

Examrace

Exchange Theory: Levi Strauss and Institutional Bases of Social Exchange Behavior

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Introduction

- Structural change perspective on lines of Mauss' analysis
- He rejected the views of Malinowski and Frazer which were utilitarian
- Utilitarian approach – social behavior is motivated by calculated economic consideration
- He argued that it is the exchange which counts and not the things exchanged

Concept

Rejected the psychological interpretation of social exchange.

Why?

- Social exchange is a symbolic process, only humans are capable of this
- It is normative behavior – governed by rules and norms of society
- It is creative and dynamic
- Well defined institutional framework help carry the exchange

Institutional Bases of Social Exchange Behavior

- Principle of social scarcity and social intervention – e. g. , Exogamy – creating artificial scarcity
- Principle of social cost of exchange – exchange by the virtue of festivals
- Principle of reciprocity - obligation
- According to Levi Strauss,
 - Exchange is done as a means of structural integration of the society
 - The items of exchange are defined culturally
 - The value of things exchanged is symbolic
 - Different patterns of exchange with change in society
 - Exchange regulated by norms and values

- A Cost for individuals with each exchange
- Not directly to individual but the social order
- Men attribute meanings and values to things

Features of Social Exchange

- Social exchange behavior is human
- Supra-individual process
 - Individual self-interests form a part of it
 - They do not sustain the practice

MCQ

Q. 1. "In the sphere of culture, the individual always receives more than he gives, and gives more than he receives." Who said this?

i. Malinowski

ii. Levi Strauss

iii. Ekeh

iv. Homans

Answer: ii. Levi Strauss

Q. 2. According to Levi-Strauss, the items of exchange

a. Are culturally defined

b. Their values are intrinsic

c. Their values are extrinsic

d. They are symbolic

Choose the right option from codes given below:

i. D only

ii. A and b

iii. A, c, and d

iv. A, b, and d

Answer: iii. A, c, and d

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#institutionalbasesofsocialexchangebehavior #featuresofsocialexchange
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