Chapter 2: Sociological Research

• Reasons for sociological research
  o Challenge our common beliefs
  o Solve social problems

• Science = objectivity
  o Objectivity
    ▪ Scientist interpret their data on the basis of merit, and they do not let their personal biases affect their work (no bias)
  o Ways to maximize objectivity
    ▪ Carefully design your research
    ▪ State your theoretical perspective
    • Different ways of looking at the world ***
    ▪ Practice verifiability:
      • Repeat studies that have already been done

• The scientific method

• Basic research concepts
  o Causation
    ▪ Events occur in nonrandom predictable ways, and one event leads to another (what causes something to happen)
  o Hypothesis
    ▪ Speculative statement about the relationship between two or more factors, known as variables (educated guess)
  o Independent variable vs. dependent variable
    ▪ Independent variable = cause
      • Independent variable causes the dependent variable
    ▪ Dependent variable = effect
      • Dependent variable depends on the independent variable
    ▪ Ex: I hypothesize that studying more hours per week leads to get higher grades
      • Independent variable
        o Studying more per week
      • Dependent variable
        o Higher grades

• Establishing a causal relationship
  o Establish a correlation
    ▪ A correlation is when one variable is associated with a change in the other variable