



VISION IAS

www.visionias.in

13 NOV 2016

SOCIOLOGY (TEST CODE : 820)

Name of Candidate	Priyadarshini Bhattacharya	Registration Number	19218
Medium Hindi/Eng.	English	Date	13 Nov, 16
Center	Karol Bagh		

INDEX TABLE

Q. No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained
1	50	
2 (a)	25	
(b)	25	
3 (a)	25	
(b)	25	
4 (a)	20	
(b)	15	
(c)	15	
5	50	
6 (a)	25	
(b)	25	
7 (a)	20	
(b)	15	
(c)	15	
8 (a)	20	
(b)	15	
(c)	15	

Total Marks Obtained:

Remarks:

Signature of Examiner

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Do furnish the appropriate details in the answer sheet (viz. Name, Registration Number and Test Code).
2. Candidate should attempt FIVE Questions out of EIGHT questions strictly in accordance with the instructions given under each question printed in ENGLISH.
3. The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it.
4. Answers must be written in the medium authorized in the Admission Certificate, which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-Cum-Answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided. No marks will be given for answers written in medium other than the authorized one.
5. Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to.
6. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-Cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.

75, 3rd Floor, Old Rajinder Nagar Market, Near Axis Bank, New Delhi – 110060

103, 1st Floor, B/1-2, Ansal Building, Behind UCO Bank, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi – 110009

EVALUATION INDICATORS

1. Alignment Competence
2. Context Competence
3. Content Competence
4. Language Competence
5. Introduction Competence
6. Structure - Presentation Competence
7. Conclusion Competence

Overall Macro Comments / feedback / suggestions on Answer Booklet:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

All the Best

Write a short note on each of the following in not more than 150 words.

12.5 x 4 = 50

1. (a) Idiographic and nomothetic approach

Idiographic and nomothetic approach are two different methods of data analysis often to draw a distinction between history and sociology.

Idiographic approach rests on the deductive logic of drawing the particular from empirical generalisations. Thus a particular social fact can be drawn from a larger context to behave or function in a similar pattern. For instance, the correlation between suicide and regulation or integration, strong in the late 19th and early 20th century, would have relevance for the contemporary context as well.

The Nomothetic approach on the other hand is based on inductive logic of forming general laws for the purpose of grand theorisation. Often scientific analysis tends to move in these directions. Thus a particular aspect of human social life if shows strong correlations with another aspect (variable), the relationship can be inferred to

be strong across time and space. This ~~is~~ ^{leads to} theoretical propositions. For example, functionalism rests on grand postulates of organic analogy, the functionality of existing social practices and social order as theoretical generalisation.

Often Sociological theorisation tends to move towards empirical generalisations from the particular. This distinguishes it from history, which is more contextual and unique to the time-space matrix.

1. (b) Briefly discuss "Social Capital theory" of Robert D. Putnam

Robert D. Putnam's "Social capital theory" takes from Pierre Bourdieu's concept of capital and field-theory.

Social capital refers to the social networks and relationships that an individual may form with another individual, organisation or institution. These networks and patterns of association function as a form of 'capital' in the

sense that they provide certain benefits in the form of security, networking and access to other forms of capital. Thus networks of solidarity can help an individual leverage their access to certain valued goods or services. These goods may be intangible and non-economic, such as integration, social cooperation, mobilisation, personal security and recognition.

It is on Putnam's model, that the recent Self-Help groups, cooperatives and local organisations are being nurtured in the rural and semi-urban areas. Often social networking can create collective systems of strength and capacities, which an individual may be unable to mobilise. Even the SEWA model recognises the importance of forming relations of solidarity, trust and cooperation among informal women workers to provide them sustained access to goods and resources.

1. (c) Bureaucracy and Rational Action

Max Weber's interpretive sociology regards social action as the fundamental unit of analysis. Thus it refers to action that is meaningfully oriented to the actions of others, vested with a subjective meaning.

Rational action is a form of social action constructed as an ideal type. It entails a logically consistent relationship between rationally chosen and carefully calculated means and the ends. The individual thus rationally calculates the benefits that would accrue to him/her by engaging in a cost-benefit analysis. Thus unlike value-rational, affective or traditional action, these actions are 'instrumentalist' in nature.

An example is that of the ideal type 'bureaucrat', who follows the legal statutes and subverts all other interests to the code of professionalism. Another example is of the 'rational economic man', whose choices are based on expediency and benefits.

The Bureaucracy is an example of the rational-legalistic form of authority. It is characterised by a hierarchy, a single chain of command, specialisation of work, a system of remuneration, professional codes of conduct and adherence to the legal statutes. The bureaucracy is thus a necessary development in an increasingly complex and modernised social system characterised by social differentiation and the salience of instrumental rationality over traditional or effective rationality.

1. (d) Analyze Durkheim's concept of "Moral Individualism"

Durkheim in his 'Division of labour' underscores the weakening of the collective conscience in the transition from the 'primitive' simple societies to the complex societies.

The nature of collective conscience which indicates to a unity in system of thought and belief thus reduces in volume, intensity and content.

The content of the collective conscience in a modern society characterised by organic solidarity is therefore moral individualism.

Moral individualism, is where the influence of a shared system of thinking is no longer overarching. It is the individual and their private spaces to which values and morality may be restricted. This is a result of the increasing fragmentation, differentiation and specialisation of the society.

The relationship between the individual and society is no longer determined by religious thinking or the 'collective effervescence'. It is rather a result of the specialised division of labour that necessitates cooperation.

Thus collective consciousness becomes fragmented and restricted to particular domains - church, sects, cults. Thus moral individualism refers to the cultural ethos within a capitalist and modernised economic and social system.

The post-modern society reinforces moral individualism, where there is no central pontiff and multiple versions of truth.

2. (a) Critically analyze the contribution of Sociology as a "scientific study of society" to the rational understanding of the social world around us. 25

Sociology as a systematic discipline, with a set of concepts, theories and methodology arose within the historical tradition of positivism and enlightenment. Human social life it was considered can be subject to similar tools of observation, experimental, empirical investigation and comparison. Comte in fact envisioned sociology as 'social physics' concerned with social statics and dynamics.

It was however Emile Durkheim who circumscribed the boundaries of Sociology through his 'Rules of the Sociological Method'. The subject matter was treated as social fact - as things, that have an empirical validity and do not amount to philosophical speculation.

The contribution of sociology as a scientific study has been in bringing a methodological rigour, objectivity, formulation of empirical generalisations that counter theology, philosophical speculation and common sense.

Beteille for instance notes, Commonsense even of the most ~~acute~~ acute kind cannot compensate for its methodological rigour. For instance A.M. Shah's study on the household as a dimension critiqued the idea of a disintegrating joint family. M.N. Srinivas countered the colonial discourse of the village as an isolated and autarchous community.

Thus science has moved from positivism to a rational understanding of the social world around us.

This rational understanding realises the limitations of technical virtuosity. It thus questions the presupposition of science as apolitical and innocent. Some of the important theoretical traditions that have questioned the "Scientific Study of Society" are

- Interpretivism - the Verstehen approach
- Feminist epistemology
- Phenomenological approach
- Critical School of thought

An important critique is that to understand the social world around us, it is ~~important~~ necessary to understand the location and world view of the individuals and institutions that we study. Ann Oakley for instance emphasises the importance of knowing and interacting with one's subject rather than instituting a methodological dualism between the subject and object. In fact the 'feminine subjectivity' is an a critical position to understand gender discrimination.

Similarly to understand groups such as the 'tribes', 'outcastes', 'working class', it is of significance to employ the emic perspective.

Thus science cannot be understood in its limited notions. Science is as much about the 'politics of knowledge' and of privileging a certain kind of knowledge above the other.

The rational school of thought in fact acknowledges the possibility of "scientific study of society", by conceiving science as prone to errors, biases as well as ideologies. For example, functionalism created the notion of a "conservative society" by emphasising on social order, value consensus and the functionality of social practices.

Thus even positivism was an ideological product of its own times.

Sociology has come a long way from a mechanistic interpretation of social life. Fundamental to its expansion is the understanding that ~~no~~ all science is not necessarily rational. Nor is rationality a preserve of science alone.

2. (b) Talcott parson's understanding of the social system is high on technical virtuosity but low in grounded research. Analyze 25

Talcott Parsons in his 'Structure of Social Action' approaches the social system within his theory of action or action approach. Parsons's methodological approach rests on creating an abstract model for purposes of grand theorisation, a cornerstone of functionalism.

The social system notes Parsons is a result of the patterned interactions between individuals, organisations and institutions that form constellations. This pattern is a result of the institutionalisation of roles and role expectations that maintain an equilibrium or homeostasis. Thus social systems are self-adaptive and self-maintaining.

Firstly, Parsons's model of the social system rests on the organic analogy. This indicates to his abstract generalisations, high on technical virtuosity.

The social system emphasises Parsons always tends to the equilibrium despite social stresses and strains. The disproportionate emphasis on equilibrium, neglects the revolutionary and radical historical events such as the French Revolution, the American Wars of Independence, the Russian Revolution and indeed the overthrow of an entire regime under Communism experienced in Soviet Russia and China.

Parson's assertion of value consensus as leading to 'boundary maintenance' also neglects the existing power asymmetries and inequalities that create faultlines within a society. Ralph Miliband for example does not regard 'society' as an appropriate unit of analysis, given the lack of cohesion and consensus. In his analysis of a 'capitalist state' Miliband

within a Marxist paradigm argues the appropriation of power by a Capitalist State, with value consensus a result of state power.

This relates to Parson's conceptualisation of power, viewed as a variable-sum concept. The dispersal of power notes Parson maintains homeostasis. However, issues of domination, control and perpetuation of vested interests is not accounted for.

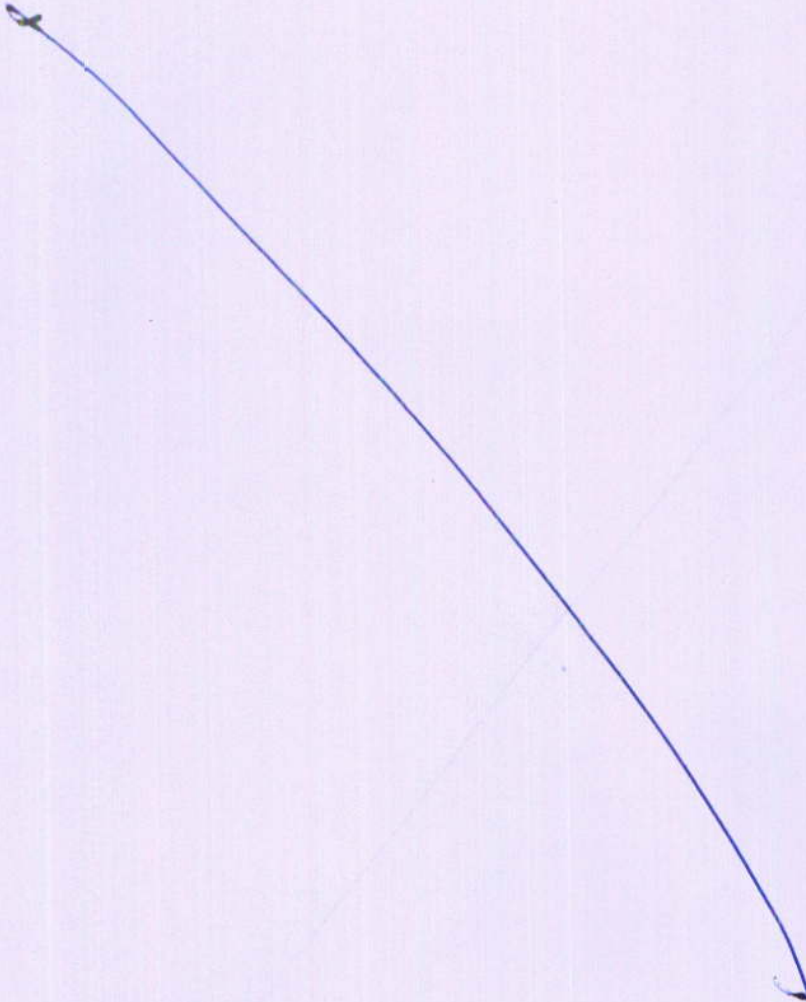
The relationship between the individual's personality system and the social system in turn is regarded as harmonious. There is thus no place for deviance and rebellion. Robert M. Merton in fact notes the fundamental disjunct between common values and the individual's socio-economic location to be a cause for deviance in society.

Parson in turn does not analyse the differing world views and values of different social constituents.

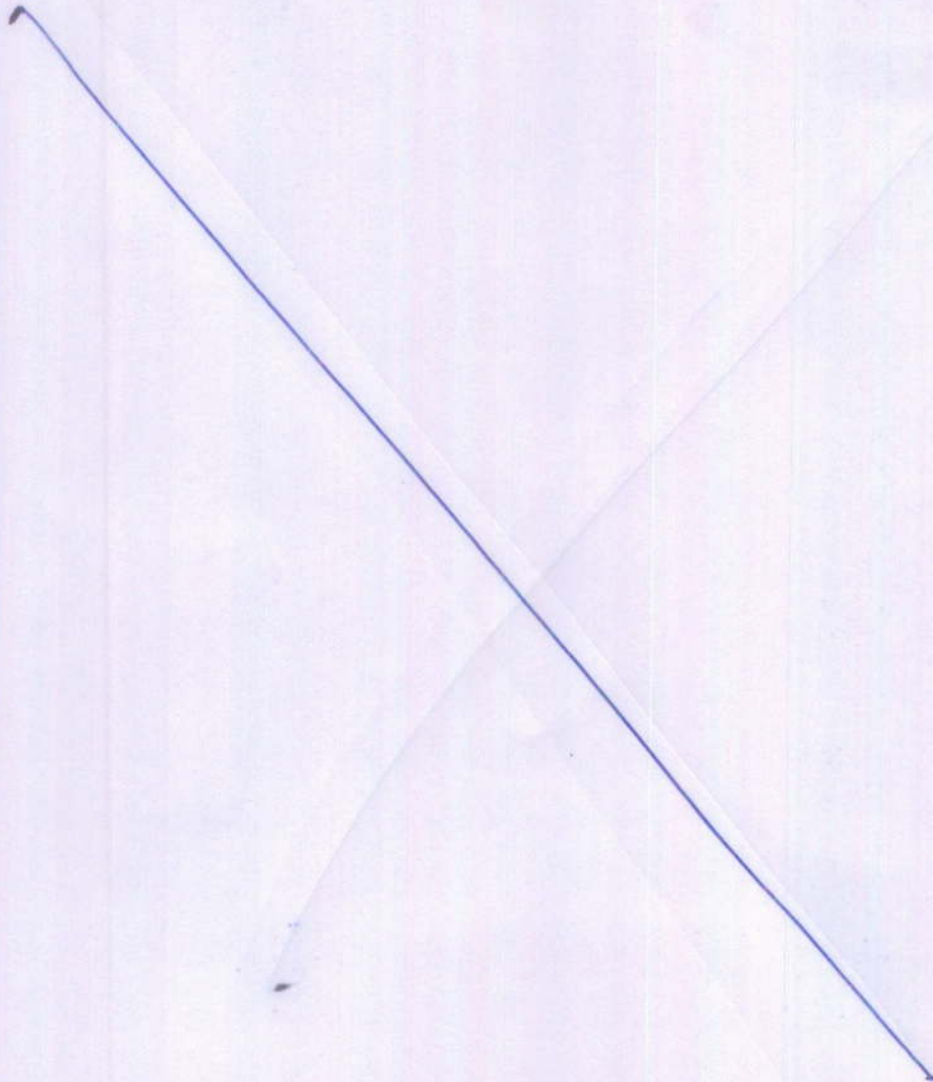
Such as women, tribals, the underclass who in fact have suffered the oppression of a 'social system' based on unequal power equations.

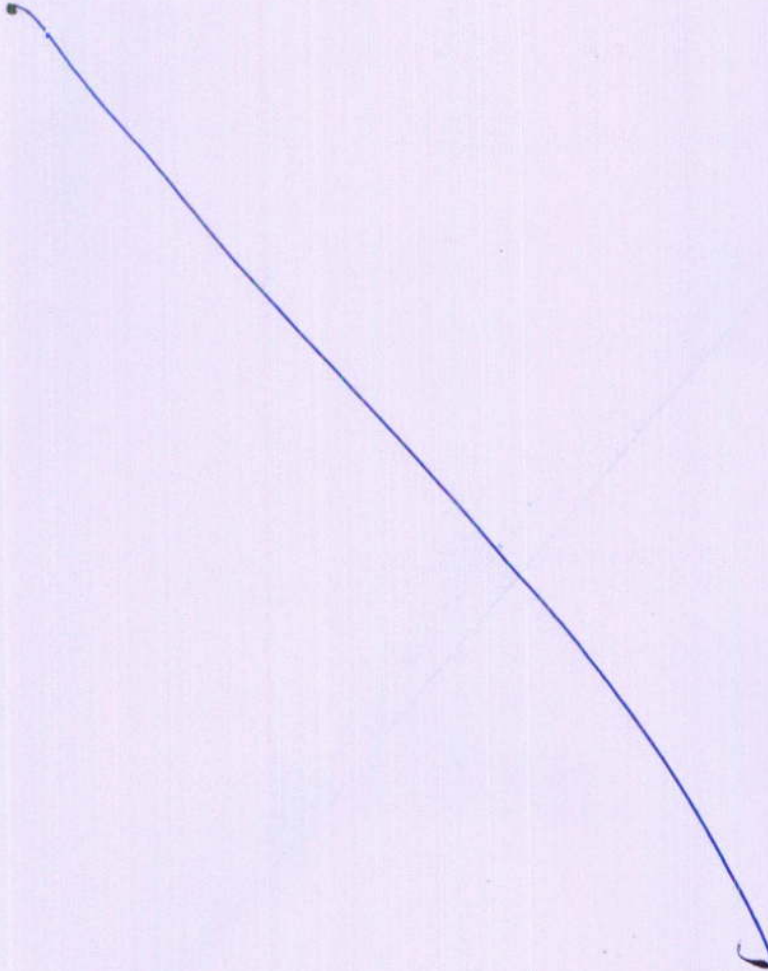
The lack of a connect between models and dynamic, empirically grounded realities thus reduces Parson's theory to technical virtuosity. Nevertheless, his contribution remain important in understanding social resilience and social change on a macrolevel.

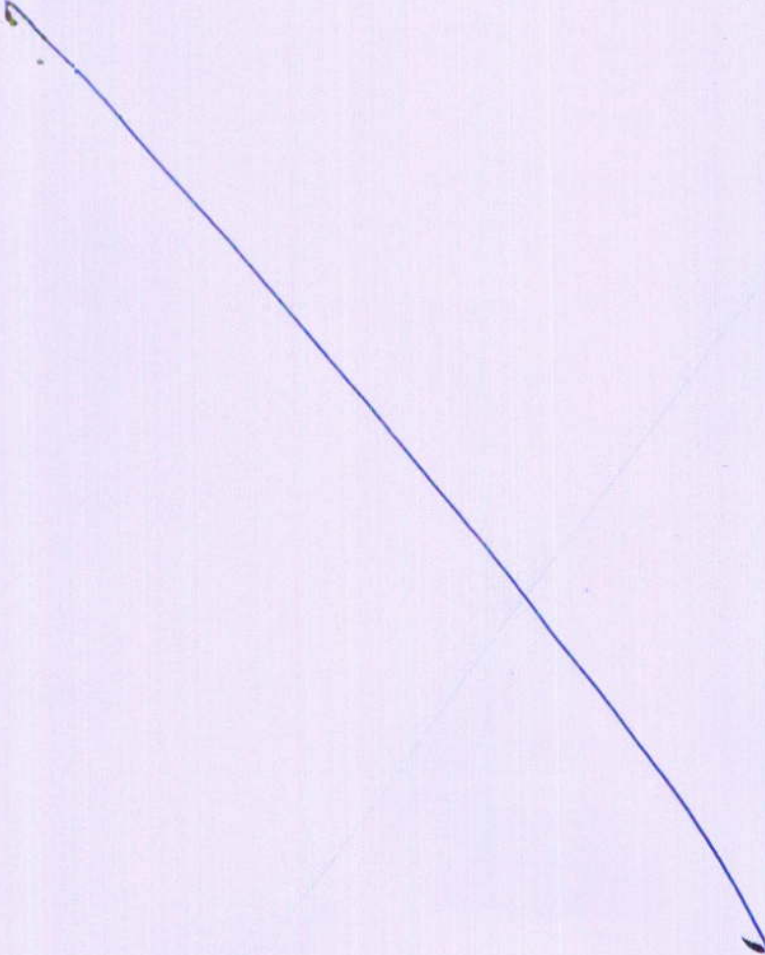
3. (a) Emile Durkheim had argued that the function of division of labour in society is that of the promotion of social solidarity. Discuss the statement and critically analyze Durkheim's Division of Labour theory, with reference to contemporary trends. 25



3. (b) "Sociology and political science are so closely and deeply related to each other that one becomes meaningless without the other". Analyze 25

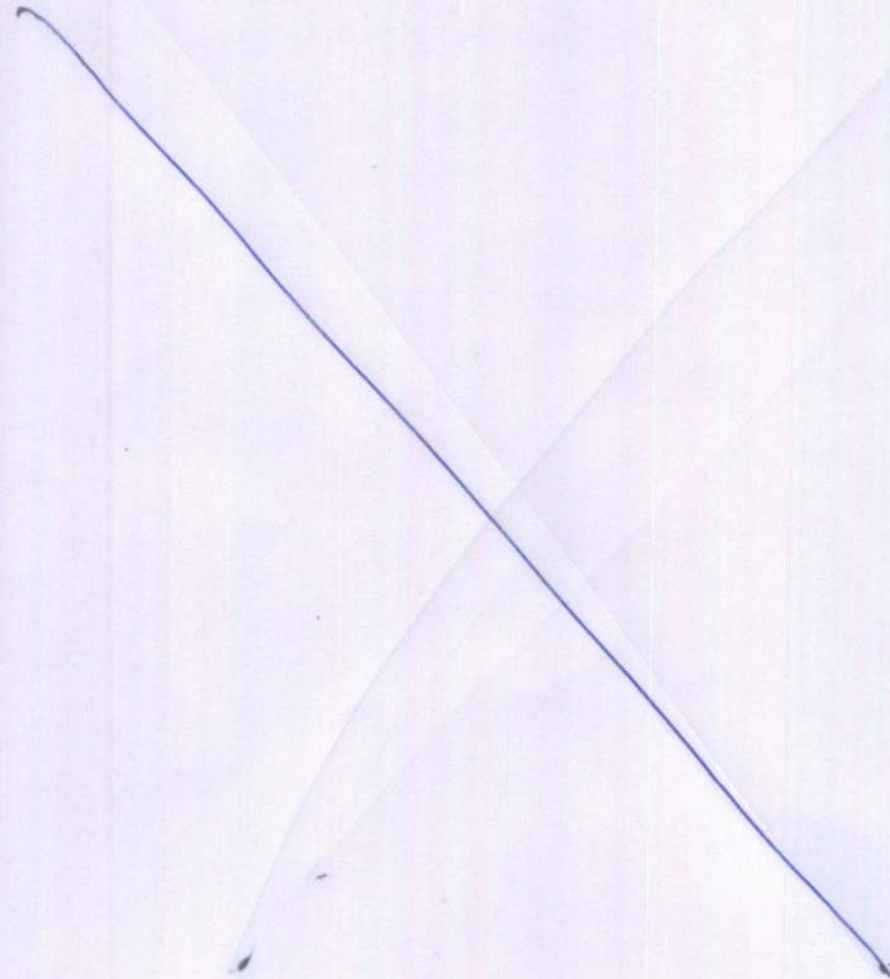


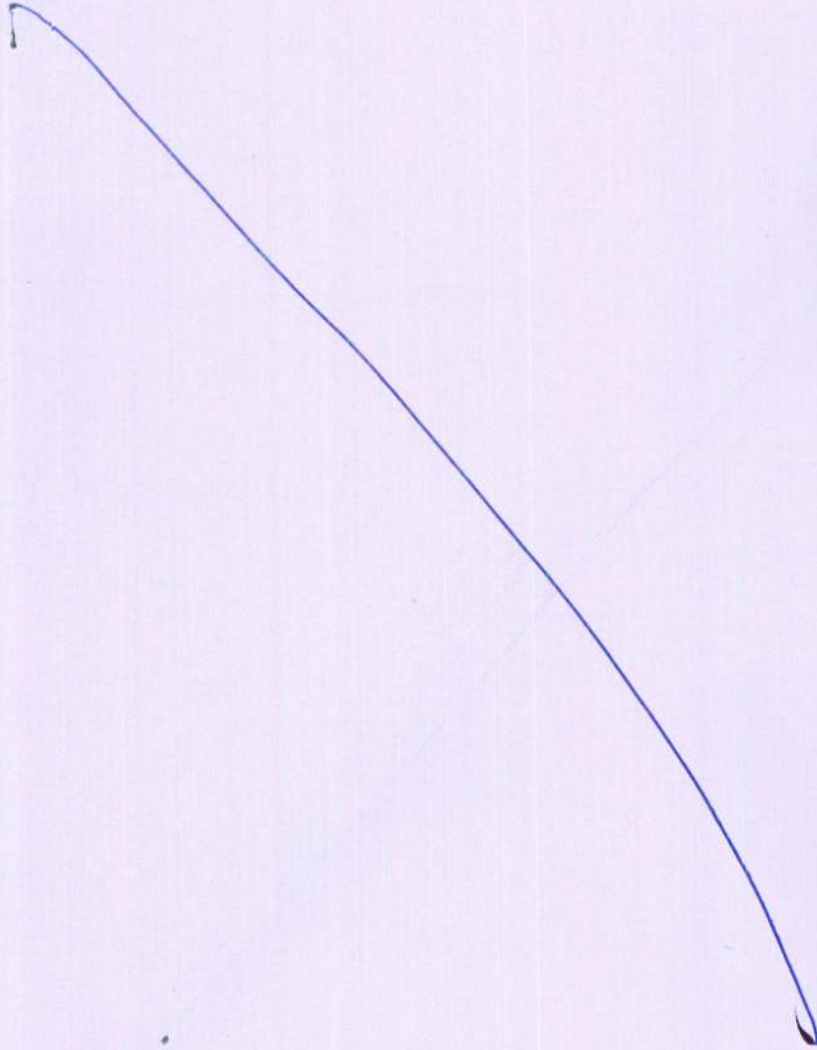


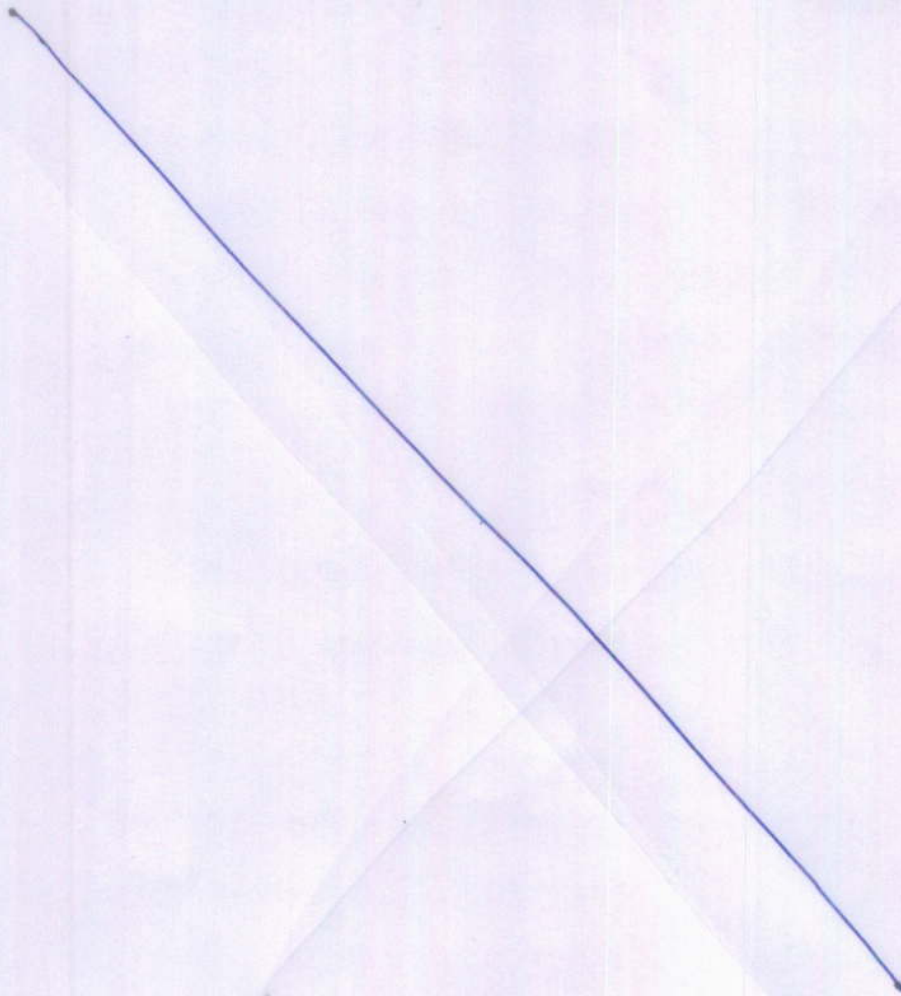


4. (a) "The theory of stratification by Davis and Moore was (and remains) highly influential, but has generated enormous controversy". In this context, give a brief overview of its criticism.

20

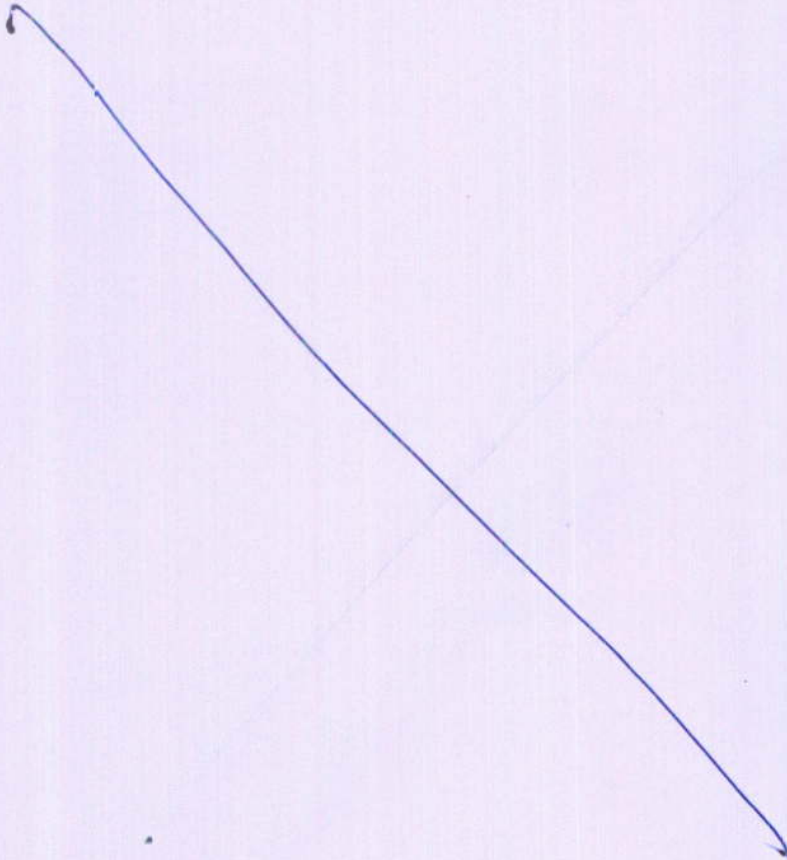






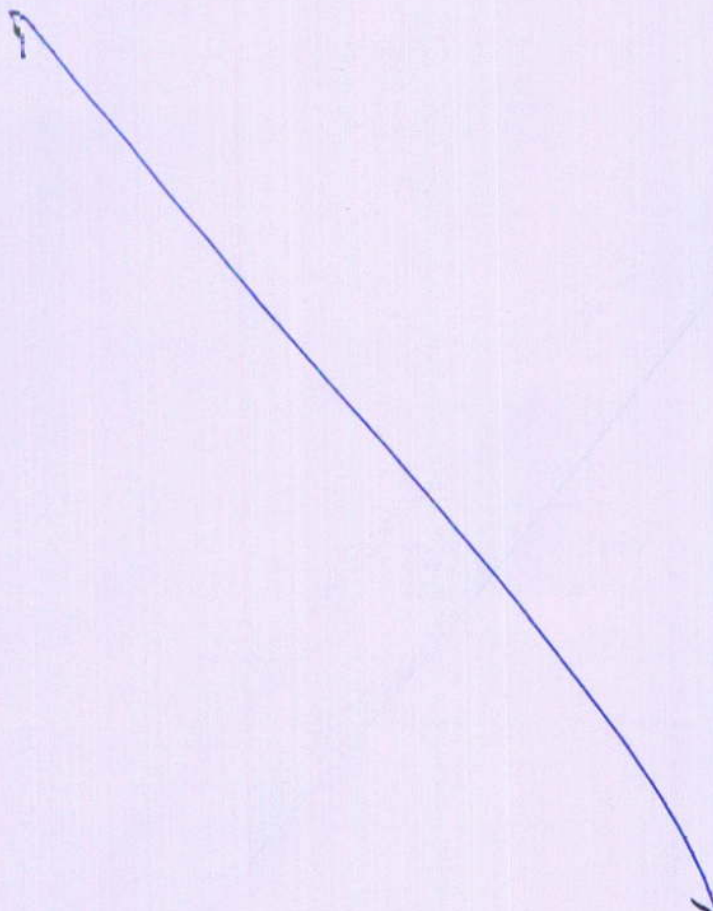
4. (b) Critically examine the "Nature and scope of feminist method" in social science research.

15



4. (c) Write a short note on "resource mobilization theory" in context of study of social movements.

15



Write a short note on each of the following in not more than 150 words.

12.5 x 4 = 50

5. (a) Gender and social mobility

Social mobility refers to the movement of an individual or social group from one social status to another. This Pitrim Sorokin notes could be vertical or horizontal, and within the former downwards or upwards.

Gender is an important axis in determining the rate, extent and nature of social mobility. Marxist feminists such as Randall Collins, Shulamith Firestone emphasise women's status to be low within a patriarchal system that manifests at the level of both the household economy and the market level.

At the level of the household note Leonard and Delphy, women are engaged in underpaid and unpaid work within the context of kinship relations. This makes women economically dependent and socially vulnerable compared to men, reducing their life chances.

and opportunities.

Even in the domain of the work space, women notes Collins are employed in 'cultural reproduction' instead of material production. Examples are those of frontline-workers such as receptionists, nurses, sales persons.

In the discussion of social mobility, it is important to note how 'double burden', maternity, lack of access to scarce goods and resources impedes mobility. Thus gender is an axis for the distribution of scarce goods and resources noted by Bina Agarwal and Ursula Sharma.

5. (b) Impact of "modernization" on the "institution of marriage".

Modernization refers to the increasing social trends towards principles of universalism, achievement, rationalism - legal authority determining patterns of interaction, evolution of social institutions and its effects on the individuals relationship with society.

Modernization notes Yogendra Singh is not a linear change, but interacts with aspects of tradition.

The institution of marriage has

'Structurally adapted' to trends of modernization, but retains its particularistic principles based on primordial loyalties to kinship, caste and religion.

Nevertheless the impact of modernization is seen in :

- The salience of conjugal marriages over marriages organised by parents. Social influences of modern education, urbanisation and political enfranchisement has led to increasing instances of 'courtships' and conjugal marriages.

- Decreasing influence of caste endogamy and rise in intercaste marriages. Prem Chowdhry in fact notes extra-judiciary bodies such as village councils and the Khay Panchayats to be a response

- Disintegration of the joint family

- Dilution of gendered division of labour
- Paternal child care and rearing

5. (c) Social composition and policies for informal sector

The informal sector was a term popularised by the International Labour Organisation's studies in India. The term has gained salience in referring to a socially heterogeneous section of people employed in labour characterised by - low productivity, familial and informal enterprises, devoid of employment contracts, social protection and security.

Jan Breman notes the informal sector to have strong linkages with the formal sector leading to its perpetuation. The informal sector comprises of familial enterprises, contract labourers, self-employed workers and the small and marginal business enterprises.

The social composition typically comprises of low skilled, semi-skilled workers, with inequitable access to quality education, ~~technical~~ vocational training and social security. These are often persons trapped in the cycle of poverty. A disproportionate presence of women and children is seen given their structural disadvantage.

leading to precarious life conditions.

Policies by the government include

- Hand holding, tax breaks and incentives to MSMEs under the Start up India, Stand up India Campaign
- Promotion of Cottage industries especially under the A-Khadi Gram Udyog policy
- MUDRA Bank and Jan Dhan Aadhaar for financial inclusion
- Cyber Community Centres and urban facilities under Pradhan Mantri Mission.

5. (d) Critically evaluate the concept of "elite exclusion".

The elites refer to a small section of the society who command disproportionate share of wealth, power and prestige by virtue of their particular positions in the socio-economic hierarchy or political chain of command.

The concept of elite exclusion can be understood through C. W Mills "Power Elite" where he regards elites to form small coteries united by similar socialisation.

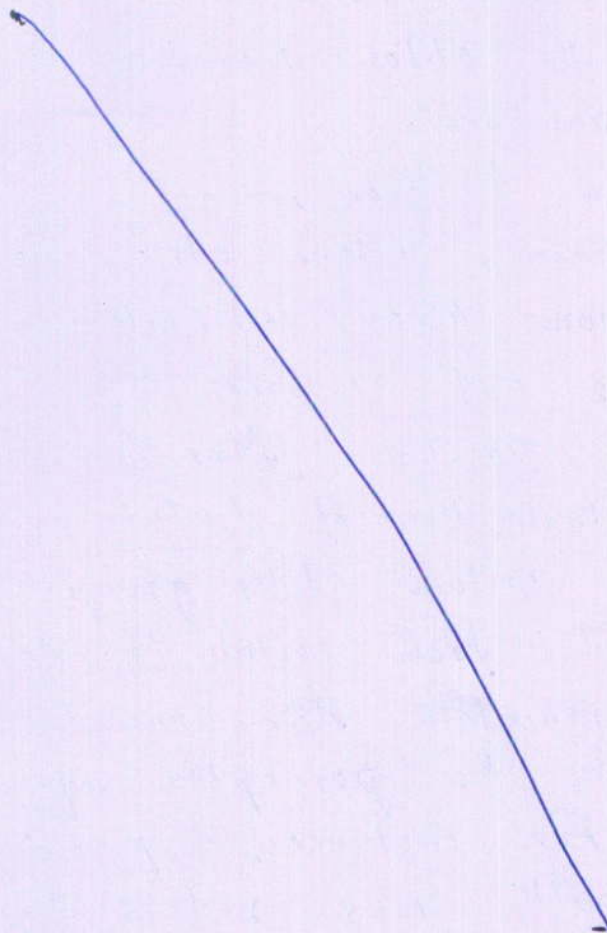
recreational patterns and lifestyles that provide opportunities to develop cliques and complex networks. This exclusivism of the elites maintains their power positions.

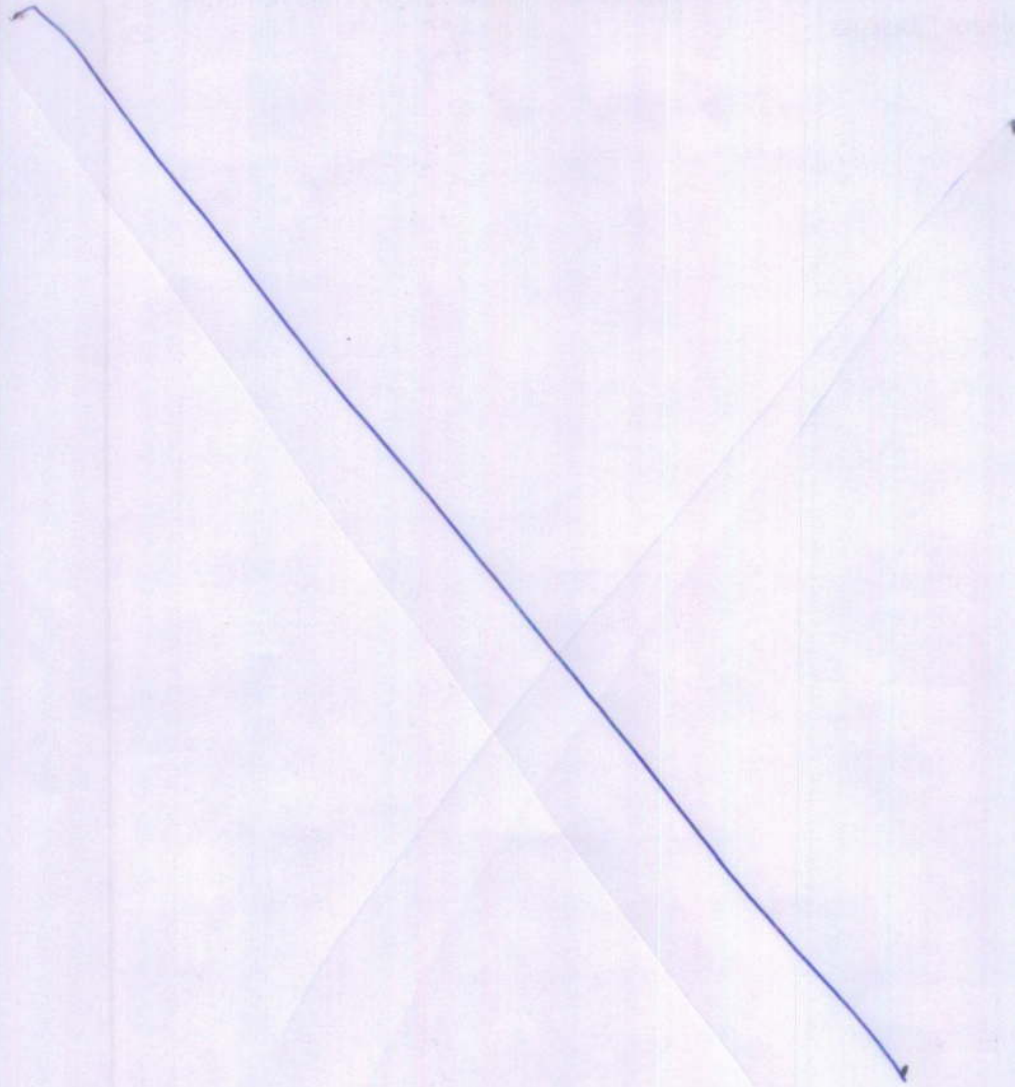
Elite exclusion however is a reverse phenomenon, where elites may be excluded from access to certain forms of goods and resources by virtue of their position. Max Weber in his conceptualisation of 'status groups' notes certain status groups to be 'deprived' from certain goods in order to maintain their sanctity and position in the perception of the masses. For instance, disproportionate access to wealth may reduce the 'social prestige' of the upper caste priests, whose sacred hold over sacred power comes through notion of renunciation.

Similarly celebrities though not elites in the true sense may be deprived of the common pleasures in order to maintain their status positions.

6. (a) Secularization as a social process has its challenges in the form of religious fundamentalism in the contemporary society. Critically examine.

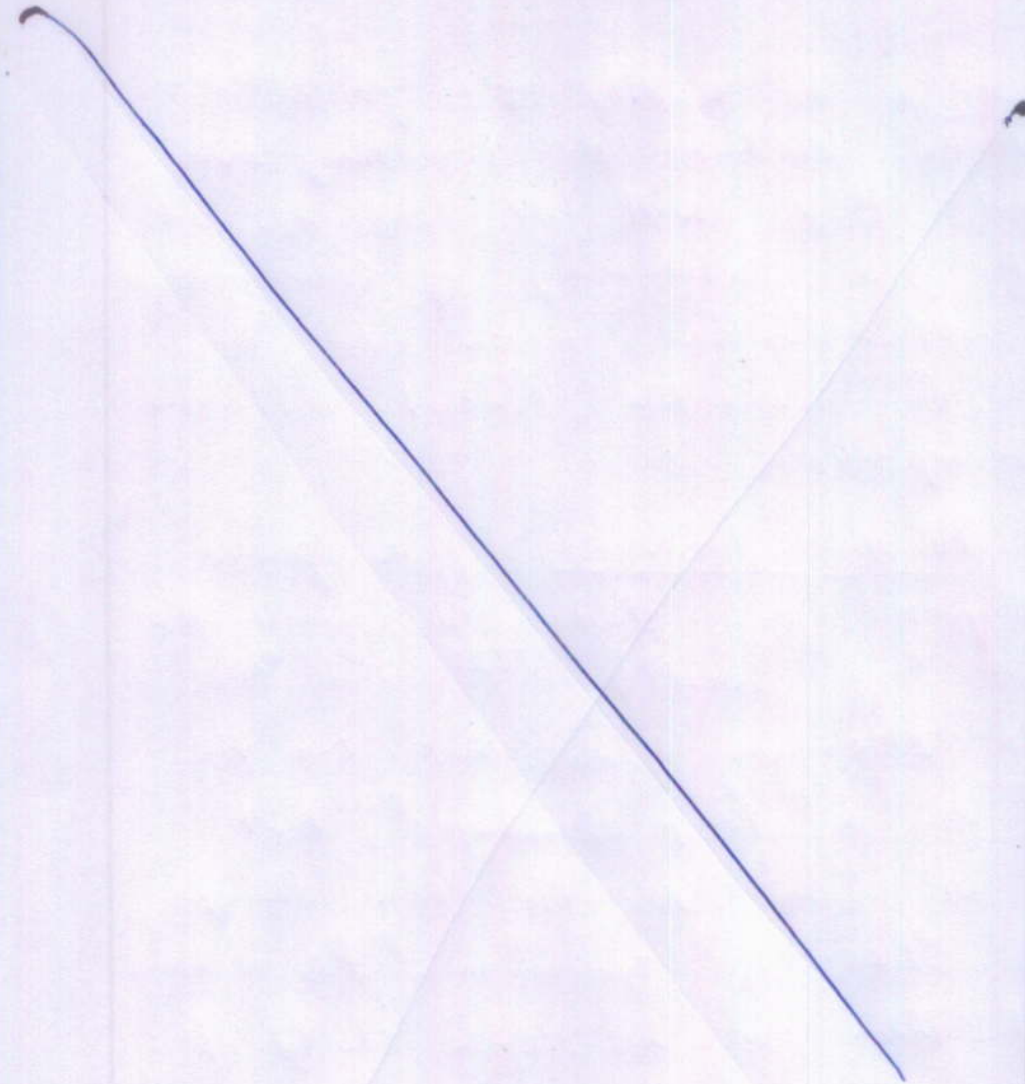
25

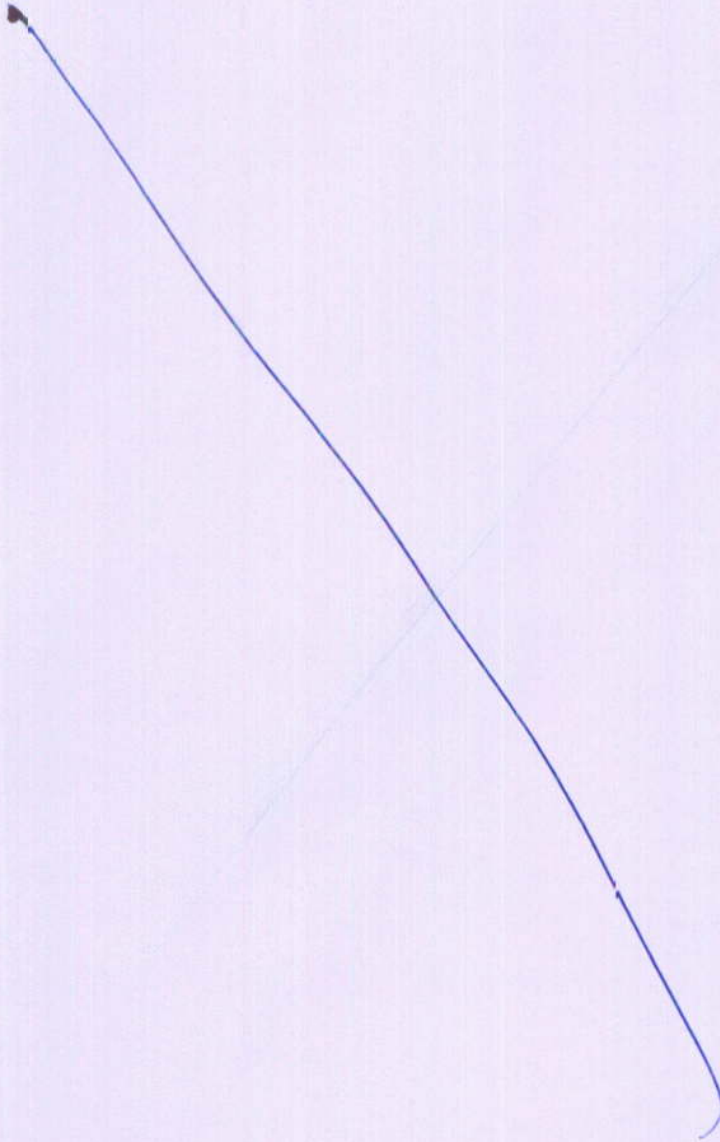


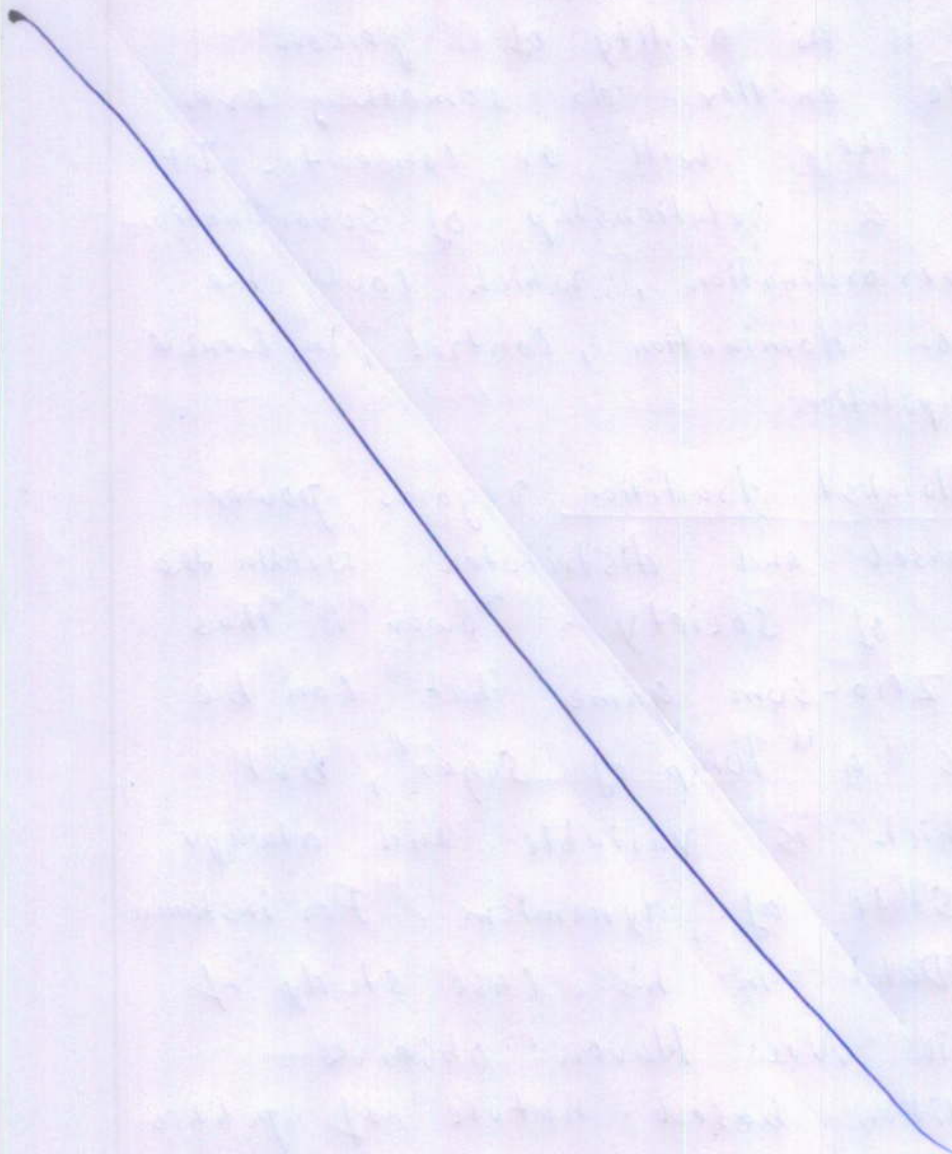


6. (b) "In the sociology of deviance, no single theory has emerged as dominant." Discuss

25







7. (a) Compare and contrast Parson's and Pluralist perspective in context of "Power".

20

Power is the ability of a person to make another do something even without their will or consent. It is thus a relationship of subordination and superordination, which could be based on domination, control, influence or manipulation.

The Pluralist tradition regards power as dispersed and distributed within the networks of society. Power is thus not a zero-sum game that can be held as a "lump of sugar", but that which is variable and always in a state of dynamism. For instance Robert Dahl in his case study of politics in New Haven observes the coalition based nature of politics.

Parsons in turn regards power as a variable-sum which is dispersed. However he differs by emphasizing the distribution of power to be a result of maintaining the

Value Consensus in Society.

The Commonalities are thus in :

- In Conceptualising the nature of power as distributive - Variable sum concept
- In regarding Competition for power based on essentially fair and just means. - lack of emphasis on coercion
- In regarding power as close to authority, that which is seen as legitimate and appropriate.
- In concluding summing peoples response to power as that of Consent over Conflict.

However the differences are seen in :

- While Parson's conceives the social system as the substratum of power, the pluralist view power within the political arena primarily.
- While Parson's emphasizes the distribution of power to be reinforcing collective values in society, the pluralists draw no

Such Conclusion.

- The Pluralists in turn operationalise power as behaviour that entails decision-making and is thereby observable. Parsons however does not operationalise power, but treats it as an abstract concept.

Both the views converge in emphasising social symmetry over unequal power relations. Thus the 'politics of coercion', asymmetries of power relations are not sufficiently looked at. Moreover, the structural deprivation of those who do not wield power has found not much mention.

Conservative
a These views thus create a notion of an essentially harmonious and society, critiqued by various schools of thought.

7. (b) Briefly analyze the role of "political parties" in strengthening of democracy. 15

Political parties are particular forms of associations, whose members come together to expand or gain social power. Thus, Max Weber regarded the common interest in capturing social power based on a common agenda, organisational structure as essential in defining a political party.

Political parties thus notes Weber require a sufficient degree of rational bureaucratic orientation and routinisation. These groups thus ~~are~~ function within a mature and modern political system - of which democracy is an important type.

The pluralists in particular emphasise the dispersal of power to be made possible by competing political parties.

The important functions of a political party in a democracy are:

- (1) Interest articulation - Specific mandates reflecting particular interests are expressed within a legitimate platform.
- (2) Interest aggregation - Opportunity to form associational groups and coalition.
- (3) Political mobilisation
- (4) Political socialization; training and educating citizens and individuals of the mechanisms of operationalising democracy.
- (5) Influencing public opinion - Thus political parties can engage in what Steven Lukes refers to the mobilisation of bias.
- (6) Challenging existing status quo. - Though political parties are less revolutionary given the broader mandate of representative democracy, they can nevertheless challenge existing power inequities.

Thus, political parties serve as agents in disaggregating power from a section to distributing it among channels.

7. (c) "Globalization leads to homogenization of culture". Critically Comment

15

Globalisation refers to the intensification in the movement and flows of people, goods, values, ideas within an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world system.

Globalization has ramifications on cultural development given the movement of ideas, values, symbols and lifestyle patterns through global consumerism and the I.T.

Proponents of homogenization view globalisation as an unequal system characterized by the one way neo-colonial flow of a Western culture to the non-Western societies. Ritzer in fact refers to 'McDonaldization' as the emergence of a homogeneous consumerist culture guided by instrumentalist values of expediency, individualism and mass production.

However the recent discourse of 'glocalization', does not treat culture as a passive recipient of a Western onslaught. Arjun

Appadurai in fact notes the emergence of 'ethnospaces' where cultures and people interact to create new fusions and hybridizations. Thus Arijit Patthak notes, how the McDonalds serves a 'veg burger' during Navratris and traditional festivals. Some thus argue globalisation to be 'old wine in a new bottle'.

It is equally visible, that globalisation may accentuate cultural sensitivities and also fuel nativism. The rapid pace of migration of people creates identity crises and insecurities, fuelling resentment and discontent.

'Let's make America great' is thus a slogan that reflects the anxiety towards globalisation.

Hence homogenisation is only one aspect of globalisation. Critical is to understand how local cultures engage, adapt or reject the narratives of globalisation.

8. (a) Critically examine the "conflict theory" of social change.

20

The Conflict theory of Social change takes inspiration from Karl Marx's historical materialism, given further theoretical substance by Ralph Miliband, Lewis Coser and others.

The conflict theory of social change regards society to be in a constant state of potential. This is a result of the deep inequalities and power asymmetries, that lead to constant frictions and tensions between the ruling class and the ruled.

Consensus is regarded to be a result of coercion both overt and covert. This consensus notes Marx was a result of the 'false consciousness' maintained by the bourgeoisie, given their vested interests in perpetuating the status quo.

Thus, existing social practices are viewed to be dysfunctional in the sense that they maintain and consolidate power inequalities.

The conflict theory however turns to become excessively ideological by rooting everything as a part of the subordination-superordination framework.

This ideological conditioning impedes objective sociological analysis.

Social change is envisioned to be a result of a subaltern revolution to the oppression of a minority. Social change is thus vested with a positive meaning and hence desirable.

The functionalists have critiqued the conflict theorists to ignore the role of value consensus, role-expectations and institutionalization of roles in maintaining social order.

T. B. Bottomore in particular notes societies to be much more complex, where conflict may be resolved within

existing institutional frameworks.

The feminist epistemology in turn critiques the excessive preoccupation with capitalism and political hegemony to the neglect of patriarchy and other forms of conflict within society.

Theoretical traditions of phenomenology in turn emphasise 'conflict' to be a social construct on the part of the interpreter, and therefore do not have a fundamental existence in reality.

The lack of emphasis on complex collusion and nexus that in fact perpetuate inequalities is neglected over the polarisation of society as a model for social change.

8. (b) Write a short note on "Social consequences of science and technology".

15

Science and technology does not operate within a vacuum, but a specific social context that defines its goals and agendas.

Science and technology (S & T) in turn affects societies and human relationships.

- S and T at the level of attitudes and belief systems has ensured a transition towards rationalization.
- Affecting interpersonal relationships through IT. Social consequences tend towards increasing alienation, isolation and depersonalisation.
- Secularisation of social sub-systems given greater reliance on empiricism over mysticism.
- Digitisation of the economic system, integrating people to markets, and the social system.
- Instituting rather than reducing

Sexual division of labour - Case of domestic appliances - Ann Oakley.

- Fostering interaction and communication over time and space.

The effects of S & T are thus complex and some unintended.

A transition towards 'disenchantment' however threatens the sanctity of traditional values.

8. (c) "Family diversity has emerged as a global trend". Substantiate

15

Globalisation has affected the composition and patterns of familial systems.

This family diversity refers to the the structure (household composition), division of labour (axes of age, gender) and functions of the family (productive, reproductive, recreational).

- With respect to the structure, families are tending towards disaggregation from joint family systems to nuclear families, stem families.

- The division of labour unlike Parson's model, is more complex. This entails 'paternal care', 'house hold men' that challenge the stereotype of the traditional family.

- The family is no longer a reproductional ~~unit~~ unit but engaged in multiple functions. This entails
 - Social reproduction through socialisation
 - Economic distribution and allocation of scarce goods and services
 - Cultural patterns of recreation
 - Sites to discipline children
 - Spaces for creative catharsis not offered by work spaces.

The family thus is responding to social changes but in a manner that defies typification.

The family of the tiger is a large one
and it is not surprising to find
many of the same.

It is a very interesting thing to find
the same thing in different places.

It is a very interesting thing to find
the same thing in different places.

It is a very interesting thing to find
the same thing in different places.

It is a very interesting thing to find
the same thing in different places.