

Objectives and Scope of RC 27 (Sociology of Care)

Indian Sociological Society

In the context of social interaction and interhuman relationships, the term 'care' essentially implies a concern for 'others'. Therefore, sociological reflections on 'care' usually start with an understanding of the nuances involved in the process of care-giving, care-receiving and emotion-sharing, and end with an exploration of its impact on other domains of life, especially on the relationship between/among individuals and groups. If care is considered as a practice, much of it is a function of verbal communications (sayings) and action orientations (doings) having their own time-space dimensions. But, the scope of the study of care is a bit wide, as it also includes a critical analysis of the manner in which we deal with nature or cultural objects or non-human beings. Care, in fact, is an essential condition of our existence. And as, with the passage of time and with the changes in the context, it moves from one site to another – individual, family, community to organisation – informal social care paves the way for institutional scientific care. It is no more considered as altruistic but becomes a right in itself. In many cases, 'care' is commodified as a marketable category. Thus 'care', both as a process and as a product, can be studied from micro-sociological perspectives and macro-sociological dimensions. The following themes, though not exhaustive, may be helpful to understand the sociological implications of 'care':

1. Care, Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Practices
2. Care, Gender and Inequalities
3. Care, Intimacy and Trust
4. Care, Power and Hierarchy
5. Care, Symbols and Gestures
6. Care Organisations, Care Work and Migration
7. Care, Caste and Class Issues
8. Care, Body and Emotional Labour
9. Health, Care and Changing Patterns of Care Management
10. Care, Self and Identity
11. Care, Abuses and Legal Issues
12. Nature, Care and Distributive Responsibility
13. Care, Market and Consumer Rights
14. Aging, Care and Ethical Issues
15. Care, Technology and Everyday Life