

Stratification systems



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Social es Stratification Systems Weber's perspective on inequality and social stratification adopted a number of dimensions that departed from earlier postulates forwarded by famous sociologists such as Marx and Durkheim.

Whereas Karl Marx postulates revolved around class struggles among the upper classes of capital owners and lower labor providers, Weber provides a detailed and a more complex perspective that explains social inequality using analytical processes. Reliance on forces of capitalism and modernity as the main drivers of social stratification enable Weber to approach the topic from convincing arguments just as Marx did. Perhaps his ideas originated from his family background, where a blend of politics and academics created the right environment for a sociologist of his stature to develop. Studying law at the university further enabled the polishing of the ideas held about the society, despite having developed impressive historical and social views at a very tender age, which almost put him in trouble with his teachers. Weber had personal experience with conflict at the domestic level when his family problems exposed him to taking sides with his mother in disputes (Kerbo, 6). Concept of conflict among upper and lower classes took the dimension of the motivation, which he thought depended on factors such as power, prestige, as well as the ownership of property and wealth.

The level of access of class and status is dependent on the transferability of the factor that accords the class and status, for instance prestige. Weber held that it would be possible for prestige to gain property if the parties involved in both classes were willing to exchange their possession. The position that wealthy people often wield power in the society may also translate into prestige involved, making it easy for such persons to rise to political power. In view of bureaucracies and their origin, Weber identifies the

authority of the state as the only legitimate party to apply force and violence in carrying out its roles. His observation of the rational source of legal power wielded by the state explains the acceptance of government in the modern world (Kerbo, 15). Rising population numbers in human civilization and the need to control the monetary concept of living among the people eventually led to bureaucratic organization, taking care of administration needs of the society. To generate this argument, Weber identifies three types of authority or dominations namely, charismatic, traditional and legal. From the legal coining of power by the state, bureaucracy gained its position in the human civilization. Features of a bureaucracy include hierarchy, rules, functional specialty, up-focused or in-focused objectives, impersonal treatment, employment on technical merit and growth in staff.

Durkheim viewed society to a living organism, perhaps making one of the most important organicism postulates of the society. Societies depicting mechanical solidarity derive their sense of cohesiveness in homogeneity of their positions in society, whereas organic solidarity emerges from heterogeneity of specialization as well as complementarities thereon. External inequalities prevalent in a mechanical solidarity expose individuals to disadvantage due to their socially ascribed status whereas internal inequalities originate from individual talents (Kerbo, 2). Durkheim perspective on class and stratification takes a functionalist shape and proposes social integration that stratification, with division of labor as the central theme around which solidarity theory takes effect. In terms of the state and highly democratized organization, Durkheim fears that political interests make it remotely possible to make policies directly related to occupational interests. He therefore observed that objective governments

should comprise of occupational groups in order to incorporate their interests in governance.

Work Cited

Kerbo, R. Harold. " Social Stratification." Web. 2010. (http://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1064&context=ssci_fac)