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Q Marx and Weber theorized that modern society alienated people. How do their approaches contrast each other and how their concept of alienation can be compared with Durkheim's concept of anomie?

Ans

1) Introduction

As nothing is entirely black and nothing is entirely white, everything in this world has positive as well as negative aspects. Such is the case with modern society. Karl Marx and Max Weber highlight the negative aspects. According to these theorists, modern society has alienated people. However, the source, origin, and ultimate objective of both the theorists differ. Moreover, their concept of alienation has some similarities with the concept of anomie expounded by Emile Durkheim.

2, Modern Society according to Marx and Weber

① According to Marx, the modern society is the result of industrial revolution and establishment of capitalism.

② According to Weber, modern society is the result of a modernity and rationality, and the establishment of a bureaucracy has made this

3. Alienation through the lens of Marx and Weber

① Max Weber

Modern societies are characterized by "Rationality" and its primary feature is large-scale organizations which employ millions of people e.g. Civil Bureaucracy. And rational societies emphasize what a person knows rather than who the person is. Emotions and sentiments are not rational in such societies. What matters the skills, knowledge and ability of a person is what matters.

Furthermore, with the growth of bureaucracies, humans are becoming machines who will "need orders and nothing but orders." According to Weber, bureaucracies have a potential to create alienation because it stifles human innovation, creativity, and naturalness.

② Karl Marx

Alienation, according to Marx, is a situation in which the creations of human labour appear as alien objects to their creators.

The four manifestations of alienation by Marx are:

- ① Alienation from Product
- ② Alienation from the act of Production
- ③ Alienation from human nature
- ④ Alienation from other workers

Marx held that alienation led to dehumanization of human beings in capitalist societies.

4. How Marx and Weber's theory of alienation contrast each other?

a. Source of alienation

Marx held capitalist mode of production as source of alienation in which "Bourgeoisie" exploit "Proletariat" for the purpose of wealth maximization.

On the other hand, the source of alienation in Weber's theory is rationalization and bureaucratization of societies.

b, Economic vs Multidimensional

Marx's theory of alienation is primarily economic and class-centred. Marx viewed this through the lens of Social Conflict Perspective emphasizing on economic aspect whereas Weber's approach is multidimensional which encompasses various aspects of modern life, including bureaucracy and individual experiences.

c, Collective vs Individual

Marx's focus is on the collective struggle of the working class against capitalism, while Weber's approach is more individualistic, emphasizing how individual experience alienation in a rationalized and bureaucratic society.

d. Ultimate goal

Marx's theory ultimate goal is the establishment of a classless society whereas there is no specific goal of Weber's theory.

5) How Marx and Weber's theory of alienation can be compared with Durkheim's concept of anomie?

① All three concepts have negative consequences. For example, Marx argued that alienation could lead to class struggle and revolution. Durkheim suggested that anomie could lead to higher rates of suicide and other forms of deviance. Weber held that alienation leads to inefficiency which negatively impact governance.

② All three concepts, Marx's and Weber's alienation and Durkheim's anomie highlight the negative aspects of modernization on individuals and society.

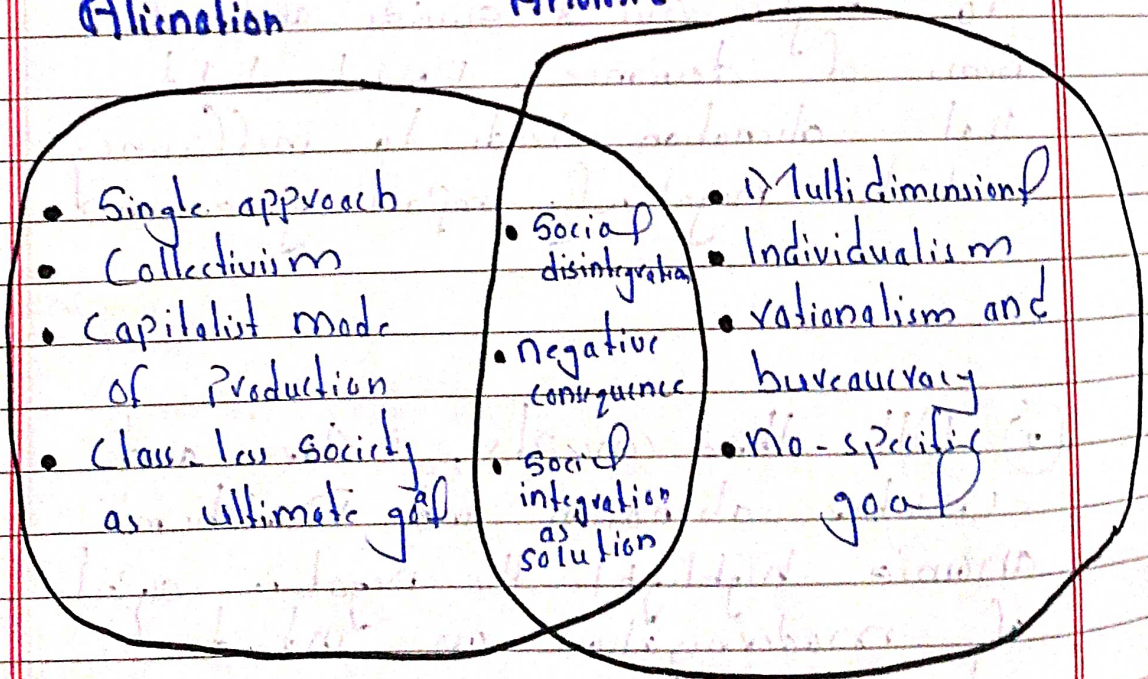
8

(3) Social disintegration as the root cause of alienation in all three concepts. Disintegration of social bond in Durkheim's case, disintegration of individuals from their work in Marx's and disintegration of individual from creative work due to strong rules and regulations in Weber's case.

(4) Social integration: suggested by all three theorists as the solution.

6,

• Marx's Alienation • Durkheim Anomic • Weber's Alienation



7, Critical Analysis

Marx argues that capitalism alienates human from its human nature, however, modern capitalism offers many avenues for human creativity, i.e., Entrepreneurship.

On the other hand, in modern societies bureaucracy is replaced by flexible organizations. Moreover, in civil bureaucracies officers also innovate creative methods to serve the public effectively.

8, Conclusion

Marx and Weber interpreted the negative consequences of modern societies and expounded their concept of alienation. ~~The~~ Although they ~~have~~ are similar to some extent, there are also some differences.

In addition to this both theories have could be compared with Durkheim's concept of anomie.

