According to Marxist theory, Marxism encourages people to seek their own doctrines of objective vision, its starting points offered a way to get to people’s ‘own version of standpoint theories, insistent embodiment, a rich tradition of critiquing hegemony without disempowering positivisms and relativisms and a way to get to nuanced theories of mediation’ (Haraway 1988, 578). Then, one important grounding of standpoint theories is the socially, politically or culturally, experiences of marginalized people. So, I agree with the argument that we can attribute “epistemic privilege” to socially marginalized groups.

Starting off thought from the lives of marginalized people is one of the standpoint theories’ ideas. Women’s lives and experiences were claimed as the grounds for knowledge. Starting off research from women’s lives will generate less partial and distorted results of research which target at women’s real experience and finally generate knowledge for this field (Harding date, p.128). The objectivity issues are argued frequently in standpoint theories. But as Harding mentioned in her text, “The epistemologically advantaged starting points for research do not guarantee that the researcher can maximize objectivity in her accounts; these grounds provide only a necessary —not a sufficient—starting point for maximizing objectivity.” (Harding, p.128)., what the objectivity that standpoint theories seek for is not to guarantee the strong objectivity but to provide a helpful starting point. Why do I think the socially marginalized groups can grasp “epistemic privilege”? this is the question you should answer by drawing on the exmples given How it can get rid of its unscientific and unobjective bias?

First of all, standpoint theories are not ethnocentrism. The definition for ethnocentrism is the belief in the inherent superiority of one’s own ethnic group or culture. (Harding, p.129). However, socially marginalized groups do not belong to this category, absolutely. Women’s lives and experience can provide a better starting point for research does not mean that thre researcher’s own lives are the best starting points. . What feminist standpoint theories want to do is not to hide the possibility of women’s lives can provide important resources and encourage women to speak for themselves. Marxist theory also argued for the scientific aspect of starting off thought from women’s lives. Although many feminisms hold different standpoints and arguments, feminist standpoint theory would not deny that each marginalized groups are not a good place to thought start. It insists on that we can learn from all of them and change our patterns of belief. (Harding, p.131). On the contrary, feminist standpoint theory is not ethnocentrism but those researchers? , who neglect marginaised women’s lives and their experience, history, social situation, tend to produce sexist, racist, classist representations; of ethnocentrism.

You still do not address the questions at hand.

Furthermore, some argued that “epistemic privilege” not suits for relativism. However, not to say that standpoint theory does not advocate relativism, instead, the fact that different people hold different ideas not means that it is not objective enough. When we discuss about the subject of knowledge, one of the characteristics of its social situatedness (Harding’) or location should be made visible and interrogated. (Harding, p.132). What epistemic privilege advocates is that women as spokesperson are made them embodied and visible, which add the plausibility, but men’s thoughts are not banned by feminist standpoint theory. Supporting for epistemic privilege not means against socially mainstreaming groups express their own opinion because men also can speak for women. But what we stressed here is a good starting point.

Finally, Feminist do not need a doctrine of objectivity. (Haraway, p.579). As for the part of Marxism that Haraway agreed with, which is epistemic privilege can have a chance to seek for their own doctrines of objective vision rather than trapped by traditionally so-called science. Science could be rhetoric, a series of efforts to persuade relevant social actors that one’s manufactured knowledge is a route to a desired form of very objective power. (Haraway, p.577). What feminist standpoint theory want is a critical theory, and it wants women can have a chance to construct their own meanings and their own understanding of science. No matter white western lesbians or black feminist lesbians, or upper class women or lower class women, they have their differences and similarities. These multiplicity and diversity are feminist want for epistemology.

It is not completely clear that you understand the idea of epistemic privilege and you do not really engage the examples given. In relation to what do these groups potentially produce better knowledge?

References

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