

Merton's five "modes of adaptation" essay sample

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Conformity

Merton recognizes conformity as the most common type of the five modes. During this mode, people strive to obtain success by the most pure conventional means available (Akers, 2000, p. 144).

Innovation

During innovation, Merton identifies a miniscule, but substantial change in the perspective of the people whose mode is still in conformity and that of whom has shifted to innovation. The people continue to seek success; however by innovation they strive to obtain the success by taking advantage of illegal goals available to them in place of less promising conventional means in order to attain success (Akers, p. 144-5).

Rebellion

Merton suggests that by the time people reach the mode of rebellion, they have completely rejected the story that everybody in society can achieve success and have loomed into a rebellious state. They neither trust the valued cultural ends nor the legitimate societal means used to reach success. Instead, these people replace such ideas with irrational objectives to include the violent overthrow of the system altogether (Akers, 2000, p. 144).