

Class conflict in kenya assignment

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Conflict can be described as a natural disagreement between two interdependent parties as a result of differences in attitudes, values, beliefs and needs. When the parties perceive incompatible goals with each other or detect interference from the other in achieving their goals conflict will arise. Scarce resources in any society are also a trigger for conflict between individuals and groups. There are multiple definitions of conflict available but commonalities exist among all of them. In order for there to be conflict all parties involved must notice the struggle.

Other commonalities include scarcity of resources, opposition and interference in achieving goals. Different schools of thought view conflict differently and there has been conflict regarding the role of conflict in society. The Traditional view, which reigned in the sass's and sass's held the idea that conflict was a negative feature Of society and was evidence Of dysfunction brought about by inadequate communication, and a lack of trust and openness between different groups in society. Therefore, in accordance to this view, conflict should be avoided at all costs. This view did not prevail for very long due to its rigidity.

The Human Relations view replaced the Traditional view and prevailed from the late 1 ass's through to the 1 ass's. This new view believed that conflict was inevitable and thus should be acceptable. Conflict was seen as a natural occurrence during interaction between groups and organizations. Eventually this view was stamped out giving way to the current perspective, The Interactions View. This view differs from its predecessors in that it actively encourages conflict believing that any congruent, diplomatic, serene and

cooperative group can become stationary and uninterested to needs for theorization and change.

Therefore, this view encourages conflict, though of a minimal level, as it helps keep the group active, self-critical and imaginative. Conflict as described by the Human Relations view is inevitable and a part of every society. This aspect is especially true in third-world societies where conflict is rampant due to excessive competition for the scarce resources available such as money, employment opportunities, land, power and prestige. Third-world countries are characterized by high levels of unemployment and illiteracy leading to a wide gap between different social classes in the society.

This leads to class conflict as different groups try to either maintain or improve their social standing at whatever cost. This conflict is evident here in Kenya, especially in the capital city of Nairobi where every social class is represented. Class conflict, also known as class struggle or class warfare is the friction or rivalry between different classes in society as result of opposing socioeconomic desires and interests. Class conflict may take a variety of forms including direct and indirect violence, legal and illegal lobbying and even bribing of government officials.

Classes in society are a result of social stratification: a method by which society positions groups of people within a hierarchy. Social stratification is an attribute of society and does not reflect on individual differences such as gender, race and religion. Because of this social stratification perseveres through generations, making social mobility difficult. Though social stratification is a universal feature, it varies between different societies, with

certain societies showing more inequality than other ones. The class system is based on birth status as well as personal achievement.

Social transformation in Kenya is a source of great conflict. The country's class system is inundated by grave inequalities in every sector from health to security, politics to economics. This predisposes the society to conflict, both passive and active, as people fight the violation of their bottom line rules and norms. Class conflict in Kenya is expressed in a variety of ways. Strikes by civil servants due to unpaid salaries and poor working conditions have become prevalent in Kenya, with the government maintaining a shortage of funds, yet Members of Parliament continue to grant themselves hefty pay rises and allowances.

Government schools and hospitals are characteristically dilapidated and congested and this is all the majority of the population has access to. Private institutions, which are highly modernized and pristine are costly and out of reach for the greater part of the population. This makes basic human needs such as proper healthcare a preserve of only the well off. The growing injustices meted out on the lower class by powerful groups and individuals in society is a major contributor to class conflict and violence.

The prices of basic commodities are often inflated in order to fund personal endeavors of the rich and powerful at the cost of the ordinary citizen.

Politicians continue to use false promises to gain votes during campaigns only to disregard all their duties and previous promises choosing instead to enrich themselves at the cost of the ordinary citizen. The gap between the

rich and poor continues to widen as the poor get poorer and the rich get more powerful.

The number of people who lack basic needs such as shelter, food and water continues to grow, while others have these basic needs in abundance but constantly complain of lack of ‘ necessities’ such as extra bodyguards. Corruption and inequalities have eroded the police and court systems with ‘ justice’ being handed to the highest bidder. It is common for petty thieves to receive heavy sentences for their crimes while those who commit large injustices walk away with nothing more than an insignificant punishment. Government offices are marred by corruption where bribing is the order of the day.

The police system is no better and traffic police officers constantly barrage motorists for bribes. For those who are well off this might not seem to be such a bad way of life, as money can get you anything you want. However, for the ordinary citizens who can barely afford to feed and support their families as it is, this dishonesty can be quite exasperating and disheartening leading to class conflict. Class conflict in Kenya takes various forms with the most obvious being direct violence in the form of strikes and protests against the government and other powerful conglomerates, which are a common occurrence in the country.

Deaths due to poverty, hunger, sickness and hazardous working conditions are other forms of class conflict. Politicians carry on their predecessors’ deception by promising to provide the people with jobs, housing, infrastructure and security, only to overlook the people once they are in

power. All these inequalities and false promises have led to frustration and anger among the working class, leading them to express their anger through violence and criminal activities. This old-age form of conflict exists and has existed in almost every society and therefore is the basis of several theories, which I will use to analyze class conflict in Kenya.

The evident inequalities in the distribution of resources in the country result in a large number of people being left with unsatisfied needs. According to Burtons Human Needs theory, conflict arises when human needs are unsatisfied, especially basic human needs. Burton believes that we seek out our needs simultaneously as opposed to Maslows hierarchal arrangement of needs. A few of the needs recognized by the theorist include safety/security, participation in the civil society, personal fulfillment, freedom and distributive justice.

People's obstinate urge to meet their unmet needs, whether on the societal, group or individual level is one of the key reasons for prolonged and problematic conflicts in society. Another theory that explains the class conflict in Kenya is the Structural Violence Theory. According to Gallant, the proponent, inequalities in society eventually bring about conflict and violence and until these inequalities are addressed, the violence will persist. According to the Society for International Development on economic inequality (2004) Kenya is among 10 top unequal societies worldwide and holds the number one position for inequality in East Africa.

The society alleges that for every shilling an underprivileged Kenya makes, a wealthy Kenya makes 56 shillings. , According to Aqualung's Structural

Violence theory, !!!! According to the Conflict Theory the pursuit of individual interests is the cause of conflict in society and thus should be considered an ordinary feature of social life. In the pursuit of interests, resources are scarce and this leads to competition. The assumptions of this theory are that society is made up of various groups Of people who fight for resources, and these groups Of people are engaged in a constant power struggle.

Social groups will use resources to their own advantage in the pursuit of their goals. This often means that those ho lack control over resources will be taken advantage of. As a result, many dominated groups will struggle with other groups in attempt to gain control. The majority of the time, the groups with the most resources will gain or maintain power (due to the fact that they have the resources to support their power). The idea that those who have control will maintain control is known as The Matthew Effect!!!! !!!! Marx argued that a class is formed when its members achieve class consciousness and solidarity.

This largely happens when the members of a class become aware of their exploitation and the inflict with another class. A class will then realize their shared interests and a common identity. According to Marx, a class will then take action against those that are exploiting the lower classes. What Marx points out is that members of each of the two main classes have interests in common. These class or collective interests are in conflict with those of the other class as a whole. This in turn leads to conflict between individual members of different classes!!!

Class conflict can take many different forms: direct violence, such as wars fought for resources and cheap labor; indirect violence, such as deaths from poverty, starvation, illness or unsafe working conditions; coercion, such as the threat of losing a job or pulling an important investment; or ideology, either intentionally (as with books and articles promoting capitalism) or unintentionally (as with the promotion of consumerism through needed] Additionally, political forms of class conflict exist; legally or illegally lobbying or bribing government leaders for passage of partisan desirable legislation including labor laws, tax codes, consumer laws, acts Of congress or other sanction, injunction or tariff.