



Optional – Answer Writing Focus Group 2025

SOCIOLOGY

Dawt #04 - (Test Code : 881244)

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|------------|--------------|------|--------------|
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| Mobile No. | 9419287800 | Date | 16 JULY 2025 |

Allotted Time : 2 Hours

Instructions to Candidates -

- There are 8 Questions in this Question paper.
- All Questions are Compulsory.
- Answers must be attempted in the QCA Booklet only.

| Q. No. | Grade/Score |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |
| 7 | |
| 8 | |
| Overall Grade/Score | |



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Duration 2 Hours

Total Marks : 90

- Q.1)** Weber established the relationship between history and sociology. Discuss the statement. (10 marks)
- Q.2)** Weber and Dilthey introduced the concept of Verstehen. Examine the statement. (10 marks)
- Q.3)** Write a short note on Iron cage. (10 marks)
- Q.4)** Weber's sociology has been used and adapted by phenomenologists. (10 marks)
- Q.5)** Explain the concept of restitutive and repressive Law. (10 marks)
- Q.6)** Durkheim also argues in 'The Division of Labour' that the form of moral solidarity has changed in modern society, not disappeared. Elaborate the statement with suitable examples from the contemporary society. (10 marks)
- Q.7)** An interesting question is whether Marx remains useful for us today. Which of Marx's theories are hopelessly dated or dead, and which remain a source of new ideas and hypotheses? Discuss the statement with suitable examples from the contemporary times. (15 marks)
- Q.8)** Marx's materialistic theory of history remains the antithesis of the Hegel's idealistic theory of history. (15 marks)

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Q1) Man Weber established the relationship between history & Sociology. Discuss the statement. (10m)

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Q1

Man Weber was an intrepretivist sociology who defined sociology as the study of social action to determine its cause & effects.

Radcliffe Brown distinguished between History and Sociology as being idiographic (specific) & nomothetic (general) respectively

Weber, however showed that there is a link between the two & sociology lies between idiographic & nomothetic.

Weber did a historical compara-tive analysis in his 'Protestant Ethic & Spirit of Capitation' and showed how capitalism - a modern sociological reality - developed over a period of time in history.

Further, Hekman argues how



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Weber provided 'Historical Ideal Types' as a way to study social phenomena.

Key: Bureaucracy and Bureaucratization were historically relevant.

Similarly, traditional authority ideal type of action is based on historical traditions & norms.

Also, Weber showed how rationalisation was a dynamic process throughout Western history which was evident in arts, accounting, measures, architecture & banking etc.

Weber's way of studying social action, i.e. Verstehen often involves understanding historical background of social actor, thereby linking history & sociology together [borrowed from historical methods]

Weber, thus established a relationship between history & sociology

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Q2

Verstehen refers to an empathetic understanding of social action.

Weber & Dilthey's in 4 Verstehen

For Weber a complete detached understanding, as desired by positivists was flawed. Instead, they proposed an empathetic understanding for knowing the meanings & motives behind social action.

Weber borrowed concept of Verstehen from tradition of understanding literary works in History which Dilthey also pioneered.

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Weber argued that mere formation of ideal types will not help sociological study of social action. Instead, a deep immersion in the subject of study is required which formed the basis of Verstehen.

But, Verstehen should not be confused with interference of values. Verstehen has to be accompanied with scientific rigor which requires training.

Verstehen has been criticised for being 'tough to train' & leaves scope for subjectivity of researcher.

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Q3

Max Weber pessimism for modernity and its outcomes is reflected in his prediction of emergence of Iron Cage of Rationality.

For Weber, ~~excess~~ though rationality was instrumental for emergence of spirit of Capitalism, excessive focus on 'instrumental' rationality would lead to suffocation of in modern organisations.

For instance, highly rationalised abstract rules & procedure of bureaucracy will inhibit creativity of humans.

↳ Lack of flexibility in rigid rules of All India Service Rules (India) for IAS.

Weber argued that humans shall be reduced to mere 'cog in the wheels' and would

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be able to realise their true potential. He lamented that modern societies will produce hedonists without hearts & specialists without spirits.

→ denial of PDS benefits to old women because of lack/flattening of fingerprints for Aadhar authentication.

Weber also predicted that charm of mysticism shall reduce & will get replaced by modern rationality.

→ decline of marriage rituals & transformation of wedding for virtual audience on social media (reels etc).

However, critics point out that even in modern enterprises, informal networks are a way of bypassing the cage of rationality (Peter Blau etc).

Also, 'religious revivalism' is evidence of suppressed efforts of rationality.

At Iron Cage of Rationality, there thus has 'flexible' locks & bars.

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Q4

Weber defined Sociology as the study of 'social action' to determine its cause & effects.

Phenomenology is the study of everyday phenomenon. like daily interaction - vs
[Husserl, Schutz etc]

Both Weber and Phenomenologists

opine contrary to the positivistic school of social thought that reality needs to be observed, empirically verified & put into 'generalisable laws'.
[Comte, Durkheim etc].

Instead, they argue that social reality is vast, ambiguous & chaotic which can only be studied by studying meanings & motivations of actors.

Phenomenologists used Weber's focus on 'Verstehen' which is the empathetic understanding and used

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argued for an immersion into the shoes of social actor.

Phenomenologists adapted Weber's focus on meanings and argued that social reality is constructed, destroyed & reconstructed through subjective meaning which can not be measured objectively in a laboratory.

Phenomenologists thus focussed on the subjective meanings that social actors imposed on reality and the 'typifications' they used.

→ To understand a 'chair' as a place of sitting, we needed to understand that actors thought it to be a sitting place.

Phenomenologists, differed with Weber on the validity & desirability of establishing cause & effect relationship as they argued that social reality is chaotic & no causal relationships can be found.

Nevertheless, Weberian sociology paved the way for Micro perspective of phenomenology

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Q5

Emile Durkheim in "The Division of Labour of Society" discussed sociology to be the study of social facts of delegation of tasks, i.e. division of labour.

For Durkheim, social facts are of two types: material & non material

- eg →
- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social structure • morphology • Law | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • morality • collective conscience |
|---|---|

Durkheim argued that Non material social facts (NMSF) were most important but can't be studied as they are not observable (Positivism). Hence he argued for study of Material social Fact of 'Law'

He argued Law to be of two types i.e. Restitutive & Repressive Law.

Restitutive law was a feature of modern specialised society, while repressive law pertained to simple societies

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Repressive law signified societies bound by Mechanical solidarity, Similarity, Sameness, collectivity & lack of individual autonomy. Function of repressive law was to restore the collective conscience & shared morality disturbed by pathological social fact.

Ex) Crime (social fact) → Death by Guillotine [repressive law]

↓
fear & adherence to law [function]

Restitutive law, on the other hand is a law for reform, & restoration of shared morality through giving a chance to individuals a chance for reform.

Ex) Crime → Community service.

This signifies a modern society bound by interdependence & organic solidarity

However, ~~critic~~ it is observed that in modern societies also, repressive law manifests in form of → media trials
→ Honour killings
→ capital punishment

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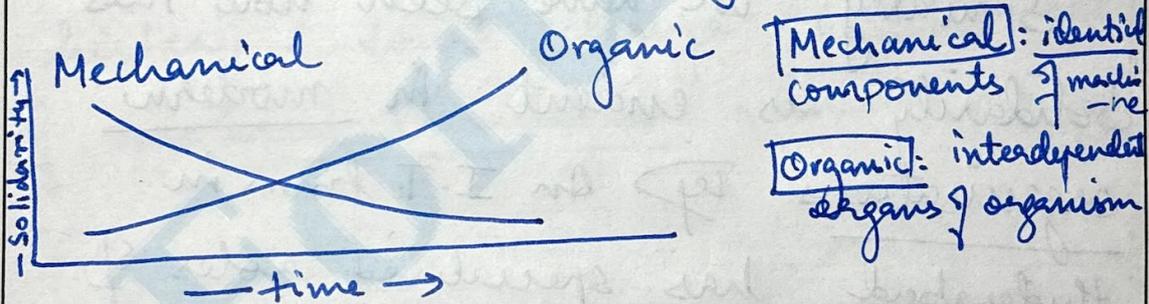
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Durkheim in 'Division of Labour in Society' differentiated between mechanical & organic solidarity as society progresses through social change as a result of division of labour & specialisation.

For Durkheim, a society is suigeneris & is bound by shared and collective solidarity.



Durkheim argued that the moral solidarity changed forms: from being similar, collectivity focused & identical to being different, individualised & diffused in modern societies. (Organic)

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For example ,

Pre Modern : Subsistence based | Similar Skills | Repressive laws

But, modern society shows : Interdependence

eg A police officer requires skills of a doctor to treat him/her while doctor requires efficiency of police officer to maintain law & order in his/her community.

Similarly, we have seen how this Solidarity is evident in modern organisations eg An I.T. firm in Hyderabad has specialised roles of Developer, team management & marketing which together share 'moral solidarity' as an organisation

However events like communal tensions, sectarian movements and repressive punishments like honour killings, death penalties question if any 'shared morality' even exists or not.

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Q7

Karl Marx served as a giant ideological inspiration and scholarly role model for social theorists world wide.

Marx's theories as source of new ideas & hypotheses

① Marxian methodology of using 'historical materialism' which sees history & social change as a result of material conditions remains power - ul.

↳ Commodification of education, marriage, spiritual ideas show how economic considerations govern everyday phenomena.

② Marx's theory of 'Class Conflict' which acts as engine of social change is relevant as in modern forms of capitalism, we see division of

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workforce.

↳ Jenna Burrell divides workforce into 'Coding Elites' and 'Cybertariats' based on position they carry in a knowledge & cyber economy.

③ Marxian conceptualisation of relations of production & means of production has seen manifestation in 'New Transnational Division of Labour'.

↳ Scholars like Immanuel Wallerstein have seen world as an integrative & exploitative capitalist system.

④ Marxian ideas have been adapted by Feminists to argue how 'women' as a class are being oppressed by men.

⑤ Neo Marxian thought has expanded Marxism to new fields such as ideology, mass media & leisure time [Althusser, Gramsci, Adorno]

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However, critics point towards the bankruptcy of Marxism as:-

- ① Fukuyama says Marxian thought fell with the fall of USSR.
- ② Failure of Communist countries & domination by state (Iron Law of Oligarchy) shattered hopes of 'egalitarianism' in Communism
- ③ Class polarisation is not happening since workers are not uniting as:
 - concerned about only own sectors
 ↳ automobiles
 - distinguished between formal & informal
 ↳ domestic help in IT sector, low level employee
- ④ Wiber argues that 'Bourgeoisisation' or expansion of middle class shall happen & not 'proletarianisation' (Marx)
- ⑤ Popper argued that 'alienation' often leads to creativity ↳ Van Gogh remained in isolation.

Thus, Marxian relevance is a contested reality. However, it is said obsolescence of Marx is in fact his relevance as Capitalism has accordingly adapted

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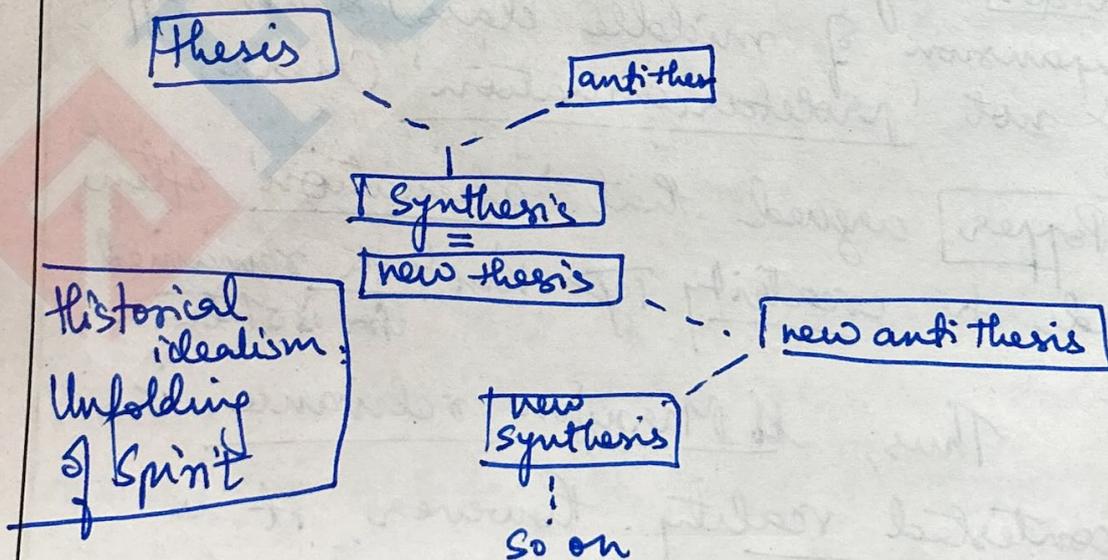
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Q8

Marrxian 'Historical Materialism'
refers to the methodology of
viewing historical social change as
a result of material conditions.
It built upon Hegel's idealistic
theory.

Hegelian idealism

Hegel posited that social progress
and change happens through the
'unfolding of intellectual spirit (Geist)'



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Marx opined that he found
Hegel's ideas 'upside down' &
wanted to tilt it on its head.

He argued that historical
change happens through change in &
conflict in material conditions
& not ideas. For him, "it is not
"consciousness ^{that} determines being, but
being which determines consciousness

He said that 'relations of
production' which are 'static'
become 'fettlers' on dynamic means
of production (tools, technology) etc
which cause social revolt & thus
social change.

→ of static feudal relations obstructed
trade which led to emergence of
proto capitalists

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Marx's theory opposes Hegel's idealism by emphasizing the greater role of material reality than consciousness.

It also differs from Hegel as it suggests 'praxis' or action to change. He argues that philosophers have been thinking about society for so long, now it is time to change it. For this, he suggested proletarian revolt in modern capitalist society.

Marx used historical materialism to ^{theorise} ~~predict~~ stages as.

Primitive Communism > Ancient Slave Society > Feudal > Capitalism > Communism

Marxian theory is criticised for being 'economic reductionist' while he criticised Hegel's for being 'idealist'.
Nonetheless, it provided a new methodology to study history & society.