

The conflict theoretical perspective

Sociology



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The Conflict Theoretical Perspective Conflict theory is a macro analysis that focuses on the allocation and use of resources. It considers that resources are limited (scarce), and therefore, competition characterizes the allocation and use of available resources. The basic concept of this theory is the exploitation of the weak and the poor by the rich, as competition for the scarce resources arises. Conflict perspective is an original writing by Karl Marx. Karl Marx was trying to address class struggles in the society when he developed this perspective (Knox & Schacht 349). This perspective deviates from the other two major perspectives of sociology, that is, symbolic interaction and functionalism. In this pursuit, the perspective of conflict presents the society in a different way from the other two.

Major perspectives of sociology present an analysis of the society in the context of its diversity and dynamism. Both positive and negative attributes of the changing nature of the society are highlighted. The conflict perspective focuses on the negative attributes, considering the diversity of the society and the conflicts therein. Conflict theory challenges the status quo of the society. It further advocates for social dynamism. This means that conflict theorists seek to encourage social changes (Andersen 439). Social changes highlighted herein may even take the form of revolutions.

Other sociology theories assert that the cooperation of people dictates the social order of that particular society. Conflict perspective challenges this assertion, to claim that the authoritative, powerful and the rich determine the social order in the society they live. This is not easily achieved since they do so by taking advantage of the weak and the poor. For instance, the governing board of a given college may seek to increase tuition fees, citing that newly introduced education programs need to be financed. The impact

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of this action may end up making the college more prestigious, than actually benefiting the students. In such an instance, the benefits to students only come in after individual interests have been met (Knox & Schacht 361).

The conflict perspective had been ignored for quite some time, but the 1960s was characteristic of the interest to pursue this theory. Karl Marx's main idea of conflict was based on the economic aspect of the society. Sociologists during this time tried to expand this idea. In the contemporary world, conflicts arise from almost every aspect of the society that seems to portray inequality among societal groups. Such instances include but not limited to race, gender, religion, politics and economics (Knox & Schacht 378).

Competition between and among social groups prompt the dynamic nature of the society, right from the allocation and use of resources, decisions of consumption and economic diversity to politics and social orders.

Behavioral changes highlighted above by this theory are modeled in the dynamic stature of the society. Economic recession in the US and the rest of the world is just but a contributing factor to the diversity and dynamism of the society. In this context, negative aspects of the society take center stage in this perspective. It treats the highlighted negativities as a means to preserve the inherent interests of the society in the development of a social order, contrary to the other perspectives that strive to control the masses. However, it is characterized by competition and oppression of the weak and the poor (Otomar 147).

Works Cited

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