

Mains 2026

**Test 1**

[Paper I – Sectional Test 1]

**Sociology – The Discipline**

**Sociology as Science**

**Research Methods and Analysis**

Time allowed: **Three** Hours

Maximum Marks: **250**

***Question Paper Specific Instructions***

- ❖ There are **EIGHT** questions divided in two **SECTIONS**.
- ❖ Candidate has to attempt **FIVE** questions in all.
- ❖ Questions no. **1** and **5** are compulsory and out of the remaining, **THREE** are to be attempted choosing at least **ONE** from each section.

## SECTION A

Q1. Write short notes on the following: (10×5=50)

- a) Intellectual influences on emergence of sociology
- b) Sociology and anthropology
- c) Reliability and validity
- d) Cultural lag
- e) Post-modernism

Q2. (a) “The sociological imagination enables us to grasp history and biography and the relationship between the two in a society.” - C.W. Mills. Explain.

20

(b) German sociology and Marxism grew from different philosophical roots. Comment.

20

(c). What is the distinctiveness of the feminist method of social research? Comment.

10

Q3. (a) Do you think that common sense is the starting point of social research? What are its advantages and limitations? Explain.

20

(b) Critically examine the structural-functional approach in sociology.

20

(c) The difference between information and data in social science is subtle. Comment.

10

Q4. (a) Q. How do you view and assess the increasing trend of digital ethnography and the use of visual culture in sociological research?

20

(b) What is a research design? Discuss the various types of research designs with examples.

20

(c) Explain the probability sampling strategies with examples.

10



## SECTION B

Q5. Write short notes on the following: (10×5=50)

- (a) Early sociological theory developed in reaction to Marxism. Comment.
- (b) 'Sociology without History is rootless and History without Sociology is fruitless.' Elaborate.
- (c) Do you think ethnomethodology helps us in getting reliable and valid data? Justify your answer.
- (d) Is reflexive sociology a radical sociology? Discuss.
- (e) Focus group

Q6. (a) Discuss the challenges associated with fieldwork research in sociology. 20

(b) Discuss the importance of interpretative understanding of social phenomena and explain its limitations. 20

(c) "Hypothesis is a statement of the relationship between two or more variables". Elucidate by giving example of poverty and illiteracy. 10

Q7. (a) Comte developed his 'positive philosophy' to combat what he considered to be the negative and destructive philosophy of the Enlightenment. Discuss. 20

(b) Examine the notion that 'complete objectivity is a myth' in social science research. 20

(c) What do you understand by sampling and non-sampling errors in social research? 10

Q8. (a) Is non-positivistic methodology scientific? Illustrate. 20

(b) Bring out the significance of ethnography in social research. 20

(c) 'Comparative sociology is not a special branch of sociology; it is sociology itself'. Comment. 10



Q. Short Note: Early sociological theory developed in reaction to ~~the~~ <sup>early</sup> Marxism (10)

5(a)

110  
250

① Preferably start with the emergence of sociology in 19<sup>th</sup> century

Pls note that the Q is not on Marxism

उम्मीदों को हटाना  
सही से नही  
लिखना नहीं।  
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③ in terms of Marxism was a perspective propounded by Karl Marx. He studied the social relationships based on dialectical materialism, where he ~~found presence of~~ <sup>explained social change</sup> class struggle across different modes of production - is the perspective of Marx

② Acc. to some scholars, early sociology developed in response to Marxism.

Early sociological theories as a reaction

Some of the early thinkers differed on their interpretation of society and social relationships.

now, explain how?

① Emile Durkheim's structural functional approach considered that social relations are oriented towards integration of society.

often criticized as conservative, status quoist

For instance, Division of labour in modern society ensures interdependence and organic solidarity in society, not struggle.

emphasis on  
social stability

social solidarity

↑ DoL — organic solidarity



Q is on early sociology theory

with Weber - sociology matured

② Later Max Weber, in his Interpretative sociology noted, that society is not just divided based on class but also status group and party.

Further he noted the religion (protestantism) helped in emergence of capitalism and not class struggle. Also, he noted, revolution is a distant possibility as middle class will expand rather than pauperisation and will act as a buffer.

Weber - conflict theory

but didn't propose radical solutions to the problems of class

focused on rationalization

③ Other thinkers also, like V. Pareto's theory of Circulation of Elite was built as reaction to Marx's prophecy of revolution and noted revolution will not occur.

Complementing

However, Marxism has inspired and influence various theories in sociology under Radical feminism, Neo-Marxism, India thinkers like AR Desai. Above all, it highlighted the short fall of modern society that enabled its correction.

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हाथिए में नहीं  
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Is this related to the Q?



b

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हार्जिन में नहीं  
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Sociology and History have enjoyed a close relationship since the early stages of sociology.

History is a very old discipline, which study the past events and society.

whereas, Sociology is a relatively newer discipline, that study the society and it's institutions.

primarily  
emerged

to study  
modern  
society &  
its problems

Sociology without history is rootless  
and material

① History has provided fodder to early sociological thinkers.

eg) Karl Marx used historical materialism to trace evolution of society from Primitive Communism to Capitalism.

basis of historical data

② History provided understanding of social phenomena in its pristine form.

on the



eg) Durkheim ~~also~~ chose 'Arunta  
Tribe' to study Religion, as it provided  
religion in its historical form.

A.R. Desai  
Social Background  
of Indian Nationalism  
③ sociologists have studied history to  
understand evolution of society and its  
institutions.

eg) Comte studied evolution of  
society from Theosophical to Metaphysical  
to Positive.

History without sociology is fruitless

① To get the bigger picture of past, one  
needs sociological understanding.

eg) understanding civilisational  
relevance of Indus Valley, Mesopotamia etc.

② society and its institutions influenced  
historical figures and events.

eg) Asoka's dhamma based  
on flux of Buddhism. G.E. Howard

Thus Howard Becker rightfully  
noted "History is past sociology and  
sociology is present history".

generalisations

Protestant  
ethos

Capitalism

Comparison



Harfinkel

Ethnomethodology was propounded by Harold Garfinkel. It studies the methods employed by individuals to create, maintain and protect social order in the society.

in response  
to  
structural  
ops &  
positivist  
methodology

### Getting Reliable data

Reliability depends upon replicability of the same results if different researcher ~~perform~~ perform the same research using same methods and tools.

For it, the research need to be standardised and majorly quantifiable. However ethnomethodology relies upon qualitative methods and does not stick to objectivity same as positivists advocated for.



However, it does not mean, it's  
data are completely unreliable. It  
does notes various methods like  
documentary, conversation analysis,  
breaching experiments etc. But, the data  
are not of that high reliability as  
positivists.

Very  
well  
articulated

gutter  
balanced  
argument  
keep it up  


Valid data

case studies?

Validity depends on the ability  
of research to measure and find  
what it claims for.

At this parameter, ~~ethnomethodology~~  
ethnomethodology is high, as it builds  
deep understanding of social phenomena  
through qualitative data. It ensures  
it discovers the correct underlying  
meanings to actions.

Contextual  
understanding

5

Thus, it is high on parameter  
of validity but low on reliability.

in conclusion  
highlight the complementarity  
of macro (structural)  
& micro (social action)  
apps.

It follows systematic  
method of research



d

emerged as a response to scholars?

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Reflexive sociology states that researchers are bound to have inherent biases and thus they should be aware of it and declare it, in their research.

As a radical sociology

It can be considered 'radical', as it differed away from early sociologists like Comte and Durkheim that thought that society is governed by social laws, which can be directly studied by researchers.

like Durkheim studied state of suicide through 'suicidogenic forces'.

But reflexive sociology contests this. For instance, Atkinson and Douglas



noted existence of subjectivity and bias in measuring degree of sociogenic forces in society.

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Other thinkers like Gunnar Myrdal, noted "chaos cannot organise itself in cosmos, It needs viewpoint", stating that values help in making sense of confuse data. He advocated for value transparency in research, where researcher declares his values and biases.

v. good

Similarly, Max Weber noted that complete objectivity is not possible in social research as biases and values will influence choice of topic. So he proposed 'value neutrality'. — do reflexive sociologists go beyond value-neutrality?

thus, later sociologists, especially non positivists advocated for Reflexivity in research to ensure high credibility of the research. and meaningfulness

Alvin Ward Hoerr  
C.W. Mills  
H. Harfenist

4



## Short note: Focus Group (10)

e David L. Morgan

Quantitative  
or  
Qualitative?

Students at the  
University of  
Cambridge  
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Focus group is a tool of data collection. In it, a group of people or subjects of a researcher are gathered together and given a topic to discuss upon. The researcher lets the conversations and interactions to happen naturally and does not interrupt it. He/she simply records the data or observations.

Is there not a better way to start this ans?

Characteristics & Significance

① It generates qualitative data majorly.

② validity of data is high as it enables deeper understanding of social phenomena in natural way.

4

- helpful in generating / modifying hypothesis



Students must not write on this margin

③ Enables understanding diverse perspectives on a subject or topic.

④ Researcher can observe how participants try to restore order as interactions start to deviate from topic or chaos emerges.

⑤ Requires less resources like time and money.

⑥ Researchers can reevaluate their hypothesis during the study and provides a degree of flexibility.

### Criticisms

① Research has <sup>comparatively</sup> low reliability as replicability is difficult.

② ~~Data may get difficult to classify and analyse.~~ Trained researcher required

③ Body language of researchers or being observed can influence participants.

Overall, it can help researchers understand social interactions.

Conclusions  
Mixed Methods

to balance reliability & validity

need to revise

social desirability bias

studies?



# short note : Intellectual influences on emergence of sociology

(10)

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Why & how?

Sociology is said to have emerged during 17-18th century as a distinct body of knowledge. ?

## Intellectual Influences

- ① Enlightenment → rise of rationality, humanism and freedom of ideas brought major social changes in Europe from religion to economy.

~~Scholars~~

The ideas that emerged during it, laid foundation for sociology. —

how?

① Marxist idea of inequality and revolution is based on rights and lack of divine power with few.

- ② Counter Enlightenment → Irving Zeitlin noted that it was actually the

~~Scholars~~ ?



reaction to enlightenment that gave birth to sociology. — how?

1) Emile Durkheim was concerned with solidarity in society and morality which was impacted by enlightenment and its resultants.

③ French Revolution — it not only created a radical political? but also social change. while it gave ideas of freedom, equality, liberty and fraternity, it also created an upheaval in society.

This upheaval prompted thinkers like Saint Simon and Comte to study society.

④ Scientific Revolution — growth of natural sciences based on empiricism and objectivity, was inspiration behind positivist thinkers like Comte and Emile Durkheim.

These led to emergence of sociology.

Enlightenment

Counter-Enl.

— means

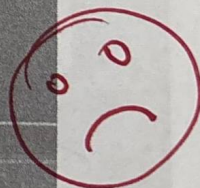
— goals

> Sociology



there is no interlinkage in your arguments  
line of argument is missing

4





Sociology and Anthropology are popularly known as sister disciplines, as they share a lot, while being distinct.

### Distinctions

#### Anthropology

→ It is the study of human, both past and present, including biology, culture etc.

→ Majorly concerned with primitive or small societies.

Anthropologists went out to non-European and under-developed societies like tribals etc.

#### Sociology

→ It is the study of society, its institutions and relationships among them.

→ Majorly concerned with modern society.

Sociologists study the modern society and institutions, along with its formation.

↳ C.W. Mills study of power elites in modern politics.



## Anthropology

Ex. Malinowsky's  
study of Trobriand  
Islanders.

Anthropologists study  
a society as a  
whole.

## Sociology

Sociologists study  
parts of society.

Ex. Durkheim study  
of Religion, Suicide etc.

Share a lot - Relation

① It is difficult to clearly differentiate  
the early thinkers and theories in  
any one of them. — Why?

MN Srinivas called it "contested  
frontier".

② Both make use of 'Ethnography'  
(Participant Observation) to study the  
society.

Why in  
Sociology?

Now, Social Anthropology has  
emerged as interdisciplinary approach  
to use both together.

inadequate  
explanation

need to  
revise

4



# Integrity aspects of Objectivity

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## Reliability and validity

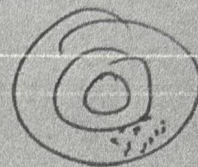
are used to measure the credibility of research data and results.

### Reliability

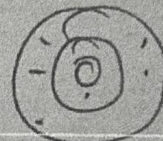
→ It refers to replicability of results of a research  
→ If another researcher conducts the research with same methods and tool.

→ It enables generalisation of the study.

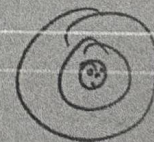
→ Quantitative data and methods produce reliable results, as they are structured and meaning of data can easily be understood by other researchers.



Reliable  
Not Valid



Not Reliable  
Not Valid



Reliable and  
Valid

Contextualize  
the  
debate  
over

R & V  
theoretically

link it  
with  
theoretical

&  
methodological  
perspectives

eg.

positivist  
&  
anti-positivist



## Validity

- a valid measurement produces what it claims to measure.
- in scientific terms, it can be equated to accuracy.
- Qualitative methods produce valid data as they conduct deeper analysis and discover underlying meanings.

## Significance of Reliability and Validity

- ✓ Good ✓
- ① Ensures that research does not deviates from its path and stick to defined goals.
  - ② Studies high in them both, are readily referred to by others and used as credible secondary sources.

## Criticism

Some scholars noted that Reliability and validity are not useful for social ~~research~~ research. Lincoln & Guba proposed "trustworthiness" as a measure.

XXX X-GSI/20

Alan Bryman

Triangulation

to balance R & V ✓

5



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Cultural lag is a theory  
of social change which was given by  
Ogburn and Nimkoff.

### Proposition

→ There are 2 types of culture in  
the society :

① Material culture which comprises  
of technology, ~~base~~ ~~etc~~ infrastructure  
etc.

② Non-material culture which comprises  
of norms, rules, values etc.

→ There is a lag between change  
in material culture and the non-  
material culture.

The material culture evolves  
faster than the non-material culture.



## Illustrations

① In vivo Fertilisation (IVF) increased the chances of fertilisation, but its adoption by society was slow, as it was considered unnatural.

② GM Crops today provide for higher yield, more nutrients in solving various social problems like food and nutrient security, farmer income. Still it is opposed by farmers in India.

## Criticism

Some scholars noted that the lag and relation between the two are over-exaggerated.

① Yogendra Singh noted that Indian society evolved without material culture. VeD Shakti movement.

② Illustrations like fast adoption of Artificial Intelligence.

However, it did highlighted the existence of these 2 cultures and their relation.

moderate

doesn't explain the concept

4

? clarity

pls think & better

conclusions



e

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हानि में नहीं  
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Post Modernism is a school of thought emerged in 20th century and propounded that the society has moved beyond the modernity that early sociologists studied. They also did critical evaluation of the theories and studies of early modernisation scholars.

name a few and mention their ideas

— basic assumptions of modernity theories?

### Key features

- ① They reject meta narratives or generalisation of social phenomena, as knowledge is contextual and perspectives are localised.
- ② Propounded concept of hyper reality, that in current society, the lines between reality and imagination has been blurred.



Scholars ?

Ulrich Beck  
Risk Society

1) Post Truth Society — where distinction of facts and opinion has blurred.

2) Internet and social media has created a new virtual society.

3) Fragmentation of society and fluidity of meaning exists in present society.

4) Gender neutrality and fluidity advocated by LGBTQ+ movement.

5) Deterritorialisation is increasing and modern concepts of nation and nation states is being diluted.

6) WTO dictating norms of trades.

7) Pluralism in the society is increasing as various beliefs, ethnicity etc exist side by side.

8) Ubiquitous accepts people of all background.

This way, post modernism expanded the scope of sociology further.

Candidate must not write on this margin

clarity

S.N. Srinivas  
multiple modernities

consumerism, hedonism

4



Q. Do you think that common sense is the starting point of social research? what are its advantages and limitations? Explain. (20)

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Common sense can be referred as typified and common stock of taken for granted knowledge. (Alfred Schultz)

Social research have relied upon common sense.

Starting point of social research

① Common sense help in formation of hypothesis for social research. especially in the new fields of sociological enquiry

? Ex Karel Marx proposition of existence of inequality in society based on class.

② Social research are conducted to correct wrongs of common sense.

? Ex <sup>Social</sup> survey of poverty explained role

Are you sure that Marx derived his hypothesis from common sense knowledge?



of social structure in creating and perpetuating poverty, like the caste consensus of Bihar

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- ③ Falsification of common sense through 'black swan events', through social research, enable expansion of understanding of social reality.

eg) Margaret Mead noted lack of patriarchal division of labour in tribes of Papua New Guinea, breaking universal nature of patriarchy and not natural.

- ④ Connecting dots across various common sense to see a pattern through social research ~~enable~~ discovers the bigger picture.

eg) Sociological Imagination by CW Mills.

however, not always common sense is the starting point:—

other sources /  
pre existing literature  
& theories  
experiences,  
etc.



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हार्जिन में नहीं  
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① Giddens noted results of social research become part of common sense, i.e. the end point, not start.

② Both can be divergent  
"Like all stare gazer is not astronomer, all common sensical observation of society is not sociology".

relevance ?

### Advantages

① Helps in evolution of knowledge of the society.

— how ?

② Discover unanticipated functions (R K Merton) behind social phenomena.

③ Helps in reflexivity, by decoding biases based on common sense.

? Are your arguments interconnected and address the Q ?

### Disadvantages

① Can lead to teleological approach, where effect is proved as cause.

② subjective bias can creep in.

Overall, both share close relation.

pls revise

5



3(b)

mention  
early  
sociologists

— one of the  
earliest sociological  
approaches

Structural functional approach  
assumes that the society is made up  
of multiple parts, ~~so~~ where each part  
has a function to perform for the overall  
preservation of the society.

Structure of society comprises  
of religion, economic practices, family,  
roles, polity, ~~and~~ stratification etc.

Significance of the approach

① Helps in understanding the existence  
and maintenance of equilibrium in  
society.

Ref) T. Parsons noted existence  
of "functional prerequisites" (AGIL) that  
help society self maintain and adjust.

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② Influence of society on the actions of individuals.

- present your argument clearly

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हानि में नहीं  
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eg) E. Durkheim gave the concept of 'social facts' which are external to and coercive upon the actors.

③ Explain the reason behind existence and universal nature of social phenomena.

eg) Davis and Moore explained how social stratification help in role-allocation in society.

v. good

However, the approach has been criticised by many scholars.

try to  
make your  
ans  
theoretical

Criticisms and Short-falls

① Justify the regressive practices of society.

eg) Feminists like Ann Oakley criticised T. Parsons for justifying sexual division of labour as preserving the

social action  
theorists  
|  
Weber, Mead,  
etc.



performing the role of stabilisation of adult personality.

- ② Scholars in India and other closed society noted that functionalist theory is eurocentric and valid in open societies.

① DAVIS & MOORE theory not valid in caste system.

- ③ R.K. Merton, a neo-functionalists, criticised structural functionalists for not considering dysfunctions, non functions and alternative functions.

① Creche as alternative to socialisation by mother.

- ④ Post modernists criticised functionalist for their metanarratives, like Durkheim's generalisation of "Le suicide".

However, structural functionalists played important role in uncovering social structures and potential roles.

— useful for macro sociological analysis of relatively stable social systems

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Are  
you  
sure?

how  
caste  
system  
originated

&  
sustained?  
over time?

clarify  
the  
ascriptive  
dimension

in  
traditional  
Indian  
society

conclusion  
is too  
simple

XXX-X-GSI/20



36)

data + meaning

might derive from data  
from data  
analysis

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Scientific research differentiates between information and data.

Information is mostly received from a secondary source, like previous ~~research~~ research, articles, book, government data etc.

Quantitative  
Qualitative

raw,  
unorganized,  
unprocessed

While data can be both secondary and primary, i.e. collected directly by the researcher himself.

This distinction however, appears to be subtle in social science, because :-

- ① Lab experiments are not possible in social research as humans have conscience. It is also not ethical as humans are not 'ginny pigs'. guinea pigs
- ② social researchers at times create



?

+ primary data from secondary sources  
based on content analysis and value  
interpretation.

③ In social research, complete value  
freedom or objectivity is not possible  
as values creep in, as researchers  
are part of society, they study  
(Alvin Gouldner)

④ However, some methods  
have been suggested to maintain  
the distinction:-

- ① Positivists advocated study of observable  
facts and at macro level (Comte,  
Durkheimen)
- ② Training the researcher to maintain  
reflexivity and value transparency.
- ③ Digitally recording the data through  
audio-visual recorders.
- ④ Peer review of the results.

Overall, the subtlety exists  
in social science compared to science.



(a)

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Social research is the study of social phenomena and ~~then~~ to ensuring a valid data collection, field work is commonly done by sociologists. Prominent method for it is ethnography (Participant Observation)

fieldwork  
empirical  
observation  
& collection  
data

Ex Malinowsky's study of Trobriand Islanders.

Ex MN Srinivas study of 'Remembered village'  
↳ Rampura

Challenges associated:—

① Choice of the correct society that would reflect the phenomena that one want to study, in most clear way.

ideal field  
doesn't exist

Ex Durkheim choice of 'Arunta Tribe' for study of religion led to



'Totemism'.

- ② Acceptance or entry into the society.

Pd Black ~~see~~ American may face resistance in studying all white village in USA.

Pd Andre Beteille noted the resistance by Brahmins of Sripuram in his visit to cheri (residence of lower castes).

v. good

- ③ Linguistic barriers in understanding the response and interactions of ~~the~~ subjects.

- ④ Cultural context variance can lead to different interpretation of an action, by researcher, ~~the~~ vs. intent of actors.

- ⑤ Different interpretation by different researchers, reduces reliability.

Pd R. Redfield and O. Lewis differently interpreted same ~~Mexican~~ village.



⑥ Premature closure of research  
by the researcher, thinking he has  
got all needed data.

⑦ Ethical concerns, especially in cover  
study and study of anti-social groups.

W.F. Whyte  
⑧ W. Whyte study of Italian-  
American community in Boston.

⑧ Jeopardy safety of researcher.

⑨ Patrick's study of Glasgow gangs,  
he rushed away in hurry, when violence  
increased.

good attempt  
but can still  
do better

### ways to overcome them

① Pilot study of the society before fully  
study.

② Training of the researcher.

③ Clear declaration of intent of study to  
objective people

④ Value transparency with subjects.

ethical  
concerns

thus, various challenges exist,  
but field work command high credibility.

?

struggle to balance  
reliability & validity



6(b)

in response to question

उम्मीदवारों को इस  
हाथिए में नहीं  
लिखना चाहिए  
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Max Weber propounded the Interpretative sociology, where he advocated going one layer below the objective and quantitative study, to uncover the subjective meanings attached by actors to their social actions.

Importance in understanding social phenomena:—

- ① Accepts the humans have conscience ~~and~~ and are not just passive followers of social facts, as stated by early sociologists like E. Durkheim.
- ② Promotes value neutrality, as complete objectivity is not possible in choice of topic. This ensures value transparency in study of social phenomena.



③ Study phenomena based on causal pluralism i.e. there can be multiple cause for a phenomena. This enhances multidimensional understanding.

④ Max Weber provided tools like Ideal types and methods like Verstehen, that help uncover meaning and at same time maintain value neutrality.

eg) In his study of "Protestant Ethics and spirit of Capitalism" he demonstrated their use.

⑤ Validity of such study is high as it makes deep analysis of the phenomena. Contextual and meaningful understanding

⑥ Understanding of maintenance and



creation of social order is ~~made~~

made through approaches like

ethnomethodology - state it in simple and direct words

⑦ Understand how subjective meanings are typified by actors, which enable different actors to understand some meaning of action (Phenomenology).

⑧ Symbolic interactionism study how social interactions creates the society and self. meanings aren't fixed

### ⑨ Limitations

① High subjectivity can lead to lower credibility of research.

② Realibility of study is low due to unstructured data and study.

③ Excessive justification of meanings can lead to status quo.

④ Inconclusive result can be achieved.

however, they enabled knowing beyond the positivist understandings

interpretative  
studies  
are  
largely  
systematic  
though  
flexible

measures - mixed methods

useful for  
micro social  
analysis

10



6(c)  
Hypothesis can be referred as 'tentative generalisation', validity of which is yet to be tested.

whereas variables are characteristics which vary viz a viz time and space.

Hypothesis is made by decoding or establishing patterned relationship between variables, which can lead to different types of hypothesis :-

- ① Simple → comprising of only <sup>two</sup> ~~one~~ variable.
- ② Complex → comprising more than two variables.
- ③ Null → where the variables do not have a relation.



## Examples of Poverty

① Poverty was commonly understood as result of individual skills, aspirations and will to work.

But social survey proved it's due to social structure like caste system, race, gender etc.

② Gendered division of labour lead to poverty of women

Where is the H?

## Examples of Illiteracy

① Illiteracy is related to high fertility

eg Kerala has 95% literacy and 1.8 TFR and Bihar has 61% women literacy and 3.0 TFR.

② Illiteracy hampers social mobility.

① P. Bourdieu established relation between social and economic capitals.

Thus, hypothesis forms important part of social research.

3

Formulate a H using poverty & illiteracy as variables



8(a)

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हिसाब में नहीं  
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Non-positivistic methodology  
emerged as a counter to the positivist  
methodology, which was propounded by  
early sociologists. They believed social  
world is governed by social laws like  
natural laws in science. But,  
non-positivists countered this.

Non-positivistic methodology NOT scientific

① Non positivists believed scientific  
methods or propositions are not  
valid in sociology.

Sufficient

• Adorno even noted that  
science suffocates creativity.

② They use qualitative methods, whereas  
science uses quantitative methods.

positivist  
methods  
done  
are  
inadequate

natural  
science



③ Unlike science, non-positivist methods do not reject values and accepts existence of biases and values.

• Alvin Gouldner noted  
"social researchers are part of society,  
claiming to be value free is like  
architect claiming not to be standing  
inside the building he design."

④ Non positivist methods are concerned with meanings attached by actors to their actions, they understand humans has conscience.

Max Weber's Interpretative  
sociology studies these meanings.

⑤ Lab experiments like in science, is not possible in ~~non-positivist methods~~, as ~~who society can't be contained in a lab.~~

Sociology

⑥ Methods like of feminists advocate collaborative approach with subjects.

• Ann Oakley called for 'reciprocity'.

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लिखना चाहिए  
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But, at the same time non-positivists do propose ways to ensuring unbiased results, in line with scientific approach:-

① Max Weber proposed 'value neutrality' and method like Verstehen and tool like Ideal types to contain bias.

② Reflexivity is used by them to maintain value transparency.

③ Operationalisation of variables is done to quantify qualitative phenomena.

eg level of happiness measured on access to education, living wages etc.

④ Bracketing (Epoche) proposed by phenomenologists to temporarily suspend biases.

Thus, while not scientific completely, they do adhere to some principles of scientific researches.

not completely a science & subject matter - only limited generalisation possible

Socio - a social science

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core studies?

good

11

is scientific in terms of scientific rigour in research



8(b)

Initially used in social anthropology

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हासिल में नहीं  
लिखना चाहिए  
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Ethnography is the study of a society or group of people for a long time.

Malinowsky is considered the father of ethnography. He studied the Trobriand Islanders.

### Significance

① It has high ecological validity as the study is done in its natural setting.

eg) A. Betelle stayed <sup>in</sup> and studied Siquem village.

② Allows the researcher to correct his hypothesis as well as previous observation as he observes phenomena and based on response of members of society.

close to reality  
- observation of non-verbal  
aspects of participants  
- study of participants



③ Helps discover how different society maintain themselves even the dysfunctional ones.

eg) W. F. Whyte study of Italian American locality of Boston where crime and delinquency was high, uncovered social network role in maintaining social cohesion.

④ Researcher overcomes any contextual biases and barriers that may have emerged in theoretical or book study.

eg) Ghurye study of Kohli tribe expanded his understanding of tribes in India, from the colonial interpretation.

⑤ social dynamics can be clearly studied.

eg) M. Srinivas studied "samukritisation" in 1959.



- ⑥ Study of evolution of societies  
and comparative analysis of societies  
can be done.

eg Durkheim study of Arunta  
tribe enabled him to understand  
evolution of Religion from Totemism.

At the same time, ethnography  
has some limitations too :-

- ① Researcher may stop observing  
W. Whyte noted "I went from  
observing non participant to non-observing  
participant".

state it  
properly

naturalisation

- ② Different interpretations due to ideology  
and perspectives.

eg O. Lewis (Marxist) and R. Redfield  
(Functionalist) interpreted same village  
differently.

- ③ Barriers to entry into the group. eg criminals

Overall, the wide use of ethnography,  
from sociology to anthropology, shows  
its significance.

— Mixed methods

good  
attempt



8(c)

Why comparative method was advocated by early sociologists?

Comparative sociology

understands social phenomena based on comparison of different phenomena with each other.

It is sociology itself

① society has to be interpreted and lacks established facts.

Thus, to make sense of phenomena one need to compare it with other similar phenomena.

eg) Cult is understood by comparing with religious denomination.

② various sociologists compared different groups to measure phenomena.

eg) Durkheim's comparative analysis in 'Le suicide' — Bachler Vs Married, War Vs Peace etc.



③ Early sociologists like August Comte noted comparative method as primary method of study of society.

④ Evolution of society is understood through comparison.

⑤ Karl Marx studied mode of production from primitive to capitalist.

⑥ Social interactions are also based on comparison, to decode meanings, and society is made by them.

Comparative method  
is useful only  
in limited scope

⑦ Difference between Yes and No by nodding the head.

However, sociology is also beyond comparative method:-

① Ethnomethodology study the methods use by people to know social order.

② Phenomenology is concerned with typified knowledge.

Overall, comparative sociology is central to sociology as whole.

Contextualize  
their arguments  
in light of the  
limitations of  
comparative  
method.

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