

# **THE THEORY OF SUICIDE BY ÉMILE DURKHEIM**

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## INTRODUCTION

- ❑ Émile Durkheim was a French sociologist who lived from 1858 to 1917.
- ❑ He is considered one of the founders of sociology.
- ❑ His most famous work is "Suicide: A Study in Sociology" (1897).
- ❑ In this book, Durkheim argues that suicide is a social phenomenon, not an individual one.

# TYPES OF SUICIDE

- Émile Durkheim, a French sociologist, developed a theory of suicide in his book "Suicide: A Study in Sociology" (1897). He argued that suicide is not a purely individual act, but is instead influenced by social factors. He identified four types of suicide:

- ☐ Egoistic suicide.

- ☐ Altruistic suicide.

- ☐ Anomic suicide.

- ☐ Fatalistic suicide.

## EGOISTIC SUICIDE

❑ Egoistic suicide occurs when individuals are too weakly integrated into society. This can happen when individuals are isolated from others, or when they feel that they do not belong to any group. Egoistic suicide is more common in societies that are individualistic and that emphasize personal achievement.

# EXAMPLE OF EGOISTIC SUICIDE

- Egoistic suicide is a type of suicide that occurs when an individual feels disconnected from society and lacks a sense of belonging. This can be due to a number of factors, such as social isolation, loneliness, or a lack of social support. Individuals who are at risk for egoistic suicide may also have a history of mental health problems, such as depression or anxiety. Here are some examples of egoistic suicide:
  - ❑ A young man who feels isolated from his friends and family and who has no sense of purpose in life may be more likely to commit suicide.
  - ❑ A young adult who moves to a new city and has difficulty making friends.
  - ❑ An elderly person who becomes widowed and loses all of their social connections.
  - ❑ A person who has been diagnosed with a terminal illness and feels like they have nothing to live for.

## ALTRUISTIC SUICIDE

❑ Altruistic suicide occurs when individuals are too strongly integrated into society. This can happen when individuals feel a strong sense of duty to their group, or when they believe that their death will benefit their group. Altruistic suicide is more common in societies that are collectivist and that emphasize group loyalty.

# EXAMPLE OF ALTRUISTIC SUICIDE

- Altruistic suicide is a type of suicide that occurs when an individual sacrifices their own life for the benefit of others. This can be motivated by a number of factors, such as a strong sense of duty, loyalty, or religious beliefs. Altruistic suicide is often seen in cultures that place a high value on self-sacrifice and group identity. Here are some examples of altruistic suicide:
  - ❑ A soldier who sacrifices his life for his country may be committing an altruistic suicide.
  - ❑ A soldier who throws himself on a grenade to save his comrades.
  - ❑ A parent who commits suicide to spare their child from a painful illness.
  - ❑ A monk who sets himself on fire to protest against social injustice.

## **ANOMIC SUICIDE**

❑ Anomic suicide occurs when there is a lack of social regulation. This can happen during times of rapid social change, such as economic recessions or wars. Anomic suicide is more common in societies that are unstable and that have weak social institutions.



# EXAMPLE OF ANOMIC SUICIDE

- Anomic suicide is a type of suicide that occurs when there is a sudden and unexpected change in social norms or expectations. This can be caused by a variety of factors, such as economic hardship, natural disasters, or political upheaval. When people's lives are disrupted in this way, they may feel lost and without purpose. This can lead to feelings of despair and hopelessness, which can increase the risk of suicide. Here are some examples of anomic suicide:
  - ❑ A person who loses their job during a recession may be more likely to commit suicide.
  - ❑ A young man who loses his job and is unable to find a new one may feel hopeless and decide to take his own life.
  - ❑ A woman who is the victim of a natural disaster may lose everything she owns and feel like she has nothing to live for.
  - ❑ A soldier who returns from war with post-traumatic stress disorder may feel like he doesn't belong in society and may commit suicide.

## FATALISTIC SUICIDE

❑ Fatalistic suicide occurs when individuals are subject to excessive regulation. This can happen when individuals are denied freedom or when they are forced to live in a situation that they find intolerable. Fatalistic suicide is rare, but it has been observed in some societies with strict social hierarchies.

# EXAMPLE OF FATALISTIC SUICIDE

- Fatalistic suicide is a type of suicide that occurs when a person feels trapped and hopeless due to excessive regulation or control. Here are some examples of fatalistic suicide:
  - ❑ A person who is enslaved or who is otherwise denied freedom may be more likely to commit suicide.
  - ❑ A prisoner who feels like they have no hope for the future may commit suicide.
  - ❑ A victim of domestic abuse who feels trapped in their relationship may commit suicide.
  - ❑ A person who lives in a society with strict religious or cultural rules may commit suicide if they feel like they are not allowed to live their own life.
  - ❑ A person with a mental illness who feels like they are not in control of their own thoughts or actions may commit suicide.

# METHODOLOGY USED FOR DATA COLLECTION

- Émile Durkheim used a variety of methods to collect data for his study of suicide. He collected official statistics on suicide rates from a number of countries, and he also conducted interviews with people who had attempted suicide. In addition, he analyzed philosophical and religious texts to gain insights into the social and cultural factors that contribute to suicide.
- Durkheim's methodology was ground breaking for its time. He was the first sociologist to use statistical data to study suicide, and his work helped to establish sociology as a legitimate scientific discipline. Durkheim's findings have also been influential in the field of suicidology, and they continue to be used to inform suicide prevention efforts today. Here are some of the specific methods that Durkheim used to collect data for his study of suicide:

☐ Official statistics.

☐ Interviews.

☐ Text analysis.

☐ Comparative method.

## OFFICIAL STATISTICS

❑ Durkheim collected official statistics on suicide rates from a number of countries, including France, Germany, England, and the United States. He used these statistics to identify patterns in suicide rates over time and across different countries.

# INTERVIEWS

□ Durkheim also conducted interviews with people who had attempted suicide. These interviews provided him with insights into the personal experiences and motivations of people who are suicidal.

## TEXT ANALYSIS

❑ Durkheim also analyzed philosophical and religious texts to gain insights into the social and cultural factors that contribute to suicide. He found that different cultures have different attitudes towards suicide, and that these attitudes can influence whether or not people are likely to commit suicide.

# COMPARATIVE METHOD

- ❑ Émile Durkheim was a French sociologist who is considered one of the founders of sociology. He was a strong advocate of the comparative method, which he believed was the best way to study social phenomena. The comparative method involves comparing different societies or social groups in order to identify the factors that influence social behavior.
- ❑ Durkheim used the comparative method in his research on suicide. He compared suicide rates in different societies and found that the rates were higher in societies with low social integration and high levels of individualism. He concluded that suicide was caused by anomie, which is a state of normlessness that occurs when people are not adequately integrated into society.



## CONCLUSION

- ❑ Durkheim's theory of suicide has been influential in the study of suicide.
- ❑ It has helped to explain why suicide rates vary from society to society, and why suicide rates can change over time.
- ❑ Durkheim's theory is still relevant today, as we continue to grapple with the problem of suicide.

# REFERENCES

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# THANK YOU

