

Analysis of structural functionalism

Sociology



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Sociology Structural functionalism (described by T. Parson) looks for the establishment of a link between the normative system and the 'situation', that is to say the environment described as an ensemble of stable and consistent constraints in which the system of action is placed. This theory describes social functions and interaction between the elements of the social system. This theory views the social world as social structures which represent the core of the analysis. For example, different professional ideologies are presented as 'solutions' to a 'situation' characterized by the asymmetry of power and competence between the professional and his client: the normative system is presented as functional in the way that it solves the problems arising from the situation. Functional relations are of two kinds: they refer to the interaction that is established between the self and the other in terms of role, but they can also describe some aspects of interdependence, some social situations in which the individual becomes totally anonymous (Schmidt 26). According to the conflict theory, society is based on class and social struggle. The main elements of this theory are competition, structural inequality, revolution and war. Each individual and social class struggles to improve its social conditions and maximize benefits. Revolution created two classes, bourgeoisie and proletariat and that their relationship is largely antagonistic, for some episodes in history can be understood only with this conflict in mind. The relationship between capitalists and workers ceases to be completely free and elements of both co-operation and conflict are part of it. This theory views the social world as a struggle (antagonism) between the main classes (Schmidt 102-103). For instance, labor union aggressiveness can stimulate productivity and, thus, be of benefit to everyone. Symbolic interactionism focuses on the aspect of

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social life explained through the use of symbols. According to Mead, people have a great impact on social structure and the construction of society. The role is a set of rights and of obligations given to the ego or even demanded and earned by ego and that in any case it acts for the other-and under the control of the other. The role is a set of rights and of obligations given to the ego or even demanded and earned by ego and that in any case it acts for the other-and under the control of the other. This theory views the social world as system of symbols and the meaning which help to explain human behavior and actions (Schmidt 71).

Recent years, teen violence becomes one of the most important social problems faced by society. In terms of structural functionalism, teen violence is explained as a lack of strong values and social beliefs, cultural decay and inclusion. Some teens from low classes are excluded from the society because of their race or class location. For most of them, violent actions become the main source of self-identity and new social values. In a situation of interaction, when the self plays a part vis--vis the other, the functional connection is provided by a set of rules, or more generally by some mutual expectations. According to the conflict theory, teen violence is caused by social inequality and a conflict between social classes and social groups. Violence becomes the main source of social control and power. Using violence, teens 'compete' with the 'dominant group' for scarce resources and material possessions. Many teens experience emotional tension and interpersonal conflict which leads them to violent actions and behavior patterns. Symbolic interactionism focuses on the roles teens play in society. Violence behavior helps teenagers to accept new roles and change their social relations. According to Mead, teen violence can be explained as <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-structural-functionalism/>

strategies through which ego and other adjust to each other.

Works Cited

1. Schmidt, K. E. Contemporary Sociological Theory. Blackwell Publishing Limited, 2002.