

Question

What is ideology? Discuss its emergence and importance.

Answer

Introduction

The term ideology is a complex phenomenon in study of social sciences on which a great deal of controversy exists among scholars on its meaning and definition. The French philosopher Antoine Destutt de Tracy used the word ideologie during French Revolution and define it as the science of ideas meaning thereby as the study of origins, evolution and nature of ideas. The ideologies contain a set of proposals about human nature and society. These proposals explicitly (in clear and detailed manner) manifest human conditions, approaches and understanding of a social and political order and provide a basis for the accomplishment of a desired social system.

Definitions by Karl Marx and Karl Manneheim

Karl Marx and Karl Manneheim defined ideology in their own ways;

Definition by Karl Marx

According to Karl Marx ideology is;

The ideas of ruling junta who seeks to perpetuate (continue, support, secure, sustain) the prevailing order of capitalism and their own privileged position.

Definition by Karl Manneheim

Karl Manneheim defined ideology as;

It is a conservative, self-seeking and biased views of the dominant class in the society.

Ideology is a different form of those comprehensive patterns of moral beliefs about man, society and the universe in relation to man and society.

Ideology is a Framework for Political Movements

Ideology is a way of thinking about the cultural and social programme of a political movement launched to emancipate (free, liberate, release) a suppressed group from exploitation of more dominant social class.

Ideology is a Set of Arguments to Justify Social Order

Ideology is a systematic set of arguments and beliefs used to justify an existing or desired social order.

Political Ideology

A political ideology can be define as,

A system of beliefs that explains and justifies a preferred political order, either existing or proposed and offers a strategy (institutions, processes, programs) for its attainment.

In short we can define ideology as,

An ideology offers an interpretation of the past, and explanation of the present, and a vision of the future.

The Emergence of an Ideology

Ideologies often reflect the way of thinking of nation or a social group who has been rejected a social position.

A Response to Social Dissatisfaction

Ideology grows amongst the dissat-

isified and disgruntled group of society as a challenge to the prevailing (dominant) social set up.

Logical Ideas to Explain Human Destiny

The ideologies are propagated as a systematic programme of logical ideas, which convincingly explain human destinies.

Core Values: The Heart of an Ideology

The ideologies are highly integrated around one or few pre-eminent (greatest leading, prominent) values, such as, equality, salvation or ethnic purity. These core values are often considered non-negotiable, absolute, and universal, and are used to evaluate and interpret various aspects of society, politics, economy, culture, and individual behavior.

The core values serves as unifying force and provide sense of purpose.

Crisis and the Rise of Ideology

Ideologies often gain popularity in the times of crisis, social unrest, and social discrimination. People find ideologies as a sense of community and purpose. For example, during the economic crisis of 1930s, Nazism in Germany gained popularity, promising to restore German greatness and create jobs.

And the Russian Revolution of 1917 was fueled by economic crisis and social unrest, led to the rise of communist ideology.

Reject the Prevailing Conditions of the Society

Ideologies often emerge and gain popularity as a response to widespread dissatisfaction with the existing social, political, or economic conditions. When a significant portion of the society rejects the prevailing conditions,

they may turn to ideologies, that offers alternative visions, solutions, and critiques of the status quo.

For example the emergence of Marxism was a response to the exploitation and inequality of capitalism. Or the gender inequality, discrimination, and patriarchal conditions of gender roles and stereotypes give rise to the ideology of feminism. And the Civil Rights Movements emerged in response to racial segregation, discrimination, and inequality, rejecting the prevailing conditions of systematic racism.

Concluding the Emergence Of an Ideology

In short we can say that ideologies emerges;

When people feel strongly that they are being mistreated under an existing order; when their status is threatened by fundamental changes occurring in the society, and when the prevailing ideology no longer satisfies them.

Importance of an Ideology

The importance of an ideology can be discuss in following headings;

Ideology as a Motivating Force

Ideology is a powerful motivating force for a nation, driving collective action, and shaping societal values. An ideology is a set of beliefs, principles and values that define a nation's identity and purpose. When an ideology is widely shared it can:

- 1) Inspire national pride and unity.
- 2) Guide decision-making and policy formulation.
- 3) Mobilize citizens to a common goal.
- 4) Provide a sense of direction and purpose.
- 5) Influence cultural and social norms.

For example, the ideology behind the Pakistan Movement and independence of Pakistan was a powerful motivator, inspiring millions of Muslims in the subcontinent to work and

Struggle towards a common goal. It shaped the political, social, and cultural landscape of the region and continues to influence the identity of Pakistan.

Ideology: a Journey to National Unity: Striving for Stability and Homogeneity

Ideology is striving hard to bring stability and homogeneity (uniformity) to its nationhood. It plays a significant role in shaping national identity and promoting national integration and unity within its borders. By promoting a shared set of beliefs, values, and principles ideology aims to unite a nation's diverse population and create a sense of common purpose and belonging.

Such as, The Soviet government under Stalin enforced a strict uniformity in thoughts, speech, and action, suppressing dissent and opposition to create a homogenous communist society. And Mao Zedong's campaign in China aimed to eliminate cultural and

intellectual diversity, imposing a homogeneous revolutionary ideology and destroying traditional practices and beliefs.

Unifying Force for Scattered Social Groups

Ideology provides the cement-binding base to the scattered groups of society and bring them closer to each other on a common platform.

This common platform enables diverse groups of society to:

- 1) Identify with a larger purpose
- 2) Share a common goal and struggle to achieve it.
- 3) Bridge the gaps between different groups by emphasizing shared values and interests.
- 4) Develop a sense of community
- 5) Using the resources make efforts to achieve a common vision, leading to greater collective impact.

Mobilizing Agent for Collective Action

Ideologies impel (force, push) their adherents (followers, supporters) to follow a joint line of action for the accomplishment of their goal. Ideologies have a powerful driving force that motivate individuals to work together towards a common objective. It mobilize people to pursue a joint line of action to achieve their goals. The Pakistan Freedom Movement is a prime example of how ideology can impel people to follow a joint line of action for a common goal. The ideology of Pakistan is rooted in the Two-Nations theory, emphasized the need for a separate homeland for Muslims and united them from diverse backgrounds, languages and regions under a shared vision of a sovereign nation-state.

Give Birth to New Civilizations and Culture

Ideologies give shape to revolutions and give birth to new cultures and civilizations. Ideologies challenge the existing power structure and give birth to new political,

social, and cultural systems. It influence art, literature, education, and values defining the character of a nation. Ideology is a driving force in areas like equality, justice, and human rights. It ultimately leave a lasting legacy on human history.

Absolute Individual Obedience and Transformation of Society

Ideologies demand an absolute and firm individual obedience of those who accept it and an unquestioned agreement with each other on the ideals is the most vital pre-requisite of an ideology. It stress on their adherents (supporters) to insist on the realization of their ideals through total transformation of society.

Conclusion

In short we can conclude it that an ideology is a science of

ideas, a systematic set of arguments that justify an existing or desired social order, and explains human destinies, and give birth to political ideologies, on the basis of which a scattered group of society gets integrated and struggle for the accomplishment of their goals.
