A Theory of Relative Deprivation Revisited (2)

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ABSTRACT

The present paper is the continuation of the earlier article by the same writer under the same topic. The present paper first introduces a couple of additional episodes related to the concept of relative deprivation from *The American Soldier* by Stouffer and others, which shows that the concept addresses the group situation instead of the individual actors perception. Second, the present paper quotes the episode on Negro soldiers in Southern areas which was not discussed fully in Merton’s *Social Theory and Social Structure*, showing how the notion of relative deprivation and the conception of reference group are closely intertwined. The paper concludes that ‘a group’, whose member compares themselves with other members of other ‘groups,’ is to be identified for the purpose of clarifying theoretically the notion of relative deprivation, whether or not the member is conscious of being a member of a particular group.

Key Words: relative deprivation, *The American Soldier*, reference group