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President Obama's Marxist Mindset towards the Middle Class: 2010 to 2016

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Dedication

To my beloved family and my dear husband, I dedicate this humble work.

Acknowledgments

First, I thank Allah for granting me hope and energy to prepare this modest work.

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Mr.Seddiki Mohamed Cheriff for his support, advice, readiness and patience, as well as to all teachers of the department of English, who contributed to shaping my experience. My special thanks go to Mr.Afkir who struggled to give us further chance and opportunity to continue our studies at Laghouat University. Finally, I extend my thanks to all teachers and administrators who granted their time to fulfill this modest work.

Abstract

This study is concerned with the field of American civilization. It is an attempt to explore Obama's implementation of Marxism in his economic policies to serve the interest of the American middle class. This humble work tends to show how president Obama has exceptionally cared about the middle class which. Exploring a chain of events, or rather than decisions, could help getting an idea about how Obama's economic policies work for the interest of the American middle class. And during my experience in this study, I came with the conclusion that Americans might be misunderstood Obama's intentions towards them. He might be really caring for the middle class.

تهتم هذه الدراسة بمجال الحضارة الأمريكية. فهي محاولة لاستكشاف تنفيذ أوباما للماركسية في سياساته الاقتصادية بما يخدم مصالح الطبقة الوسطى في الولايات المتحدة. هذا العمل المتواضع يميل إلى إظهار كيف الرئيس أوباما يهتم بشكل استثنائي حول الطبقة الوسطى. عبر استكشاف سلسلة من الأحداث، أو بدلا من ذلك القرارات التي يمكن أن تساعد في الحصول على فكرة عن كيفية عمل سياسات أوباما الاقتصادية لمصلحة الطبقة الوسطى الأمريكية. وخلال تجربتي في هذه الدراسة، جئت مع استنتاج مفاده أن الأميركيين قد اساءو. فهم نوايا أوباما تجاههم. فهو يهتم للطبقة المتوسطة.

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Marxism is a movement that was founded by Karl Marx which fights for self-emancipation of the working class. It aims at eliminating all forms of Bourgeoisie domination. Karl Marx focuses on the idea that social life is based on conflicts of interest. The most important conflict is that between the capitalists who own and control the means of production in a society and the proletariat who sell their labor power in the market place of capitalism.

According to Marxist class theory, the individual's position in the class hierarchy depends on his or her role in the production process. Marx's analysis of class struggles focuses on the relationship between men and their relative positions in regard to the means of production.

Marxism had its impact on many nations. The United States of America is one of those nations. As a result of the rise of Marxism, America as a nation has faced a revolutionary warfare situation for most of the twentieth century. During that period, the revolutionary forces of Marxism have sought to change the social structure of American society.

The Marxist mentality had permeated many American minds in the 21st century, one of those minds is the US president Barack Obama. His early life experiences prove how Marxist principles flowed into his head. He applied those principles in his economic policies. Obama had an idea that the higher class did not succeed by their own, but with the help of the lower classes. He pushed a plan to increase middle class benefits. That is why he proposed a new type budget for the year 2016. The budget aimed at strengthening the American middle class and helping the hard-working families get ahead in a time of economic growth.

The main reason for selecting this topic lays behind my enthusiasm to investigate the principles of Marxism in Barack Obama's administration, especially in his economic policies, and how those policies affected the American middle class.

General Introduction

It is highly questioned in this study that some of Obama's economic policies were considered as an economical lift, while other policies were refused by the American citizens. Since most of the Americans are considered as middle class, Obama had good intentions toward them. But yet most of the American middle class believe that he was trying to eliminate them rather than help them.

The research hypothesizes that president Obama's main concern is to switch the focus from the rich to the middle class and small businesses. He imposed new policies and raised the funds of the different fields that work for the benefits of the middle class.

In the light of this analytic approach, this dissertation tends to discuss the adoption of Marxism in Obama's economic policies and their impact on the American middle class. It is a set of three chapters. In the first chapter, the rise of Marxism in America is discussed through defining Marxism and Marxist theories in relation to Karl Marx's class theory. Concerning the second chapter, it discusses the role of Marxism in the early life of Obama and its enforcement in his economic policies. It also explores Obama's proposal for the focus on 'middle-class economics'. The third chapter is devoted to examine the Impact of middle-class economics on the Americans as well as their reaction toward it. Furthermore, it reveals Obama's plan to support the middle class and small businesses in the future.

I. Introduction:

This chapter aims at discussing the concept of Marxism through three theories published by Karl Marx. Those theories were the main principles to show how societies transferred from feudal system to capital one and that capitalism is a destructive one. Also, this chapter focuses on class system in relation to Marxism followed by three critics on Marxist theories of class structure written by three famous theorists.

The scope of this chapter is concerned with the existence of Marxism and Socialism in the nineteenth and twenties centuries. This chapter tries to show an image about the contribution of Marxist principles in the United States government, particularly during Barack Obama's presidency. It tries to answer two questions: what are the principles that Marxism stands for in its relation to class system? And how did Marxism engage in the US history?

II. The Early Days of Marxism: An Overview

Marxism has its main intellectual origins in German philosophy, English political economy and French utopian socialism. First, Karl Marx ¹learned a way of thinking about the world, in all its complexity from the German philosopher, Hegel². It is called 'dialectics'. Second, Marx also was provided with an approximation of his labor theory of value by the British economists, Adam Smith ³and David Ricardo⁴. Finally, Marx caught a glimpse of a happier future that lay beyond capitalism. It was because of the industrial revolution which produced much poverty as it did wealth, Marxism was formed⁵.

¹Marx (1818-1883): A German philosopher, revolutionary socialist and the father of Marxism. (<http://www.biography.com/people/karl-marx-9401219>)

²Georg.W.F.Hegel (1770-1831): A German philosopher and one of the creators of the German Idealism.(<http://www.britannica.com/biography/Georg-Wilhelm-Friedrich-Hegel>)

³Adam Smith (1723-1790): A Scottish social philosopher and political economist. (<http://www.biography.com/people/adam-smith-9486480>)

⁴David Ricardo (1772-1823) : An English economist. His Laissez-Faire doctrine was typified in his law of wages, which stated that all attempts to improve the real income of workers were futile. (<http://www.britannica.com/biography/David-Ricardo>)

⁵Ollman Berttel, What is Marxism ? A Bird's-Eye-View, p12 New York, Red Hot publication, 1982. Print.

Marxism is essentially Marx's analysis of two classes, the capitalists, who own the productive resources, and the workers or the proletariat who must work in order to survive. There are three main theories that make up this analysis: the theory of alienation, the labor theory of value and the materialist conception of history⁶.

II.1 The Theory of Alienation:

The specific theories of Karl Marx are understood as answers to his questions about the nature and development of capitalism. The theory of alienation contains an answer to Marx's question 'How do the ways in which people earn their living effect their bodies, minds and daily lives?' Marx's answer to this question is that workers in capitalist society do not own the machines, raw materials and factories they use in their work. These are owned by the capitalists to whom the workers must sell their 'Labor power' in return for a wage⁷.

The system of selling worker's labor in return for a wage shows four relations that lie at the core of Marx's theory of alienation. First, the worker is alienated from his or her productive activity. This means that the worker has no part in deciding on making his or her work. The capitalist, also sets the conditions and speed of work and even has the right to decide whether to hire or fire the workers. Second, the worker is alienated from the benefits of his or her productive activity and has no control over what is made or what happens to it. Third, the worker is alienated from other human beings with competition and shared indifference replacing most forms of cooperation. This applies to relations between individuals inside each class as everyone tries to survive as best he or she can. Finally, the worker is alienated from the different potential for creativity and community we all share just because we are human beings. Step-by-step, workers lose their ability to develop the finer qualities which belong to them as members of the human species through labor which alienates them from their activity, product

⁶Ibid., p13

⁷Ibid.,p15

and other people. The cutting of the relationships leaves the individual physically weakened, mentally confused, isolated and nearly powerless⁸.

The necessary conditions for reproducing the worker's alienation had been constructed unknowingly by his own. The world that has been made by the worker reappears as someone else's property which means that the worker only can access to that property by selling his labor power and engaging in more alienated labor. Marx's main examples of alienation are brought from the life of workers but also, other classes are alienated in a way that they are directly affected by these relations, and that includes capitalism⁹.

II.2 The Labor Theory of Value:

Marx's labor theory of value is initially concerned with the basic problem of why goods have prices of kind. In capitalism¹⁰, the distribution of the products takes place through the medium of markets and prices. While in feudalism¹¹, the head master declares that he has the feudal right to have some part of what is produced by his serfs, and his serfs would consume the rest of their output directly. In both of capitalism and feudalism, most of the products cannot be bought or sold, and therefore, does not have any price. Marx highlighted on the separation of the worker from the means of production and the sale of his or her labor power that this separation makes necessary. In selling the worker's labor power, he or she gives up all claims to the product of his or her labor. The products become available to exchange in the market, while workers can consume that portion of their products by buying it from the market with the wages they are paid for their labor power¹².

⁸Ibid., p16

⁹Ibid., p20

¹⁰A way of organizing economy so that the things that are used to make and transport products such as land, oil, etc are owned by individual people and companies rather than by the government. (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/capitalism>).

¹¹A social system that existed in Europe during the middle ages in which people worked and fought for nobels who gave them protection and the use of land in return. (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/feudalism>)

¹²Ollman Bertell. *Opicit.*, p21

Value stands for the whole set of conditions which are necessary for a product to have any price at all. That's why Karl Marx calls value a product of capitalism. The difference between the amount of exchange and use of value created by workers and the amount returned to them as wages is an aspect of value which is called 'Surplus-Value'¹³. As any other commodity, the worker's labor power is bought by the capitalist and that worker is put to work for eight or more hours a day. The worker can make products equivalent to his or her wage in five hours, while in the remaining working hours, the amount of the produced wealth remains in the hands of the capitalist. This surplus which is controlled by the capitalists is the basis of their power over the worker and the rest of society. Marx's labor theory of value explains the struggle between workers and capitalists over the size of the surplus value. The workers seek to protect themselves from being replaced by machinery because of the competition among capitalists, while the capitalists try to extend the length of the working day and speed up the pace of work¹⁴.

The amount of surplus value is also considered as a source of capitalism's greatest weakness. Only part of the products is returned to them as wages and the workers cannot buy a large amount of those products. With time, and under the pressure from the growth of the total product, the capitalists fail to find new markets. This leads to crises of "overproduction" and capitalism's classic contradiction, in which people are forced to live on too little because they produce too much¹⁵.

II.3 The Theory of the Materialist Conception of History:

It is based on Hegel's idea that history occurs through a clash of opposing forces. Marx accepted this notion, but refused Hegel's idealism¹⁶. In Hegel's point of view, Idealism meant that the finite world is a reflection of mind, which alone is

¹³ Marxian economic concept that professed to explain the instability of the capitalist system.

¹⁴ Ollman Bertell. *Opicrit.*, p25.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p27.

¹⁶ www.age-of-the-sage.org/philosophy/history/marx_historical_materialism.html

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truly real¹⁷. Marx thought that historically and socially specific ideologies prevented people from seeing the material conditions of their lives clearly.¹⁸

In the funeral of Karl Marx, Engels¹⁹ described the theory of the Materialist Conception of History as a discovery of the law of evolution in human history. And he declared that Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history just as Darwin discovered the law of evolution in organic nature. This means that like Darwin, Marx continued the previous works of other people.²⁰

Marx analyses history on the basis of the difference between the means of production (land, natural resources, etc) and the social relations of production. He observed that the mode of production changes in any given society and that European societies had progressed from a feudal mode of production to a capitalist mode of production. Marx thought that over time, capitalists would invest more in new technologies and less in labor.²¹

Karl Marx believed that production would now be directed to serving social needs instead of maximizing private profit through democratic planning. The human goal of abolishing alienation is the final one, toward which socialist society would constantly build. Marx called the attainment of this goal “communism”²².

III. Marxism and Class System:

Class system and the struggle between classes are viewed as the engine of change in the structure of society. A class is defined by the ownership of property according to Karl Marx. This ownership gives a person the power of excluding others from the property and using it for personal purposes. There are three classes

¹⁷www.britannica.com/topic/Absolute-Idealism.

¹⁸www.age-of-the-sage.org/philosophy/history/marx_historical_materialism.html.

¹⁹Friedrich Engels (1820-1895): A German socialist philosopher and the closest collaborator of Karl Marx in the foundation of modern communism.
(<http://www.britannica.com/biography/Friedrich-Engels>)

²⁰www.marxists.org/archive/hardcastle/materialist_conception.htm.

²¹www.age-of-the-sage.org/philosophy/history/marx_historical_materialism.html.

²²OllmanBertell, opicit.

of society: the bourgeoisie who own the means of production and whose source of income is a profit, landowners whose income is rent, and the proletariat who own their labor and sell it for a wage²³.

Class is a theoretical and formal relationship among individuals. For Marx, individuals form classes to the extent that their interests engage them in a struggle with the opposite class. The struggle between classes was initially limited to individual factories. Then class consciousness was increased, common interests and policies were organized, and the use of class struggle occurred for political power which pushed classes to become political forces²⁴.

There are six elements in Karl Marx's view of class struggle: first, classes are authority relationships based on property ownership. Second, a class defines grouping of individuals with shared life situations thus interests. Third, classes are naturally antagonistic by virtue of their interests. Fourth, imminent within modern society is the growth of two antagonistic classes and their struggle which eventually absorbs all social relations. Fifth, political organization and power is an instrumentality of class struggle and reigning ideas are its reflection. Finally, structural change is a consequence of the class struggle²⁵.

Marxist theories of class structure were criticized by many theorists. Three main theorists are; Nicos Poulantzas²⁶, Erik Olin Wright²⁷, and Guglielmo Carchedi²⁸.

²³Rummel.R.J. Understanding Conflicts and War ; Vol3: Conflict in Prespective, chapter5, BeverlyHills, California, 1977. Print.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶NicosPolantzas (1936-1979): Was a formative and Neo-Marxisttheorist of politics. (http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Nicos_Poulantzas.aspx).

²⁷Wright.E.O 1947 : Professor of sociology at the university of Wisconsin, Madison and one of the leading scholars of Marxian class analysis. (http://www.asanet.org/about/presidents/Erik_Olin_Wright.cfm).

²⁸Carchedi. G :A senior researcher in the depaetment of economics at the university of Amsterdam. His previous books include 'Marx and Non-Equilibrium Economics'.

Nicos Poulantzas' is considered one of the theorists who have exercised great influence over the development of Marxist class analysis. In his theory of the new petty bourgeoisie, his analysis of class rests on many basic ideas. First, Poulantzas argues that classes cannot be defined apart from class struggle. This emphasizes on the relationship between classes that refer to a system of the antagonistic relations that form the social division of labor. Second, classes are structurally determined. They exist independent in the consciousness of individuals. Within the social division of labor and with the identity of the social agents who occupy such places, class analysis is concerned with the structure of "empty places". Third, the principal role is played by the social relations of production. Poulantzas differentiates the Marxist theory of class from other definitions of classes that identify them as social relations of distribution and that derive them from technical organization of production or in other words occupational categories. Finally, Poulantzas maintains that political and ideological relations are also part of the structural determination of class. There are three criteria in Poulantzas' model of class structure; economic, political, and ideological. These three criteria define the boundary between proletarian and non proletarian class positions²⁹.

Poulantzas rejects the criterion of non ownership of the means of production or wage-labor as a sufficient condition of proletarian class position. In order to determinate relations of exploitation, ownership or no ownership of the means of production acquires significance only insofar as they correspond. He defined productive labor narrowly to include that labor directly produces surplus value through the production of material commodities.³⁰

Poulantzas defined the new petty bourgeoisie as the salaried workers who are not exploited in the form of the dominant capitalist economic relation or who participate in the domination of the working class either politically as managers and supervisors or ideologically as mental workers. He concludes that these

²⁹Burris Val. "Class Structure and Political Ideology". *Critical Sociology*. 25(1991):310-313. University of Oregon. Print. Accessed in 24.09. 2015.

³⁰Ibid., p311.

intermediate positions and the traditional petty bourgeoisie (small shopkeepers, artisans) are both part of a single heterogeneous class “the petty bourgeoisie”. The two groups are similarly located in relation to the dominant class antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Within the class struggle and this situation, it results a rough ideological unity which is characterized by competitive individualism, reformism, and a belief in the neutrality of the state as an arbiter of competing class interests. According to Poulantzas, this ideological affinity is strong enough to justify placing both the traditional and the new petty bourgeoisie in the same class. Like Poulantzas, Erik Wright focuses on the basic theoretical premises of the Marxist conception of class.³¹

Another theorist who introduced the theory of contradictory class locations is Erik Olin Wright. For him, Classes are defined in relational rather than gradational terms and the technical organization of economic relations. They are determined by the social organization of economic relations. Also, rather than the social relations of exchange, classes are defined by the social relations of production. Unlike Poulantzas, Wright eliminates political and ideological relations from the structural determination of class position.³²

Wright defines class positions in three economic criteria; control over investments and resource allocation, control over the physical means of production and control over labor. The first one designates the relations of real economic ownership while the second and the third ones comprise what Wright calls the economic relations of possession. The fundamental class division between capital and labor is seen as an antagonistic relation in whom the capitalist class occupies a dominant position and the working class a subordinate position.³³

According to Wright there are three groups of contradictory locations. First, like workers, managers and supervisors are excluded from control over

³¹Ibid, p312.

³²Ibid, p313.

³³Ibid, p215.

investments and resource allocation, and like capitalists, they exercise a degree of control over the physical means of production and over the labor of others. They occupy a contradictory location between the working class and the capitalist class. Second, semi-autonomous employees are excluded from both the control over investment and over the labor of others like the working class but they retain a degree of control over their immediate physical means of production within the labor process. They occupy a contradictory location between the working class and the petty bourgeoisie. Finally, small employers employ and control a minimal amount of labor power. They occupy a contradictory location between the petty bourgeoisie and the capitalist class. These groups form a combination of characteristics of two classes and they are viewed as being objectively torn between two opposing class locations.³⁴

Wright's notion of "contradictory class locations" captures the ambiguity of these class locations as well as the complexity of their relationship to other classes. According to Wright, classes must be analyzed in terms of the social relations of production rather than the technical organization of production. He also maintains that classes must be defined in relational rather than gradational terms in order to grasp the class contradictions which motivate social change. Then he defines classes in terms of forms of control that are inherently gradational.³⁵

Autonomy is defined by Wright as a technical relationship between workers and their physical means of production. He aims at specifying any social relationship between those who possess a certain level of autonomy and those who do not. The criterion of autonomy is a gradational characteristic. Most of the workers retain at least some control over their immediate instruments of production. Wright proposes that sufficient autonomy exists to warrant exclusion from the working class whenever an employee exercises some control over what is produced and not over how it is produced.³⁶

³⁴Ibid, p316.

³⁵Ibid, p317.

³⁶Ibid, p317.

The last theorist is Guglielmo Carchedi, and his theory is “the new middle class”. He defines class position in three different types of social relations. First, ownership relations differentiate those who own the means of production from no owners. Carchedi refers to real economic ownership as the power to dispose of the means of production. Second, expropriation relations differentiate those who expropriate surplus labor from those who are expropriated of surplus labor. Carchedi does not distinguish productive labor from unproductive labor for the purpose of defining classes. The two are treated as equivalent forms of exploitation. Third, functional relations distinguish those who perform the function of capital from those who perform the function of the collective worker. Carchedi defines the first one as the control and surveillance of the labor process and the second one as the production of use-values either material or nonmaterial within a complex and differentiated labor process. These three aspects are viewed by Carchedi as bound together in a relation in whom the ownership element is dominant over the expropriation and functional elements.³⁷

According to Carchedi’s criteria, foremen and other low-level supervisors for example would be placed within the new middle class while many technocrats and planners would remain as proletarians as long as they do not directly supervise the labor of others. The class position of nonsupervisory professional and technical workers is therefore something of an exception in Carchedi’s conception of class structure.³⁸

IV. Marxism in the United States of America:

Socialism³⁹ was brought to the United States by the immigrants. In 1848, the United States was still erasing the Mexican war⁴⁰, while the native radicals had

³⁷Ibid, p 320.

³⁸Ibid, p321.

³⁹A way of organizing a society in which major industries are owned and controlled by the government rather than by individual people and companies. (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/socialism>).

⁴⁰The war—in which U.S. forces were consistently victorious—resulted in the United States’ acquisition of more than 500,000 square miles (1,300,000 square km) of Mexican territory extending westward from the Rio Grande to the Pacific Ocean. (<http://www.britannica.com/event/Mexican-American-War>).

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risen up against the imperialist policy. In that year, Karl Marx and Freidrich Engels published 'the Communist Manifesto'. It provided an introduction to the Marxist theory of 'historical materialism'. In the United States, many of the insurgents fled to German communities. The German Ferdinand Lassalle was the socialist leader. Karl Marx had his followers, but Lassalle was more popular than him. (Paul Buhle, 1987)⁴¹

In 1875, the German Social Democratic party⁴² became the largest party in the new German empire and its progress was followed in the German-American press. Socialism was not achieving success in the United States until Germans were followed by other Eastern European immigrant's waves. Their slowness in realizing social democracy may have led them to become the core of U.S Socialism.⁴³

During the American Civil War, Karl Marx has his own point of view about it. In January 1861 and after the election of the republican candidate Abraham Lincoln, Marx wrote a letter to Engels saying that in his opinion, the biggest things that were happening in the world that day were on one hand the movement of the slaves in America started by the death of John Brown⁴⁴, and on the other the movement of the serfs in Russia. Marx focused on the conflict from the economic development of the nation to the actions of political and military leaders.⁴⁵

Marxism also contributed in women's liberation in the United States. Marxism rejected any link that binds women to the family and the home. In Marxism, women's emancipation is considered as an essential principle in society.

⁴¹Buhle Paul, *Marxism in the United States: Remapping the History of the American Left*, p29, London, 1987.

⁴² Germany's oldest political party and one of the country's two main parties. (<http://www.britannica.com/topic/Social-Democratic-Party-of-Germany>).

⁴³Buhle Paul, opicit p49.

⁴⁴A leader of revolutionary abolitionists, both white and blacks, who attacked and seized the military arsenal at Harpers Ferry in 1859. (<http://www.biography.com/people/john-brown-9228496#early-life>).

⁴⁵Schraffenberger Donny. "Karl Marx and the American Civil War". *International Socialist Review*. Issue 80: features. 2013. Print. Accessed in 10.04.2016.

Under the same conditions as men, women are to be thrust into public life and collective production.⁴⁶

Women's liberation became a major revolution during the twentieth century in the United States. Its main purpose was to free women from the discrimination in the civil society and the political legislation. Nikolai Lenin a disciple of Karl Marx supported the ideology of urging women to revolt against men who discriminate them. Women's liberation was considered as a part of the struggle for the creation of a classless society.⁴⁷

Marxism continued to permeate in the United State government until the elections of 2008, when barrack Hussein Obama was elected as a president of the United States. At that time he made a statement in which he said that they were days away from fundamentally transforming the United States of America.

Obama is considered as a Marxist-socialist leader. The ideology of Marxism and Socialism drilled into his head by his grandparents, his family, his friends, and his teachers who espoused to the ideology.

V. Conclusion:

Marxism is supposed to be series of political, economic and social theories which include the belief that the struggle between social classes is a major force in history and that there should eventually be a society in which there are no classes. But class conflict existed in societies until the current day. In the United States, there still exist the Marxist principles in its government. Especially in Obama's administration and class division occurs in the form of poor, middle, and rich

⁴⁶Fr. Hardon. John A., S. J. "The Influence of Marxism in the United States Today". The Real Presence Association. Vol2(2003).Father John A.Hardon, S.J.Archives. print. Accessed in 01.05.2016.

⁴⁷Ibid.

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classes. Therefore, the Marxist Obama chose the middle class to apply his Marxist principle on.

I. Introduction:

The previous chapter has shown a discussion of Marxist theories: Alienation, Labor theory value, and the Materialist Conceptions of history. Also it has explored Marx's class theory and the inclusion of Marxist principles in the United States' history in general and policies in particular. This chapter tends to examine the influence of Marxism on the president of the United States Barack Obama. This chapter also discusses Obama's implementation of Karl Marx's ten-point platform of his "*The Communist Manifesto*" in his economic policies. Furthermore, this chapter examines Obama's focus on middle-class economics and his future intentions to step up the living and working conditions if not creating a 'bourgeoisie'. It is hypothesized in this chapter that president Obama was trying to implement Marxist principles in the United States' government through middle-class economics.

II. The Notion of Marxism in Obama:

Marxism has been a major influence in modern American liberalism⁴⁸ since the 1960s and has played a large role in president Obama's life. In investigating Obama's past, it is advisable to find out how Marxist principles developed, rose to prominence, in Obama's mindset.

Returning to Obama's background, Obama's mother Stanley Ann Dunham was a Marxist. She attended a radical communist-leaning high school where the teachers forced the students to read and learn Karl Marx's "*The Communist Manifesto*"⁴⁹. Obama said of his mother:

⁴⁸ Modern American liberalism is the dominant version of liberalism in the United States. It combines liberal ideas of civil liberty and equality with support for social justice and a mixed economy. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_liberalism_in_the_United_States)

⁴⁹ Wilson Hack, "Marxist Influences : Barack Obama's Childhood and Adolescence". Hackwilson. 11-03-2012. Print. Accessed in 15-01-2016.

“She was the dominant figure in my formative years ... The values she taught me continue to be my touch stone when it comes to how I go about the world of politics”.

Unlike his mother, Obama's father didn't play a major role in his life. His maternal grandfather, Stanley Dunham, with whom he lived much of his childhood in Hawaii, was a communist sympathizer. The Dunhams used to attend a church called “the Little Red Church on the Hill” where they were taught liberal theology and adopted communism. In the Rush Limbaugh show Obama Said:

“We're not making huge amounts of money. God bless folks successful. My mom, my grandparents, the only thing they didn't like is when they felt like folks at the top were taking advantage of their position and not following the same rules as everybody else and keeping other folks down. And we don't want an economy in which some are being treated differently than others”⁵⁰.

Obama's quote describes what Karl Marx outlined in his “the Communist Manifesto”. Karl Marx believed that capitalism is a destructive system and a proletariat revolution must be created. This means that the bourgeoisie and the proletariat which both identify class-separated economics are struggling to exploit each other. This struggle would probably end with the rise of the proletariat class.

Another communist who influenced Obama is Frank Marshall Davis. In his “*Dreams from my Father*”, Obama describes Davis as a “mentor”, and one he could always look to for answers. Davis was a poet whose work drew on and put a personal stamp on many of the trends in black poetry of the 1930s and 1940s. He was also an active member of the communist party of the USA.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

It doesn't take much analysis to conclude that Obama adheres to Marxist ideology. He uses Marxist rhetoric in his speeches. An interview was made on Friday, July 13, 2010 with him in the Rush Limbaugh Show which. It revealed the influence of the Marxist ideology on Obama's thinking. Obama said that if anyone had been successful, he or she did not get there on his or her own. He also believed that no one got there on his or her own. He said that he was always struck by people who think "Well, it must be because I was just so smart!" He added that there are a lot of smart people out there and it must be because he worked harder than everybody else. At last he said that if someone was successful, somebody along the line gave him or her some help⁵².

After the Rush Limbaugh Show interview with Obama, Americans thought that Obama doesn't love America. Rush said that before Marx there was no such thing as class-driven economics, and that without equivocation, this man does not hate this country. And that Obama is trying to achieve the American dream. Obama means that the bourgeoisie class did not stand up alone. The proletariat class contributed in its success. This takes us back to Marxist theory which shows that classes are interrelated and there should be no classes in societies.⁵³ It had been noticed that Obama applied those Marxist principles in many of his economic policies.

III. The Implementation of Marxist Theories in Obama's Administration:

Obama adopted Marxist theories in his policies including the ten-point platform of Marx's plan. This platform is included in chapter two of Marx's book "*The Communist Manifesto*". It is considered as the main principle to socialize an economy. This principle has been implemented in the United States. The following lines assert the interpretation of Marx's ten-point platform in Obama's policies.

⁵²Reynolds Jeff. "The Emperor Has No Clothes-Obama's Marxist Ideology Revealed Again". FreedomWorks. 17-07-2012. Print. Accessed in 12-11-2015.

⁵³ Ibid.

Team Obama has blocked the development of domestic energy supplies through controlling over massive tracts of federally owned land and limiting American citizens from drilling in American waters. This policy refers to Marx's "State control of territory".

Although Obama raised taxes on "the rich", still the top 1% of earners pay almost as much of the federal income tax as the bottom 95% of taxpayers⁵⁴. Obama also reinstated federal inheritance taxes and proposed raising them by reducing the dollar so that the tax kicks in without allowing that amount to be included into inflation⁵⁵. These two policies are the implementation of Marx's "Progressive income taxes" and "Abolition of inheritance".

In 2010, Obama won the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act. It obliges foreign financial institutions to provide information to the Internal Revenue Service about Americans' offshore holdings⁵⁶. This policy refers to Marx's "Confiscation of the property of emigrants and rebels".

Obama has found a way to accelerate the centralization of credit in the hands of the state. This refers to the 2010 Dodd-Frank bill⁵⁷. Obama supported its content and implemented it in an aggressive way. The purpose of Dodd-Frank was to reduce dangerous degrees of financial leverage. The larger import of the bill is the way that increases the government's political leverage over a wide range of financial firms. President Obama, Dodd and other supporters of the bill assured the Americans that this law would protect them from the financial fallout of major bankruptcies by authorizing federal regulators to shut down financial institutions when they start to fail or to bail them out. It seems that the Obama administration

⁵⁴Perry J. Mark, "The top 1% of US taxpayers pay almost as much in federal income taxes as the entire bottom 95%, and half of that bottom group paid no taxes at all in 2010," Carpe Diem blog, December 27, 2012, print Accessed in 10-09-2015.

⁵⁵<http://www.investmentnews.com/article/20130411/FREE/130419987#>

⁵⁶ Hendrickson Mark, "Obama and Marx's Ten-Point Platform (Part 1)". FrontPage MAG. 30-07-2013. Print. Accessed in 05-09-2015.

⁵⁷The term Dodd-Frank refers to a comprehensive and complicated piece of financial regulation born out of the Great Recession of 2008. It was named after Senator Christopher J. Dodd (D-CT) and U.S. Representative Barney Frank (D-MA), who were the sponsors of the legislation. (<http://www.investopedia.com/terms/d/dodd-frank-financial-regulatory-reform-bill.asp>)

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is moving in the direction not only of total financial control over financial institutions, but over all of the individuals, too⁵⁸. This refers to Marx's "Centralization of the country's financial system in the hands of the state."

Obama involved government into the auto industry. He wishes he could force the Americans to convert to "green transportation," such as electric cars and biofuels. In the area of communication, team Obama has attempted to control conservative media outlets like Fox News. They suggested reviving the so-called "fairness doctrine"⁵⁹ and expressed hostility toward free speech and seeking to use planning to shape and limit the public⁶⁰. This refers to Marx's "State control of means of communication and transportation".

Obama has moved to focus on control of health care and insurance. He selected Chief Executive Officer of American automobile companies. He also worked hard to increase government power over the energy industry through his green energy subsidies⁶¹. This refers to Marx's "Increase state control over means of production."

Obama has done his best to strengthen labor unions. And by securing a large expansion of AmeriCorps and winning passage of his Serve America Act, he has raised the number of Americans working for Uncle Sam⁶². This refers to Marx's "Establishment of workers' armies."

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has launched a plan to change where some people live to achieve an indefinite goal of a more even racial distribution of the population. In Brian Sussman's book, *Eco-Tyranny*, there is a part about an administrative order that Obama signed in October, 2009 that

⁵⁸Hendrickson Mark. Opicit.

⁵⁹It was a policy of the United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC), introduced in 1949, that required the holders of broadcast licenses both to present controversial issues of public importance and to do so in a manner that was—in the Commission's view—honest, equitable, and balanced. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fairness_Doctrine)

⁶⁰Hendrickson Mark, Opicit.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²A personification of the government or people of the U.S.: represented as a tall, lean man with white chin whiskers, wearing a blue tailcoat, red-and-white-striped trousers, and a top hat with a band of stars. (<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/uncle-sam>)

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would divide the country into sectors where all humans would be herded into urban hubs while most of the land would be returned to a natural state upon which humans would only be allowed to tread lightly. Obama wants to concentrate on urban life while Karl Marx wants equal distribution of the human population between town and country, but both want to control where people live⁶³. This refers to Marx's "Control over where people live".

Schools are controlled by the government. The target of this point is to control over how and what people think. That is why George Orwell⁶⁴ featured "Newspeak" which is the resection of truth and reason by distorting the meaning of concepts. Obama has done more to centralize control over education. In Washington, he has nationalized the student loan market. Instead siding with teachers' union monopolists, Obama has tried to limit school choice. In his 2012 state of the Union address, he called for additional funds for new federal education programs, including obligatory nationwide schooling for everyone up to age eighteen, regardless of aptitude, interest or willingness⁶⁵. This refers to Marx's "Education for all children in public" or governmentally controlled schools.

President Obama believed that applying Marxism in his economic policies would probably work for the interest of the American middle class which made him call for a focus on it.

IV. Obama's Visions about Middle-Class Economics:

Before going too deep in Obama's focus on middle-class economics, a major campaign has been done to identify who belongs to the middle class. Many public opinion polls were done to ask the Americans whether they identify themselves as middle-class or not. Excluding the lower-middle- class and the

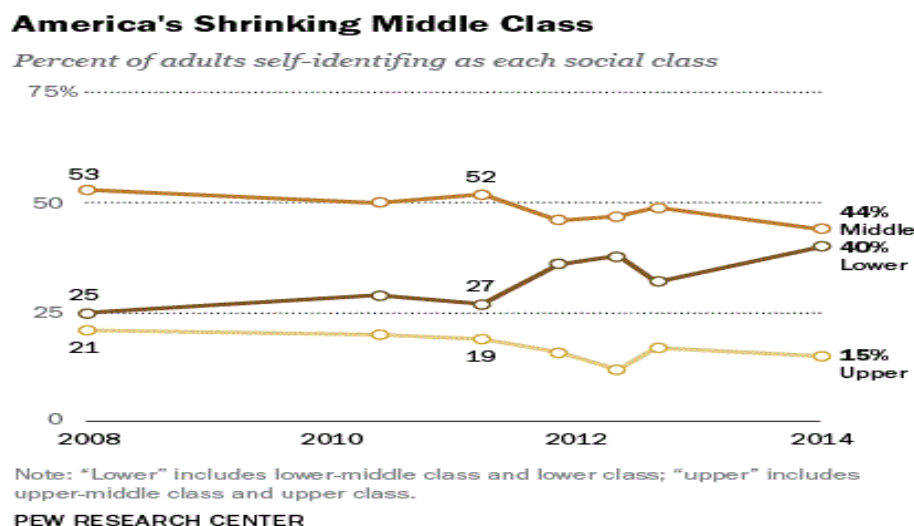
⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴An English novelist, essayist, and critic most famous for his novels *Animal Farm* (1945) and *Nineteen Eighty-four* (1949). (<http://www.biography.com/people/george-orwell-9429833>)

⁶⁵Hendrickson Mark, opicit.

upper-middle-class, the Pew Research Center⁶⁶ found that 44% of Americans identify themselves as middle-class since 2008⁶⁷. The results are shown as follows:

Figure1: Americans' Adults self-identifying social class.



Source: Pew Research Center.

The Gallup Organization⁶⁸ have done the same public opinion poll in a 2012 version, 42% identified as middle-class and 13% identified as upper-middle class, while 31% said they are working class. By this measure, majority of Americans appear to identify as either middle-class or pretty close to it⁶⁹. The following diagram shows the results of the poll:

⁶⁶Based in Washington, D.C. it provides information on social issues, public opinion, and demographic trends shaping the United States and the world. It also conducts public opinion polling and demographic research.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pew_Research_Center)

⁶⁷Zumbrun Josh."What Is the Middle Class, Anyway? A Look at Obama's Focus on 'Middle-Class Economics'". The Wall Street Journal,20-01-2015. Print. Accessed on 15-10-2015.

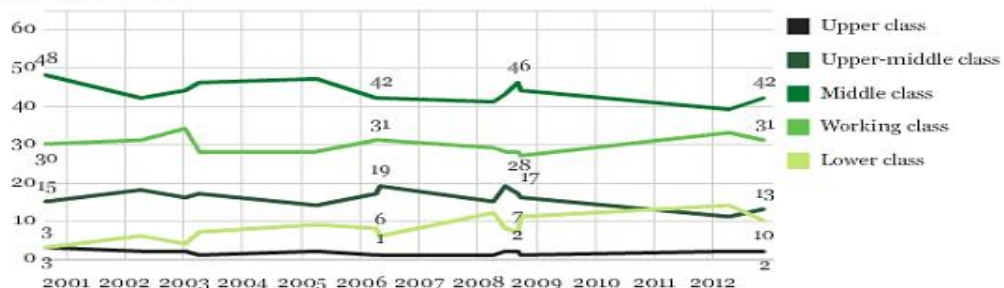
⁶⁸An American research-based, global performance-management consulting company. Founded by George Gallup in 1935, the company became known for its public opinion polls conducted in several countries. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallup_\(company\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallup_(company)))

⁶⁹Zumbrun Josh.opicit.

Figure2: Americans rate in social classes.

If you were asked to use one of these five names for your social class, which would you say you belong in -- [ROTATED: upper class, upper-middle class, middle class, working class, (or) lower class]?

Among national adults



Source: The Gallup Organization.

In 2013, Wall Street Journal/NBC News organized a public opinion poll to ask respondents to identify the annual income they considered to be middle-class. Groups that earn between 30.000dollars and 100.000 dollars identified their own income as middle-class. Most Americans identify themselves as middle-class, that is why politicians love the term ‘middle-class’ so much⁷⁰. The following table is Wall Street Journal/NBC News’ results:

Table1: American middle class annual income.

What Is Middle Income?	All Adults	Income: 30,000 or less	Income: \$30,000-\$40,000	Income: \$40,000-\$50,000	Income: \$50,000-\$75,000	Income: \$75,000-\$100,000	Income: Over \$100,000
Less than \$30,000	9%	28%	2%	0%	4%	1%	0%
\$30,000-\$40,000	13%	23%	44%	9%	5%	3%	1%
\$40,000-\$50,000	23%	25%	34%	48%	24%	14%	8%
\$50,000-\$75,000	29%	16%	13%	29%	50%	36%	33%
\$75,000-\$100,000	16%	4%	3%	9%	13%	39%	32%
Over \$100,000	7%	4%	1%	3%	1%	7%	25%

Source: Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll

Source: Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll.

⁷⁰Ibid.

There is no formal definition of the term middle-class. Though the income of the median household must be taken into consideration. In 2013, anyone who earned between 40,187 dollars and 65,501 dollars was considered in the middle 20% of households. While anyone earning between 20,900 dollars and 105,910 dollars was in the middle 60% of households. The post-recession period has been difficult for Americans at the very middle of the income and wealth distribution. That is why politicians have been trying to soothe people who identify as middle-class⁷¹.

Addressing a crowd in Ohio, president Obama declaimed that his policies have gathered the economy while Republican plans would damage the middle class. In the City Club of Cleveland, Obama said that reality had rendered its judgment, trickle-down economics doesn't work, and middle-class economics⁷².

He declared that the unemployment rate is falling while the stock market is rising. And that he was going to take a little credit. Through his proposed budget, Obama said that he wants to cut taxes on the middle class, raise some levies on the wealthy, and invest in middle-class programs like college aid. Cory Fritz, a spokesman for House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, said that president Obama would be working with Republicans on areas of common ground if he was serious about expanding growth and opportunity.

Dave Boyer⁷³ wrote in The Washington Times on January 20, 2015 that in his State of the Union, president Obama argued the Republican-led Congress to focus on middle-class economics. He proposed a 320 billion dollar tax increase that would hit wealthier families and big banks to raise money for expanded tax breaks for middle-class families and pay for new federal programs such as government-paid tuition for community college students. Obama declared that his economic

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷² Perkins Olivera, "Obama's Middle-Class Economics Speech at City Club Comes as Many Still Struggling During Recovery". Cleveland. 17-03-2015. Print. Accessed in 12-10-2015.

⁷³A White House correspondent for The Washington times. (<http://www.washingtontimes.com/staff/dave-boyer/>)

policies, including ObamaCare, private-sector bailouts and regulation produced the fastest economic growth in over a decade.

The official name for “ObamaCare” is the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. It was signed by President Barack Obama on March 23, 2010 and upheld by the Supreme Court on June 28, 2012. The ACA aims to reform the health care industry. ObamaCare’s goal is to give more Americans access to affordable, quality health insurance and to reduce the growth in U.S health care spending. It expands the affordability, quality, and availability of private and public health insurance through consumer protections, regulations, subsidies, taxes and other reforms.

On March, 2015, President Barack Obama’s speech on middle-class economics was scheduled for the City Club of Cleveland, Ohio. The speech brought new focus on what many have deemed the vanishing middle class. Despite the economic recovery, many middle-class families are still struggling. Long-term unemployment still remains high and wages are flat. More jobs are created but many of these new positions are lower paying.⁷⁴

Lawrence Michel, the president of the Liberal Economic Policy Institute in Washington, D.C said that the problem with people who drop out of the labor force began with Republican President George W. Bush. He said that the fact was that the Labor Force Participation Rate peaked in the year 2000. It was actually declining between 2000 and 2007, before Obama ever got elected. Obama supported policies that would have helped with more jobs. Michel said:

“Even that the Republicans blocked every one of his initiatives, it is hard to hold the president accountable. This is criticism from people who lit the fire and then put up a blockade so that the fire truck couldn’t get through to put it out.”

⁷⁴ Perkins Olivera. Opicrit.

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In a speech at UW-La Crosse on Thursday, July 2, 2015, president Barack Obama promoted policies he said would help the middle class, while criticizing Republican economic strategies. His speech generally focused on what he called “middle-class economics.” He said that teachers should be paid more and confirmed that technical college should be free. He also aimed at changing to overtime as well as pushing for improved sick leave and stronger workers benefits.⁷⁵He said:

“Give them the tools they need to earn higher wages and better jobs, keep our businesses the most competitive. Invest in research. Build our roads. Build our bridges. That’s how we’re going to help middle-class families succeed.”

In his State of the Union address, president Obama urged the Americans to “turn the page” on years of economic trouble, terrorism, and war. He said that the shadow of crisis had passed, and the State of the Union was strong. He also said that at that moment, with a growing economy, shrinking deficits, bustling industry, and booming energy production...they had risen from recession freer to write their own future than any other nation on Earth. And it was then up to them to choose who they want to be over the next 15 years, and for decades to come. He also declared that the verdict was clear. Middle-class economics worked. Expanding opportunity worked. And these policies would continue to work as long as politics don’t get in the way.⁷⁶

The 2015 Economic Report of the president Obama released by the white house have revealed the current conditions of the U.S economy which include solid overall growth, accelerating job creation, and continued low inflation. It also tried to remove the mystery from the failure of average families to get ahead in the recovery from the Great Recession.

⁷⁵McCollum Maureen, “Obama Focuses on ‘Middle-Class Economics’ in La Cross Speech”. Wisconsin Public Radio.02-07-2015. Accessed in 04-09-2016.

⁷⁶Boyer Dave, “Obama Calls For Focus on ‘Middle-Class Economics’ in State of Union Speech». The Washington Times. 20-01-2015. Print. Accessed in 20-08-2015.

The American economic history has been divided into three distinct eras by president Obama's economic advisers. The first era is from 1948 to 1973, and it is called "The Age of Shared Growth." In this era, economic innovation made worker productivity rise. Income inequality shrank, a surge of working women expanded the labor force, and incomes grew fast enough to double in 25 years. The second era is from 1973 to 1995. It is called "The Age of Expanded participation." Productivity slowed during this period and profits flowed increasingly to the highest earners. Even faster growth of women in the workforce masked the previous years' developments. The third era is from 1995 to 2013. It is called "The Age of Productivity Recovery." Technological changes accelerated output again. The benefits were offset by continued income inequality and a fall in "labor force participation" by both men and women. Chairman of Obama's council of Economic Advisers, Jason Furman said that that was the big picture challenge they were trying to overcome as an economy.⁷⁷

Obama's plan to help the low and middle income families would be partially paid for by raising taxes on the rich, such as an increase on investment taxes and getting rid of what Obama calls the "trust fund loophole" in the estate tax. According to the White House, the budget would install new taxes hitting U.S corporations storing assets overseas and offer nearly 300 billion dollars in tax cuts aimed at mainly the middle class. Obama wanted to make sure that everyone benefits as the economy grows⁷⁸. He said:

"I want to make sure that we have not only recovered, but that the administration has built a strong foundation that will prevent the country from ever getting mired in another economic meltdown."

V. Conclusion:

Even though Obama implemented Marxist principles in his economic policies, it seems that president Obama was only trying to help the middle class

⁷⁷Harwood John, "Middle Class Stagnation : What Obama Plans to Do". CNBC. 19-02-2015.Print. Accessed in 14-05-2015.

⁷⁸Boyer Dave.opicit.

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through raising taxes on the rich and cutting taxes for middle class families. He also encouraged education by helping middle class families pay for college. He had a goal that by 2020, the United States will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. But still there are some disagreements that Obama is helping the middle class.

I. Introduction:

The previous sections of this paper were devoted to the investigation as well as analysis of Marxist principles and their effectiveness on Obama's economic policies. They also contained the theory of classes and the middle class issue in the United States including president Obama's emphasis on middle-class economics. This chapter is an attempt to explore the effect of Obama's economic policies on the middle class and the Americans' attitudes toward those policies. Moreover, this chapter reveals Obama's future plans to raise the middle class and the economy into a higher level.

"middle-class economics" had been a major policy in the United States with the new Affordable Act which is made to suit especially the middle class. Yet there has been an assumption that the American citizens disagree with Obama's new economic policies and that the Americans are arguing that president Obama was launching a war against the middle class rather than helping it. It is expected in this chapter to diagnose that assumption through public opinion polls and many facts of Obama's intentions toward the middle class.

II. The Impact of Obama's 'Middle-Class Economics' on the Middle Class:

The purpose behind what is called "middle-class economics" is to treat the economic damages and to compensate the American middle class by proposing a new program to boost productivity growth. The program aims to expand overseas markets for the American exports, reform the American business tax system, encourage investments in technology, expand education, and reform the American immigration system. This program leads to a higher productivity which is necessary for the increases in middle-class incomes. This is not enough, which is why president Obama called for steps to expand opportunity like an increased

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minimum wage and expanded tax credits for low-income workers and the middle class⁷⁹.

The Affordable Care Act has been described as a “job killer” while many Americans considered it as a saving plan. It is considered that the year 2014 is the best year for job creation since 1999. Full-time job creation has quickly increased since December 2013 and part-time employment has fallen bit just before exchange insurance went into effect. The bureau of Labor Statistics⁸⁰ monthly “Employment Situation” announced the statistics of the rise of full-time jobs and the fall of the part-time jobs as follows:

Table2: The full-time and part-time jobs transformation rate.

Date Adjusted Jobs	Full or Part Time	Not Seasonally Adjusted Jobs	Seasonally
<u>December 2013</u>	Full-time	116,661,000	117,278,000
<u>July 2015</u>	Full-time	123,142,000	121,589,000
Change		+ 6,481,000	+ 4,311,000
December 2013	Part-time	27,762,000	27,372,000
July 2015	Part-time	26,850,000	27,265,000
Change		- 912,000	- 107,000

Source: the bureau of Labor Statistics

⁷⁹ OMB Communications, “Fact Sheet: Middle Class Economics: The President’s Fiscal Year 2016 Budget”. The White House Blog. 02-02-2015. Print. Accessed in 08-02-2016.

⁸⁰ The Bureau of Labor Statistics is an arm of the U.S. Department of Labor whose primary purpose is to research, assemble and publish a wide range of statistical data on labor conditions, price, unemployment and productivity. (<http://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/bls.asp>).

It is clearly obvious that full-time jobs have increased by 4,3 million since ObamaCare exchange insurance went into effect, while part-time jobs have fallen by 107.000. This increase in full-time jobs has been accomplished in a period of 19 months.

The Affordable Care Act or “ObamaCare” aims at providing health insurance for all Americans. Especially for those who are considered in the lower income ranges. However the changes were not entirely favorable for many who are considered in the middle class. Americans who earn between 100% and 400% of the federal poverty level are helped with monthly payments. The federal poverty level is based on the 2014 numbers which are 23,850 dollars for a family of four. This helps a lot of Americans, but for the ones who earn up to 400% of the poverty level, they end up being stuck with very high costs for Marketplace insurance. They are stuck in the middle between those poor Americans who can get the help and those rich American who can afford insurance. Eventually, they cannot afford full Marketplace prices and are not able to get assistance with costs. Experts consider health insurance unaffordable if it comprises more than 10% of a household's income.

There are many jobs that provide middle class Americans with health insurance. Those employees are considered as unaffected by the ACA as long as they keep their jobs-based insurance. However, they found that their insurance has changed and became more expensive due to ObamaCare.

III. Americans' Reaction towards Obama's Economic Policies:

There have been many critics about Obama's class warfare compaign which is a war against the rich. Some considered it as an attempt to gain the votes of everyone else. The Media supported Obama's class warfare in order to convince the public that it would be much better if the government would soak the rich like Obama wants to do⁸¹.

⁸¹ <http://www.americadeathwatch.com/obamas-war-against-the-middle-class.php>

There is a hypothesis that the middle class is being systematically destroyed by ruining their small businesses and reducing market competition. The egg crisis is an example. It started when a few eggs in one part of the country were found contaminated. Those eggs came from one single supplier on one single egg ranch. The government forced suppliers and grocery stores to pull thousands of egg cartons off the market. This caused the rise of egg prices⁸².

Another example is Obama's tax plan. Obama proposed to reduce the corporate income tax rate to 28%. Corporations' actual legal tax rate is 35% and there still a number of deductions of incurred expenses. As a consequence, during some years, some corporations didn't pay any taxes, while others paid the full legal 35%. Those companies that benefit from the deduction are averaged with others who pay the full legal amount⁸³.

If Obama reduces the corporate tax rate down to 28% and eliminates all deductions, corporations would actually be paying more taxes and become less competitive. Every tax that corporations are forced to pay is paid by the consumer, not by the company. This means that when companies pay the legal rate of 35% or 28%, they pass on that cost to the consumer in the form of higher prices for their products.⁸⁴

President Obama believes that the Affordable Care Act works and that it has come with benefits in many specific areas. But yet, there is no evidence the Americans agree with it. An analysis was made to see Americans' opinions of the ACA⁸⁵. The result of the analysis was as follows⁸⁶:

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

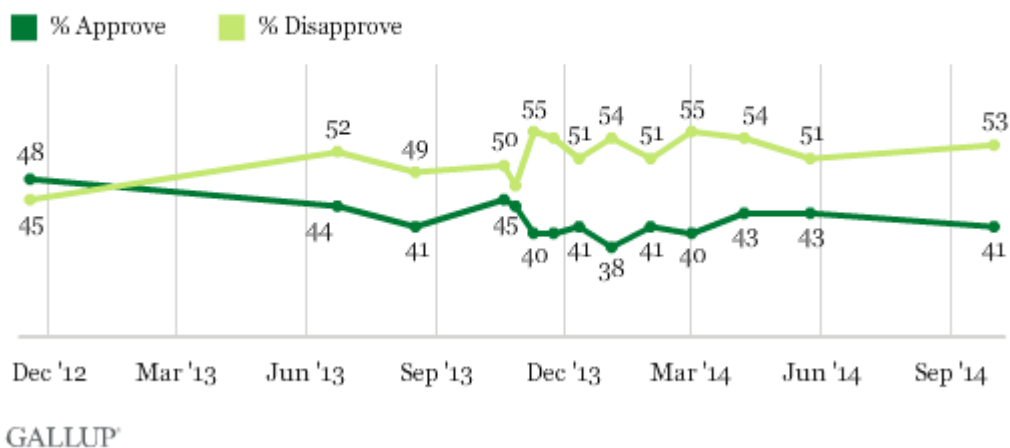
⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ The Affordable Care Act.

⁸⁶ Newport Frank, "American Public Attitudes Toward Affordable Care Act in Negative State". Gallup. 10-10-2014. Print. Accessed in 28-04-2016.

Figure3: Americans overview of the ACA.

Do you generally approve or disapprove of the 2010 Affordable Care Act, signed into law by President Obama that restructured the U.S. healthcare system?



Source: The Gallup Center.

The analysis showed the attitudes of Americans towards the ACA from late 2012 to late 2014. The results show that the approval was at 48%, while the disapproval was at 45% in 2012. In 2014, the approval decreased to 41% and the disapproval increased to 53%.

Americans have perceived negative and positive consequences of the Affordable Care Act. The percentage of the Americans who said that ObamaCare helped them had gone from 9% to 16% in November 2013, while the percentage of those who said the law had hurt them had gone from 19% last November to 27% today. That means there is a seven-percentage-point increase in those who the ACA helped them and an eight-percentage-point increase in those who the ACA hurt them. Most of the Americans who said the law hurt them were Republicans, while those who said the law helped them were Democrats. This means that the impact of the law may be more political than economical⁸⁷.

⁸⁷Ibid.

IV. Obama's Future Plans in Favour of the Middle Class:

President Obama has already put a budget to the fiscal year 2016. This budget depends on a strategy that strengthens the middle class and help America's hard-working families get ahead in time of economic progress and technological change. It makes sure that those families would be able to afford the cornerstones of economic security which are child care, college, health care, a home, and retirement. The budget helps middle class families by reforming the tax code, tripling the child care tax credit, expanding child care assistance, encouraging state paid leave initiatives, affordable health care, bolstering job training so it leads to careers, and helping families save for retirement.⁸⁸

The best way to grow the economy and middle class is by creating jobs that pay good wages. The budget includes creating jobs for thousands of construction workers and engineers strengthen the American communities, and making it easier to do business. To create jobs and grow the economy, the budget includes 478 billion dollars, six-year surface transportation reauthorization proposal paid for with transition revenue from pro-growth business tax reform.

On a conference call with reporter, senior administration officials said that 44 million households would see an average tax cut of 600 dollars. The admitted that Obama's budget is only a starting point in negotiations with Republican lawmakers. Republicans used to criticize all what the White House proposes. In an interview with NBC, Obama said that his job was to present the right ideas, and if Republicans thought they have a better idea, they should present It.⁸⁹ He also said that over 6 years, he realized that when he tell the American people very clearly what direction he think the country should go in, occasionally Republicans start agreeing with him, but not as quickly as he would like. Obama aims at making everyone benefits in a time of economical growth.

⁸⁸OMB Communications, "Fact Sheet: Middle Class Economics: The President's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget". The White House Blog. 02-02-2015. Print. Accessed in 08-02-2016.

⁸⁹Spodak Cassie, "White House Budget Pitch: Higher Taxes on Wealthy, Lift up Middle Class". CNN Politics. 02-02-2015. Accessed in 10-05-2016.

In his State of the Union speech, Obama announced a range of programs that included tuition-free community college, early education programs, affordable child care, and housing and skill training to increase job mobility. He also increased funds for special education, teacher training, and investment in science, technology and engineering⁹⁰.

Obama declared that the economic competitiveness depends on continued investment in Research and Development. His 2016 budget provides 6 percent increase for research and development. The budget invests in biomedical research like the brain initiative which is a tool that offers new insight into diseases like Alzheimer⁹¹.

The purpose behind Obama's 2016 budget is to keep the deficit at a very modest level until 2018. It aims at showing that investments in growth and opportunity are suitable with putting the nation's finances on a strong and sustainable path⁹².

Although Americans rejected Obama's economic policies of the year 2016, he continued planning for building a strong economy and achieving fiscal progress. Obama's economic policies have already created 14 million jobs. The unemployment rate decreased to 5 percent. The Affordable Care Act provided nearly 18 million people with health coverage.

Obama have already put a new budget for the fiscal year of 2017. The budget is about making sure that the economy works for everybody. It is about investments that suit the kind of country Americans want to pass to the next generations. It also supports all kinds of innovation including building new transportation system, prioritizing research and development, supporting basic

⁹⁰Spodak Cassie, "White House Budget Pitch: Higher Taxes on Wealthy, Lift up Middle Class". CNN Politics. 02-02-2015. Accessed in 10-05-2016.

⁹¹Ibid..

⁹²Ibid..

research, investing in civil space activities, supporting adoption of clean energy, and many other objectives⁹³.

The 2017 budget is considered as an opportunity for all Americans. It aims at improving access to high-quality child care and early education, cutting taxes for families paying for child care, supporting universal preschool, expanding technical programs for middle class jobs. The president Obama and his administration are focusing on meeting all Americans' greatest challenges and giving everyone opportunities and economic security⁹⁴.

V. Conclusion:

In the light of the preceding points, one can safely conclude that some Americans agree with Obama's middle-class economics while others don't. President Obama considered middle-class economics as a means of spurring economic growth and creating a more inclusive economy. This means helping Americans afford child care, college, health care, a home and retirement. Obama's 2016 budget aimed at lowering the taxes of working families and putting thousands of dollars back into their pockets each year.

⁹³ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget>

⁹⁴ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget>

General Conclusion

The current study is set to investigate the role of Marxism in Obama's economic policies. Therefore, the main concern of this research paper is middle-class economics and their influence on the Americans in a time when those economics' fortunes are already improving. The study also spots the light on the Americans' attitude toward Obama's policies, mostly the affordable Care Act.

Several studies argued that Obama's middle-class economics were made for the interest of the middle class. Many public opinion polls were made to investigate the American middle class point of view toward middle-class economics. Hence, it is the objective of this study to discuss the positive and the negative effects of the Affordable Care Act on the American middle class and to reveal Obama's future intentions with regard to the budget of the fiscal years 2016 and 2017.

As a point of fact, the study concludes that the influence of Obama's middle class economics on the American middle class was mainly negative. This was examined through various public opinion polls which revealed their disapproval on Obama's middle-class economics.

As a conclusion, Obama's main concern behind middle-class economics was noble. He was trying to grow the American economy through focusing on the middle class interests. Through my study experience, I concluded that the Americans didn't clearly get Obama's real intentions behind his new policies toward the middle class and the US economy.

Although Marxism had a major role in Obama's early life, the reason behind his adoption of Marxism in the economic policies is still to solve a social problem. Obama tried to apply Marxist principles in order to make the US economic system works in favor of the middle and working classes.

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