

■ EDU GUIDE ■

Anthropology vs Sociology

A STUDY OF PEOPLE AND SOCIETIES

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As a social science student looking to broaden my horizons, I recently came across an intriguing research opportunity. All of this began in my Ethics course where I became interested in the intriguing disciplines of Anthropology and Sociology. It made me curious to learn more about these fields of study and their differences.

Anthropology, as I discovered, is the study of humanity in its entirety. It addresses a broad range of subjects, including the study of human evolution and various cultures. The significant contributions made to this field by renowned anthropologists such as Margaret Mead and Franz Boas have expanded our understanding of the complex fabric of human existence.

On the other hand, the study of sociology explores the complex web of contemporary society. In order to address problems like inequality, crime, and health, the discipline delves into social structures, behaviours, and interactions. Well-known sociologists like Emile Durkheim and Max Weber have made substantial contributions to this field and have left a lasting legacy that continues to shape social theory globally.

So, what sets Anthropology and Sociology apart? It is not just the subject matter but also the methodological approaches and ethical considerations. Qualitative research methods, such as participant observation and ethnography, are frequently used in Anthropology. In an effort to understand the world through the perspectives of the people they encounter,

anthropologists usually immerse themselves in the cultures they study. This methodological decision promotes both the preservation of regional customs and a profound appreciation for cultural diversity.

On the other hand, sociology favours statistical analysis and other quantitative research techniques, like surveys. Sociologists work to identify relationships, patterns, and trends in social phenomena so that large datasets can be analysed methodically. This method is essential for comprehending intricate societal issues and developing social policies.

Although Sociology and Anthropology place different emphasis on ethics, both fields value it highly. Cultural relativism, which maintains that every culture should be understood in its own context without imposing external judgements, is a theory supported by Anthropology. This strategy promotes cultural sensitivity and the maintenance of cultural diversity. Anthropologists must, therefore, walk a narrow path between moral obligations and cultural respect when cultural practices conflict with universal ethical norms.

As a discipline concerned with addressing societal inequalities, discrimination, and social injustices, Sociology frequently addresses social justice and advocacy. Beyond the walls of academia, Anthropology and Sociology are still very relevant in today's world of rapid change. These academic fields impart priceless life lessons that give perspectives and critical thinking abilities that go beyond the realm of classrooms. It teaches us the skills we need to thrive in a global society – valuing diversity, respecting opposing viewpoints, and being able to adapt to new situations.

Sociology, on the other hand, hones analytical, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills. It allows young minds to delve deeply into societal issues, understand the underlying causes of inequality, and promote positive change. With the world facing so many complex issues today, Sociology provides young people with the knowledge and skills they need to engage in meaningful, evidence-based dialogue and work towards a more equitable and just society.

Students interested in gaining a holistic understanding of our rapidly changing world will find a promising path at the intersection of Anthropology and Sociology. Sociology majors can work in social work, policy analysis, market research, and human resources, and they can advocate for societal change. Choosing Anthropology, on the other hand, opens doors to careers as a cultural anthropologist, archaeologist, linguistic anthropologist, or applied anthropologist, with responsibilities ranging from cultural exploration to addressing real-world issues through language preservation and museum curation.

Anthropology and Sociology are disciplines that provide unique perspectives on human societies and behaviours, each with its own set of values, methods, and ethical considerations. These academic fields prepare today's youth to excel in their careers and to be responsible global citizens by emphasising cultural sensitivity, quantitative analysis, and a commitment to social justice.

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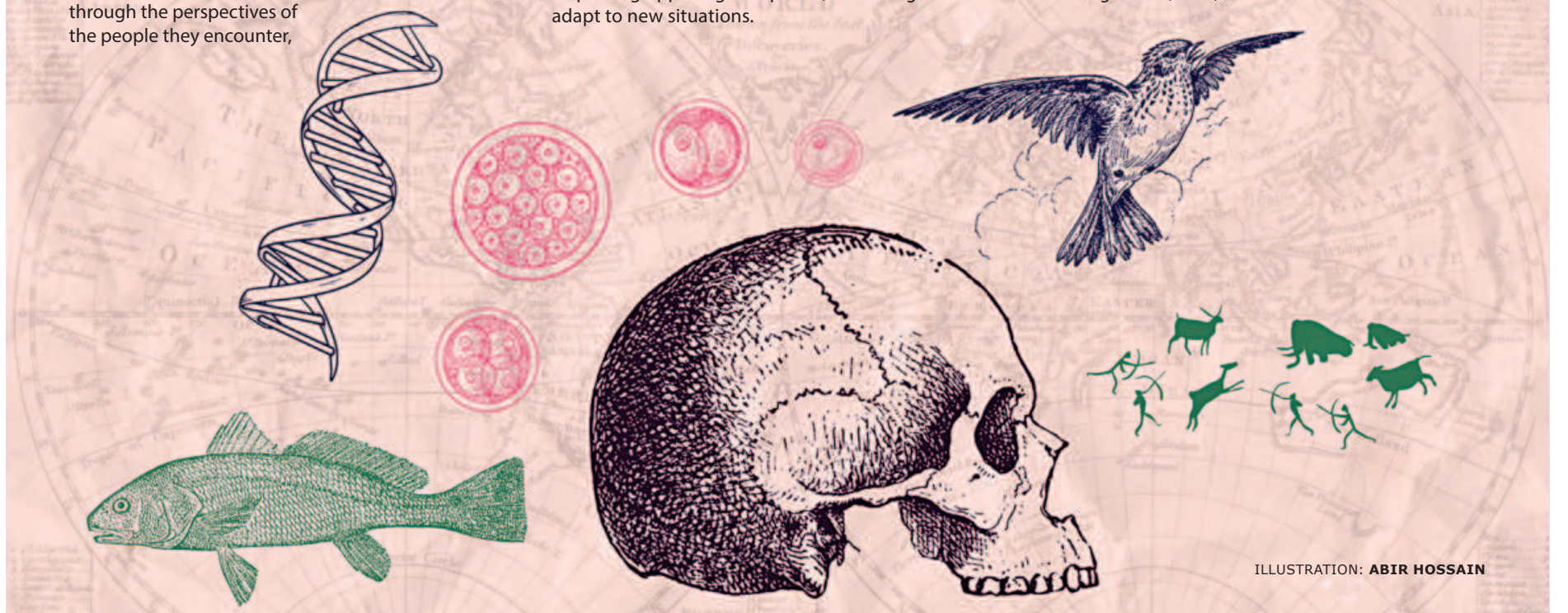


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