits, rules of conduct, and customs now take on a renewed significance. The battle against the COVID-19 pandemic is a taxing endeavor as individuals grapple with safeguarding themselves against an invisible threat. The pandemic has prompted considerable movement of people to regions affected by COVID-19.

The assorted public perspectives during the COVID-19 pandemic can be categorized as follows:

- 1) COVID-19 as a Perilous Pathogen: Despite COVID-19’s relatively lower fatality rate than previous viruses like SARS and MERS, health experts recognize its danger due to its rapid transmission rate. The swift spread of COVID-19 among the global population is a testament to its potency.
- 2) COVID-19 as a Multifaceted Threat: Beyond health concerns, COVID-19 poses a comprehensive threat encompassing the social, economic, educational, and political realms worldwide. The pandemic has curtailed social interactions, incited disarray, and engendered social dysfunction. Economic shifts toward online trade, remote learning in education, and political complexities have also emerged.
- 3) Conspiracy Theories Amid COVID-19: Some perceive the pandemic as a global conspiracy orchestrated for the gains of capitalists, fuelling debates despite lacking scientific validation. Amid the fight against COVID-19, societal stress has surged, leading to skepticism and a proliferation of conspiracy theories that lack evidential substantiation.
- 4) Economic Exploitation through the Pandemic: Certain factions view the pandemic as an economic opportunity, capitalizing on heightened demand to drive profits. Economic agents have significantly raised prices, disregarding sympathy and empathy during the crisis.
- 5) Responses to Government Policies: The diverse public responses outlined above underscore the nuanced reactions to government strategies concerning COVID-19. These responses indicate the evolving levels of awareness, discipline, and societal behavior during the pandemic. This phenomenon continues to evolve in Indonesia, marked by the emergence of new clusters of COVID-19 spread, both in specific areas and related to activities.

Numerous endeavors are underway to address the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, including determining the duration of uncertainty and anxiety experienced by individuals from various walks of life. Uneven distribution of vaccination efforts and health experts’ prolonged projection of the pandemic compound the complexities. Given the circumstances, the “New Normal” concept serves as an alternative strategy to navigate the crisis. This approach involves reshaping societal life to integrate health protocols while

sustaining regular activities. Irrespective of debates surrounding the term “New Normal,” from a sociological perspective, it signifies an adaptive response to the pandemic’s emergency. The “New Normal” strategy strives to facilitate the gradual resumption of dormant aspects of life. It aims to mitigate the social vulnerability in unstable societies by adapting to pandemic-induced emergencies. The global pandemic has dealt a significant blow to the resilience of communities. Community resilience, defined as a community’s ability to utilize available resources to meet fundamental needs and fulfill social functions, has been compromised due to social vulnerability. This susceptibility results in reduced productivity disrupted lifestyles, and even the emergence of social anxiety disorders.

Social vulnerability can manifest in three interlinked behaviors: indifference, irrationality, and criminal conduct. Indifference is evident in individuals who disregard governmental health mandates. Amidst irrational behavior, people resort to traditional remedies and preventive measures despite limited scientific evidence. The uncertainty catalyzed by the COVID-19 pandemic has driven some to extreme measures, such as incurring debt and contemplating suicide. Criminal behaviors, encompassing theft, robbery, and violence, represent the most alarming manifestations of social vulnerability during the pandemic (Norberg & Rucker, 2020).

Consequently, the pandemic’s impact has destabilized societal equilibrium and functioning. A lack of consideration for long-term stability and a myopic focus on short-term gain in societies with limited resource access exacerbates this. The three behaviors above and the accompanying examples only scratch the surface of the social fragility that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light. While these behaviors are evident, addressing the broader implications through various case studies across media and distinct environmental contexts is imperative. The pandemic’s transformative influence has transcended numerous facets of daily existence, necessitating rational approaches to alleviate the fear and anxiety pervading society.

3.4. Societal Transformation from Talcott Parsons’ Sociological Perspective

An individual’s life is marked by continuous change, ranging from inconspicuous shifts to substantial transformations. Change may be gradual or rapid, affecting a limited sphere or extending broadly (Rakhmat, 2013). Some changes are beneficial within this spectrum, while others may have adverse consequences. Societal changes can be deemed functional if they yield positive outcomes for the community. Talcott Parsons, a prominent sociologist, conceptualized social change as a gradual adjustment process aimed at restoring equilibrium. Parsons’ notion of change leans towards evolution rather than revolution. Change can also be planned and orchestrated by entities seeking to drive societal transformation; these entities can be termed agents of change.

In Parsons’ perspective, social change theories revolve around paradigms that explore the mechanisms and processes driving societal changes. The social facts paradigm aligns with the structural functionalism theory in this study’s context. Parsons’ structural functionalist theory centers on four functional actions encapsulated in the ‘AGIL’ scheme. This theory underscores order and tends to disregard societal conflicts and rapid changes. Key concepts within this framework include function, dysfunction, latent function, manifest function, and equilibrium. Structural functionalist theorists sometimes overlook conflict and social change in their models (Parsons, 1985; Ritzer & Douglas, 2007).

Nevertheless, contemporary proponents of this theory, armed with concepts like function, dysfunction, latent function, and equilibrium, have started addressing conflict and social change issues. Comprehending social change is pivotal in analyzing societal structures.

According to contemporary scholar Talcott Parsons, delving into social change necessitates an intricate understanding of social structure.

In terms of deviance-related social change, it is intertwined with the functional-structural perspective. This viewpoint regards society as a stable system characterized by a relatively fixed social order integrated into daily life. Stability and regularity are seen as steady states, with changes perceived as deviations from this norm. Functionally, this perspective downplays social change, portraying society as operating within a static or established framework. Social change is marginalized through the structural-functional lens, and society appears to function within a static or unchanging framework. This perspective presupposes that societal conditions are in equilibrium and that individuals must adapt to their daily lives accordingly.

The “New Normal” concept endeavors to reconfigure behavior to accommodate customary activities while curbing the transmission of the novel coronavirus. Talcott Parsons’ ideas, specifically his AGIL scheme, offer insight into this phenomenon. Parsons’ central tenets, outlined in his 1950 book “The Social System,” entail four prerequisites that every society and group must satisfy. These prerequisites form the foundation of a structural functionalism theory, establishing requisites for a functioning society or organization to survive. The AGIL scheme encompasses four action systems that correspond to the following:

- 1) **Adaptation:** This action system necessitates coping with external threats. Adaptation entails adjusting to the environment and modifying it to suit one’s needs. The pandemic has prompted shifts in behavior, urging communities to adapt to evolving circumstances to preserve equilibrium and suppress the virus’s spread.
- 2) **Goal Attainment:** This system focuses on setting and achieving goals and mobilizing resources to realize these objectives. The “New Normal” initiative aims to curb the virus’s spread while enabling societal activities like economics, education, and social interactions. In this context, individuals and communities must align with these objectives.
- 3) **Integration:** The integration system manages relationships among system components. Effective integration is essential for synchronizing efforts across institutions and fostering cooperation between entities like governments and private sectors. Such integration is vital for establishing cohesive responses to the pandemic’s challenges.
- 4) **Latency or Latent Pattern Maintenance:** The cultural system perpetuates norms and values that motivate action. This system is crucial in instilling and maintaining societal norms that guide behavior. The “New Normal” seeks to foster behavioral change that becomes a shared norm, reflecting the values of safety and responsibility.

Tying the AGIL schemes to the facets of social life exemplifies the mechanisms behind societal transformation. Talcott Parsons contends that society operates as a system of controlled actions. Individuals and communities adhere to these AGIL schemes as society transitions, comprising adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latent pattern maintenance.

- 1) **Behavioral Organisms or Action Systems:** These systems adapt by adjusting to external circumstances. The pandemic, for instance, has prompted adjustments in behavior, reflecting a response to external realities. Government policies, like large-scale social restrictions and the “New Normal,” have been designed to align with the values and goals of society.
- 2) **Personality System:** This system aims to achieve goals by setting objectives and mobilizing resources. Both cultural and social systems influence individuals’ personalities. People’s responses to the pandemic reflect their unique personalities and the cultural and social systems that shape them.

- 3) **Social System:** The social system handles integration by regulating its components. Integration is essential for cooperation between institutions during the pandemic. Institutions must collaborate to foster societal cohesion, reinforcing shared norms and values in the face of change (Talcott & Turner, 2013).
- 4) **Cultural System:** This system perpetuates norms and values driving action. During the pandemic, adherence to norms like handwashing and mask-wearing reflects the cultural system's influence. The "New Normal" transition seeks to institutionalize these behaviors as cultural norms (Cohen, 2021; Jansson et al., 2021).

From this vantage point, society can be envisioned as an interconnected web of groups functioning in a structured and relatively orderly manner, guided by shared rules and values. This collective structure encompasses diverse institutions, each assigned distinct roles and responsibilities. The intricacies of structures and functions vary between modern and traditional societies. To uphold this order, communities must establish maintenance systems, fulfill their designated roles, and cultivate positive relationships with other communities.

1) Role of Relaxation Techniques

Individuals must embrace relaxation techniques when they recognize irrational thoughts and approach their experiences objectively and rationally. This helps them attain a state of tranquility that mitigates negative emotions. Mastery of relaxation techniques heightens awareness of muscle tension, which often arises during interpersonal communication anxiety. By systematically alleviating this tension, individuals can attain a state of relaxation.

Muscles, particularly around the face and neck, tend to tense up in moments of anxiety. Simultaneously, heart rate increases, exacerbating the challenge of effective communication. This physiological response hinders the clear expression of thoughts. Training the body to relax fosters swift recognition of tense conditions. Consequently, individuals can think more clearly and express themselves more effectively.

2) Role of Self-Monitoring Techniques

Self-monitoring techniques play a pivotal role in enhancing individual awareness of their behaviors. Individuals gain an objective understanding of their actions through meticulous observation and record-keeping (Meichenbaum et al., 1986). Notably, Soekadji (1983) underscores the significance of self-monitoring and data recording to avoid creating a false impression of behavioral change. These practices enable individuals to subjectively evaluate and affirm their actions, potentially leading to adjustments.

By recording their experiences, individuals attain deeper insights into daily events and emotional responses during interactions. Self-monitoring encourages a better understanding of emotions and empowers individuals to rectify negative sentiments. This process involves self-evaluation and correction, fostering adaptive behaviors.

3) Role of Communication Engineering

Communication engineering is a technique that focuses on the cognitive aspects underlying desired behaviors (Goldfried & Davison, 1976). It entails developing adaptive and non-adaptive behaviors and emotional patterns through cognitive processes (Burns, 1988). Recognizing that anxiety in interpersonal communication stems from irrational thoughts and perceptions empowers individuals to replace these irrationalities with objective viewpoints (Meichenbaum et al., 1986). This heightened awareness enables individuals to assess self-statements

contributing to anxiety, halt these distressing thoughts, and replace them with rational and objective self-statements.

Individuals grappling with communication-related anxiety often harbor subconscious cognitive distortions. Developing an awareness of these distortions holds the potential for alleviating anxiety. As individuals unveil and address these cognitive distortions, they become better equipped to manage anxiety by enhancing their cognitive frameworks (Bellack & Hersen, 1977).

In essence, these techniques contribute to individuals' psychological well-being and ability to navigate interpersonal interactions effectively. By fostering relaxation, self-awareness, and cognitive resilience, these strategies empower individuals to engage in healthier, more constructive communication patterns.

4. Conclusion

The emergence of the New Normal order signifies a transformation in societal behavior, necessitating the continuation of regular activities while adhering to health protocols until the discovery of a vaccine or treatment for Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19). Beyond the semantic debates, the New Normal order aligns with a sociological adaptation to the difficulties of a pandemic emergency. As a result, individuals often experience a sense of culture shock due to disrupting familiar behavioral and interactional patterns. This underscores the profound impact of the New Normal era on prevailing social values. Drawing from Talcott Parsons' functionalism theory, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of elements and their functions within a system, the COVID-19 pandemic has induced substantial changes across all dimensions of life. Whether willingly or out of necessity, people are compelled to adapt and innovate within the framework of the New Normal. This era has ushered in a transition period, where society's challenges are addressed by adhering to a structured system of actions. The four schemes put forth by Talcott Parsons—adaptation, purposeful living, harmonious relationships, and self-motivation—have become essential pillars for individuals to uphold during this pandemic-driven transformation. Notably, behavior modification techniques have proven effective in reducing communication anxiety between individuals. The enduring effectiveness of cognitive behavior modification in mitigating interpersonal communication anxiety stems from the ability of individuals to record and employ the modified processes as needed. This sustainable change is attributed to the cognitive dimension's capacity for internalizing modifications.

Additionally, motivation plays a pivotal role in facilitating adaptive societal change. The evolving landscape demands continuous resilience and proactive response to societal shifts. Talcott Parsons' insights remain pertinent, offering a framework through which society's adaptations can be comprehended. As we navigate these unprecedented times, the interplay of structure, function, and individual action takes center stage in shaping social change and transformation trajectory.

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