

Education is an important social institute. How conflict and functionalist perspectives view education as institutionalized activity? Which of these approaches can best describe the system in Pakistan and how?

Introduction

Thesis Statement

Education is an important social institute.

Overview

Education enables children to internalize the social rules that contribute to functioning of society.

Education as a social institute includes patterns, norms, roles meant to provide an environment of learning skills and cultural values.

Perspectives

According to Karl Marx's conflict perspective education system is working in interest of ruling class elites.

(The Communist Manifesto, 1846)

According to John Dewey, functionalist society are thought to function to maintain and reproduce organs.

(The Reflex arc concept in Psychology, 1896)

According to functionalists, the role of schools is to prepare students for participations of institutions of society.

Analysis of Pakistani educational system

Education system of Pakistan comprises of 260,903 institutes and is facilitating 41,018,384 students with help of 1,535,461 teachers.

— (Islamabad Policy Research Institute) —

Out of school children

According to UNICEF Pakistan, an estimated 22.8 million children aged 5-16 are out of school, which makes 44% of total population of this age group. Currently Pakistan has world's second highest number of out of school children.

Low literacy rate

Pakistan has one of lowest literacy rate in the world with only 60% population being literate.

— (Academia Magazine, 2023) —

low budget

The government of Pakistan spends 2.2% of its GDP on education which is lower than recommended 4-6% by United Nations

— (Academia Magazine, 2023) —

decreased enrollment

Miftah Ismail, former finance minister writes for Dawn that, in 2020, net enrollment rate in primary schools was 64% down from 67% in 2015

— (Our failure to educate, Dawn, 2022) —

Conflict perspective of Education

core idea of conflict perspective

Conflict perspective is synthesis of Marxism which indicates that division of classes into rich and poor is attracting a major conflict between working class and ruling class.

Conflict perspective views on education as institutionalized activity

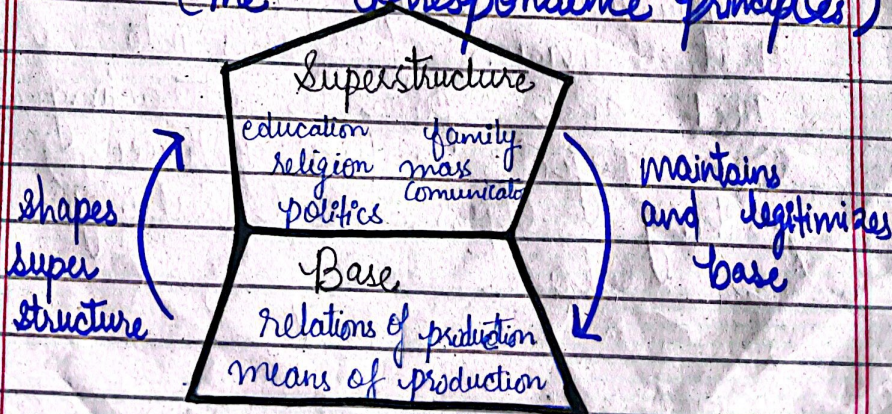
Traditional conflict theorists believe education is another way of favouring elite class and exploiting working class. Educational institutes socialize students to work for capitalist after graduating.

(Bowles and Gintis, 1976)

Three functions of education

According to conflict theorists perspective education system performs three functions

01. It produces class inequality (The Correspondence Principle)



According to Karl Marx, education system prepares working class to serve ruling class. Students are taught the skills that future capitalists employ needs.

On similar note, Bowles and Gintis suggest there was correspondence between values and skills learnt and the way in which workplace operates. They are taught these values through a **hidden curriculum**.

02. It legitimizes class inequality

Class inequalities are legitimized by education system through myths of meritocracy, as there is always correspondence principle working in form of hidden curriculum.

03. It works in interest of capitalists

According to conflict perspective it works in socialising children to accept authority, hierarchy and wage labour.

Hidden curriculum and work's correspondence

- Passive subservience of pupil to teachers correspond to passive subservience of workers to managers.

o Acceptance of hierarchy (authority of teachers) corresponds to authority of manager.

o Motivation by external reward (grades not learning) corresponds to being motivated by wages (not the joy of working) (Bowles and Gintis, 1976)

Functionalist perspective on education as institutionalized activity

core idea of functionalist perspective

Functionalist perspective highlights positive functions performed by the education system

Two main functionalists of education are Durkheim and Parsons

perspective of education as institutionalized activity

Durkheim believed that modern industrial economies have a complex division of labor where the production of even a single item usually involves the cooperation of many different specialists. Skills are needed for complex economic functions.

According to Parsons, schools play an important role in process of secondary socialization, taking over primary socialization.

Four functions of education

According to functionalists education system performs four functions.

01. Creating social solidarity

Emile Durkheim argues that schools make student feel being part of something bigger and not of just home. Study of subjects like history also plays role in it. Durkheim stresses on fact that "school is a society in miniature" (The Sociology of Education: A Durkheimian view, 2014)

02. Teaching skills necessary for work.

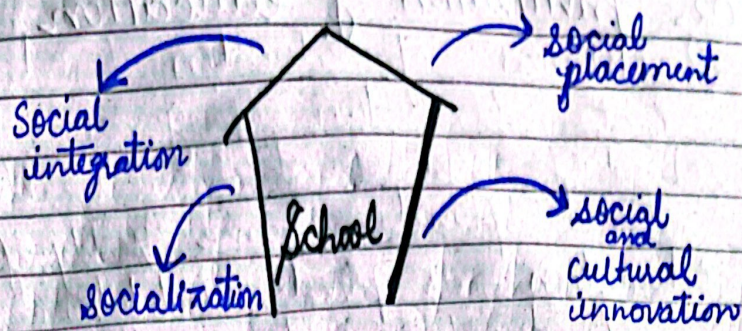
Durkheim noticed that advanced industrial economy require a massive and complex division of labor. He believed that one of most impressive thing about modern education system was that they simultaneously teach core values and a sense of belonging to a whole while at the same time teaches us the different and diverse skills that a modern economic system requires to function.

03. Teaching core values.

Talcott Parson argues that education acts as 'the focal socializing agency' in modern society. Schools play important role in secondary socialization.

04. Role Allocation and meritocracy.

Functionalists believe that meritocracy is extremely important for peace in society. Only education system can allocate people for their talents using examinations and qualifications.



Approach that best describes Pakistani education system

“Conflict perspective best describes Pakistan Education System”

Evidence

01. Class differences being main cause of illiteracy

Poverty is a significant reason for poor literacy rate in Pakistan.

Private schools have made it too difficult for lower middle class to receive higher education.

~~Conclusion~~

(Education system of Pakistan, The Nation, 2023)

02. Privatization of education

Privatization of education has led to devaluation of government schooling system which is unable to provide same quality of education as private institutions
(Education System of Pakistan, The Nation, 2023)

03. Only kids of ruling class enjoy benefits of education.

Children of working class have given the curriculum of such quality that after graduation they still remain into working class and children of elite class keep their socio-economic status maintained.

(Miftah Ismail, Reimagining Pakistan)

04. Production of spoiled students

HEC chairman Dr. Mukhtyar Ahmed expressed that, "we have spoiled our children and our education produced neither good students nor good citizens."

(The News International, 2022)

Critical Analysis

The conflict perspective on education highlights class inequalities presented by education system. On the contrary based on the correspondence principle, On contrary, functionalist perspective highlights positive side of education making everyone skillful to be adjusted in society of complex division of labor. However, conflict perspective best describes the education system of Pakistan, according to static statistics.

Conclusion

Pakistan's education system has many loopholes whose roots go back to poverty, class division and gender discrimination. All this results in low literacy rate. According to statistics 4 out of every 10 people in Pakistan is illiterate (Dawn, 2023)

Deductive analysis

Pakistan's education system is practical example of conflict perspective on education system, making working class suffer in education sector as well.

Synthesis

Education system of Pakistan is suffering due to class inequality and students are being socialized to work serve ruling class.