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Social Status and Cultural Capital

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Social Status and Cultural Capital

How Weber Conceptualize Power and Prestige

People who happen to be wealthy are often powerful, hence appear prestigious to others. Wealth includes property such as buildings, factories, land, among other assets, while prestige is the respect one is accorded when in a higher rank (Keirns et al., 2015). According to Weber owning such property only determine peoples' social class in which power and prestige are found. Here, individuals who run organizations also benefit from such status. Weber further observed that having adequate property is the source of prestige. In this case, rich people are highly regarded irrespective of their moral behaviors in society.

Because of this, prestige can also be achieved through having high intellectual capacity or a given talent. This can be evidenced by footballers, athletes, and perhaps business persons. Holding such intellectual capacity and talent automatically brings prestige.

Not all wealthy people possess power. For instance, the ancient Jews lacked power despite being wealthy. This is an indicator that power was derived from different sources such as birth and individual achievement. Corporate managers are given certain power though they do not necessarily own such companies. On the other hand, Weber considered prestige as a social honor or gaining popularity within society. This could easily change compared to power, where is no given limit to achieve.

An example is a political power that solely depends on the capital value and status of the individual. On the other hand, artists such as musicians can have immense influence in society irrespective of having little economic progress, hence having a prestigious position. Therefore, prestige and wealth power do not all depend on wealth possessed by an individual but the ability to influence others.

Why Power and Prestige Are Important Factors in Determining a Person's Social Status

Most societies distinguish people based on wealth, income, and intellectual property. In Weber's case, power, material, and prestige determine a person's social status. It is obvious people owning certain wealth and has great influence in society can be easily distinguished. For instance, the world's champions in athletics, football, among other games, are highly recognized. Here, intellectual capacity and talent make them reputable individuals in society.

For that reason, these factors are important because most people in society use them to distinguish people. For instance, in the United States, the stratification system depends on wealth, education attainment, and the type of occupation (Keirns et al., 2015). These individuals are accorded certain treatment because of the kind of influence they have. An example of occupation with certain power includes; Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Congress have certain power despite having little property. Therefore, based on the society's choice on the categorization, power, material wealth, and prestige are important factors in determining a person's social status.

Another reason why Weber used to power, prestige, and wealth is the social status, economic order, and political order through the party occupied by an individual. All these are relevant in determining the social class of various people in society. With social status, one can easily tell their social position that is relative to others. In this way, people can determine whether such individuals should get special treatment. For instance, prestige is a good indicator of social class. It also determines other social determinations of class, such as wealth and power. For instance, A Supreme Court Judge is considered wealthy, leads a prestigious life, and exercises full power. Moreover, one can choose to get such a higher rank by attaining a certain

education level and choosing the right career path. However, there are instances where prestige, power, and wealth are attained depending on where an individual comes from.

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is linked to symbolic elements such as skills, tastes, mannerisms, material belonging, and posture (Sociology Live, 2015). Since cultural capital deals with social assets that promote individuals' social mobility, half of the children are likely to grow up having a similar socioeconomic class as their parents. In this case, parents play significant roles in transferring determinants of social class such as power, wealth, and prestige. Having social wealth also dictated a person's position in a certain manner. An example of social capital was when parents taught their children how to dance, visit the prehistoric sites, and, importantly, discuss literature (Sociology Live, 2015). Children could have no relevant idea about this social capital without being informed by parents. While growing up, children tend to master and emulate meaningful cultural capital such as dancing, hence high chances of inheriting a similar socioeconomic class as their parents.

Additionally, cultural capital is often static; hence, children possess them when of the right age. Nevertheless, certain significant cultural capitals cannot be easily neglected. For instance, parents often embrace language, mannerisms, cultural goods, books, and artistic work due to the economic significance (Sociology Live, 2015). Besides, parents would always wish that their children benefit from this cultural capital, thus passing them on from one generation to the next. An example of cultural capital that is not diminishing is artistic works. People continue to thrive due to this unique culture. This is evidenced by music and various art works in media and the prehistoric sites.

Consequently, most people believe that cultural capital taught by parents is likely to assist children excel in school. Furthermore, children equipped with cultural knowledge are likely to

develop critical thinking capacity since they are experienced and deployed with skills and knowledge. In this way, children are likely to have the same socioeconomic class as their parents.

References

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