

**“The Hopeful and Possible Presence of Social Responsibility and CSR in the Ideology of Capitalism and the Impact of Marxism.”**

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**Abstract**

Capitalism and Communism had been growing simultaneously, ever since the birth of industrial revolution. But both are unfortunately marching parallel to each other. Arguments and counter-arguments , accusation and counter-accusation , the saga of struggle goes on .The epic bitterness between the two ideologies will continue in the years to come .Both justifying their respective viewpoints and standing firm in their perspectives ,unless both ideologies fails to see a strong commonality and unified attempt aiming at prosperity and progress , the industry – society - people are bound to suffer .

Keywords: Marxism, CSR, Hegemony, Capitalism, Dharma.

## **The Hopeful and Possible Presence of Social Responsibility and CSR in the Ideology of Capitalism and the Impact of Marxism**

The Renaissance and revitalization brought to the west and the simultaneous growth in political freedom, economic prosperity, intellectual revival and social reform. The Greek spirit of science and rationalism became predominant during this period and eventually led to the great development in scientific investigation and research which has enhanced the human civilization in the Europe and West, from the renaissance to the present. Today a good number of people think that science itself cannot solve their basic problem, and the need and necessity of acquisition and implementation of that knowledge, which brings lasting peace and prosperity to humanity. History had witnessed and humanity had fatally suffered because of fanaticism, persecution and the consequence of war, which affected the life and economy of the civilization. Success is not about becoming richer, wealthier and more knowledgeable while keeping everybody else ignorant, poor and deprive of education and better standard of living

The Industrial revolution paved way for economic prosperity and capitalism. Politician, economist, scientist, philosopher's artist –all have contributed to the increased quality of human living standards. But along with progress, a silent and invisible agony too had gradually evolved. We are now facing that realization and cannot deny the fact that materialistic wealth, sense gratification, and physical beauty do not necessarily bring satisfaction in life. People have become cynical, bitter, confused and desperate. Frustration, disappointment and dissatisfaction are very much visible on the faces.

To overcome this crisis one solution was theorized and advocated by Karl Marx. Marxian theory states that everything in life is determined by capital. The availability and non-availability of wealth influences and affects ones relations with other persons, with nature and with the world. Our thoughts, goals, ideologies have been the reflection and products of property structures. In every aspect of life, human culture has been reduced to a direct or indirect expression of some preceding and controlling economic content.

The dynamic of a society can only be understood in terms of a system where the dominant ideas are formulated by the ruling class to secure its control over the working class. The latter, exploited by the former, will eventually try to change this situation (through revolution), producing its own ideas as well as its own industrial and political organization.

Technology develops, scientific investigation yield greater understanding ,art and culture mature , morality and ethics becomes lively and active as we start analyzing and guiding our behavior for the benefit of society as a whole. The social responsibility of man can yield incredible goodness and virtue for the development of society

Business and Ethical behavior are complementary since ethics can be a successful marketing strategy and observation of scruples, a better assurance for business relations than fraud and deception.

The soul killing consequence of stark materialism can be mitigated only by a spiritual approach of trusteeship to reward , wealth and resources both individually and organizationally. If the concept of service rather than acquisition of economic power is adopted ,the whole scenario becomes transformed. But very unfortunately wealth maximization has become the sole aim of any corporates. When demand increases the price of the product subsequently increases. The Government has done nothing to curb these atrocities. The petrol and diesel price are on frequent rise, making the life of the people miserable. With a bare minimum wage man is struggling to meet both ends. The politician are burdening the citizen with taxes and simultaneously emptying the treasury for the personal needs, building mansion and buying expensive and luxurious vehicles. They are the “crows beautified by our feathers”-our money.

Even the corporates are not far behind ,they are capitalizing on every opportunity and every laxity from the part of the Government . Essential products and commodities can possibly distributed to everyone at an afford rate .But deliberate manipulation and exploitation in distribution & supply of the essential commodities and vegetables has created an inflation. Greedy traders and merchants- brokers are hoarding the goods and demanding an exorbitant price. The Government is not at all bothered about this fact. Though they can possibly prevent such misdeeds, but their impotency and inefficiency in tackling and preventing, are inevitably mentionable, and is surprisingly and shocking indeed.

*“There is enough room, enough space and enough resources for everyone to live a life of sufficiency .Man must learn to control his Insatiable greed”.*

Capitalism has widened the gap between the employer and employees, haves and have not's. The macro environment has been playing a very cruel and merciless role in making the life of the working class people miserable. They are dragged into abject misery and poverty.

Karl Marx had vehemently attacked and criticized the evils of capitalism and consequence that would ultimately drag the society into inevitable class struggle. When frustration and disappointment reaches its culmination point, ends up in violence and struggle for the rights to wealth and profits. But very unfortunately, Karl Marx's one sided view was grossly misunderstood by the pro-capitalist critics. Marx only expressed the evils that would arise and precipitates due to unchecked and uncontrolled practice of capitalism. The effect of what was said a few decades ago has been felt today. The whole world is experiencing the negative shade of capitalism. Disparity and imbalance are very much apparent. The class struggle is paving way for new dimensions of conflict. The hopelessness and wretchedness are mitigated with false promises made by politicians.

Had he written something good about capitalism and the importance of wealth creation as a means to progress and prosperity. There would have been a different development in the study on class struggle and capitalism –inevitable presence of both could have been viewed on equal footage.

Professor Werner Sombart, the Revisionist of Revisionists previously quoted,:-  
“During the last 20 years, as we know, there has been a concentration of capital by the formation of trusts such as Marx in his boldest flights of imagination could never have dreamed of<sup>1</sup>.

Marx's whole life was guided by the principle of “**No Compromise**”. Because of his refusal to truckle to the rulers of Germany he was hunted down and put on trial for sedition. Paper after paper was suppressed, and in their effort to crush “the terrible Marx”, the German powers even incited the French and Belgian Governments to thrust him from their shores

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/socialist-standard/1910s/1913/no-103-march-1913/karl-marx-current-criticism-verdict-generation>

The whole 'ism' of Karl Marx was on class struggle and dire criticism against capitalism. Even today the teaching and ideology of Karl Marx is very much active and vibrant, and furthermore, still continuing an unending saga of class struggle. Had Marx, then stated some better shades of capitalism and its implementation in finding an effective remedy to class struggle, things would have been different today. But unfortunately his principle of "no compromise" and prejudiced view against the accumulation of wealth, only alienated and narrowed his teaching to particular sector. The teachings of Karl Marx remained there and slowly flourished. Simultaneously the growth of capitalism was indeed fast and quick. He could have been flexible enough to suggest the good sides of capitalism and moreover suggestions to improve the relationship between the two sides. The one sided view was not all acceptable by the progressive minded people, because the belief then and now is 'capitalism is solely responsible for development and growth of an economy'. The negative shades of Capitalism was least concern for them and they furthermore vehemently discarded Marxism, accusing on the basis that teaching of Marxism is very much contrary to capitalism and an hindrance to economic prosperity.

The doctrine of Marx became the reference book of the underprivileged and labor class. The criticism against capitalism became an prejudiced ideology of the working class and finally baptized into a **political ideology**. The working class fail to see the good in capitalism and capitalist ideology carelessly and heartlessly ignored the welfare and well-being of the poor working class.

But this continuous class struggle must have an end, though not all of a sudden but there has to be a gradual decline through some measures. Because the present scenarios demand mutual co-operation of both parties. The inevitability and importance of labor class and presence of capitalistic ideology, both are instrumental in the growth and development of a nation's economy. And more

Though there are Labor Laws and welfare measures to protect the working class, yet a full fledged voluntary initiative is apparently necessary from the part of corporate sectors. This does not mean that business are ignoring their social responsibility and only aiming of maximizing and hoarding of wealth. Many established and successful corporates are actively involved in CSR and Philanthropic activities. But then the

impact and effect of their activities have not been able to influence the other concerns.

CSR and Philanthropic activities must create an influence and positive impact on others. Even the smallest firms or even a small retailer must actively involve in the CSR activities. A new positive 'HEGEMONY'.

*[The term 'Hegemony' was coined by **Antonio Gramsci**.<sup>2</sup> The theory suggests that subordinated groups accept the ideas, values and leadership of the dominant group not because they are physically or mentally induced to do so, nor because they are ideologically indoctrinated, but because they have reason of their own].*

Each entity, whether it is an Industry, Firm, Profession or Employee, Retailer, wholesaler etc., all have their respective consortium or association to voice their rights and demands. Similarly, why is it not possible for all the business units to come together and form a 'consortia' for a philanthropic cause? Undoubtedly, such movements will have a lasting impact and influence on the society and on the Entrepreneurs. The CSR activities must directly influence the people and the society. They must set an example and others must unconditionally adopt their ideology to serve the society and people, besides wealth maximization. Why should one wait for the politicians and governments? The civic rights and duties are not only to protect and uphold oneself but also, bestows us the responsibility to protect and develop society.

The core of successful management lies in one's clarity of noble vision, sincere plan of action and punctuality in implementation. A successful business agenda depends on the corporate ability to mobilize resources –natural and manpower- for profit maximization. While it is generally believed and assumed that materialistic approach is more effective in managing outer resources, it would be interesting to experiment how managing one's spiritual life contributes to positive gains. For example, the goal of *sarve bhavantu sukhinah* (may all be happy), where achieving maximum happiness without exploitation and injustice demands higher state of consciousness on the part of the entrepreneurs.

The spiritual perspective comes from a level of consciousness where we rise above our physical needs and cravings, and **Dharma**(Duty) holistically integrates body,

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<sup>2</sup> **Antonio Gramsci** was an Italian writer, politician and sociologist

mind and soul. If Dharma governs *Artha* (Wealth) and *Kama* (Desire), there will be no discord or hostilities. The corporates and Politician must cultivate deeper human awareness and drives that are better incentives than material prosperity.

A holistic disposition implies the end of dualism between workers and management, co-operation rather than confrontation and conflict, and a reconciliation of contrary interests. In a system inspired by this principle, a person works for his own evolution and for others in the same measures. It is a mechanism for transformation by which a company concentrates on solving society's problem by resolving private and public interest for greater benefits without dependence on external agencies. This promotes functional autonomy which is conducive to overall growth.

Capitalism can bring about a holistic prosperity along with the profit maximization. But utilization of resources for the betterment of mankind which majority of the corporates are reluctantly and miserly implementing is an undeniable fact too. This where the Marxism ideology **infallibly succeeds and strengthens**. Because Marxian ideology vehemently and vigorously accused capitalism of exploiting the labor and amassing wealth.

One sided view of Marxism and on the other side, exploitation of labor by capitalism, in a fast growing capitalist society, mutually failed to suggest a voluntary solution for the overall development of man and society. Both ideologies are equally responsible and have equal contribution in recommending violence and using force to make others obey and listen.

Materialism is certainly acceptable, it is a great blessing on humanity. The comforts and luxury of scientific age, the easy life made possible by the employment of the machine, the profits and achievement gained by employing the natural forces to work for humanity, are all by heritage. To decry them is to insult and degrade the intelligence of humanity. But when the same inventions and achievement becomes a curse, the humanity has the right to protect and protest against them.

It is possible for people to who are at power, and who have the power to influence the resources can join together and unify themselves as one welfare organization. When an organization does it alone, the impact is less and most of the times remains incomplete

and half done .When all the corporates come together , the wealth they contributed can be utilized in a well- planned manner . Plans should be formulated on how it should be spend and where it should be spend. Cannot wait for the Politicians, because they are deliberately trying to exhibit a false impression to the people of their philanthropy. Unfortunately they are forgetting that, its' their unavoidable duty to serve the people and nations. Their insincerity and hypocrisy is well apparent to the people .Little can we expect from them.

Capitalism can serve the people. If the Government and the politician, wisely utilize the wealth for the selfless development of the people and society. The corporate can come together , form a “PHILANTHROPHIC CONSORTIUM” of their own .Collective effort is more potent and effective than Individual effort .

CSR will become inevitable for each and everyone in due course of time. The corporate sectors are coming forward and voluntarily contributing for humanitarian cause. Decades ago Marx criticized and accused Capitalist ideology of accumulation and amassing wealth through exploitation of labors .This resulted in ‘Class Struggle’. But had he given a constructive message to the capitalism ,instead of one sided prejudiced and uncompromising tirades ,there would have been less disparity throughout the world.

Had he suggested and recommended some ‘TIPS’ to the capitalist world, today the intensity and gravity of Class struggle would have softened at a considerable rate.

But unfortunately ,the uncompromising and inflexible accusation , only aggravated and alienated the relationship between “ Employees and Employers , Haves and Have not’s” .

Still today , a majority of people from both classes feel , Force and Violence are the only means to bring justice to one class and on the other, to protect and uphold the wealth .

Time as changed ,Society is developing , every man and every single money making organization is accountable and responsible for the growth and development of the society. They all are part and parcel of a society ,it is the duty of every human being to have constructive ideology , whether it is “Capitalism or in Marxism”, greed and violence must be abandoned and unanimously implement an ‘unconditional, selfless service’. The ancient wisdom says, “The more you give, the more you get”- wealth, Peace and Happiness.

Concluding with a remark by Swami Chinmayanada, “The Highest prayer in this world is service; the greatest devotion is loving the people around us ;and the noblest character trait

is divine compassion for all living creatures. Shall we waste a life in the futility of indolence, or shall we gain a glimpse of our glorious being through the purity of our sincerity and the earnestness of our dedication? The choice is ours. The future lies open, waiting .....

Thank you,

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