

Example of essay on social progress

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



Social progress is the idea that a society can work on improving their social, political and economic structures. It can either be through human action, naturally or through social activism. The social progress concept was introduced by sociologists in the 1960's. Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim and Herbert Spencer are the men in history known as the founding fathers of modern sociology (Abraham and Morgan, 23). Their ideas on sociology have shown a great progress in the society and social sciences and they reflect one another. Comte is the founding father of sociology seconded by Herbert Spencer.

Comte and Spencer

The first two great sociology's theorists are Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer. Comte was born in France in 1798 while Spencer was born in England in 1820. These two theorists focused on studying the society and how the people interact in given societies. Comte and Spencer agree on certain issues that pertains the society and social sciences nevertheless, they disagree on their arguments on the functions of sociology. Through their studies on sociology, Comte and Spencer realized that there must be an order of co-existence in the society. This is because the society is made of several components which are subject to change and progress; therefore, there is need for social progress in the society.

According to Comte, sociology was an important fact in the society as it guides the people on how to live with each other in the society. He believed in involving the society from one stage to another in order to make it a better place. The stages Comte believed in are; theological stage, abstract stage and lastly, the positive stage. On the other hand, Spencer believed

that sociology was essential to reveal that people are not supposed to interfere with natural processes. He focused his theory on three basic laws; the law of structibility of matter, the law of persistence of force and the law of continuity of motion. He believed that things are meant to happen naturally.

Spencer and Comte shared a common perspective on certain issues of the society. They both saw the society in two ways. Comte saw it in a theological (military) way which looked at the power of leaders both spiritual and those with intellectual power and scientific (industrial), where there is moral intellectual power and includes scientists and thinkers. On the other hand, Spencer also saw the society in two ways as well. The first way was the movement of the society from a simple place to a complex one with several levels. His second approach was changing the society from a militant society to an industrial one. Comte mainly focused on empirical facts whereby he believed in thorough and concrete application of the law. While Spencer's approach primarily focused objectively. He believed in individuals fundamental characteristics of the society.

Durkheim and Marx

Sociology has been created and built up over the time by different individuals, among them Marx and Durkheim. It has been edited and revised over and over and although there is more that needs to be done, the first two sociologists who laid the first bricks needs to be credited for their work in bringing social progress this far. This is because, their contributions are very important despite the fact that at times, they are contradicting.

Marx main focus has been on class division and how it has shaped the society. He emphasized on how children are brought up in a society and how their future behaviors and life resembles their parents. Marx argues that, if children are born into a poor family that depends on welfare, then they are most likely going to grow up depending on welfare in their future life. This is because it will be very hard to improve their social life since they are poor. Marx opinion on the working class was that the working class people hold ideas, beliefs and values of inequality and they sometimes feel superior to others. Marx argues a person's wealth will determine the power they have in the society. He found that the people with class separate themselves from other classes. Marx accentuates on the inequalities between the Bourgeoisie class and the Proletariat class and how they contrast each other. Conflict in the society is always brought up due to the class issue between the rich and the poor. He further adds that, there is always competition between the upper class and the middle class to attain an economic status in order to achieve power in the society. Marx articulates that all workers should be paid an equivalent of what they have worked for and not less because this is what is happening.

Durkheim was a functionalist who argued that social facts should be treated as things. By this statement, he meant that, individuals should focus on studying sociology as if it were an object that can be dissected. The working class makes up 99 percent of the society and every individual has the right to make a choice as to whether to follow the set rules by the society or to go against them. Durkheim studied suicide and the many reasons people commit suicide.

Marx and Durkheim compare and at times contrast in some of their aspects on social progress. Their similarity is that in their approaches, they both dealt with the people, how they grow up, and how they become different in the future. They differ because Durkheim focuses on people and every aspect of their lives while Marx's main focus is on business and how people conflict each other in the society due to class issues. They have studied people, their actions and how their economic status effect where they fall in the society. Marx and Durkheim enhanced many phases of sociology in both similar and different ways. Marx took his focus to a business aspect and Durkheim focused on all aspects. They both focused on how people grow up and stay in the same group they start in. The building blocks may be there, but if no one was there to put them together and start the foundation, then we would not have the knowledge that we have today and social progress could be history.

In contrast to philosophers, Marx theories can be tested with scientific methods and proved. Both Marx and Auguste Comte embarked on developing scientifically defensible ideologies on sociology to improve social progress in the society. Even as Marx discarded Comtean sociological positivism in an attempt to develop a science of society, while working in the Hegelian tradition, he has been later celebrated as the main founder of sociology. In all modern sociological theories, Marxist sociology is documented as one of the main classical perspectives. Marx has been regarded as the true father of modern sociology, even though initially it was Auguste Comte. Karl Marx had such an influence on sociology that his views are recognized worldwide (Abraham and Morgan, 204).

I believe Spencer's ways of thinking about social progress is the most effective. This is simply because a society needs to be improved in order to progress and this can only be done by the people in it. Spencer saw the society in two ways; one is improving the society from a simple place to a complex one. He wanted change to take place. The second one was changing it from militant to industrial whereby every person will have work for the improvement of their lives and the society at large. When change is made in the society, there will be progress and that change should involve every individual regardless of their class and everything else.

Work Cited

Abraham, Francis, M. and Morgan, John, H. Sociological thought: from Comte to Sorokin ; Marx, Spencer, Pareto, Durkheim, Simmel, Weber, Mannheim. Indiana University: Wyndham Hall Press, 1989. Print.