

# Marx's view of exploitation of labor under capitalism



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? Marx's View of Exploitation of Labor under Capitalism Introduction Marx was one theorist who was very much against capitalism. According to him, it is also the rich and employers who enjoyed in capitalist societies. This is because they used other people to do their biddings to be able to amass more and more wealth. For example, he argued that employers used employees to ensure they achieve high profitability. He believed that employers did not attract and select employees from the market to utilize their knowledge and skills but rather to exploit them to ensure they are able to realize high profits.

The recent years have seen a rise in intern labor or free labor. This paper intends to examine Marx's view in relation to the same or his thought on the rise in free labor. Marx's View on Rise in Intern Labor As mentioned above, the recent years have seen a rise in free labor such as interns who normally work without any pay. Marx would easily view this as a strategy employed by employers to exploit future potential employees. Marx was of the view that most employers if not all under capitalism are never interested in the skills and knowledge portrayed by employees.

This interest in normally in exploiting people to ensure they are able to achieve their goals and objectives. With this being the case, they may not be interested in enhancing the skills of employees or improve their performances (Hodson & Sullivan 2008). The main reason to why people agree to work for free while on internship is to acquire the right experience necessary to be considered by prospective employers in the future. Most organizations never expose interns to the required jobs that will enhance their skills and knowledge.

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In fact they will only use them by asking them to execute roles and duties that are in any related to their field of interest. In the end, an intern leaves the company or organization the way he or she came or even worse as some lose hope (Cutler 2010). Marx believed that employers will do almost anything to enhance their returns. This means that they will be more than willing to work with interns who may not ask for payments as this reduces their labor cost. The fact that most of them are not interested in the skills and knowledge portrayed by employees, means that they would mind to work them as long this helps them increase their profits (Hesmondhalgh 2010). Many governments have enacted rules and regulations in relation to labor and how companies and organizations ought to remunerate their employees. As such, it has become hard for employers to continue exploiting their employees the way they did many years ago. Marx would have argued that now that employers are under the government's watch to ensure they are treating their employees in the desired way, they have seen internship as a way to exploit potential employees without having to face the law.

As such, they will use them in any way they want to be able to enhance their performances. This can explain the increasing number of unpaid interns on the market (Hodson & Sullivan 2008). According to Marx, employers have the power to engage in almost anything to ensure the survival of their respective companies or organizations. This implies that employees only exist to follow the rules and regulations without any question. This is because they actually lack the power question the authority.

Paid employees may have some power with regards to deciding the course of their companies or organizations. On the other hand, interns have no

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power whatsoever. They merely exist to ensure the implementation a company's goals and objectives. This implies that no matter how they are treated, they must respect the will of the employer considering the fact that they will need his or her recommendation to gain access to permanent employment in the future. Employers on the other hand use this to their advantage knowing for a fact that interns have no choice but to comply (Hodson & Sullivan 2008).

Marx also argues that employers in the society use their positions in the society to deprive employees the chance to progress or enhance their skills and knowledge. This is done by depriving them the chance to access important aspect of the production systems. In capitalist society, this is done to ensure employees remain dependent to their employers or masters. With this being the case, the poor remain poor while the rich become richer. The same case applies to interns. Most organizations are unwilling to expose them to he important aspects of their business activities. This is because they have never viewed them as members of the organization ( Armin et al 2013). They are only there to be used as a means to ensure the organization achieves its ambitions or vision. At the end of the day interns never get to learn or acquire the right skills that can enable them become better employees in the future. Marx was against such behaviors and thus why he advocated for the abolishment of capitalism in favor of a society where private property ownership does not exist (Cutler 2010).

There are interns who are exposed to longer working hours yet they are not paid anything to compensate them for the input they give to the

organization. There is also no job security as their employment contracts can  
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be terminated anytime or when the employer feels like so. Most of them are also exposed to poor working conditions as the employer is not interested in improving their working conditions considering the fact that this might reduce their company's profitability.

This is also some of the factors Marx looked at to come up with the conclusion that employers were exploiting their employees without any care (Cutler 2010). As such, he could also have argued that current employers are using people's need to gain experience to their advantage. The fact that they are not covered by the law means that their employers will exploit them in any way to achieve their ambitions. Employers continue to reap many benefits and the expense of the poor who only but trying to earn a better living.

However, as a result of the exploitations they may not be able to achieve this (Hodson & Sullivan 2008). Many companies and organization insist on the need for potential employees to have experience in their field of study for a certain period of time before they can consider them for employment (Robinson 2013). The problem is that such companies may still be reluctant to offer one employment opportunity even if he or she has been working for it as an intern and has shown great potential. They will be more than willing to relieve his duties to be able to employ another intern to fill the same position.

This is a clear indication as much as they are talking about being interested in highly qualified candidates their intention to cut labor costs. Marx also considered such factors when making the presumption that employers are

only interested in using their employees and nothing else (Hodson & Sullivan 2008). In a capitalist society, employers will always want to have dominion over employees. On the other hand, employees would wish to have more power or control on their roles and duties to be able to achieve the desired results.

The issue that they can do this as employers will want to control every aspect of their jobs as this is the only way they can exercise their dominion. Interns have to power or control over their jobs. This also explains the reason for why they are not paying for the services they render. The rise in interns means that employers are interested in people they can exploit without any retaliation. There is no intern that can be willing to stand up to his or her employer as this will mean bad recommendation something none of them can afford as this will render their job search very difficult.

The same case applies to employees who are willing to work for low wages. They for a fact they do not have a choice, hence they will be willing to work for anything and may also do any of their employers bidding to avoid being fired (Cutler 2010). Interns put in more effort just like any other employee in an organization or company. In fact, there are incidences when they may out perform other employees that may be in permanent employment yet they are not paid anything (Osnowitz 2010). This is also one of the reasons to why Marx was against capitalism as it created an environment where resources were unevenly distributed.

According to him, some people got even more than they deserved. For instance, there are people who inherit wealth from their parents hence they

are able to leave a better life despite the fact that they have done nothing to deserve better. He added that there are people who will work extraneously to earn a better living yet this will never happen as they only but exploited by the few rich people in their society who are only interested in maintaining their positions in the society. As such, interns' efforts may be going to waste as those who are reaping the fruits are individuals who may not deserve the same.

As much as they need skills and knowledge to access the best employment opportunities on the market, they also need to use what they have now to earn a better living. Nevertheless, this is normally next to impossible as those in power never allow them to achieve this (Hesmondhalgh 2010). One can easily argue that interns should be entitled to any payment as they may not have the skills to execute a role in the most effective and efficient way. As such, it is the company or the organization that enables him or her to achieve the right skills. In this regard, it is the intern who should even pay their respective companies or organizations.

This could have been the truth if there were predetermined structures on how a company intends to improve the skills of an intern. The truth of the matter is that most of the employers do not have this (Hodson & Sullivan 2008). Marx argued that employers advertise jobs specifying the needed experiences for one to merit a chance. However, the skills are never utilized. This is because, most organizations have organizational structures that break down jobs into smaller parts, hence making it hard for employees to realize their potential. This is also the reason to why they pay them low wages.

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The same case applies to interns. The fact that they are not paid means that employers are reluctant to utilize their full potential as they may fear interns might ask for remuneration. This also implies that interns are never exposed to tasks that will make them realize their potential hence the whole logic behind internship is defeated (Giddens 2010). Interns are not only exploited by their employers but also by other employees who are in permanent employment. The fact that interns don't pay anything for the services they render lead to them being viewed a less important members of an organization or company.

On the other hand, employees who are paid view their selves as more superiors hence they may even see their selves as interns' employers. As such, most of them ask interns to deal with their duties after they are asked by employers. According to Marx those with the power view their selves to be more superior to others in the society (Cheshkov, n. d). As such, looking at the above situation faced by interns while delivering their roles, he could have seen this as an exploitation of the highest order. In fact this is heightened form of exploitation as interns are being exploited in every angle.

Most of them have to look for internship from more than one company to be able to acquire the right skills that are needed for one to be considered for a permanent employment (Seligson 2013). Recently, most organizations and companies have been using financial incentives to be able to motivate their employees to achieve the required levels of performances. This has also been done to ensure they are able to maintain a high commitment to the growing concern of the company. Initially, the same organizations used threats to ensure high level of commitment among employees.

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However, this is no longer an option as employees may not be motivated to the right levels. Marx used to refer to the threats used by employers as exploitation (Hodson & Sullivan 2008). This is because they used force to ensure compliance among employees. Most interns also feel threatened and that is the reason to why they may be willing to work without any pay. They are ever willing to deal with the roles and duties allocated to them as failure to do so can be detrimental to their career development (Cheshkov, n. d). The only way such behaviors can be stopped among employers to come up with laws that protect the right of interns.

One of the major reasons to why Marx was of the view that employers were exploiting their employees was because there were no laws that were protecting employees by the. This led to employers engaging in multi practices that were beneficiary to them and not their employees. There might be incidences where employees are still being exploited by their employers especially in developing countries. However, things are changing as time goes by. However, the rise of interns has again made it possible for employers to exploit their employees just like Marx argued (Hodson & Sullivan 2008).

There is the need for an internship to be recognized as employment. This is the only way employers will cease from behaving in a manner that seem exploitative to interns. For example, there is the need for such laws to be included in the employment legislations (Hodson & Sullivan 2008). The same case should be applied to the bill of rights to ensure interns are respected and are not misused or exploited in any way. For instance, interns ought to

be paid for the services they render and this should be put down on record. Governments need to come up with a minimum wage for interns.

This is the only way employers will stop using low wages to be able to cut on their labor costs hence high profitability (Cutler 2010). Conclusion Marx believed that the wealthy people in the society who are also the employers use their position on the market to exploit their employees. According to him, employers look for employees not to utilize their greatest potential but to use them to ensure they realize high returns on their investments. The number of interns has been increasing over the last few years. Marx could have easily concluded that employers are using interns to cut their labor costs and as a result realize more profits.

Interns are not exposed to all the essential activities that will enhance their skills. Some may even leave the organization without learning anything as they are exposed to jobs that are outside their field of study. Bibliography Armin et al. 2013 Free Work, PDF. Cheshkov, M A n. d, Will the Marxist Theory of Exploitation Survive? PDF. Cutler, A 2010, Marx's 'Capital' and capitalism today, Routledge, Boston . Giddens, A 2010, Capitalism and modern social theory : an analysis of the writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber, University Press, Cambridge. Hesmondhalgh, D 2010, User-generated content, free labour and the cultural industries, PDF.

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