

Good essay on how social factors affect society and individual

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and

Comparison and Contrast between Functionalism and Marxism

Evaluate how social factors (education, religion, family and media) affect society and individual

Social factors, such as education, religion, family, and media, affect society and individual in myriad ways. Starting with informal education in the family or foster home care, a child is being initiated, acculturated, socialized or taught social practices . Further, depending on the religious practices of the family or society, a child learns moral codes (that is, things he or she ought and not ought to do). From informal education, in today's modern world, a child then receives formal schooling where he or she acquires the skills to de-codify and codify the written and unwritten records of his or her past. The child learns to read, write, and express his or her own views and those that he or she believes in. Hence, social factors, such as family, religion, and education, greatly influence the child's upbringing because he or she is being taught how to behave and interact with others based on societal expectations .

Another social factor is the media. Even at a very young age, a child is being exposed to various sorts of media (for examples, radio, television, newspaper, internet). The media influence his or her thinking such that his or her preferences could later possibly clash with his or her prior thinking and beliefs . If a child is being taught by his mother or father not to resort to unhealthy practices (such as smoking and drinking), but sees in the media individuals and people resorting to it, he or she might have change of mind

and action later in his or her life. The practices of individuals and people living in society directly and indirectly influence the way a child views the world. What is allowed by society would likely permit a child to resort to it also, especially as he or she comes of age. Hence, when the child wants to belong to the society where he or she lives, he or she simply adopts to societal tradition, practices, norms, mores, and so on.

In view of the above, social factors, such as family, religion, education, and media, can either make or unmake an individual. This is because family values system, for instance, is a reflection of a greater societal value system where an individual is inescapable entangled to it. In like manner, the religious practices of other more mature family member and other societal members could simply hand over to him or her greater forces, such as institutionalized religion backed up society. Although some countries exercise separation between Church and State powers, other countries make it inseparable (for example, in Muslim countries). Hence, in such cases, even the familial and other societal members have no option but to fully support their countries' religious ideologies. In most other cases, even before an individual enters schooling, he or she may have already been initiated with the formality of their religious and related traditional practices. On the other hand, in some parts of the globe, people can choose their religion because they live in a democratic country. Even in schools, there are sectarian and non-sectarians educational institutions. Even when a child has been initiated with the familial and religious values at such an age, when he or she attains legal or consenting age, he or she can change his or her personal, familial, educational, religious, and related societal influences. To tap it all,

nowadays, the media (especially, online social networks) has even made a much greater influence in the way growing adolescents and adults perceive their world.

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Compare and contrast Functionalism and Marxism

Functionalism, as social explanatory theory, is akin in some aspects to Marxism. First, Functionalism is a social doctrine that focuses on purpose, needs or utility for societal adaptation, social solidarity, and collective conscience. Societal members fit together in an interdependent and interconnected social structure, which establish for the purpose of social harmony despite the appearance of anomie. Likewise, Marxism, as an economic-political theory, nonetheless, asserts that people's actions and institutions are economically determined; hence the need for class consciousness (though may become false consciousness at times). For Marxist adherents, class struggle is required to engender a historical change such that capitalism (that is, private ownership) will ultimately be

superseded by communism (that is, state ownership in a classless society). In functionalism, each societal member functions in an integrative whole, just like in Marxism (that is, foremost, for the sake of the State). Each familial or societal member, shares his or her part for the holistic functioning of the various units of society (whether it be family, community, and society, as a whole). To the contrary, in Marxism, all societal members perform their duties each according to their individual abilities and thereby are apportioned of their labor based on their individual needs. It is the State who receives the most. Moreover, in Functionalism, there is a need for social value consensus, common or collective conscience; whereas, in Marxism, there is the Will of the State . Internal order and harmony manifest balance of the whole system (which includes but not limited to the following parts of the system: family, school, media).

Further, in Functionalism, individuals and society function to maintain internal homeostasis. In Marxism, the State has the sole responsibility to see to it that balance is maintained. When there is social disharmony (for example, anarchy) due to social unrest, the balance is likely caused by internal dissatisfaction (for example, high rate in crimes or ruling versus the ruled classes, respectively). Societal members may have been negatively influenced by unfavorable societal forces (for example, illegal drugs) or capitalists who own the most profit produced by the working classes.

Although functionalism offers a theoretical social explanation in its own analysis of the functions of members in a society, as well as, in the analysis of historical materialism (such as Marxism), there is no evidence to pinpoint out how a State rulers will not be abusive in the exercise of their power in

communist state.

In line with the above comparison and contrasts between Functionalism and Marxism, the former postulates a social functioning configuration similar to the latter. For both theories, the whole system has to achieve stability. However, in functionalism, stability is attained through social consensus whereas in Marxism, it is through class conflict. Nonetheless, the government or state foremost and ultimately has to secure the general welfare of its constituents or classless members. Societal members work together and pay their due to the state; in consequence, the state has to provide education, health and other social services. Lastly, functionalism offers a lens for analysis of Marxism, which is a specific politico-economic theory espoused by revolutionary theorists Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Marxism's critique of Functionalism, on the other hand, is that the functioning (working) classes, unlike propertied ruling classes, may not even be aware that they are being exploited by the ruling classes the reason it calls for drastic social change.

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