

# Sociology - karl marx

Sociology



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Karl Marx Karl Marx was one of the greatest sociological thinkers who criticized capitalism and advocated for socialism. In his conflict theory, he offers that internal tensions are necessary for the achievement of social change. He believes that power and vast resources are held by few capitalists mainly factory owners who manipulate the working class. Karl Marx Introduction Many sociological theories have contributed to the modern understanding of sociology (Ritzer, 2000). They include Karl Marx who influenced the socialism doctrine, Marx Weber who developed organizational theory, Talcott Herbert who developed the structural functionalism doctrine, Herbert Spencer who developed the social Darwinism theory, Joe Feagin who was interested in institutional racism and sexism, Wright Mills who advanced power elite conflict theory and William Julius who advanced the contemporary conflict theory (Ritzer, 2000). This research essay shall focus on Karl Marx contribution to the development of sociological theories and its application in the modern society. The paper shall also outline personal views on the sociological theory and why it should be justified in the modern society. Karl Marx was a German sociologist, philosopher, historian and revolutionist who contributed significantly to the development of social sciences during the 1800s. He was born in 1818 to a middle class German family and later became communist when he moved to Paris in 1843. His friend Friedrich Engels influenced his sociological thinking since he provided Marx with sources of income in 1850's when Marx's sociological writings could not sustain him. His theories about society, economics and politics are collectively referred as the Marxism and hold that the society can only progress through dialectic of class struggle (Ritzer, 2000). Karl Marx believed that social change was needed for a better society. To attain social change,

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he pointed out that there must be a class conflict hence the major social change could only be achieved through economic change. He dwelt mainly in the opposition between the capitalists and working class where he referred the capitalists as Bourgeoisie which are the one controlling major inputs of production like land and factories and the working and the working class which he referred them as the Proletariat who are the workers experiencing exploitation by the capitalists. Marx is one of the founders of communism (Ritzer, 2000). Under socialism, Marx argues that the society would eventually be governed by the working class and socialism would eventually be replaced by stateless and classless society which is pure communism. He criticized the social-economic form of the society which was purely capitalist and run by the upper class hence he predicted that internal societal tensions would arise which would lead to self-destruction of the capitalism and replacement of socialism system in the economy (Ritzer, 2000). I strongly agree with his conflict theory which argues that the competition of individuals and groups within the society for power and wealth is the fundamental process which can shape the social structure. He argues that the privileges of the upper social class block the progress of social change in the societal social structure (Ritzer, 2000). One of the reasons why I choose the Karl Marx is because the desire to accumulate wealthy and retain power by the ruling elite has prevented the development of many economies since they misappropriate the national resources which should be used in providing welfare benefits to the less privileged hence reducing the social class gap and income disparities within the economy. For instance, the last one year has been marked by internal tensions within the social classes in many Arab nations where the ordinary public has accused the ruling elite for

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mismanagement of economies and withholding power through dictatorial leadership (Giddens & Griffiths, 2006). Marx asserts that conflict of the groups would lead to progressive human development, greater equity in the economy, democracy and individuality when the privileges of the upper social class are abolished (Ritzer, 2000). His theory can be applicable in the modern society since past conflicts like the civil rights movements in America and Abolitionist movements eased the racial and class gaps in America where women were allowed to vote, slavery was abolished and equal opportunity laws were enacted by the U. S government. Marx conflict theory asserts that in a capitalist society most of the resources are controlled by few people who dominate the economy through political corruption hence the abolition of dictatorial regimes and monarchies would give the citizens the freedom to choose their leaders and have a voice in the political decision making (Giddens & Griffiths, 2006). He believes the “ wage slavery” can only be abolished through ending the private ownership of production and implementation of public enterprises. Karl Marx tries to show the oppression in the society through the high prices of commodities and low wages in the industries. I agree with the theory since governments have to preserve strategic industries which provide basic commodities to the citizens in order to prevent exploitation of the consumers as well as check the quality and safety standards of the commodities. The high modern trade unionism can be explained by the theory whereby private employers do not cater for the basic needs of the workers hence the governments have enacted legislations on the minimum wages and healthy and safety conditions which should be adhered to in the workplace (Giddens & Griffiths, 2006).

Conclusion Karl Marx was a great German sociological theorist who hated

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capitalism and advanced socialism. In his conflict theory, he asserts that majority of the vast resources are controlled by few political elite who manipulate the public through political corruption. He believes that internal conflicts can be motivators for social change, democracy and more civil rights. His conflict theory stresses the importance of stratification, class, conflict and material interests in attaining social change. References:

Giddens, A & Griffiths, S. (2006). Sociology. Cambridge. Polity Press. Ritzer, G., (2000). Sociological theory. New York. McGraw-Hill.