

An Overview Of Habermas's Critical Theory

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Jurgen Habermas: A Brief Overview:

Before delving into the theories formulated by Jürgen Habermas, a brief overview of his contributions and achievements requires the reader's attention to understand the reasons that motivated Habermas to come up with such influential works that have been used worldwide. Habermas is considered a prominent figure in the field of social theory. He is also among the many notable German philosophers who have contributed towards the betterment of society. His theories cover diverse topics such as communication, language, epistemology, and political thought, etc. Habermas's concepts are directed towards the framework of society and cover all aspects of it.

Due to the detail that he has put into his work, Habermas's work is used in different fields such as philosophy, science subjects, education, politics, psychology, sociology and many others. His work reflects an in-depth analysis of theories that are focused on society and knowledge and show a close association with the Frankfurt School. The Frankfurt school is closely related to the theories presented by the Marxist school of thought. Habermas was devoted to examining the rule of law in politics, specifically the one that is prevalent in Germany. His work is concerned with the concept of rationality while also focusing on the relation of rationality with communication. Habermas modified his ideas and concentrated on the idea that morality is associated with the theory of rationalisation, which had been initially formulated by Max Weber.

According To Habermas's First Publication, Which Was Titled Knowledge And Human

Interests (1968), mass social delusion and unthinkable conformity to rigid patterns of authority are social neuroses grounded in the societal repression of basic instincts that aim at individual and social fulfilment. As Habermas became more convinced of the importance of unlimited and undistorted communication in fulfilling emancipation from ideological delusions, he also became more committed to the idea of an open and democratic society. Forced to leave Frankfurt due to clashes with his former mentors, Habermas was invited by his two former students, Hans-Georg

Gadamer and Karl Lowith to take up the Extraordinary Professorship of Philosophy at Heidelberg. That same year (1961), Habermas applied for a second doctorate in political science, and within the short span of just three years, in a stunning turn of events, he was appointed the chair of Philosophy and Sociology at the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt (1964). By 1970, Habermas's belief that unlimited and undistorted communication was essential to both political action and knowledge led

him to reconsider his previous knowledge-centred conception of **critical theory** in favour of one founded on a **theory of communicative** action. From this point on, Habermas increasingly focused his attention on linguistics, the philosophy of language, and the relationship between moral development and the acquisition of intellectual communicative competence. In 1971, Habermas left Frankfurt to become co-director with Carl Stenberg, where he deepened this line of inquiry.

Historical Background Of Critical Theory:

Critical Theorists have faced controversy over their political and theoretical merits. The group of intellectuals gained popularity during the political turmoil of the 1960s partly because they drew on traditions that had rarely been studied by the Anglo-American world (Ingram, 2010). The critical theorists drew attention to subjects such as mass culture and state and also the discourses that had recently been researched. They were critical towards capitalism and Soviet Socialism and turned their writings towards the possibility, which is often sought after, of creating an alternate path for social development (Held, 1980). It can be said that the founders of the critical theory preserved many of the concerns of German Idealist thought, such as the nature of reason, truth and beauty, but reformulated the way in which these had been previously understood (Held, 1980). They placed history at the centre of their approach to philosophy and society (Held, 1980).

The issues the critical theorists addressed went beyond a focus on the past and embraced future possibilities. Each of the critical theorists maintained that although all knowledge is historically conditioned, truth claims can be rationally adjudicated independently of immediate social interests. They defended the possibility of an independent moment of criticism. They also attempted to justify critical theory on non-objectivistic and materialistic foundations. The critical theorists worked further on the concepts that were present previously and developed the notion of critique from a concern with the condition and limits of reason (Held, 1980). Knowledge (Kant) to a reflection on the emergence of Spirit (Hegel) and then to focus on specific historical forms – capitalism, the exchange process (Marx) was furthered in the work of the Frankfurt theorists and Habermas (Held, 1980).

The theory took shape in Germany initially and was developed by intellectuals who belonged to the Marxist school of thought (Held, 1980). The work caught the attention of intellectuals and students everywhere, and copies of the work were sold for free anywhere. Critical theory was divided between the perspectives of the Frankfurt School of thought and those of the views presented by Habermas (Held, 1980). Adorno and Horkheimer were in opposition to the opinions presented by Habermas as the latter believed in paying more attention towards individuals in society and conducting rational debates in the public sphere (Held, 1980).

Critical Theory:

From the amount of work done on critical theory, it can be said that the approach has been criticised

by intellectuals all across the world (Held, 1980). The focus of the critical theorists was mainly on discourses that discussed mass culture and the State (Held, 1980). Society was an integral part of critical theory as the liberation of the individuals was the primary concern of the critical theorists (Held, 1980). However, it should be noted that the first generation of the Frankfurt school did not consider coming up with a solution for the problems faced by members of the society (Held, 1980). On the contrary, they only focused on describing different ideologies and presented a critique of the earliest notions of the Marxist perspective (Held, 1980). Some of the followers of the Marxism approach believed that Socialism had been a part of the traditional plan, while the other half felt that social action would follow from the doctrine of the correct party line (Held, 1980). These two concepts raised a lot of questions as they were misleading. The followers of the determinism approach could not understand how men could make their history, while the followers of the centrality group underestimated the way the making of history was affected by circumstances “directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past.” (Held, 1980). Specific questions were raised regarding the theories that had been developed by different schools of thought; the problems are as follows:

1. How could the relationship between theory and practice now be conceived?
2. Could theory preserve hope for the future?
3. In changing historical circumstances, how could the revolutionary ideal be justified?

To understand the responses generated by the Frankfurt School and Habermas, the approaches of two men will be discussed these men are Georg Lukacs and Karl Korsch (Held, 1980). Their attempts to address these issues led to the development of new concepts in Marxism. Lukacs and Korsch had raised questions about the dominant Marxist orthodoxies, such as the established doctrines of the Communist and Social Democratic Parties (Held, 1980). The two men, by challenging belief and by rethinking Marxism about contemporary events, created a basis for a reexamination of Marxist theory and Practice (Held, 1980). They both believed that Marx’s writings contain concepts, methods and principles which are violated by orthodox Marxism and both sought to elaborate and develop this dimension of Marx’s enterprise (Held, 1980). Lukacs and Korsch were of the view that the process of elaboration and development requires an examination of the Marxist origins and perspectives and the involvement of those thinkers who can aid the process of reconstruction (Bubner, 1982).

The purpose of the theory, therefore, is to analyse and expose the hiatus between the actual and the possible, between the existing order of contradictions and a potential future state (Bubner, 1982). Theory must be oriented, in short, to the development of consciousness and the promotion of active political involvement (Held, 1980). Critical theorists retained many of Lukacs concerns: the interplay between history and theory and the importance of approach as a “promotive factor in the

development of the masses.” (Held, 1980). The relationship between production and culture, the effects of reification and the way each aspect of society contains within itself ‘the possibility of the unravelling of the social whole or totality’ (Held, 1980).

Critique Of Instrumental Reason: Critical Theory And Philosophy Of History

The initial controversy surrounding Habermas’s *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* can be best perceived in the context of the work that was done in collaboration with the Institute for Social Research. By being under the wing of his two seniors, Horkheimer and Adorno, Habermas learned a great deal about how things were carried out. The guidance of both Adorno and Horkheimer gave Habermas the confidence to believe in his work and to do it in whatever manner seems reasonable. Habermas was inspired enough to start his research, and he began with the investigation of how the new public sphere functioned, especially during the [Enlightenment period](#) and the different revolutions that were going on across European borders. He also examined how the public area was used for discussion and public debates.

Habermas formulated this study based on the Institute’s analysis of the transformation from the liberal capitalist approach of the nineteenth century to the stage that involved the state and other institutes of the twentieth century. One of Habermas’s first articles provided a critical point of view on the society that had turned the masses into consumers. In his article titled, *Theory and Practice*, Habermas highlights the link between the unity of both theory and practice, which was central to the [Marxist approach and also the critical](#) theory of society, which had moral and political dimensions. And in *Theory and Practice*, Habermas maintained the unity of theory and practice central to classical Marxism and the critical theory of society, while fleshing out the moral and political dimensions of critical theory. Initially, when Habermas started working with the Institute of Social Research, his primary focus was centred on the political opinions and the capabilities of students. While working on the behaviour of students and politics, Habermas stood by the principles of formal law, sovereignty, guaranteed rights and civil liberties as part of the legacy of the bourgeois society.

Habermas’s tactic for the use of an earlier model of bourgeois democracy to criticise the later instances where the bourgeois class suffered a decline and degeneration. Therefore, Habermas sought to come up with a normative ideology based on democracy that could be applied which could be used as a standard for critically analysing the welfare societies. He was of the view that both the Frankfurt School and Marx had underestimated the significance of the principles of laws, rights and sovereignty. He also claims that both the Frankfurt school and Marx had been negligent in the re-democratisation of the radical social theory, which was a significant task. Around the year 1961, students had shown an interest in participating in the democratic conceptions which had caused Habermas deep concern. He set himself on the task of developing theories of democratisation and also about political participation. From the very beginning to this day, Habermas’s work has been

labelled as extraordinary as it paid attention towards issues of utmost importance, like the emphasis on radical democracy. Most often, intellectuals overlook the political foundations of Habermas's work and jump directly towards presenting a critique of his work.

It is evident from the ongoing advancements in different fields, such as science, medicine, and technology, which have added towards the increased number of possibilities for human beings. With these advancements, the world has become hell, according to Adorno, because of all the opportunities that have been showered upon humans. Horkheimer and Adorno published an article, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, in which they discussed the issues related to society and the way everyone was abandoning rationality and turning towards barbarism. Their purpose for the article was to understand rationality and social actuality while also looking at nature and the mastery of nature. Both Adorno and Horkheimer asserted that it was human nature to possess everything possible. According to Adorno and Horkheimer, the trait of domination lies at the base of how the social and natural worlds are set apart and apprehended. The *Dialectic of Enlightenment* played a crucial role in establishing the basis of the Frankfurt school. In the article, some of the most critical issues have been discussed, such as "the rise and domination of instrumental reason". Adorno and Horkheimer tried to explain the concept of domination in their article. However, little was done on this subject. They defined domination as "an attribute that takes place when an individual has his or her goals and purposes defined for which he or she strives to work hard and succeed. Domination can happen by anything, be it nature or people or things, and then there is the second type, which is internal, in which individuals try to exercise control over themselves." From this definition, capitalism can be termed a historical example of domination as it tried to dominate members of society by imposing rules on them. The purpose of Adorno and Horkheimer was not to recreate a philosophical system but instead create concepts that worked towards the philosophy of history. They asserted that the theories were imposing themselves upon history and, by doing so, distorting it.

Apart from distorting history, these philosophies tend to impose "acts of severe brutality". The authors gave examples of different views such as Christianity, idealism and materialism that initially worked on imparting truth to the individuals of a society, however, they were to be held responsible for victimising people. These ideologies acted as organising forces, but all they did was play a bloody role, as is evident from history. The purpose of the *Dialectic* was not to prove what was right or what was beneficial for any society. Instead, the theory worked towards assessing any impending threats of domination. Herbert Marcuse maintains that a rational society is essential due to circumstances such as the irrationality of the community, the limitation on productivity, the aggressive attitude regarding expansion, the impending threat of war and the exploitation of members of the community. The critical theory works towards creating a movement that pieces together everything.

Habermas's Critical Theory:

Habermas aimed to develop a critical approach by engaging himself with different discourses, such as modern philosophy and [modern social theory](#) and also by contrasting his work with the work

presented by the first generation of critical theorists that belonged to the Frankfurt School (Bernstein, 2014). As has been discussed previously, Habermas was against the views of both Adorno and Horkheimer and believed that critical theory should be developed that focused more on the issues of the people than only explaining why the ideologies had been oppressive (Bernstein, 2014). He believed that his project strived towards making a theory that was focused on society with a practical intention, which was to liberate the people from domination (Bubner, 1982). The theory formulated by Habermas aims to work towards understanding the social groups that are capable of changing society. In regards to defending the theory of society, will and conscience, Habermas has been concerned systematically to create its philosophical underpinnings (Bubner, 1982). To carry on such a work, Habermas had to recreate some of the classical Greek philosophical works, which specifically focused on the concepts of truth and virtue, facts and values and theory and practice (Bubner, 1982).

Habermas defined his project as a way to find the critical soul of science while also working towards understanding the essence of criticism (Braaten, 1991). The aim of redefining critical theory lies in the course of history (Braaten, 1991). Habermas's critical theory does not intend to find a way out of the issues that have troubled people but rather to confront them by explaining and by also providing a critique of ideology (Braaten, 1991). Therefore, it is safe to say that the critical theory presented by Habermas then provides a diagnostic explanation, unlike the therapeutic explanation, whose purpose is to provide a treatment for any ailment (Braaten, 1991). Unlike the Marxist theory and Freudian theory of psychoanalysis, which offer a therapeutic explanation, Habermas's critical theory provides a diagnostic explanation of the problems that have been ailing everyone (Braaten, 1991). The diagnostic explanation works towards finding the causes of any crisis that has surfaced and then working through it to find a solution (Braaten, 1991). The diagnostic explanation then is associated with the critical theory of society offered by Habermas (Braaten, 1991).

The event of the 1960s had a profound impact on Habermas's ways of thinking. The movement had been initially led by Habermas and was based on getting followers who sought radical democratisation of society (Kellner, 2014). However, near the end of the 1960s, Habermas decided to part ways with the movement (Kellner, 2014). According to Habermas, the party had moved away from its initial purpose, which was to seek a primitive democratic society (Kellner, 2014). Habermas asserted that the members of the movement had been working towards implementing new laws and rules in society instead of liberating people from the laws of society (Kellner, 2014). The followers of the movement were critical of Habermas for not taking part in the actual struggles and instead shifting to the theoretical works. However, Habermas defended his position by using a theoretical approach instead of working on doing anything practical (Kellner, 2014).

Jay M. Bernstein has written a book titled *Recovering Ethical Life: Jurgen Habermas and the Future of Critical Theory*, which is based on the theories presented by Habermas (2014). Bernstein regards Habermas as a spokesperson for a version of Kantian moral thought with his notion of the ideal [speech situation or the unlimited communication](#) community (Bernstein, 2014). He believes that Habermas's perspective is Kantian and formal, and it also goes through a series of procedures which give the form of a thoroughly examined work (Bernstein, 2014). Another aspect that gives depth to

Habermas's work is his motive of locating communicative rationality about creating a critical theory that is entirely focused on society (Bernstein, 2014). The critical theory presented by Habermas should, therefore, be thought of as a synthesis of the Marxist perspective. It also acts as part of radical thought that centres on liberating individuals from the restraints of different institutes and working towards implementing laws that provide justice to everyone (Bernstein, 2014).

It should also be noted that Habermas attempts to distinguish moral reasoning, as pointed out by communicative reason, from ethical identity (Bernstein, 2014). Habermas goes beyond the concepts of morality presented by Durkheim in which Durkheim states that deduction of morality is not possible as the moral rules submitted by any pure theory are logically binding and, therefore, are not ethical rules at all (Bernstein, 2014).

Structural Transformation In The Public Sphere:

Habermas centred all his attention on democratisation, which was linked with an emphasis on political participation as the core of a democratic society and also as an essential aspect that was part of the individual's self-development (Jürgen Habermas, 1989). Habermas's article Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere was set apart by diverse kinds of active, participatory bourgeois public sphere (Jürgen Habermas, 1991). Habermas discusses two main aspects in this book; one aspect includes the historical analysis of the bourgeois area that is followed up by the reports on the structural change in the public sphere (Jürgen Habermas, 1991). The contemporary era involved the rise of capitalism, industries, and the increase in the distribution of influential positions of economic corporations to people belonging to the elite class. Habermas's theory of the public sphere explores the popular class of the eighteenth century, especially in Great Britain, France and Germany (Jürgen Habermas, 1991). The central theme of the article centres on the changes in the public sphere over the years in the mentioned countries.

The article focuses on the shift of the public sphere from the elite class to the working class, allowing the private sector to take control of the public domain (Habermas, 1991). This process has been termed the feudalization of the public sphere by Habermas in his article Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (1962). Habermas claims in his report that the shift in economy and power structures had allowed the working class to gain access to the public sphere once again (Habermas, 1991). It also allowed the consumers of that period to use people for their purposes, such as turning the masses into unthinking consumers on one hand, while the political groups and the state tried to turn the citizens into unthinking masses on the other side. For Habermas, the public sphere is a domain that allows people to view things critically and rationally and debate public policy (Habermas, 1991). The public sphere does not necessarily have to involve face-to-face interactions as it can be done through different mediums as well, such as newspapers. Habermas states that the public sphere, in its ideal form, is a domain that allows private people to come together in the shape of the public to express the issues of society with the state (Habermas, 1991).

According to Habermas, the public sphere is a part of the lifeworld as it provides an immediate setting for individuals to involve themselves in interactive discussions (Keane, 1995). Therefore, Habermas states that the public sphere should not be separated from the lifeworld. Habermas focuses on oral biases and emphasises the importance of communication between people in the private sector (Keane, 1995). He believes that the public sphere can be maintained through dialogue and debates between the members of society. The public sphere can be made better by allowing the communities to come up with different activities be it religious or recreational (Calhoun, 1992). Involving various institutes in the public sphere can give people the opportunity to come together and share their views and debate over matters that include social and economic issues (Calhoun, 1992). The public sphere was first institutionalised in Britain, allowing newspapers to present the views of the people on matters that involved the treatment of the Queen towards the people (Calhoun, 1992). The earlier press-licensing regime lapsed in 1695 when Parliament declined to renew it; this ended prior licensing of the press rather than creating a new "Licensing Act 1695" that expressly authorized newspapers to discuss the monarch without censorship (Jürgen Habermas, 1991). However, despite the changes in the laws, there were still some strict laws that were kept to remind the people of the Queen's position. Despite the laws, the public sphere has acted as an essential enabler of rational debate among the citizens (Jürgen Habermas, 1991).

The article Structural Transformation in Public Sphere is based on the historical and sociological account of the rise of the bourgeois public sphere and its disintegration (Jürgen Habermas, 1991). The article includes diverse subject matters such as law and politics, cultural history, and social and economic factors to understand the structures and functions that lie at the centre of modern society (Jürgen Habermas, 1991). Habermas writes in his article that the word public and public opinion have varying meanings. However, Habermas defines a public sphere as the private domain that is occupied by the members of a society, in which they come together to form a public sphere. According to Habermas, public opinion matters and, therefore, should not be restricted when it comes to public discussions. Habermas also notes that the role of the press and media has shifted from sharing the public's opinion to moving towards the promotion of consumer culture (Jürgen Habermas, 1991).

In his study on "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere," Habermas presented different aspects of the participatory and active bourgeois public sphere through the view of a bureaucratic industrialised society, which was being controlled by the elites and the media (Alway, 1995). The book covers two critical themes that include an in-depth analysis of the historical genesis of the bourgeois public sphere. This is inclusive of the era when the rising elements of cultural industries, capitalism, and the gradually increasing and influential positions were owned by industrial businesses and corporations. This, in turn, caused the big economic companies and corporations to take full dominance over the public sphere while the public opted to become the consumers of political administration, goods, and spectacle (Habermas et al., 1974).

Habermas begins the article by addressing the history of the public sphere and gives an account of the representative publicity that existed in the Middle Ages before the bourgeois public sphere rose to power (Jürgen Habermas, 1991). He traces the difference between both private and public by looking

at different fields, such as language and philosophy. The representative publicity consisted of Lords and nobles in which the King represented power while everyone else was a spectator (Jürgen Habermas, 1991). During the Middle Ages, there was no division between the private and the public sphere, as the power rested in the hands of a King. Habermas further adds that for the public sphere to evolve, economic developments were of utmost importance (Jürgen Habermas, 1991).

In addition to this, Habermas highlighted the role of capitalist methods in terms of production, trade and commodities that were part of the evolution process (Jürgen Habermas, 1991). Furthermore, Habermas points out a significant attribute of the public sphere which was the use of rationality in critical debate. By allowing the public critical discussion to take place, the public sphere could keep a check on everything to make sure that power was not being used illegitimately (Jürgen Habermas, 1991). According to Habermas, the sphere that was to be used as a place for discussion between society and the state was replaced by the bourgeoisie (Duelund, 2010). The public sphere, which was meant to show the ruler's power to the people, was replaced by the state's authority, which was monitored by the people (Duelund, 2010).

To study the emergence of the elite class, Habermas looked through different contexts such as the changes in the literary canon and the development in political journalism to the rising reading societies and the development of the coffee houses (Duelund, 2010). The public sphere, in this instance, encouraged rational debate within the sphere occupied by the bourgeois. Habermas highlights that during the eighteenth century, the rise in the political public sphere first took place in Britain (Duelund, 2010). The institutionalisation of the public sphere was carried out by the European bourgeois-democratic states around the nineteenth century (Duelund, 2010).

Habermas remarks that the public sphere's institutionalisation was done to keep a check on the use of power. Acquiring the status of a fully developed public sphere, it became wholly dependent on the social conditions that shifted over the passage of time (Duelund, 2010). The bourgeoisie took over the public sphere; it was seen as a literary public sphere where people belonging to the elite class came together to discuss topics related to literature and art. The bourgeoisie had replaced the rights of the liberal public sphere by continually having the state interfere in the matters of the society (Duelund, 2010). Habermas criticises the bourgeois for restricting people from entering the public sphere as a rule had been set that people with proper education and ownership of property could only enter (Duelund, 2010). With the emergence of the elite class, most of the bourgeois public sphere was closely linked to the aristocratic society. The public sphere, including museums, theatres and concerts, still showed links to the original bourgeois class (Duelund, 2010).

With the emergence of the bourgeois public sphere came an increase in the publications of literary texts written by the elite class and for the elite class. An example of such a literary book is Pamela, which became the best seller of the century (Duelund, 2010). The changes were not only seen in the field of literature but in architectural structures as well. The popular architectural style had disappeared to the extent that newly built houses did not have separate dining and drawing rooms (Duelund, 2010). Apart from these changes, a shift was seen in the way people interacted with one

another. A change was seen in the way the authors perceived their society and then projected it in their writings (Duelund, 2010). An intimate mutual relationship was observed between the privatised individuals who showed a keen interest in the human psyche and empathy (Duelund, 2010).

To this, Habermas adds that the actual role of the public sphere was to express the interests of civil society. Habermas claims that if one looks at the meaning of the public sphere, it can be seen that the public sphere was created for the public to come together and share their opinion. Habermas considers the concept of public opinion in light of the ideas presented by intellectuals like Hegel, Mill, Marx, Kant and Tocqueville. Hence, the term 'public sphere' was a domain in which matters of privacy concerns that were affecting the members of a society were to be shared so that solutions could be discussed. It is noticeable that with the passage of time, the bourgeois public sphere disintegrated due to economic and structural shifts. However, a significant aspect to be noted is that the public sphere was ruled by the social welfare democracies in which there was an ongoing competition between organisations that had conflict over interests and the public had been excluded from it.

The Significance Of Critical Theory:

Critical theory allows the members to conduct a reflection on the constructs of their society and their contributions towards knowledge (Held, 1980). It also encourages them to consider the proposed claims for the concepts of neutrality and its ability to hide the role knowledge takes on towards creating an environment of social arrangements that are unsatisfactory. The perceptual idea of Critical theory exhibits an opposition towards the evident claims directed at the social world (Held, 1980). These claims represent the idea that the prevalent structures show signs of being immutable. Furthermore, the theory looks into the possibilities of different views, which offer the chances for groups or individuals capable of aspiring for a high level towards freedom and truly attaining it (Held, 1980).

A detailed investigation of the concept of freedom leads the observer to believe that the inherent factors of social relations are possible to acquire. The theory, however, forwards the idea that it is in denial of the concept of power and class being the obvious and most general determinants of this social exclusion. This also relates to production since it is not the only factor other than power and class, on which history or society will solely rely (Held, 1980). In support of the points viewed by critical theory, an important aspect is that critical theory can provide judgments based on social arrangements and the ability to define the limits to accept any form of open dialogue with others. This view analyses the factors that can break the unjustified exclusion of political communities (Held, 1980). From an essential point of the theory, it envisages a model that abolishes the concept of object distinction and subjects, whereas applying emphasis on the available human needs and the sole purpose that determines the key elements that decide which knowledge is valuable and which is not (Held, 1980).

Habermasian Approach:

The Habermasian approach proved to be useful in promoting elements that were able to identify three essential interest areas distinctively. These three interest areas are directed towards technical interest, emancipatory interest, and practical interest. Further analysis of each of these respective interests revealed that,

- Professional interest is related towards the notion of establishing a base that conceptualises the power to extend control over elements such as society and nature.
- Emancipatory interest conveys the idea of locating and identifying social constraints and confinements and eradicating them over time.
- Practical interest promotes the notion for an individual to create an understanding based on the practice of establishing and maintaining communities.

By the critical theory and implementing the concepts onto the interests, it becomes understandable as to what role these interests play and their ability to contribute knowledge, provide a frame to evaluate the subject's method of analysis better and bring forth the difficulties of value-free knowledge. All points considered, the critical theory adds further to the argument that society will remain incomplete if it is found to be lacking the fundamental purpose of emancipatory needs.

Habermas's Contribution In The Field Of Philosophy:

Intellectuals all over the world believe that Habermas's most influential contribution to the field of philosophy has been through the formulation of the rationality theory. Habermas thinks that the best way to utilise human rationality is not merely by achieving one's own goals but by coming up with a way to build a community that is devoted to using communicative methods (Jürgen Habermas, 1984). Habermas believes in creating a community that lives in harmony and where people are open to public debate. By putting effort into making such a community, Habermas asserts that the members of a society will be exhibiting an excellent example of rational beings (Jürgen Habermas, 1984). Therefore, Habermas focused on securing an 'ideal speech scenario' to let the masses speak up and voice their concerns to obtain some solution for the issues that can be solved through rational debate (Jürgen Habermas, 1984).

In the realm of communicative rationality, a theory which stresses human rationality as an essential outcome that has been achieved through the procedure of affluent communication, Habermas asserts that humans are competent in gaining some speech that has undergone agreement (Jürgen Habermas, 1984). He also emphasises the fact that we as members of a society should work towards making a change in our surroundings by interacting with others openly and utilising our knowledge on different subjects instead of following the norms that the community has set out for the members

(Jürgen Habermas, 1984).

Habermas admits that the formulation of communicative rationality has been a significant achievement (Jürgen Habermas, 1984). Furthermore, Habermas asserts that his theory of rationality differs from the viewpoints presented by other rationalists as Habermas believes that rationality can only be located when used in spoken communication (Dallmayr, 1988). His theory is significant as it helps liberate humans from the constraints of society that have been imposed on them through the implementation of different ideologies (Dallmayr, 1988). It is also believed that aside from socially liberating people from the shackles of society, the theory also presents an adequate framework based on morality (Dallmayr, 1988). In addition to this, the social structure offered by the theory of rationality highlights the assertion that all forms of speech act lead to an end, which shows that the goal of shared understanding has been achieved (Dallmayr, 1988). It should be noted that the theory of rationality was formulated by using different theories, such as the social theory and moral theory, that had been presented by influential philosophers such as Jean Piaget, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Karl-Otto Apel and many more (Dallmayr, 1988).

Habermas's Contribution In The Field Of Law And Politics:

Habermas has been a devoted mentor to many and has taught at various institutes. Over the years, there has been a never-ending debate based on the link between law and religion (Modak-Truran, 1997). Intellectuals are of the view that the world is not an integrated whole anymore; it has been divided by differences based on metaphysical and religious viewpoints. They also believe that the law stands as a meaningless institute as it can keep the people together (Modak-Truran, 1997). Looking at the theories that have made a difference in the field of science subjects, it can be seen that the theory of communicative action has contributed significantly to the field of law and politics (Modak-Truran, 1997). Habermas claimed a form of democracy in which the constitution and laws are readily accessible to the public opinion. He was of the view that by utilising this form of democracy, the member of a society will be made aware of their interests in self-governance (Modak-Truran, 1997). By doing so, people will take responsibility for their actions and will cling to rational and logical debates. By allowing rational discussions to take place in the public sphere, society will become more humane and will be rid of class-related issues. Habermas claims that in order for the law to be functional in the present times, it needs to have a post-metaphysical justification as the Western world continues to become disenchanted with the passage of time (Modak-Truran, 1997). In such a society, the capabilities of human beings will be accepted and will also be put to good use. Furthermore, Habermas argues that by eliminating religious concepts and notions regarding existence and life, the law can be implemented in a society (Modak-Truran, 1997).

In the article Towards Reconstructing Historical Materialism, Habermas voices his concerns regarding Marxist perspectives. He asserts that the Marxist analysis of human evolution has been limited to

economic development only and human liberty has been entirely left out. Furthermore, Habermas argues that the Marxist school of thought had seen the advancement of human communities as occurring in a linear form, while Habermas says that human progress cannot be confirmed to go in a linear pattern as humans can show dynamism. Therefore, the progress of human societies should be thought of as a multi-dimensional and randomly occurring phenomenon.

Habermas's Contribution In The Field Of Education:

The impact of Habermas's immediate surroundings during his childhood has been reflected in his theories of rationality and communicative action. Being born in Germany during an era of National Socialism, Habermas was not allowed to leave his homeland like his predecessors had been (Terry, 1997). The first generation of the Frankfurt school had been allowed to leave Germany (Terry, 1997). However, during the time during which Habermas had been a part of the Frankfurt school, the movement based on National Socialism became an obstacle in Habermas's way. Habermas's work reflects the history of Germany and also Habermas's attempts to save whatever he could from the German Enlightenment project (Terry, 1997).

During the time during which Habermas was growing up, the German government had been suppressing the rights of its people, making them devoid of any free will and imposing their own rules on the citizens. Germany was enveloped in propaganda that was spreading lies and distorted ideologies, which were restricting people from living their lives the way they wanted (Terry, 1997). The treatment of the Nazi leadership has left an impact on many Germans, and Habermas's works are an example of the impact. He refers to the notions of freedom, truth and rationality through and through his concepts which highlights the impact of Nazi rule in Germany during the time he was growing up.

The oppression and propaganda of 1933-1945 have turned Habermas into the man he is now, willing to fight for the rights of fellow human beings and urging people to raise their voices and express their concerns in matters of public interest (Terry, 1997). Apart from the oppressive rule of the German government on its people, Habermas has also provided evidence of the policies concerned with the field of education. During the Nazi rule, the works of many influential writers had been banned in Germany such as Marx and Freud. Around the middle of the 1950s, Habermas took on the field of journalism, which provided him with the opportunity to pose questions and initiate debates about important matters that required immediate attention (Terry, 1997). His participation in debates continues to the present day, and he has been voicing the concerns of people on various matters that have so often been neglected by the Government.

Habermas has contributed significantly to the German newspapers, magazines and periodicals (Terry, 1997). His work has mostly been recognised outside German-speaking countries since he has always been criticising the way the Nazi rule and the German government had suppressed the rights of the people and brainwashed them into believing the distorted ideologies (Terry, 1997). If one goes

through Habermas's earlier works, it can be seen that he examined different concepts of knowledge in which he specified three areas, which are analytical knowledge, hermeneutic knowledge and critical knowledge. These three areas formulate a model and reflect the concepts of Kantian perspectives that were based on science, aesthetics and morality (Terry, 1997). These three areas of knowledge serve different types of human interests, such as the empirical interests of people can be served through the notions of science, which then comes under the field of analytical knowledge (Terry, 1997).

Furthermore, the interests in different contexts, such as historical and cultural contexts, are catered by hermeneutically driven knowledge. Lastly, the interest in the concept of freedom is similar to the core elements of knowledge (Terry, 1997). In addition to the above-mentioned examples, it becomes evident that the three areas of knowledge fall into the category of different discourses such as social sciences, natural sciences and psychology (Terry, 1997). While examining the types of expertise, Habermas has provided the key to analysing the education structures in which each type is said to be based on one of the aspects of knowledge. For instance, analytical knowledge includes material related to education, such as curriculum; hermeneutics comprises educational methodologies, such as praxis.

Lastly, critical modes include concepts that are responsible for raising questions regarding policies (Terry, 1997). If Habermas's perspectives regarding knowledge are to be considered, then it is evident from the theories that he treats knowledge as a cumulative phenomenon that involves data being assimilated at every level, which forms the basis for the next one. For instance, when analysing factual knowledge, the understanding of the concept is revealed, which then becomes a topic that needs to be critically examined (Terry, 1997). The critical analysis of factual knowledge can be related to what the students are led through in educational institutes. Also, if the methodology of teaching is to be examined, then it can be seen that the analytic element is prevalent in the way teachers share knowledge with students (Terry, 1997). The teaching methodologies are then categorised as the traditional approach that is used in knowledge. Moving on to the last area of knowledge, which is a hermeneutic method, it can be seen that this method is part of progressive philosophy (Terry, 1997).

Viewing teaching methods regarding psychological development that are achieved by every student, it can be seen that the process links back to Habermas's critical theory of society and also to the concepts presented by the first generation of critical theorists from the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research (Terry, 1997). The process of acquiring knowledge, be it analytical, hermeneutic or critical, reflects a learning process, and it is in this cognitive process that a link is seen between Habermas's concepts of knowledge and the change in his perspectives that happened at a later stage due to his remodelling of the idea into communicative action and interaction (Terry, 1997). A difference in the views of the earlier critical theorists and those of Habermas is evident from the way Habermas focused less on the psychological development of humans and more on the theories that had been implemented in the individuals of a society.

The impact of the German government on its citizens is prevalent in the works of Habermas (Terry,

1997). He could not forget the barbaric attitude of Nazi leadership towards the German citizens, and his views regarding such an oppressive rule can be observed in his writings (Terry, 1997). Habermas was unable to understand why such a large population would find a way to justify the actions of the tyrant rulers and accept the atrocities that had been brought down on them (Terry, 1997).

Habermas's notion of freedom and rationality seems to have risen out of the sufferings that he had seen during his childhood and left a profound impact on his psyche. Habermas asserts in his concept of rationality that the learning process of any society relies on the people who make up that society. Therefore, these processes should be considered to be of utmost importance so that any regression can be avoided from taking place in a society or a community (Terry, 1997).

Aside from the cognitive processes that play a crucial role in the development of society, Habermas points his reader's attention towards the regeneration of the social sphere in light of the struggles that are present between the social systems and the life world in which people live out their days. Habermas asserts that the function of the system is to colonise the life world (Terry, 1997). He views language as a means to gaining a rational consensus, which he considers to be the fundamental mode of social interaction. In addition to this, Habermas also points out that by aiming for social interaction, members of a society can avoid putting an end to any colonization from taking place within any system (Terry, 1997).

It is crucial to note that Habermas has drawn his communicative action theories from the works of Austin and Searle; Wittgenstein had influenced both of them; Habermas has been facing problems as the intellectuals are unable to differentiate between his theories of communicative action and the ideas based on sphere along with those that are focused on the notions of language (Terry, 1997).

Considering Habermas's concepts of language, it becomes evident that Habermas paid less attention to the structure of language and more to the practical use of speech regarding social interaction (Terry, 1997). Habermas's avoidance of linguistic competence shows that his work contradicts that of Noam Chomsky, which is focused on generative grammar. It is crucial to note that Habermas does not differentiate between practical issues or the questions of morality (Terry, 1997). The stance that Habermas takes on this notion leads groups like cultural relativists to raise awareness about the concept of universalism.

Habermas believes that if topics based on the notions of universalism are to be brought forward, then they should be supported by arguments, facts and figures that can make their existence understandable (Terry, 1997). By providing arguments to support such assumptions, Habermas believes that by critically analysing such concepts, the authenticity can be evaluated. It should be kept in mind that the apprehension of any subject matter is a fundamental component of language (Terry, 1997). The truth aspect, Habermas asserts, can be judged by analysing the linguistic expressions of the speaker. Also, the way people utilise linguistic patterns to commence communicative action can show the truthfulness of their arguments (Terry, 1997).

Furthermore, it should be noted that when initiating a communicative interaction, the participants

should make sure that they all refer to the same level of language. By doing so, they can all refer to facts and figures to argue on any subject so that every individual is familiar with the topic of discussion and is prepared to comment on it with true intentions and sufficient knowledge (Terry, 1997). Habermas asserts that people should not use illogical statements to prove themselves right. Nor should people try to force people or persuade them into accepting the comments uttered during any debate (Terry, 1997). Habermas prefers being rational over everything and urges people to be logical when asked to take part in any debate so that the debate reaches a conclusion and, in doing so, presents a solution to important matters (Terry, 1997). Habermas believes that if everyone used fair means when taking part in any argument and provided sufficient proof for every case, only then can an ideal speech situation be achieved, which is the whole point behind his theory (Terry, 1997).

Moving onto Habermas's concept of a public sphere, it should be noted that Habermas does not consider the state to be independent. He regards the state as a nonresponsive agent as it does not deal with the interests of its people (Terry, 1997). Habermas voices his concerns and suggests that the state and the citizens need to have a channel of communication to share their interests and concerns regarding essential matters. The channel of communication created by the state and the citizens is referred to as the public sphere. The public sphere includes a range of informal associations and also receives coverage by the mass media. In the public sphere, members of a society are allowed to bring up any social concern, which is then formally considered in the political system (Terry, 1997). Gordon Graham has structured his philosophical reflections on the concepts of Habermas, saying that there does exist a never-ending tension between public opinion as it is made practical by the inclusion of pressure groups as they only join the public sphere for the sake of gaining publicity to get their interests approved (Emden & Midgley, 2013). Graham questions the function of public opinion and its rational authority since people use it for personal reasons instead of sharing their views regarding matters that concern the whole public (Emden & Midgley, 2013).

Conclusion

In conclusion, Habermas's works have not been limited to one discourse only but to different fields of sciences ranging from philosophy to social sciences, natural sciences, law and politics, education, psychology and many others. Habermas has influenced many generations of intellectual thinkers across the world. Old and young alike have been impacted by his concept of rationality and lifeworld when it comes to creating a unified public sphere. Habermas's experiences while living in Germany changed his perception of the way the power structures worked and motivated him to strive to create a better society that would not oppress its members. Liberating people from social restraints has been Habermas's goal throughout his professional career. He continues to inspire people with his works based on rationality and hopes to achieve a society that will allow people to come together and interact so that social issues can be brought to an end. Habermas has a firm belief in the human capabilities to change society and take control of what is rightfully theirs.

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