

Chapter 15 Project

Purpose

Religion serves a function in society just like the economy and the government. It's important to understand the different religions practiced all over the world, to examine how these religions affect society, and to explore how people find meaning through religion. **The purpose of this project is to explore the world's major religions to better understand their basic tenets and use the sociological imagination to consider how these religions affect the lives of the people who practice them and the societies in which they are most prevalent.**

Directions

Gather in groups of three or four. Your instructor will assign each group one of the seven major world religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity). As a group, research your assigned religion and create a presentation to share with the class.

In your presentation, address the following prompts:

- Define your assigned religion.
- What were the sociohistorical conditions that brought about the prevalence of these beliefs and practices?
- How has the religion changed over time?
- How do members practice this religion? What are their key beliefs, tenets, and rituals?
- Where is this religion most commonly practiced?
- What are the major symbols associated with this religion? What do they mean?
- Based on their varying locations across the globe, how do the members of this religion integrate their own cultural norms and values with their beliefs and practices?
- Generally speaking, are there any prejudices associated with this religion? If so, what are they?
- Do the people who practice this religion experience any discrimination? If so, in what way?
- How might race, gender, class, or sexual orientation affect how the members of this religion experience discrimination?

Make your presentation more engaging by including images, videos, and/or music.

Materials

Sources on the major world religions, presentation software

Checklist

- ☐ Gather in groups of three or four
- ☐ Create a group presentation on assigned religion
 - Address all given prompts

 Chapter 15 Writing Assignment

Purpose

The major sociological theories (functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism) help us examine components of society, how religion can affect the function and evolution of a society, and how people find meaning through religion.

The purpose of this writing assignment is to allow you to explore religion through a sociological lens and examine how religion has affected your life and socialization.

Directions

In an essay of two to three pages, summarize how each sociological theory analyzes religion. Then, select the theory (or theories) that fits best with your experience. Explain how religion has affected your life and socialization through the lens of your chosen theory (or theories). For instance, are you nonreligious because you experienced religion as something that perpetuated inequality (conflict theory), are you religious and enjoy practicing your religion because of the sense of community and social attachments (functionalist theory), or have you adapted the basic tenets of a specific religion to fit your own spiritual needs (symbolic interactionism)? Remember that your experience with religion does not have to fit neatly into any preconceived notions.

Make sure your essay is in APA style and is free of spelling and grammatical errors.

Materials

Word processing software

 Checklist

- ☐ Two to three pages
- ☐ APA style
- ☐ Free of spelling and grammatical errors
- ☐ Addresses given prompts
 - Summarizes all three sociological theories and how they analyze religion
 - Includes a description of your own religious experience
 - Examines your own religious experience through the lens of chosen sociological theory (or theories)