

Difference Between Sociology and Anthropology

Sociology and Anthropology are two branches of social sciences that study human behavior. While anthropology examines human behavior and culture at the micro-individual level, sociology studies societies as a whole and looks at the larger picture.

To understand the **Difference Between Sociology and Anthropology**, let's take a deeper look at these fields of study through this article. The article will prove helpful for candidates during the UPSC Essay Paper, and in general, for the IAS Exam.

Anthropology vs Sociology

Anthropology studies the human through the lens of cultural diversity. Whereas, Sociology examines human actions that are shaped and created by economic, political, and social pressures.

Anthropology

Anthropology studies human evolution, development, culture, and behavior. It studies both the past and present of human beings. In other words, it is the study of biological and sociocultural facets of man.

The term anthropology was first used in English in 1593 to refer to the natural science of humanity. However, it began to be studied as a distinct discipline in the 19th century.

Anthropology focuses on four primary areas of human studies- archaeology, culture, language, and biology.

Sociology

Sociology is the study of society at large. Human beings are social animals, and they need to interact with each other to co-exist. Sociology tries to survey and analyze human interactions. It focuses on group behavior patterns that may be defined by gender, class, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

The term sociology was first coined in 1838 by August Conte, often regarded as the father of sociology. Scholars like Karl Marx and Herbert Spencer contributed hugely to the subject.

However, sociologist Emile Durkheim established sociology as a formal academic discipline in the 19th century.

Sociology generally studies social problems and tries to find solutions to them.

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Sociology and Anthropology difference lies in how they look at society. While sociology looks at how a larger group affects an individual, anthropology studies how individuals have evolved over the years to adapt to changing social trends.

Basis of Difference	Sociology	Anthropology

Definition	Sociology studies society's structure, development, interaction, and functioning.	Anthropology studies human beings' evolution, culture, environmental, and biological characteristics.
Focus	Sociology focuses on social problems related to gender, race, ethnicity, and behavioral patterns of families, communities, and institutions.	Anthropology focuses on the evolution of mankind, its culture, and communication.
Methodology	Sociology uses a quantitative method for data collection and analysis. Hence it is regarded as rigorous social science.	Anthropology uses qualitative methodologies as its mode of analysis. Hence, it is considered a softer social science compared to sociology.
Perspective	Sociology studies human behavior at the macro level. It tries to analyze how society at large affects individuals and families.	Anthropology studies individual behavior and culture at a micro-level and takes it as an example of the larger culture.
Objective	The objective of sociology is to resolve social issues through policies.	The objective of anthropology is to study human diversity and cultural differences.
Sub-fields	Some of the subfields of sociology are gender studies, criminology, social work, etc.	Some of the subfields of anthropology are archaeology, linguistic anthropology, physical anthropology, and sociocultural anthropology.