

INTRODUCTORY **SOCIOLOGY**



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CHAPTER TWENTY

UNDERSTANDING SOCIOLOGY OF LAW IN SOCIAL ENGINEERING

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Chapter Objectives

After completing this chapter, readers should be able to:

- explain sociological interest in law,
- differentiate among sociology of law and other sub-disciplines in sociology,
- understand basic scientific inquiry influencing sociology of law,
- examine the philosophy and social origin of law,
- highlight the contemporary relevance of traditional legal culture,
- state the consequences of human law,
- describe the structure and functioning of legal action,
- explain the relationship among law, legal system and socio-cultural processes, and
- discuss various perspectives in sociology of law

Chapter Outline

- Introduction
- Preceding and later developments explaining sociological interest in law
- Sociology and Law
- Sociology of Law and other sub-disciplines in Sociology
- Basic scientific inquiry influencing Sociology of Law
- Philosophy and social origin of law
- Traditional legal culture and its contemporary relevance
- Consequences of human law
- Structure and functioning of legal sanction
- Law, legal system and socio-cultural processes
- Perspectives in Sociology of Law
- Chapter exercises
- References

Introduction

Sociology of law is a branch of sociology that attempts the investigation of the foundations of legal order, the pattern of social change and the contributions of law to the fulfilment of social needs and aspiration. It involves the study of how social conditions influence or affect the enforcement of law (Abercombie, Hill & Turner, 2000). The sociological exploration of law lies within the purview of what Cousin and Rui (2011) described as sociological intervention. This effort centres on the utilisation of influence and the adaptation of career on societal issues to unravel the complexities involved in law, its structuration and utility as a basis of guaranteeing harmonious society. Law itself is a product of social action,