
Immigrants: Theoretical Analysis Of The Concept

Emile Durkheim said that everything in society is functional where even immigrants bring in new skills to our society be it with their building skills or food where their culture can be shown and create an opening to our country contributing to social cohesion. Functionalists say that every job needs to be filled and sometimes labour power means that immigrants can be seen to be scapegoats and blame is placed on them for taking our jobs and houses. To avoid anomie immigrants, need to socialise with the host society and adapt to the ways and cultures of their chosen society. Certain behaviours need to be adapted to fit in and to be accepted. They should abandon their own culture along with assimilation where they fully understand information and ideas of the host country. Overall functionalist says that there is nothing wrong with immigration and that it is needed within society to make it grow. (Stephen Castles, 2005)

Marxist describes socialization and how this is done through ideology through people's social class when a person's education is sought. Social stratification is a product of people's relationships with the means of production. People are categorized then ranked into order from the lowest to the highest. Social action theorists say that people's behaviour along with life chances are not deemed by their social background, its more to do with how people interact and shape their identity (Ashley Crossman, 2018) The labelling theory states that people who have power and the ability to enforce classifications than those who hold less power. Immigrants are seen as scapegoats and that they cause the problems of capitalism and it's known that all ethnic minorities are part of the working class. Mead and Blumer connect socialisation with the relationship we have with others. (Lewis and Smith 1980, Pg. 72)

Neo – Marxism agrees with Marxism that the state creates and maintains racist ideology. This continues to exploit migrants and cause a further divide within the working class and causes class consciousness. Immigrants are targeted and seen to be different which then creates a discrimination ideology separating them from the working class. (Therese J.F.A Gerold – Scheepers & Wim M.J. Van Binsbergen, Pg. 21)

Mead was the key person who created symbolic interaction, (Mind, self and society, 1934) he stated that we create our own identities, babies are not born with a personality, but they gain their personality in the way they are raised and this can change through interaction and communication while growing up. Symbolic interaction is a micro theory where it focuses on relationships among individuals within a society where communication is sought through symbols and language. Immigrants are a free flow of labour where employers benefit from cheap labour and gain more profit. Immigrants get a lot of stick for this and are accused of taking our jobs along with our homes, but they did not create this stigma our societies did along with the government and mass media. It is known by Oxford economics that immigrants put more into the economy than the average UK adult, they put at least £2,300 back into the public purse (Oxford economics 2016/17)

Symbolic interaction is a micro-level theory and describes socialization where individuals along with society develop through peoples interactions through symbols where individuals develop a sense of themselves as they learn to use the symbols, they learn to see themselves the way they believe others to see them (H. Mead, 1934) Symbolic interaction shows how racism comes

due to stigma. If we look at the wind rush generation in 1948 where the west Indians searched for better life opportunities for themselves and children, a local add was advertised by our government seeking more bodies after the end of WW2 as a lot of people were killed. Many took up this opportunity, half a million to be precise between 1948 and 1971 (Freedom from torture, 2020) Some only stayed a while saving money to return home while others decided this was their new home forever, the influx ended in 1971 which gave the commonwealth citizens UK citizenship and were allowed to remain in the UK or so they thought. In 2012 the hostile environment policy came into action resulting in making it exceedingly difficult for immigrants living in the UK. Some now faced being treated like illegal immigrants losing jobs and welfare and even faced immigration detention or deportation (BBC news,2018) This was all down to our Government where Theresa May enforced these changes all because the home office did not keep a record of everyone of migrated to the UK, this just shows how shocking our political system is. We act towards people and things based on the meaning we interpret from them. Those meanings are the product of social interaction between people which is known as the interpretive process where our initially meaning may remain the same, change slightly or radically.

edubirdie.com