

# Introduction

The life of prominent personalities remains one of the most comprehensive topics focussed on in the field of sociology. This can be accredited to the fact that various prominent personalities played a comprehensive role in bringing about social change in the society. Worth noting is the fact that the traditional society was filled with various societal matter that hindered societal progress. As an example, the traditional society had a less regard for women in the society as evident by the fact that women were discriminated highly. Nonetheless, the emergence of prominent personalities led to mutual change of the society in terms of such matters. The societal progresses that have been made by the society are credited to prominent personalities who improvised different strategies aimed at streamlining the society for the better. Ellen Gates Starr occurs as one of the prominent personalities who made significant contributions in influencing societal change and progress (Hamington, 2010).

## Early life

Born by the close of the year 1859 in Laona, Illinois, Ellen Gates Starr remains as one of the prominent personalities who made a significant contribution towards mutual change of the society for the better. She was enrolled for formal schooling across various Illinois country schools, but by the close of the year 1877, she joined Rockford Female Seminary where she met various seminarians including Addams Jane, whom they grew to become good friends. In fact, the friendship between Ellen and Addams had a significant influence on their lives (Cady & Webber, 2006). Worth noting is the fact that Ellen's education in Rockford Female Seminary was filled with a wider array of challenges such as lack of tuition fee because she came from an ample family background. Nevertheless, Ellen struggled and created magnitude of opportunities that enhanced her life.

## Essence of Ellen in the field of sociology

As previously connoted herein, Ellen as one of the most prominent personalities made significant contributions in the field of sociology. In fact, she made significant contributions towards mutual societal development. There are various ways in which Ellen made significant contributions to the field of sociology. More importantly, Ellen made efforts to enlighten the society on pertinent matters that affected their lives. As an example, Ellen spent most of her time enlightening the immigrants who had been subjected to harsh living conditions. To be precise, Ellen reading clubs, which were utilized by every societal member. This reading club enlightened the societal members; hence, resulting in positive social change within the society. The second way in which Ellen is regarded as an important figure in the field of sociology is accredited to the social changes that were brought about by the Hull House, which they co-founded with her long-time friend Addams (Hamington, 2012).

The Hull House served as a significant place where various social reformers were born. To be precise, the Hull House acted as a place where people, especially women could converge to be given teachings on the essence of social reforms. The teachings carried out in the Hull House precipitated the eventual emergence of various women reformers who fought for women rights, which had been impeached on by males in the previous decades. In addition, the Hull House that was established by Ellen served as a nursing home for women who had fallen victim of domestic violence. Overall, Ellen utilized the Hull House to offer a wider array of teachings to women including teachings on how to curb poverty (Hamington, 2010). This is of the essence to the field of sociology because it shows how women were able to use teachings obtained from Ellen to bring reforms in their lives.

On another note, Ellen sought to know the true meaning of religion, which remains one of the fundamental sociological factors that puzzle many. Upon exploring on the issue of religion, Ellen spent most of her time educating the populations on the essence of religion. In fact, Ellen turned religion into a tool for enlightening the populations on various matters. It is imperative to note that by the use of religion, Ellen was able to influence mutual change amongst the populations (Cady & Webber, 2006). This is because of the high regard that people have and continue to have on religion. While it may be viewed that Ellen was more focused only on reducing women victimization, which was evident in the previous decades, she extended her quest for social reforms by advocating for the assimilation of the immigrants. This is a substantive indicator on the importance of Ellen to the field of sociology.

## Ellen's most significant concepts (campaign against child labour and discrimination of women)

One of the pertinent issues that Ellen sought to resolve was child labour. Worth noting is the fact that the inception of the industrial revolution necessitated the availability of cheap labour. This resulted in the engagement of children in forced labour, which was certainly unacceptable. In line with this, Ellen joined hand with other reformers such as Kelley Florence to fight against the rising child labour (Hamington, 2012). On a similar note, Ellen participated strongly in reform agendas that aimed at improving the status of women in the society. In fact, she was among the prominent personalities who established the Women's Trade Union League, a women's organization that supported the quest by women to develop trade unions advocating for their concerns.

As a leader of the Women's Trade Union League, Ellen was in the forefront strategizing strikes and supporting women uprisings. However, this does not mean that Ellen did not support reforms that involved men. This was evident when she aided a strike that was launched by textile workers, most of whom were men. Her support for uprisings and strikes was not only limited to engaging in the strikes. She also provided food, and clothing for the striking workers. Furthermore, she gave motivational speeches, which encouraged the striking workers to keep fighting for their rights. Overall, Ellen advocated for legislative reforms, which were poised to bring to an end issues such as child labour, minimum wages, and long working hours and days (Hamington, 2010).

## Reflection and conclusion

A reflection on the life of Ellen depicts a character that should be emulated by everyone. Her life brought about social reforms that have and continue to benefit various generations. One of the take home lessons derived from Ellen's lifetime achievements is the fact that life changes do not happen in isolation nor spontaneously. Instead, achievements call for commitment towards attaining our life desires. In a nutshell, social reforms remain to be of much essence across various settings all over the globe. Social reforms create a society where everyone is respected. This create a viable platform that can ensure mutual societal progress. There is no doubt that Ellen's contributions have and continue to remain important in the field of sociology (Cady & Webber, 2006)

## References

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