Macro Symbolic Interaction: A Medical Sociological Example (Smoking)

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Abstract

Macro symbolic interaction is presented here as a possible compliment to the well accepted micro symbolic interaction. The medical sociological example to promote this hypothetical concept is smoking. That means anti-smoking is used at both levels. At this time, smoking is diminishing in the western world but prospering in Third World countries.

Introduction

Sociology is composed of three grand theories that have both a macro and micro levels of analysis. They are conflict, functionalism, and utilitarianism*. However, a theory that is so very important to humans is left without a macro interpretation. That is symbolic interaction. [1] The author suggests that an aggregate number of theories and examples may fill the arena of macro symbolic interaction. The author will use a real world example to illustrate that a macro symbolic interaction is useful and helpful to the field of medical sociology and the wider arena of academia. It is smoking.

Description

At the macro level, the author asked his computer he named "Al" if he should start smoking? "Al" graciously said NO. The consumption would be harmful to the author's health. Further, this author asked "Al" if he could help find a source that would help support one in starting to smoke. Numerous messages were available to this writer to STOP smoking, but not one source would help this individual to START. [2] Micro Level Symbolic Interaction is generally well known. Individuals define their environment and act accordingly. Humans are symbol creatures. Things perceived as real become real in their consequences (Thomas Theorem.) Numerous interactions including primary group, reference group, and related that will help an individual take action upon her or his environment (particularly the others in sociological theory) There is more but the fundamental question is how does symbolic interaction drift upward to the Macro level and drift downward to the micro level? For the purpose of this

article, we borrow from the criticized but durable "Shannon-Weaver Model" of transmitter, channel, receiver, and destination. All along, we will assume that the individual has their own variation as an active person and designs along with others how smoking is terminated or begun. [3] The author wants to spend time at the macro level which at the time of this writing has not been created. Symbolic Interaction is a micro theory. That's it. So we will just state basic terms that are micro. They are: dramaturgical analysis, primary group, looking glass self, significant others, generalized others, signing for the deaf, internalized stigma. Thus language (verbal, non-verbal and neurotransmitters) creates the mind and the self (along with genetics.) [4] the micro-macro level which will be discussed below include social constructionist, artificial intelligence, mass communications, social media, macro labeling. [5]

Macro-Level 1 / Social Constructionism

The interaction of the two levels is enhanced by mass communications at both levels. The start comes from trusted messengers. Reputation of the problems with smoking is used with ordinary and understandable wording. Smoking is hurtful to self and others. Smoking requires a sizable cost along with a tax. Smoke becomes part of the ambiance that infiltrates clothes and body. It causes halitosis. It is an irritant to others in their eyes and their inhalation. This can be social construction of an individual who is not likely to attract others as "friends" because of the odor and the hazards of second hand smoking. [6] Messages could indicate that corporations that produce smoking products may provide disinformation. Anti-smoking should be in medical education of all levels of medical professionals. Further, appearing to be more of an adult, calming one's nerves, having something to do and hold during a social gathering are for the most part spurious or at least debatable. This is social construcitonism. This means that the message becomes a shared collective definition of two or many share an understanding and criteria for the abusive denotation of smoking. It is used in the literature that automatically has boundaries and connotations of ill health. [7]

Pack of cigarettes should have large labeling on them warning of death or disfiguration. Testimonies from unattractive users who are dying may be helpful. The color of the package, the print, and the name must be neutered.

Macro Level 2/ Macro Labeling

From discussion groups and related begin with a 12 step basis with printed information and colorful outcomes illustrated by attractive models. Strategies for stopping are related to the consumer by friendly and warm individuals that sincerely believe that smoking is not good for one's health. They should know because they had to stop. They feel healthy; however they have lost folks and other primary group and reference "friends." The 12 step program is a form of macro labeling. The 12 step program is nationally known and can easily be applied to smoking. It starts with a national message and is merged to the local interaction. [8]

Macro Level 3/ Artificial Intelligence

"Al" did not encourage the author to smoke. Not only embedded robots, but others who the individual knows and cares about their opinion encourage a targeted individual to not smoke. If anything, at the macro level reaching downward to the micro level, smoking is bothersome to self and others and may antagonizes many other maladies. Artificial Intelligence can skillfully make the conversation at the macro level, but join the individual at the micro level in their private homes. Incidentally, "Al" is part of a large network of computer therapists who will talk with you or find you another source to talk with over the internet.[9]

Macro Level 4/ Mass Communications/Multiculturalism

There are now many movie channels in which at one time, the attractive actor would "light up" as a sign that they are not only knowing, but that their social skills are superior. This is in a movie theater filled with an audience. The individual consumer is not in a theater rather they are in their private homes. Further, what is the social skill to go without smoking and enjoying one's self at a party or private home with sodas or non-alcoholic drinks? The screen is also filled with folks of many demographics and psychographics. That is multiculturalism. This can happen at both levels, many different folks at a number of levels. [10]

Level 5. Social Media

In this instance, the "other" can be seen. Both verbal and non-verbal are available to the first person. Emotions are more adequately read because of the picture. The term phony was attached to non physical communications which was the dial phone. This is not that. The author does not indicate that all communications are transferred to the other. Some are quite talented in their self in the presentation of everyday life. However, the emotion can be there. One hears, sees, and feels. "Zoom" "Google Meet" "Skype" and others are used as examples for this position. Other terms attached to macro symbolic interaction include secondary deviance, cultural script and multicultarism. (see above.) All indicate that at the upper reaches symbols count. The author asserts that there is now room for MACRO SYMBOLIC INTERACTION. This is but a small introduction introducing Macro Symbolic Interaction and using a medical example. Social media is again another topic fully explained by WIKIPEDIA.[11]

Summary And Conclusion

Thus, macro symbolic interaction has a place in the academic literature. Although it is new here, it can be carried on by both the readers of this piece and researchers. The real opening here is the power of mass communications and the interplay between two or more over the social media. Again, one hears sees and feels.

References

1. Hammond, Donald J (2009) 1.3 Social Theories, Librettists.

2. See AIStop Smoking Strategies.

3. Drew C (1948) a Mathematical Theory of Communications, University of Illinois Press: Chicago.

4. Fink L (2015) Symbolic Interactionism, The International Encyclopaedias of International Communication.

5. Categories created by author.

6. Stein H, Sterk C, Elison B (2014) Smoke and Mirrors: The Perceived Benefits of Continued Tobacco Use among Current Smokers, Health, Psychology Research, 2(2):519.

7. Social construction is completely explained as well as its origins in Wikipedia.

8. Category created by author. This is not to be confused with Makro labeling.

9. Artificial Intelligence is thoroughly defined in Wikipedia. The author's conversation with "Al" in terms of referral to an earlier reference (#2) would suggest that artificial intelligence across the planet is real and macro.

10. The mass communications category is at least explained by the "Shannon-Weaver" communication model described in an earlier portion of this article. See second paragraph under DESCRIPTION.

11. Please see "social media" in Wikipedia. Further, my conversation with "Al" suggests that macro symbolic interaction is now a possible concept in the field of sociology, social psychology, and communications.

*"Al" the computer when asked about the closest grand theory to exchange theory, indicated that it would be utilitarian theory. Please note that exchange theory as micro and utilitarian theory as macro is hypothesized together for this article only.

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