

Mains 2026

Test 2

[Paper I – Sectional Test 2]

Sociological Thinkers

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) Class-in-itself and class-for-itself
- b) 'Social fact is to be treated as thing.' Discuss.
- c) *The Structure of Social Action*
- d) Relative Deprivation
- e) Authority

Q2. (a) What is the focus of sociological analysis in the contributions of Emile Durkheim? Give your answer with the help of any one of his contributions. 20

(b) Bring out a comparative analysis of Marxian and Parsonian views of social change and examine the relevance of each view for social development in the contemporary India. 20

(c) How could one use Merton's concept of deviance to understand the traffic problem in urban India? 10

Q3. (a) Compare Karl Marx with Emile Durkheim with reference to the framework of 'division of labour'. 20

(b) "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary it is their social being that determines their consciousness." Examine Karl Marx's notion of mode of production in the light of this statement. 20

(c) Critically examine the contributions of Weber to the understanding of industrial bureaucracy. 10

Q4. (a) Do you agree that Marxism offers a prefabricated theory of social change? Discuss. 20

(b) Attempt a comparative analysis of the Weberian and Marxian theories of social change. Which do you think is more relevant to the Indian society at present? Give reasons for your answer. 20

(c) Discuss how Merton's paradigm for functional analysis is an advancement over the classical functionalism. 10

SECTION B

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

- (a) Objectivity and value-neutrality
- (b) Dialectical approach
- (c) Manifest and latent functions
- (d) Theoretical discourses on alienation
- (e) *Mind, Self and Society*

Q6. (a) Talcott Parsons' theory of social system has been criticized as a veiled status quoist ideology. Critically examine how valid and justified is this criticism. 20

(b) Identify the similarities and differences between Marx's theory of 'alienation' and Durkheim's theory of 'anomie'. 20

(c) What is the difference between anomie in Merton and Durkheim? Explain. 10

Q7. (a) 'The history of the hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggle'. Critically analyse the statement. 20

(b) Define Ideal Type and explain Weber's concept of 'Verstehen' for understanding social phenomena. 20

(c) Why Parsons' theory is called as neo-evolutionary theory of social change? Discuss. 10

Q8. (a) "According to Durkheim, the essence of religion in modern society is the same as religion in primitive society." Comment. 20

(b) What is 'social action'? What is its place in the analytical frameworks of Max Weber and Talcott Parsons? 20

(c) Write a short note on interactionist perspective on deviance. 10

12 July

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250

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(a)

Karl Marx sees class in terms of its objective and subjective expression i.e. class-in-itself and class-for-itself respectively.

Class in itself is like category which is seen by others but the members are not aware of being part of a common stratum.

It includes individuals who have same relationship to the means of production.

Eg proletariat who only own their labor.

The members are not aware of their common interests and difficulties. ^{According to Marx,}

~~possess~~ a "false class consciousness" ^{they are driven by}

In capitalist mode of production, the inequalities between the haves and have nots widen, exploitation of proletariat increases. While working in factory the workers recognise the shared

are these
concepts
restricted
to
Capitalist
society only?

~~homogenization~~
~~politicization~~
~~politicization~~
exploitation and identify their common
enemy i.e. bourgeoisie. And hence they
achieve true class consciousness.

Is that all?

This is when a class in itself
becomes a class for itself

3

A class for itself is a social class defined
on the basis of subjective criteria.

However class for itself is transitory.

In capitalist mode of production, they
rise against the bourgeoisie (Revolution of
proletariat), usurp state power and
eventually establish communist society
(which is classless and stateless)

what
offer
communism?
(as per
Marx)

~~omitted
argument
weaken
your
line~~
However Ralf Dahrendorf suggests
the revolution might not occur since the
class conflict has now been institutionalised
(@ Trade unions).

Despite that, Marxian concept provides
a framework to analyse and understand
social change.

— other theories that
explain social change

functionalists
— elite
theory
— Weber

1(b)

In Rules of Sociological method, Emile Durkheim introduced the concept of social fact as the subject matter of sociology. ("science of society")

social facts are "way of feeling, thinking and acting, which are external to the actor and possess a coercive power"

To establish sociology as a scientific discipline, he argued that its subject matter i.e. social fact has to be studied as a thing, in the same manner natural science studies natural facts.

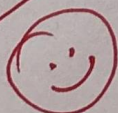
According to him, social facts are not abstract, but an objective reality.

They can be empirically observed, quantified and empirically tested. and cause-effect relationship could be established — quantifications

while studying them sociologists must discard all preconceptions, prejudices and biases, this ensures that they are studied

v. good

this is how you substantiate your argument and convince the examiner



objectively i.e. as things.

He also specified certain characteristics of social facts that establishes that they are objects?

- 1 Externality → they are sui generis and seen external to an individual
- 2 Constraining → existence of constraints makes them as real as other objects.
- 3 Independent of the will of individual

[Ex] → legal system is a social fact, it exists independently, is external to an individual and has coercive nature as well.

However Max Weber argued studying social facts is not enough, a sociologist must study social action and the meaning behind it.

Webster - long with positivist methods, subjective understanding (Verstehen) is important

Despite this, by insisting on treating social facts as things he established sociology as a distinct discipline moving it away from philosophy.

good concluding remark

★ should have been mentioned earlier (only briefly)

5/2



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1(c)

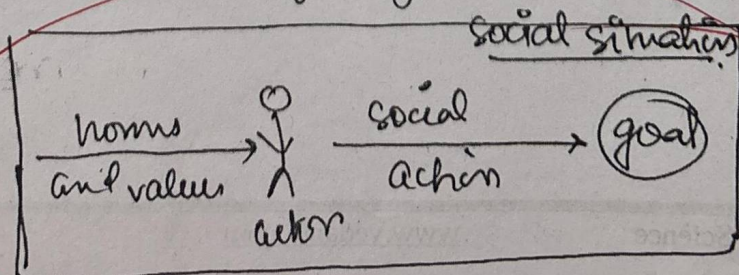
"The Structure of Social Action" is the seminal work of Talcott Parsons that synthesised French positivism, German Idealism and British Utilitarianism together.

→ most cons of these theoretical traditions as discussed by Parsons

He defined social action as a conscious, goal oriented human behaviour that is regulated by norms and values of society.

He listed four elements that constituted a social action.

- ① The Actor "being in a situation"
- ② The Situation is the context
- ③ Norms of values of society that regulate the action
- ④ The End → an action is oriented towards attainment of a goal/end



check the diagram in the attached file on laptop

beautiful intro



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He then went on to classify social actions into 3 types -

- ① Instrumental Action in which both ends and means are logically decided.
Eg Reading a book to pass an exam.
- ② Expressive Action in which the appreciation component dominates
Eg Hugging a friend
- ③ Moral Action in which actor's own motivation is subordinate to values of society
Eg helping someone despite paucity of time.

this was mentioned by Parsons in his subsequent works

this work bridged the gap between macro and micro analysis of society and laid the groundwork for the structural functionalist school

how?

refer notes on Talcott Parsons

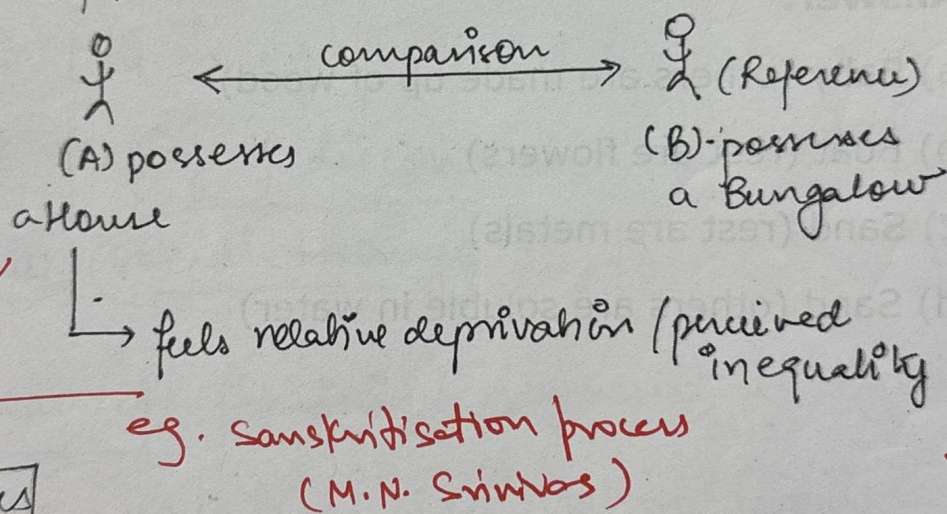
2 1/2

1(d)

Relative deprivation is the feeling of discontent, disadvantage or injustice that an individual/group experiences when they compare themselves to a reference group.

Unlike absolute deprivation (lack of basic necessities), relative deprivation is entirely subjective and psychological.

Example



Types

- ① Egoistic deprivation → when an individual feels disadvantaged compared to the situation of his/her peers

Eg When a colleague gets promotion, others discuss in relation to

- open society → membership group
- closed society → non-membership group

1.1.16

lovely 😊

S.A. Stouffer
The American Soldier

always prefer or social example over an individual of an individual

may experience this deprivation

② fraternal deprivation - when a group collectively feels disadvantaged compared to another i.e. reference group.

Ex This is often experienced by minorities.
• not political rights or distributing resources.

Relative deprivation can create social unrest (in case of fraternal deprivation), a general feeling of discontent and ~~it~~ even lead to social change.

V. G. V. argument

Ex Rise of feminist movements is due to the relative deprivation women feel in political, economic and social arenas.

* cite any scholar or study here for feminist theory

This phenomenon shows that discontent stems from subjective comparisons, not always from absolute deprivation necessarily

1(c)

Max Weber defines authority as a form of legitimate power.

According to him, power has an element of coercion which differentiates it from authority. As authority is based on the beliefs of subordinates that the issued command is justified and rightful.

Weber developed three ideal types of authority.

derived from the
ideal types of social

① Traditional authority → stems from traditional social action & is based on beliefs, customs and values.

Khap panchayat, institution of primogeniture

Ex: authority exercised by teachers over pupils.

link them

② Charismatic authority → based on charisma qualities of the person who exercises it. It is more pronounced in times of crisis but is inherently fragile. It survives only as long as the person is considered charismatic by the

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followers or dies

⇒ Religious leaders, Politicians exercise this kind of authority

if you can cite some specific examples, it would be better

③ Legal Rational Authority → based on unethical action. According to Max Weber, Bureaucracy was the purest type of exercised legal authority.

In reality, however, actual authority different types of maybe a combination of these ideal types. may coexist at the same time in a given society.

Example PM ^{may} exercise legal authority when dealing with ministers; traditional authority over party members; charismatic authority over the electorate.

V. good



Authority can be a ^{tool to} ~~balance~~ ensure social order (legal authority) or it can be a revolutionary force (charismatic authority) that inspires social change.

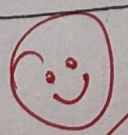
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beautiful



But, Marx - authority - all power - false class consciousness

YOU ARE LEARNING FAST. KEEP IT UP



Q (A)

Emile Durkheim was one of the founding fathers of sociology who gave distinctive sociological explanation of social pattern, processes and institutions

what?

avoid such general statements

save your words & time

Focus of sociological analysis of 'Suicide' as an example

(1) Durkheim emphasised that

social facts are the subject matter of sociology

and must be studied as things

(2) He studied 'suicide' as a social fact

not a psychological phenomenon. He

proved that there were certain suicidal currents that were responsible for suicides and not the individual's state of mind

(3) He also emphasised that sociological analysis should be based on empirical observations and evidences.

emphasised good positivist app.

Q

Focus perspective
① perspective
social realism
social reality over the individual
society as a system
social reality
Swing

③ positivist approach
② social solidarity

② 'Suicide' was his first empirical study, which was based on data gathered from police records.

③ Durkheim focused on functional aspects of the society, such as social order, solidarity, integration etc. By

studying these, he believed he could reverse the upheaval caused by modernising forces.

④ Through his research on suicide he showed that integration (level of social solidarity) and regulation (level of social control) that were the causes of suicide. So, by addressing these suicide rates could be controlled, although he believed a certain rate of suicide was functional for the society.

v. good

Important
suggestion:

Discusses theoretical arguments first and then with the help of an example of all the theoretical arguments.

① He also insisted that sociological analysis should be based on scientific method. Therefore, he argued for comparative methodology.

- must it
with point ②

② He compared the suicide rates of different religion group → Protestant vs Catholics to establish the cause of suicide.

- subject matter?

However, his critics like Max Weber have accused him of ignoring the subjective meaning behind individual's actions. And Marxists argue that he ignores the class conflicts and prevalent inequalities.

Despite criticism, Durkheim's study of Suicide and other works, showcased how to systematically analyse social reality and gave sociology its distinct place among the social sciences. during its initial years.

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Good attempt

2(b)

Karl Marx employs dialectical materialism to explain social change while Talcott Parsons provides a structural functionalist theory of social change.

① Drivers of social change

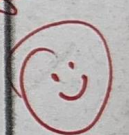
> Marx believes change is driven by economic factors. i.e. economic structure determines superstructure. These changes in base occur due to internal contradictions in a mode of production. And it is through class struggle that these contradictions are resolved and social change occurs.

while for Parsons it is structural differentiation that drives social change.

He explains that when society experiences strains, it adapts through differentiation and moves from a simple to more complex society.

beautiful
the point

no general statement



manifest in the form of class struggle
resolved by a revolution

good

② Nature of change

> Marx believes social change is radical
and revolutionary driven by class struggle.

It causes disruption in the current social
order

class in itself → class for itself
(for revolution)

while Parsons sees it as an evolutionary
process, which is gradual and increases
the adaptive capacity of the society

↳ "adaptive
upgrading"

③ Final stage

> Marx believes social change will culminate
into a communist society which is
classless, stateless and egalitarian

3. Parsons → neo-evolutionary theory of social change
sees it as a continuous process.

[Relevance]

[Marxian view] is effective in analysing
the economic disparities and conflicts

of the owners
to new top control
of the system
(existing)
ruling class

AG/L

subsystem
- compatibility
- internal
dynamics

Evolutionary
process

differs

Ex the wealth gap exposes the exploitative nature of capitalist system and that Marx suggested

Marxian view can be used to analyse the unequal land distribution and alienation of farmer

Parsons' view can be used to analyse how system adapts to new changes in social systems

With advent of AI, new rules and guidelines are emerging that represent system capability to adapt

India is a multicultural society with peace & harmony, that shows how value generalisation handles diversity.

→ democracy, secularism, nationalism, etc
Marx and Parsons providing

two very contrasting paradigms that can help analyse social changes occurring in different sub components of social system.

both can be seen as complementing each other for a comprehensive understanding of society

again generate examples

substantiate them with facts, case studies, reports, etc.

12

Q. (1) According to Robert Merton, deviance is an adaptation that breaks societal norms. It occurs when there is a mismatch between cultural goals and institutionalised (legitimate) means to achieve them.

can be written more clearly

focus on this while

In case of urban traffic problem →

cultural goal = efficient and timely travel and distance from
 - to reach on time
 - to follow traffic rules

Merton's point of view

legitimate institutionalised means = existing infrastructure, laws and rules, pollution norms etc

good

Sometimes, heavy traffic leads to loss of productive hours; poor road infrastructure causes accidents; inefficient public transport system disproportionately affects the lower strata; this causes structural strain in the urban areas ~~that~~ and people often resort to deviant behaviours in order to adapt.

Innovation → ~~the~~ some reject the institutionalised means and adopt innovative

ways to → like violating traffic laws to save
time or driving on sidewalks

Retreatism some abandon both cultural
goals and institutionalized means.

habitual
offenders
bikers at night

Ex some may avoid the cultural goal of
efficient transportation and adopt alternative
means → work from home or live in sub-
urban areas ?

Ritualists ?

Rebellion some not only reject cultural
goals and means but also look for new
alternatives

electric cars, solar energy

concern for
environment
sustainability

Ex some may advocate for smart-

car pooling

mobility solutions or metro rails

good

Merton's concept of deviance explains

that urban traffic problem is not because
lack of civic sense or morals only. It's an
adaptive response to a structural strain.

Thus by removing the discrepancies

policy measures
for a better
system

between cultural goals and institutionalized
means these problem could be solved

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are the key of
attributes of
any scholar

5(a)

In sociology objectivity and value-neutrality are needed for conducting empirical research and ensuring the results are reliable, valid and free from bias of researcher.

in social sciences - different theoretical traditions

Objectivity is a methodological or scholar's procedure that involves using rigorous logical and transparent techniques tools (like Ideal Types) in order to capture social reality as it is.

have tried to

addresses

concerns of

objectivity &

value-neutrality differently

↓
early

sociologists

↓
later

sociologists

while value neutrality is a state of mind that requires researcher to remain neutral and not pass moral judgements on their findings.

Ex while studying criminal subculture, researcher must record his observation without condemning them.

Weber acknowledged absolute objectivity is not possible as sociological

is it
only
about
state
of
mind?

→ Weber - for a comprehensive understanding of social reality, positivist approach is inadequate. Hence, inquiry can't be completely value free. need for Justification

He argued that values can be permitted while selecting the research topic. But after that value neutrality is necessary. Therefore, from there on researcher should use objective tools like Ideal type or Verstehen.

Before Weber, positivists like Durkheim believed that objectivity can be achieved if social facts are treated as things.

This was criticised by non positivists like Gunnar Myrdal who believed ^{absolute} objectivity is neither achievable nor desirable.

Adding to that Alvin Gouldner called value free sociology as a soulless discipline.

In contemporary sociology, scholars ~~see~~ this dilemma could be advocate or adopt triangulation methods. to address the concerns related to R & V.

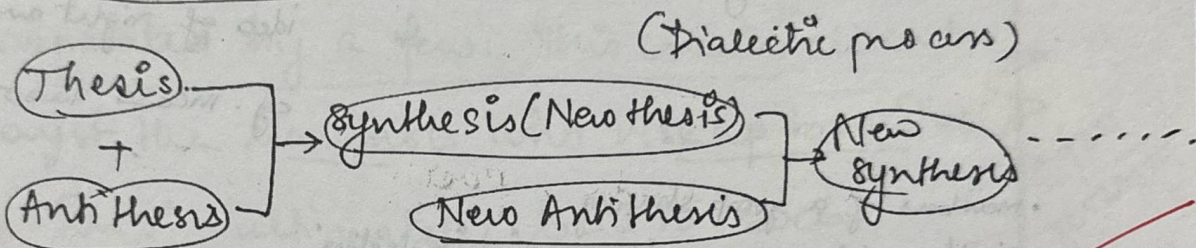
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a method of investigation initially associated by Hegel & later adopted by Marx in social sciences

be simple & straightforward

Qb)

The Dialectical approach is a method of discovering truth by resolving the conflict between opposing forces.

The roots of this idea lies in Hegel's Idealism, but it was adopted in sociological inquiry by Karl Marx - i.e. Dialectical Materialism.



Hegel used this in realm of ideas; to map how new ideas emerge and society evolves. while Marx applied this to the material world.

Hegel's dialectics remained abstract ideas but Marx provided an empirical analysis of material conditions using dialectical approach.

Truth?
This is an example of self-created trap

how these paragraphs are different?
What new thing you saying?

No avoid repetition

it is waste of words & time

Using this approach Marx explained how contradictions in the economic base are the drivers of social change.

[Ex] In capitalist mode of production, one of the major contradiction is communal nature of production but profits are appropriated by a few. This creates discontent amongst the have-nots who rise up to resolve this and ultimately lead to social change (Capitalism → Communism).

But critics argue the Marx lays too much emphasis on economic factors while ignoring social, cultural, political and other factors.

Weber pointed out that even values (Protestant ethics) can lead to change. (arrival of capitalism).

Despite that dialectical approach is an indispensable tool to analyse social change. It is useful as an ideal type and as a complementary theoretical perspective to structural-functional app.

with the emergence of institutions of property

Conflict of interest

class-in-itself
homogenization
proletariat

class-for-itself

Conflict resolved by revolution
abolition of class

too general
explain how?
the process is imp.

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name all the
three postulates

500

In "Social theory and social structure" - R.K. Merton
rejects universal postulates of early social
anthropologists and functionalists,
introduces empirically testable
categories i.e. manifest and latent functions etc.

good
😊

Manifest function - is an objective, conscious intended and publicly recognised consequence
of a social pattern or institution. that helps
the system to adjust or adapt

subjective - as intended by the
social actor

but
also not
completely
subjective
as they are
empirically
observable
&
measurable

Latent function - is an unintended, hidden
and unrecognised consequence of the same
structural pattern that helps in sustaining the
social system.

objective consequences

Example Hopi tribe and rain dance

Manifest function of rain dance is to appease rain gods.

Latent function → is to reinforce group solidarity

Example 2 Veblen's - conspicuous goods.

Manifest function → physical needs (e.g.) car for travel.

Latent function signals wealth, status

RK Merton argued that focusing only on manifest function will make sociology redundant, therefore analysing latent function is important to uncover hidden realities.

Introduced
"dysfunction"

Also, not all unanticipated consequences are functional; if an unintended outcome disrupts the system, it's considered as 'latent dysfunction', which needs to be studied as well.

Further, what is function for one may be dysfunction for another

However, Alvin Gouldner has warned that looking only for functional aspects can make sociologists defend even harmful structures like calling power as 'latently functional for elite'

have highlighted class for keeping this in mind; if Merton's methodology is applied then it can uncover hidden social dynamics and patterns.

1
42

X

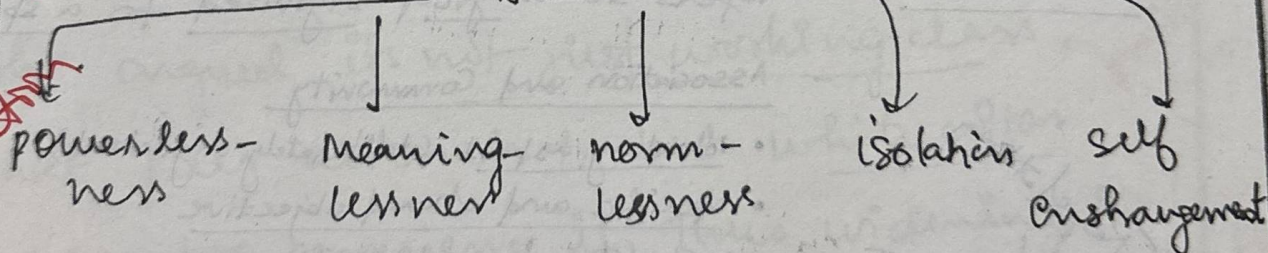
5(d)

there are many scholars who ~~staped~~ shaped and developed the concept of alienation. But it was Karl Marx who laid a strong foundation

Alienation was a feeling of estrangement from one's own creation, labor, other individuals and from their own being. As per Marx, alienation peaks in the capitalist mode of production

Building on Marx's work, Melvin Seeman tried to define alienation comprehensively

He divided it into five elements



Apart from this Herbert Marcuse

in his 'one dimensional man' studied alienation in advanced industrial societies. He concluded that both work and leisure

neglected
lack of
sublation

cause of
alienation

not in
prop. property

class
inequality
&
exploitation

alienate people from their true selves.

Taking a different path, Wiesner argued that it is the bureaucratic structure and increasing rationalisation that kills individuals' creativity and alienates them.

When formal rationality predominates substantive rationality

there are scholars like Karl Popper who considered alienation as a breeding ground for creative ideas, presenting a functional view of alienation.

alienation
- in service sector

Then there are scholars like C. Wright Mills who argued it's not just working class that feels alienated, but white collar workers too experience it. Thus, widening the scope of sociological inquiry.

"prohibiting
personality"

(5)

Theoretical discourses of alienation have evolved from pure economic critique of class exploitation to wider analysis of alienation in contemporary society.

✓ good
😊

socio-economic,
political &
psychological

5(e)

"Mind, self and society" is the foundational work of GH Mead that led to the establishment of Interactionist school. — in response to Watson's radical behaviorism

In his work Mead rejected biological determinism, ~~proposed and argued~~ argued that 'mind & self' are social constructs that are developed and shaped during social interactions thinker

Stimulus - Organism - Response

Mead considered mind as a social process rather than an organ. It emerges and develops during social processes. Mind involves thought processes, is oriented towards problem solving and allows individuals to operate efficiently in the society.

The 'self' is a dynamic entity and involves a dialectic relationship between 'I' and 'me'

① → spontaneous, unpredictable creative aspect of self that responds immediately to me

rejected
S-R mechanism

offered
S-O-R instead

argument
lacks
flow

relationship
of
mind
with

"significant
symbols"

how
construction
of self
is a dynamic
process?

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(16) → the social self. that has internalised societal norms and expectations.

Using these two concepts Mead explains and analyses both social stability and social change.

He argues since 'self' shapes ? the society (stability or change) and self develops due to social processes, therefore both self and society are inseparable and can't exist in isolation.

4 ~~Nevertheless~~ his work is criticised by positivists for being too abstract. According to them, the concepts - 'self, mind' etc are difficult to operationalise and tested empirically.

consider
society
structure
or men
ex. significant
symbols

But despite all of that, his work is significant as it shifted focus from macro-structural determinism to micro level interactions.

- understanding of meanings
- reflects dynamism of social life

1 (a) This statement is the core theme of Karl Marx's 'Historical materialism'. Through this Marx suggests that conflict between antagonistic classes (ruling class & subject class ~~of bourgeoisie & proletariat~~) has been the driver of human history.

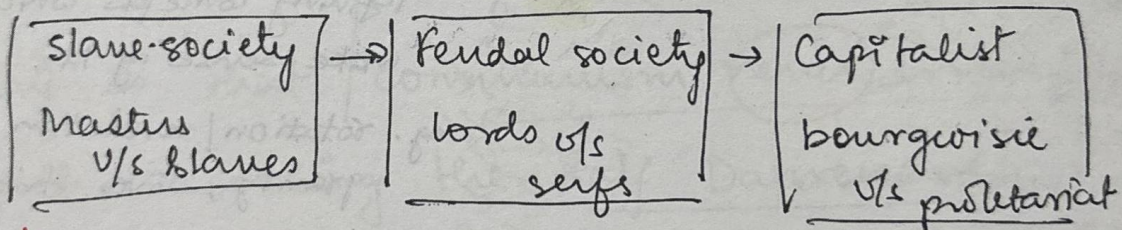
don't limit the discussion to Capitalist society only

Marx argued that due to unequal and conflicting economic interest position in relation of production the classes have been in conflict. This conflict brought

revolutionary changes to the mode of production and history progressed.

Except primitive Communism

all historical societies were class based



HISTORY



Critical evaluation



Weber rejected Marx's economic determinism. In 'Protestant ethics and spirit of Capitalism' he showed how religious beliefs and ethics can too bring / social change.

(aspects of superstructure)

He was criticised for providing mono-
causal explanations and downplaying
the role of ideas, values and other institutions.

Talcott Parsons too countered Marx's
view that history is primarily driven
by class conflict. According to Parsons, it
is structural differentiation, integration and
value generalisation that drives social
change.

One of the major limitation of Marxist
theory is that communism never arrived as Marx
had hoped for.
In fact, according to Ralf Dahrendorf,
the class conflict that Marx talked about
has been institutionalised in the capitalist
mode of production (e) trade unions that
act as safety valve; workers can vent out
their grievances instead of a revolution

Dahrendorf - decomposition
of labour & capital

Apart from this, feminist scholars have pointed out that the history of patriarchy and oppression of women has been omitted by Marx. Thereby providing an incomplete picture of human history

Although Marx's theory has its limitations, it provides a methodology ^{unique perspective as well as} to analyse societal developments and understand the forces that drive social change.

relevance in
contemporary societies

class based inequalities, etc.

case studies?

land ownership, farmer protests, etc.

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Contextualize the concept - Why Weber suggested it?

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7(b)

Ideal type is tool ^{on account of subjective meanings} developed by Max Weber that ~~is~~ used as a 'measuring rod' to ^{social reality is infinitely complex - only can be selectively studied} understand a social phenomenon (organisation, processes or behaviors)

Ideal Type is a mental construct ^{rationally constructed} designed to ^{capture} essential features of social phenomenon. It acts as a heuristic device, that allows sociologist to analyse and compare social reality with an abstract model. ^{to exercise selectivity during the research} which is rationally constructed on the basis of empirical observation of social reality.

Verstehen means 'interpretative / empathic understanding'. It is a methodological approach that involves understanding the subjective meanings that actors attach to their actions and interactions.

Weber discussed two types of understandings which can be used to comprehend the meaning of

since positivist methods alone are inadequate, Weber suggested Verstehen to study social reality

Social action is meaningful

Link?

- ① Direct observation understanding it simply involves observing an act - ^{attributing} ^{motives} ^{meanings to the} ^{social action}
- ② Explanatory understanding in which ^(by researcher) investigator tries to decipher meaning by explaining the context of the act - ^{motives} ^{behind the} ^{social action}

Doing so requires certain steps to be followed by the investigator

- ① Develop clear understanding of situational choices and constraints of the actor
- ② Develop communication abilities (e.g. learn the language of actor) to ensure investigator and actor are on same wavelength.

- ③ Don't sympathise with the actor

Verstehen is important methodology of interpretative sociology. But requires the investigator to put themselves in the

can be avoided

(empathy)

shows of the people that they are studying.

Doing so allows investigators to understand the context, culture, norms and values that shape social interactions and social actions.

By employing verstehen, they develop a deeper understanding of social phenomenon,

which allows improves the validity of their observations

— since such understanding is contextual, hence, only limited generalisations could be derived

However, positivists argue that

verstehen and ideal type are highly susceptible to subjectivity.

According to them social research should be objective.

Merton's MRT (Middle-Range Theory) — actually inspired by Weber's Ideal Type & his focus on limited generalisations

too criticised Weber for ignoring the latent functions and dysfunctions of social actions.

However, both these tools are central to Weber's work and helps in developing a more comprehensive understanding of the society

— contemporary sociology — seeking a balance b/w macro & micro quantitative & qualitative

Fragmentation of social science
lack of wholeness
subjective

(balancing the concerns of objectivity & validity)

Triangulation

10

X (C)

Talcott Parsons theory is called neo-evolutionary theory of social change because it overcame the limitations of classical evolutionary theories (of Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer).

Classical evolutionary theories like law of three stages or Social Darwinism were rigid in approach. These theories claimed that all societies pass through exact same unilinear stages.

However, Parsons introduced a more open ended model that focused on the society's ability to adapt and curvilinear.

Parsons added a dynamism to theory, because he saw social change as a moving equilibrium rather than a fixed trajectory as claimed by classical theorists.

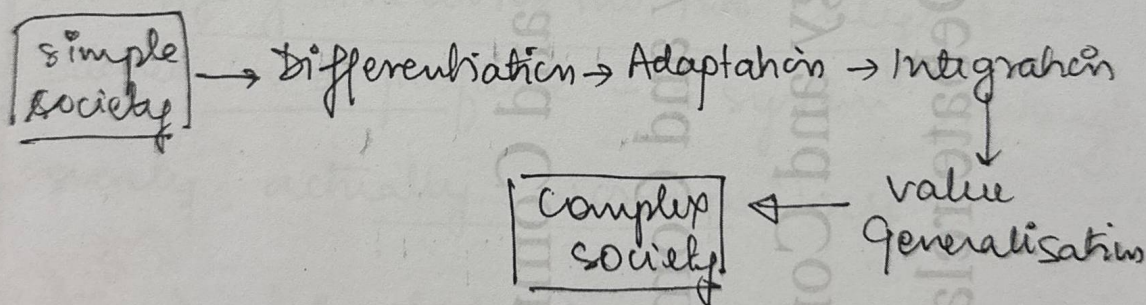
U.P.S.C.

Teg comte believed society passes through 3 stages (theological → metaphysical → positivistic)

— Marx — (stages)

He studied social change from structural functional perspective that saw change as progress & [as society's adaptive capacity increased after change].

For Parsons social change was multi faceted and involved certain processes like



In many ways Parson's theory was an improvement over classical theories and provided a fresh perspective (structural functionalist), therefore was called Neo evolutionary theory.

cybernetic hierarchy
of control

evolutionary
university

idea of
diffusion

5/2

Q (10)

In the 'Elementary Forms of Religion' he ^{who?} defined religion as unified system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things (set apart and forbidden) which unite its followers into a single moral community.

And it was the sacred-profane dichotomy, that Durkheim believed to be the essence of religion. — and rituals associated with the sacred — collective worship — collective effervescence

He rejected theological explanations of religion and argued religion involved classifying the world into two categories — sacred and profane — a system through which society actually worships itself.

In his study of Aranda Tribes he suggested the totem of tribe was a sacred entity that in fact represented the tribe itself.

He ~~noted~~ noted that what is sacred

Sacred
symbolism
Collective
conscience
of the society

in one society may not be so in the other. Sacred and profane may change society to society but the practice of worshipping the sacred and maintaining a distance between sacred and profane remains common to all types of societies.

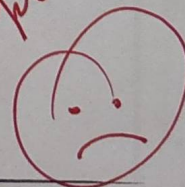
Therefore he believed the essence of religion in modern society is same as religion in primitive society.

He wanted to study modern religion but it was difficult to identify its authentic form. Therefore, he chose to study totemism of Arunta tribe which he believed was closest to the original religion.

Although his theory is considered by its critics as an armchair theory, it but it helped to understand the functional aspects of religion.

(X)

incomplete



sacred symbols
modern societies
totemism - Arunta tribe
authenticity
or
explanation

8 (b)

Social action is a behaviour to which the actor attaches a subjective meaning and which by virtue of its meaning, takes into account the behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course.

Max Weber's analytical framework

For Weber, social action is the subject matter of sociology. And according to him the task of sociologists is to understand the meanings attached by an actor to his/her action, which he called interpretative understanding (Verstehen) of social action.

He created four ideal types of social action that can be used to establish meaning.

① Traditional Social Action which draws meaning from beliefs and traditions.

Perspective

Social action is meaningful

meanings are attached

hence social reality becomes highly complex

thus, need for selective study through social types

try to make your own theoretical as well as methodological

U.P.S.C.

for practice
use only
सिर्फ अभ्यास
के लिए

Question No.
प्रश्न संख्या

eg touching feet of elders.

② Affective Social Action which is driven by emotions like love, hatred, anger etc.

eg hugging someone out of love

Goal-Rational action

③ Zweckrational social action is the most conscious action and means and ends are logically defined

eg studying a particular book for an exam.

Value-Rational action

④ Wert-rational social action is one whose goal is defined by social values.

eg soldier going to save country.

using these ideal types; Weber argued that one could understanding the meanings behind action and establish some cause-effect relationship to a limited extent on the basis of a wort-rational understanding

Talcott Parsons

He viewed social action from structural functional perspective.

methodological aspects
- limited generalization
- causal pluralism
- Verstehen
- hermeneutic

U.P.S.C.

He defined it as a conscious, goal oriented behaviour, which was shaped by societal norms and values.

These actions had certain elements that made them a social action &

"being in a situation"

- ① The Actor → who was part of society
- ② The Goal of the action
- ③ The situation → constituted physical and biological environment
- ④ Norms and values that regulated the action

Through he tried to analyse how norms and values regulate, guide or constrain any social action.

while, Weber laid more emphasis on individual meaning.

In conclusion, Weber adopted a bottom up approach while Parsons adopted a top down approach to understand social action.

over emphasis on culture / shaping the individual

incomplete refer notes on Parsons

Initially work
"The structure of social action"
actor also exercised choice
however, in later works, Parsons viewing it as a system

9

Q. (C)

The interactionists shifts the focus from causes of deviant behaviour to social processes through which individuals or behaviours are labelled as deviant.

For Interactionists like Howard

Becker deviance is socially constructed.

According to him, the moral entrepreneurs

(police, teacher, media) have the power to define and label others as deviant.

Eg Racial profiling of criminals by USA

police department often leads to 'Black Americans' being suspected and searched.

And according Edwin Lemert it

is secondary deviance that pushes

someone permanently towards deviant

subcultures. This is because primary

deviance is common & fleeting and decent

← briefly
contrast
with
structural
approaches
like
S-F App.
&
Marxist App.

beautiful
info



affects one's self identity. while in case of secondary deviance, one is publicly labelled as deviant, which when internalised by individual becomes his/her self identity.

views of
Cicourel
&
Hoffman

The Critics of this approach argue that interactionists fail to explain why people commit deviant acts before being labelled as such.

↳ origin of deviant acts

They are also criticised for treating criminals as passive victims and ignores their choices and motivations.

emphasises less on

do not adequately highlight the role of - distribution of power in society and the nature of decision-making in society?

Despite these limitations Interactionist perspective on deviance i.e. labelling theory proves that it is a dynamic social status/label that is created, shaped and amplified by social processes.

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