

# Labour and social alienation work on class structure



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The division of labour and Industrial revolution are seen as the main two forces during the nineteenth's century for a greater social mobility and stratification of classes. In this essay a close analyse of the impact caused by division of labour and social stratification on productive forces such as: labour, technology and classes. During the course of human history the causes of class conflict are evidently linked to the dispute between the owner of the means of production and the productive forces. Analysis and studies carryout by sociologists in this particular area such as; Karl Marx, Max Webber, Werner Sombart and the economists Adam Smith, David Ricardo highlighting specific areas in this topic in which each of them presenting different points of view in relation to this topic. Special attention is paid to Karl Marx theories contrasting with Adam Smith theories, Webber and Taylor on division of labour, bureaucracy and technological implication on social stratification and the implication of those in modern society.

## **THE DIVISION OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL ALIENATION OF WORK ON CLASS STRUCTURE**

The rise of productivity in westerns society is characterised by the pre-existence of feudal or pre-capitalist classes where the dominant class secured hierarchical privileges in a carefully engineered legal framework.

Marx related the consciousness of men by their ideas and beliefs, to their situation in society. Marx used the term political alienation mainly sociologically and work oriented. This assumption is based upon on the fact that workers dignity cannot be maintained unless the work process provides autonomy, responsibility and self-fulfilment; he argued the fact that the working conditions in factories in 1867 reflected the power and interest of

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the dominant class through the division of labour and de-humanisation of labour. “ The process of alienation of work begins with the separation of ownership of the means of production, the powerlessness in influence managerial policies, lack of control over work conditions and finally lack of control over the labour process” (West, 1 Mar 1969).

The distinction between these two social groups and social class is deeply embedded in the surplus-value which is unequivocally the main difference between the two social groups, ‘ under this social division each person belonged as a member of a ‘ mechanical’ or functional group’ (West, 1 Mar 1969).

Surplus- labour in sociological terms is defined as labour that is sufficiently active to produce and can generate a surplus- value in terms of production value added in a cash economy. This is the fundamental nature of a surplus-value is maximum value that is extracted from each unit input (in this case labour and machinery) in order to maximise output. From this point wealth is created or produced, but poverty is also produced logically if wages are not equal to the product of labour there is a clear inequality in economic terms and social. Adam Smith views on division of labour where completely opposite to Karl Marx, according to “ Smith the division of labour is a necessary force for progress in modern society and these forms of social progression in modern are measured by how freely these societies had developed commerce and division of labour”. (West, 1 Mar 1969)

At the beginning of the industrial revolution craftsmen(highly skilled labour) where pushed to one side to give way to manufacturing(semiskilled labour)

class therefore semiskilled differ from the unskilled not from the technical qualification required to perform they jobs but by experience accumulated throughout the time while performing a clear demarcation form both groups, division of labour and job- segmentation where put into motion in order to respond market demand, the growth of industrialisation resulted on the increase of commerce, navigation and railways therefore the increase of capital extended the gap between labour and industrial society to a such degree that inequality and social division of classes is structured by three main categories; unskilled labours-manual, who are mainly newcomers to industry (former agricultural labours, immigrants) without experience in working in the industry, on the other side we have semi-skilled-technical workers that earn a higher wages than the unskilled and the skilled labour-intellectual the salaried labour thus participant in white-collar status .

The transformation of social classes from the 19 century to the present date driven by industrialisation and consumption caused a demographic shift and subsequently the division of classes. The sifts from craftsman-highly skilled labour to manufacturing -semiskilled class became visible with mass production (assembly line), technological advancement in manufacturing and the simplification of tasks based on the belief that managerial practices, morale, and productivity and proper working environment could enhance labour capabilities . Industrialisation caused a redefinition of social classification in terms of social structure, previously knowledge and skills that was embedded in the craftsman(highly skilled) mind is replaced by technology(technology) and division of tasks followed by a methodical observation of the labour process brought forth into existence the concept of

mass production work force labour causing a complete reconfiguration of the labour market the segmentation of work force and work specialisation .

In addition the creation of legal system framework such as bureaucratic system to coordinate and delegates function within an organisation.

Organisational structure and social structure within the society were pre-existent in the early stages of the organisation formation with the creation of a organised structure that delegates, organise, controls and ultimately profit from those actions. Indeed, bureaucracy and other forms of organising labour and production had a major effect in how social classes and society are organised in allocating resources within a economy and in fact is the allocation of economic resources and division of class that ultimately results in a conflict between economic groups such as labour and management.

## **SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND CONFLICT**

In fact Ure (URE, 1835) pointed out that the management of a factory poses organisational challenges. In his view the is the management responsibility to implement a system that not integrates production system but also a system that would motivate and satisfies the needs of workers therefore the harmonisation of these factors could undoubtedly reduce conflict between working class (labour force) and management within organisation.

Throughout the course of human science the questioning of certain assumptions , doubts and self-analysis in which certain traditionalised perspectives based they scientific analysis have come under critical reflection. The debate is mainly centred around two conflicting epistemologies: Morden and postmodern. The modern perspective

assumption is the belief in the essential capacity of humanity to perfect itself through the power of rationality whereas the postmodern reject such assumptions on the bases that the human agent construct interpretations of the world, these interpretation having no absolute or universal status therefore treating reality as an abstract. There is a significant implication based upon the fact that, this two epistemologies have helped shaped the social structure and organisational structure. According to Weber the study of modern social system in which bureaucratic organisation were designed to created an 'iron cage' of the modern economy in which organisation hierarchal system has deeply influenced the creation of social hierarchy.

' Thus, writing teaches people how to decompose complex tasks into sequences of elementary complements, and this skill is a step toward dividing collective labour into sequential steps (KALLINIKOS, 1996).

Education made possible for organisation to proliferate and to work effectively but also for a greater social mobility. Industrialisation created a demand for literate workers; (MERKEL, 1890) scientific management indirectly contributed significantly to the expansion of managerial activity after 1880 in addition to that (DREEBEN, 1968) argued that the major function of education is to introduce 'principles of conduct' that included appropriated behaviour of organisation members, distinctions between roles and role incumbents, respects for bureaucratic authority, standardised procedures, accountability and task performance. In this perspective compliance receive large rewards, and ability received smaller ones causing a devaluation of skills, consequently skilled workers began to form trade unions in order to strike back predatory business behaviour that perceived

labour purely as economic resources that needed to be utilised in order to achieve production efficiency through the use of 'scientific management techniques'. One of the similarities and contrast between Webber and Taylor management theories reside on the fact that Webber saw bureaucracy as a form of legal or rational type of authority that underpinnings a form of organisation structure that is characterised by a specialisation of labour, followed by specific hierarchal authority.

In fact the strength of bureaucracy lays in its standardisation; employee's behaviour is controlled and made predictable contrary to Taylor scientific management in which managers tend to use to extract the last ounce of effort from workers specially when this technique is applied to mass production whereas Webber believe this was achievable through the by application of rules, regulation and procedures. Those are the factors that determine social positions allied with social relation that determines the social structure of class and the interaction of groups in a societal context. The interdependence of both social groups allows the creation of economic interests in which exploitation appears to a form of social relation for the following reasons: exploitation represent a social relation in which confronts the interest of one group against another throughout the interaction of both social classes based on economic interest, furthermore the imbalance caused by this mutual economic interaction provides a form of power to the disadvantaged group in which the exploited group challenges the interest of the exploiters. This is an important point because exploitation depends upon the appropriation of labour in this sense human are conscious agents and not machines they always will retain significant levels of control over the

expenditure effort “ The interests and life situation of the proletariat are more and more equalized, since the machinery increasingly obliterates the differences of labour and depresses the wages almost everywhere to an equally low level” (Dahrendorf, 1957, p. 49). The divergence and conflicts among economic classes is associated with the social stratification exerted by each economic group within the composition of social structure. In modern western society the stratification is defined as the hierarchal arrangement of individuals into division of power and wealth within the society therefore the decomposition of labour and capital resulted in a social development occurred during the industrial revolution resulting in a social mobility of class and economic groups and although some may consider the economic variable irrelevant in this topic research carried out have shown those in higher classes have higher incomes than those in lower classes. These inequalities still persist even in terms of occupation and work conditions at work. The bureaucrat’s or upper-middle class enjoy greater freedoms in their occupations. This particular group is generally more respected, enjoy more diversity, and are able to exhibit some authority. Those in lower classes tend to feel more alienated and have lower work satisfaction overall.

The physical conditions of the workplace differ greatly between classes. While middle-class (skilled) workers may “ suffer alienating conditions” or “ lack of job satisfaction” but in contrast the blue-collar (non-skilled) workers suffer alienating and often routines involving usually hard labour, this social stratification especially in Europe created an emancipation of the labourer classes not only from the middle-class group but also from non-skilled



seeking for better working condition and salary increased across every single spectrum of the society, unfortunately the in America labourer rights were not recognised at early stage mainly because of the culture embedded in the American society during the years of 1930 and 1940 in which the conflict between social classes and the social structure with the hereditary nature of inequality of the American society founded the expansion of the American Capitalist system. In Europe according to Marx's theory the working class would become more homogeneous, because differences of skill and earnings would be reduced, by the more extensive use of machinery (technology) and knowledge reducing the bargain power of the middle-class and sink to the condition of wage-earners as a result of the increasing similarity between both social classes; non-skilled worker and skilled in terms of work alienation (job satisfaction, boredom) resulting in these group to become more united and class conscious as a result of increasing similarity of life and work, but in reality modern working is class highly differentiated in respect of skill levels and even though the discrepancy in terms of earnings have tended to diminish therefore the increase in specialisation and professional occupation has created a far more complex social structure as well as multiplicity of interest in the social structure level followed by the expansion of the middle class because of the economic trend from a industrial economy to a service economy reduced the proportion of industrial workers and their social influence in the social structure deterioration the solidarity of the working class . In conclusion division of labour enable a demographic shift from non-skilled worker to skilled worker driven by technological and human progress, therefore the positivism of division of labour and is influence in the

stratification of social classes and social structure is sum up in this quote by <https://assignbuster.com/labour-and-social-alienation-work-on-class-structure/>

Adam Smith; " In the progress of society the increasing ability of its poorest members to exchange and to overcome poverty by participating in the division of labour enable them to improve their stature and move away from the animal like existence." (West, 1 Mar 1969)