



SOCIOLOGY FOR UPSC

Notes that Make You Achieve **300+ Score**

SOLVED PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS



2025

Our UPSC Topper's with Highest Score in Sociology



Srushti Deshmukh
AIR-05, 2018

312 Marks



Komal Aggarwal
AIR-303, 2022

315 Marks



Ruchi Bindal AIR-39, 2019



Arnav Mishra AIR-56, 2022



Anuja Trivedi AIR-80, 2022



Jatin Jain AIR-91, 2022

2025 - Paper 1

Section A

Question 1. Answer the following questions in about 150 words each

1a) What is common sense? How are common knowledge and sociology related to each other? Explain. (10 Marks)

- In introduction – define sociology and common sense
- Differences between both
- Complementary nature
- Conclusion

Karl Mannheim viewed common sense as uncritical and traditional knowledge passed through generations, shaping people's perceptions of the social world. Sociology, in contrast, is the scientific study of society and social behavior. **Emile Durkheim** emphasized sociology's role in systematically investigating social facts, moving beyond the assumptions and subjective judgments generated by common sense

- **Differences between both**
 - **Source:** Common sense is grounded in personal experiences and informal knowledge, whereas sociology is based on systematic observation and empirical research.
 - **Nature:** Common sense is subjective and varies across cultures and individuals; sociology, as **Max Weber** advocated, strives for objectivity and employs "verstehen" or interpretive understanding to grasp social meaning.
 - **Scope:** Common sense tends to be narrow and locally situated, shaped by immediate social environments, while sociology, as **Auguste Comte** envisioned, aims to uncover universal social laws that apply broadly across societies.
 - **Attitude toward Change:** Common sense often resists new ideas and is conservative, maintaining traditional views. In contrast **C. Wright Mills'** argued that sociology is dynamic and questions existing social patterns to understand and drive social change.
- **Complementary nature**
 - Common sense provides sociology with preliminary insights and raw data; it is the experiential backdrop against which sociological theories are developed and tested.
 - in **Howard Becker's Labelling Theory**, everyday judgments about "normal" and "deviant" behavior emerge from common sense, but sociology explains how these labels shape identity and reinforce social structures. Thus, sociology transforms raw common-sense notions into deeper scientific insights.
 - Another important point is that common sense facilitates communication between sociologists and the public. Sociologists can translate complex findings into accessible terms, helping bridge the gap between academic knowledge and public understanding.

In today's world of **fake news, stereotypes, and rapid social change**, sociology is crucial for distinguishing between biased assumptions and evidence-based understanding, making their relationship highly relevant for contemporary society.

b) What is the relationship (similarities and differences) between sociology and history in terms of their area of study and methodology? Discuss (10 Marks)

- Introduction - define both subjects
- Similarities between Sociology and History
- Differences between subjects
- Conclusion

Both **sociology** and **history** study human society, but they differ in focus and methods. Sociology, as Auguste Comte proposed, is the **scientific study of society** and its structures. History, according to thinkers like R.G. Collingwood, is the **systematic study of past events** to understand how societies evolve over time.

Similarities between Sociology and History

- Both sociology and history study human beings in social groups. **Marx's Historical Materialism** explains how economic conditions shape social relations and historical developments across societies.
- Historical context shapes sociological analysis, and sociological theories enrich historical understanding. **Weber's Protestant Ethic** links religion to capitalism, while **GS Ghurye and Louis Dumont** illuminate caste through historical-sociological perspectives.
- Sociology and history examine how societies transform while also persisting in traditions. **They analyze social evolution alongside enduring cultural and institutional patterns over time.**
- **Historian Marc Bloch** emphasized using sociology's concepts to deepen historical insight, focusing on social structures, cultural mentalities, and everyday life beyond political events for richer historical analysis.

Differences

- **Sociology seeks general patterns by comparing varied events; history focuses on unique details** and differences within similar events for deeper understanding of specific cases.
- Sociology prioritizes recurring patterns and structures; history highlights the impact of influential personalities or significant individual events, as emphasized by historian Trevor-Roper.
- **Sociology analytically interprets data to uncover underlying social mechanisms; history is more descriptive**, providing detailed accounts and narratives of what happened.
- **Sociology's nomothetic approach creates universal laws; history's idiographic method, as noted by Radcliffe Brown**, describes particular historical events, stressing uniqueness over generalization.

Conclusion

Understanding contemporary issues—like nationalism, gender inequality, or globalization—requires both the **historical context** provided by history and the **theoretical analysis** offered by sociology. In the contemporary world of rapid social change, their combined approach is essential for a deeper understanding of society.

c) What is a variable in social research? What are their different types? Elaborate. (10 Marks)

- Define variables
- Types of variables
- Conclusion

Earl Babbie defines a variable as a logical set of attributes that can take different values across individuals or groups. According to Babbie, variables are essential for transforming abstract social concepts into measurable phenomena, which allows sociologists to empirically study social behavior and structures.

Types of Variables in Social Research

- **Based on Function in Hypothesis**
 - **Independent Variable:** This is the presumed cause that influences or affects another variable. For example, education level is an independent variable that impacts income levels.
 - **Dependent Variable:** This represents the outcome or effect being studied, which changes in response to the independent variable. For instance, crime rate can be the dependent variable influenced by unemployment.
- **Other Types**
 - **Qualitative Variables:** These are non-numeric attributes and include characteristics like caste, gender, or marital status, which describe categories without a numerical value.
 - **Quantitative Variables:** These variables involve numeric values and measurements, such as income, age, or literacy rate.
 - **Discrete Variables:** Countable values that are distinct and separate, such as the number of children in a family.
 - **Continuous Variables:** Variables that can take any value within a range, like height or income, having an infinite number of possible values.

Conclusion

Variables are central to **hypothesis testing and theory-building** in social research. They provide measurable dimensions to abstract concepts, enabling systematic study. In contemporary sociology, variables help analyze issues such as inequality, digital behavior, or impacts of climate change, thereby linking **theory, evidence, and policy**.

d) Can Merton's reference group theory be relevant in understanding identity making' in digital world? Explain. (10 Marks)

- **Introduction – brief idea of Merton**
- **Relevance in the Digital World**
- **How it is not relevant**
- **Conclusion**

Robert K. Merton's Reference Group Theory suggests that individuals shape their attitudes and identities by comparing themselves with groups they belong to (membership) or aspire to (reference). This is useful in understanding digital identity-making, but it also has limitations.

Relevance in the Digital World

- **Virtual Reference Groups** – Social media influencers (e.g., fitness icons on Instagram, tech YouTubers) serve as aspirational groups, shaping values, lifestyle, and identity.
- **Reference groups set benchmarks** - LinkedIn community norms on career success provide a global frame of reference, influencing how users shape professional identities and behavior.
- **Comparative Evaluation – Platforms like TikTok** enable individuals to compare themselves with aspirational or peer reference groups, which directs behavior and self-concept through upward or downward social comparison.
- **Digital campaigns like #MeToo, BlackLivesMatter, LGBTQ+ rights act as normative groups** that set standards for acceptable behavior and values. They shape moral identity and global consciousness.
- **Group Solidarity and Belonging:** Online communities form based on shared interests or identities, facilitating social identification and internalization of group norms, as emphasized in social identity extension of reference group theory.

Counter arguments

- Users may align with conflicting digital groups, **leading to fragmented identities and questioning Merton's idea of a stable, consistent reference group influence.**
- **Algorithms filter and prioritize exposure to certain groups, limiting genuine choice and freedom of comparison** central to the theory, thus shaping identity through controlled information flow. **"Surveillance capitalism"** highlights how digital platforms manipulate identity formation.
- Online identity is curated or performative. People project "ideal selves" rather than real membership/aspiration. Erving Goffman's **dramaturgical theory** (front stage/backstage)
- Reference groups may be exploited commercially, manipulating users to conform to consumerist norms rather than authentic social or aspirational groups envisaged by Merton.

Merton's theory explains online identity-making, like teenagers copying Instagram influencers, yet algorithm-driven, curated digital worlds highlight the need to supplement it with postmodern perspectives and newer sociological insights for deeper understanding.

e) Is the social stratification theory gender-blind? Elucidate. (10 Marks)

- Define social stratification
- Why Social Stratification Theories are Gender-Blind
- How it is being challenged
- Conclusion

Social stratification refers to the hierarchical arrangement of individuals in society based on class, caste, race, or power. Classical theories of stratification like **Marx, Weber, and Davis & Moore** focused largely on class, status, and power, but often neglected gender.

Why Social Stratification Theories are Gender-Blind

- **Marxian Focus on Class** – Marx analyzed class relations between bourgeoisie and proletariat but overlooked how women's unpaid domestic labor sustains capitalism.
- **Weberian Dimensions** – Weber discussed class, status, and power, but gender as a distinct basis of inequality was absent.
- **Functionalist Approach** – Davis and Moore (functionalist theory) justified inequality as necessary, assuming women's domestic roles were "natural," reinforcing gender-blindness.
- **Indian caste theories (like G.S. Ghurye)** often underplayed intra-caste gender inequality (dowry, female seclusion).
- **Most traditional theories prioritize economic production and labor markets** as the foundation of inequality, overlooking unpaid reproductive and care work predominantly done by women,

How it is being challenged

- **Intersectionality** - Crenshaw's theory reveals how class, caste, race, and gender intersect to create overlapping systems of oppression, exposing limitations in traditional, gender-blind social stratification models.
- **Ann Oakley** argued that gender roles are culturally and socially constructed, not biologically determined, challenging assumptions that justified gender inequality as natural or inevitable
- **Sylvia Walby conceptualized** patriarchy as an autonomous system of social stratification that intersects with but remains distinct from class and state power structures.
- **Heidi Hartmann** critiqued Marxism for reducing women's oppression solely to economic class exploitation, emphasizing the need to recognize patriarchy as a separate and simultaneous system of domination.

In today's world—marked by **gender pay gaps, digital harassment, unpaid care work, and algorithmic bias**—stratification cannot be understood without gender. Thus, sociology must integrate classical insights with feminist and intersectional perspectives for a truly holistic view of inequality.

Question 2.

a) What is positivism? Critically analyze the major arguments against it. (20 Marks)

- Define positivism
- Features of positivism
- Criticism of positivism
- Conclusion

Positivism, founded by Auguste Comte, is the belief that social phenomena should be studied using the methods of natural sciences – objectivity, observation, and measurement. Positivism draws from **Empiricism** (what is seen or observable), **Inductivism** (supremacy of facts), **Naturalism** (influence of external environment on actions)

Features of Positivism

- **Scientific Method:** Comte proposed sociology adopt scientific methods from natural sciences to systematically study and explain social phenomena empirically and rigorously.
- **Objectivity:** Durkheim's study on suicide exemplifies eliminating personal bias, ensuring research findings reflect social realities, not researcher's subjective views or prejudices.
- **Quantification:** Sociologists employ surveys, statistical tools, and census data to gather measurable information, enabling reliable analysis and comparisons across populations.
- **Predictability:** Spencer's evolutionary theory demonstrates predictable social patterns and laws governing societal development and individual behaviors.
- **Causality:** Marx showed causal relationships, explaining how capitalist economic systems generate class conflict, leading to social change and potential revolutions.
- **Generalization:** sociology seeks universal social laws that apply broadly, capturing widespread patterns rather than focusing on unique, isolated cases.
- **Policy Relevance:** Sociological insights inform governance, social planning, and welfare programs, such as using demographic data to address population and health policies.

Criticism of Positivism

- **Interpretative School (Weber, Dilthey):** Argue that human behavior requires understanding subjective meanings, making natural science methods unsuitable for studying complex social actions and interpretations.
- **Subjective Understanding of Objective reality** - Sociology must focus on people's subjective understanding of objective reality to truly comprehend social behavior, beyond mere observable facts.
- **Postmodernists (Derrida, Foucault):** Reality is diverse and fragmented; no single method or grand narrative can fully capture social realities, emphasizing multiple perspectives in study.
- **Interactionist (Mead, Cooley, Blumer):** Social actions emerge from interactions and interpretations between individuals, highlighting fluid, negotiated meanings rather than fixed objective facts.
- **Phenomenologists (Berger, Schutz):** Generalizations are impossible because social realities are continuously constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed, opposing positivism's attempt to scientize sociology.

- **Ethnomethodologists (Garfinkel):** Reality should be understood from the actor's own perspective, not imposed by researchers, emphasizing everyday social practices and meanings

Conclusion

Positivism gave sociology scientific credibility by emphasizing laws, objectivity, and predictability, yet critics exposed its neglect of meaning, values, and lived experiences. In contemporary sociology, positivist and interpretive traditions increasingly merge, leading to neo-positivism, which balances quantitative rigor with qualitative insights for a fuller understanding of society.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

b) Highlight the main features of historical materialism as propounded by Marx. How far is this theory relevant in understanding contemporary societies? Explain (20 Marks)

- **Define historical Materialism**
- **Main Features of Historical Materialism**
- **Criticisms**
- **Relevance in Contemporary Societies**
- **Conclusion**

Historical materialism, propounded by **Karl Marx**, is the theory that material (economic) conditions and modes of production shape society, history, politics, and ideology. It emphasizes class struggle as the engine of social change.

Main Features of Historical Materialism

- **Primacy of Material Conditions** – The economic base comprising production forces and relations of production fundamentally shapes society's political, legal, and ideological superstructure.
- **Dialectical Change** – Marx adapted Hegel's dialectics, emphasizing material contradictions and class conflict as drivers of societal transformation over abstract ideas.
- **Mode of Production** – Societies evolve through stages—primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, socialism—each defined by dominant economic relations.
- **Class Struggle** – Social history progresses through ongoing conflicts between oppressed and oppressor classes, such as bourgeoisie and proletariat under capitalism.
- **Revolutionary Transformation** – Contradictions like capitalist exploitation intensify within each mode, ultimately catalyzing revolutionary social and economic change.
- **Determinism and Scientific Outlook** – Marxism claims scientific status by asserting society's evolution follows objective, discoverable laws rooted in economic realities.

Criticisms

- **Economic Determinism** – **Weber** argued ideas and beliefs, like the Protestant ethic, also actively shape societal development and change.
- **Neglect of Culture & Ideology** – **Gramsci** stressed cultural hegemony and ideological domination as powerful forces beyond mere economic infrastructure.
- **Prediction Failure** – Capitalism's adaptation through reforms such as welfare state and democracy contradicts Marx's prediction of its inevitable collapse.

Relevance in Contemporary Societies

- **Economic Inequality** – Marx's focus on exploitation remains relevant amid growing global wealth disparities highlighted in reports like those by Oxfam
- **Globalization** – Capitalism's global spread has created interconnected markets and a worldwide working class, as Marx anticipated.
- **Alienation Today** – Modern labor forms gig economy, automation, digital work—continue to produce worker alienation and loss of control.
- **Neo-Marxist Updates** – Thinkers like Gramsci, Wallerstein, and dependency theorists expanded Marx's framework, integrating culture, world-systems, and global power dynamics.

Historical materialism, despite criticisms of economic determinism and limited scope, remains central for analyzing inequality, class conflict, and capitalism's contradictions. In contemporary societies marked by globalization, digital labor, and identity struggles, Marx's insights remain relevant, though they must be enriched with cultural, gender, and postmodern perspectives for holistic understanding.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

2 c) What do you mean by reliability? Discuss the importance of reliability in social science research. (10 Marks)

- Define Reliability
- Importance of Reliability in Social Science Research
- Challenges in Ensuring Reliability
- Conclusion

Reliability in social science research means consistency of measurement. A tool is reliable if it produces stable results under similar conditions. **Durkheim** emphasized reliability as a core criterion of scientific rigor in social research.

Importance of Reliability in Social Science Research

- **Reliable data gives stable results**, making knowledge cumulative. **Durkheim's Suicide** gained authority because results were replicable.
- Policymakers, academics, and the public trust findings only when they are consistent. **For instance, the UN Human Development Index and India's NSSO surveys are valued for their reliability.**
- **Validity depends on prior reliability.** IQ tests must first give consistent results before measuring intelligence.
- **Governments need reliable statistics for planning welfare and resource distribution.** Indian Census guides policy on education, healthcare, and reservations.
- Reliability gives sociology the status of a science, like natural sciences. **Auguste Comte** – Advocated sociology as a “science of society,” needing reliable, credible data.

Challenges in Ensuring Reliability

- People's opinions, moods, or values shift over time, making responses unstable. E.g, -Voting preference surveys may vary within weeks during an election campaign.
- **Howard Becker** showed that researcher bias and labeling influence responses, questioning reliability. Biased survey questions on caste may push respondents towards “socially acceptable” answers.
- Abstract variables like happiness, trust, or alienation are difficult to measure consistently across time and contexts.

Reliability is the foundation of trustworthy social research, ensuring stability, comparability, and policy relevance. Yet, because human behavior is fluid and contexts differ, achieving complete reliability is difficult. Still, reliable methods are essential for advancing theory and guiding social interventions effectively.

Question 3.

a) Compare capability deprivation approach with that of social capital deprivation in understanding chronic poverty. (20 Marks)

- Define both approaches
- Differences between both
- Common grounds
- Conclusion

Chronic poverty is not only about income but about persistent deprivation of opportunities and resources. Two major approaches explain this:

- **Capability Deprivation Approach (Amartya Sen)** – poverty as lack of basic freedoms and capabilities like education, health, and participation.
- **Social Capital Deprivation Approach (Bourdieu, Putnam)** – poverty as exclusion from networks, trust, and community resources that enable access to opportunities.

Differences between both

- **Unit of analysis**
 - **Capability Approach:** Centers on the individual, focusing on their real opportunities and ability to function (e.g., being educated, healthy, politically active).
 - **Social Capital Approach:** Centers on the community or group, where networks of trust and reciprocity shape access to resources and opportunities.
- **Nature of Poverty**
 - **Capability Approach: (individual-centric)** Poverty arises when individuals cannot translate resources into meaningful lives. Example: malnourished children despite government food subsidies.
 - **Social Capital Approach: (community centric)** Poverty arises from exclusion from beneficial networks. Example: Dalits excluded from caste networks limiting access to markets or jobs.
- **Persistence of Poverty**
 - **Capability Approach:** Chronic poverty persists through intergenerational deprivation—poor health, low education, and lack of skills passed down.
 - **Social Capital Approach:** Poverty persists due to **structural exclusion** like caste, gender, or race, which prevent integration into opportunity networks.
- **Measurement Tools**
 - **Capability Approach:** Measured through indices like **HDI and MPI**, which consider education, health, and living standards.
 - **Social Capital Approach:** Measured through surveys on **trust, participation, and networks** (Putnam's civic community index, World Bank's social capital surveys).
- **Policy Prescription**
 - **Capability Approach:** Policies emphasize expanding health, education, and welfare services to enhance individual opportunities. Example: Midday Meal Scheme in India.
 - **Social Capital Approach:** Policies emphasize building cooperatives, SHGs, and participatory governance. Example: Kerala's Kudumbashree movement that empowers women through networks.

Common Grounds between Capability Deprivation and Social Capital Deprivation

- **Multidimensional Nature of Poverty** - Both Sen and Putnam reject income-only poverty definitions. Poverty means lacking freedoms, networks, and opportunities. Example: an educated youth without networks still faces exclusion.
- **Interdependence of Individual and Society** - Capabilities flourish within supportive networks, while networks thrive when individuals enjoy health and education. Example: literate women benefit more from SHGs.
- **Policy Emphasis on Empowerment** - Both advocate sustainable poverty reduction through empowerment. Sen stresses education and health; Putnam stresses civic engagement. **Programs like Kudumbashree and Grameen Bank integrate both effectively.**
- **Critique of Economic Measures** - Both highlight GDP's inadequacy in capturing deprivation. Poverty encompasses restricted freedoms, weak networks, and exclusion. Human Development Index and social capital surveys reflect broader realities.

Capability and social capital approaches provide a multidimensional understanding of chronic poverty. By emphasizing freedoms, networks, and empowerment, they support inclusive, sustainable development and directly contribute to achieving SDGs, particularly those on poverty reduction, education, and gender equality.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

b) Are pressure groups a threat to or a necessary element of democracy? Explain with suitable illustrations. (20 Marks)

- Define pressure group
- Threats of Pressure Groups
- Why Pressure Groups are necessary
- Conclusion

Pressure groups are organized collections of individuals aiming to influence government policies or public opinion without contesting elections. They reflect pluralist theory by distributing power in society. **Anthony Giddens calls them the “bearer” and “face of democracy,”** highlighting their democratic role, while also warning they may act destructively when dominated by narrow interests or elites.

Threats of Pressure Groups

- **Distortion of Public Policy** - Wealthy groups dominate policymaking, sidelining citizen interests. Influence of corporate lobbying in USA
- **Groups frequently prioritize immediate sectional interests over long-term welfare.** Farmer protests sometimes resist sustainable water or land reforms for short-term gains.
- Identity-based or regional pressure groups may prioritize sectional agendas, sometimes creating tensions between communities, e.g., caste-based lobbies in state politics.
- **Stifling good social change and progress-** Some protectionist organisations have the ability to use a heckler's veto to stymie progress toward a modern and liberal society.
- **Political Party Instrument-** The majority of active pressure groups in India are influenced by political parties for example, farmer groups have splintered along party line, which has undermined the farmers' movement.
- Powerful groups monopolize resources - **Despite the fact that a number of mass shootings in schools and public gatherings occur on a regular basis, US Ammunition Laws are defended by strong industry interests.**

Why Pressure Groups are necessary

- Groups amplify minority and marginalized voices, such as trade unions like INTUC protecting workers' rights and negotiating wages, **reflecting James Madison's idea of factions balancing democracy.**
- **David Easton's concept of democratic feedback** - Pressure groups monitor policies and hold authorities accountable. NGOs like **Transparency International India** and **CHRI (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative)** expose corruption and ensure accountability.
- Groups drive reforms ignored by mainstream politics. **Movements such as Right to Information (RTI) advocacy, anti-corruption campaigns, and women's SHGs illustrate social change efforts.**
- **Provide technical knowledge improving policymaking.** NITI Aayog advisory groups and health committees contribute evidence-based, practical recommendations for better governance.
- Defend linguistic, religious, and cultural minorities, preventing majoritarian bias; organizations like **PUCL advocate for marginalized communities.**

Pressure groups are vital to democracy, amplifying citizen voices, influencing policy, and promoting accountability. **Global movements like Greta Thunberg's climate activism** show how such groups can shape sustainable, inclusive governance and drive long-term social and political change.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

c) What is hypothesis? Critically evaluate the significance of hypothesis in social research. (10 Marks)

- **Define Hypothesis**
- **Significance of Hypothesis in Social Research**
- **Issues / Limitations of Hypotheses in Social Research**
- **Conclusion**

According to G. A. **Lundberg** a hypothesis is a tentative, testable statement about the relationship between two or more variables. For example, "Higher education levels lead to greater political participation" is a hypothesis.

Significance of Hypothesis in Social Research

- **Guides Research Design** – Hypotheses help define objectives, focus, and methodology, ensuring the study is systematic rather than arbitrary.
- **Clarifies Variables and Relationships** – They identify independent and dependent variables, clarifying what is being studied and expected relationships
- **Facilitates Data Collection and Analysis** – it guides method choice, such as surveys or longitudinal studies, ensuring systematic testing and replicable results.
- **Enhances Scientific Rigor** – Provides a structured framework that reduces bias and ensures replicable, objective results.
- **Leads to Discovery of Laws and Conclusions** – Hypotheses help uncover social patterns and generalizations.

Issues / Limitations of Hypotheses in Social Research

- **Oversimplification of Social Reality** – Hypotheses may reduce complex social phenomena, like "poverty causes crime," ignoring contextual factors.
- **Difficulty in Operationalization** – Concepts like happiness, social capital, or empowerment are hard to measure accurately.
- **Confirmation Bias** – Researchers might interpret data to support a hypothesis, ignoring contradictory evidence.

Hypotheses guide social research by structuring inquiry, clarifying variables, and predicting outcomes. Despite limitations, they enhance scientific rigor and remain essential for meaningful, systematic, and theory-driven social investigation.

Question 4.

a) Give an account of the recent trends of marriage in the Indian context. How are these different from traditional practices? (20 Marks)

- Define Marriage
- Traditional Marriage in India
- Recent Trends in Indian Marriage
- Conclusion

Marriage is a social institution permitting sexual and social union between two people, often formalized through religious or civil ceremonies. **Edmund Leach defines it broadly as granting privileges including sexual exclusivity, social recognition, legality, and culturally specific rights.**

Traditional Marriage in India

- **Regulation of Sexuality** – Marriage controlled sexuality and ensured reproduction, crucial for societal survival (G.P. Murdock).
- **Social Respect** – Provided legitimacy to women and children, enhancing social recognition (Malinowski).
- **Religious & Social Duties** – Hindu marriage focused on dharma; Muslim marriage as a contract for procreation
- **Limited Individual Choice** – Emotional fulfilment or personal preferences were secondary to family and societal obligations.
- Girls often married in late teens; boys in early twenties. **Kingsley Davis** – “social control through early marriage” for population regulation and family alliances.
- **Arranged Marriages** – Families primarily chose spouses to maintain social, caste, and economic alliances.
- **Gender Roles** – **Patricia Uberoi** argues gender inequality in family structures and patriarchy. Clear division of roles: men as providers, women as caregivers and homemakers.
- **Marriage as Social Institution** – Seen as a duty or obligation rather than a personal relationship.

Recent Trends in Indian Marriage

- **Companionship & Emotional Fulfilment** – Marriage emphasizes personal happiness, companionship, and emotional support rather than only reproduction
- **Individual Choice** – Urban middle-class youth increasingly participate in spouse selection via matrimonial portals.
- **Remarriage Acceptance** – Previously taboo, now remarriage is more accepted, prioritizing individual happiness.
- **Sexuality & Reproduction Separation** – Sexual activity is increasingly viewed independently from reproduction; concept of “plastic sexuality” (**Giddens**).
- **Smaller Families** – Preference for fewer children over large families, emphasizing self-fulfilment.
- **Marriage as Partnership** – Shift from social contract to mutually satisfying relationship, fostering equality and dialogue between partners.
- **Parental Involvement with Consent** – Parents still influence marriage, but increasingly with children’s agreement in urban educated settings.

- Rising acceptance of marriages across religions/castes. Online matrimonial sites promote inter-community matches. **Indian government actively supports them through schemes like the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Scheme for Social Integration**, which provides incentives for inter-caste marriages

Indian marriage has evolved from a socially regulated institution to a partnership focused on emotional fulfilment, choice, and equality. While tradition still influences rural and low-income contexts, urban practices increasingly prioritize individual autonomy and personal happiness



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

b) What would you identify as the similarities and differences in the elite theories of Mosca, Michels and Pareto? Discuss their main/crucial issues. (20 Marks)

- **Define elite theories**
- **Similarities between thinkers**
- **Differenced between them**
- **Criticism of elite theories**

Elite theory suggests a small minority (elite) holds power in society, while the majority (masses) has limited influence. This theory, developed by classical thinkers such as Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, and Robert Michels, highlights the structural dominance of elites in society and their control over institutions.

Similarities

- **Minority Dominates Society:** Small elites control society; masses remain subordinate.
- **Democracy and Elite Control:** Elites maintain influence through institutions, even in democratic systems.
- **Limited Mass Influence:** Ordinary people have minimal decision-making power, guided by elite interests.

Differences Among Mosca, Michels, and Pareto

- **Basis of Elite Power:**
 - Mosca: Power comes from control of institutions and organization.
 - Michels: Power comes from organizational position and bureaucratic authority.
 - Pareto: Power derives from skills, abilities, wealth, and competence.
- **View of Elites:**
 - Mosca: Elites act as stabilizing forces, maintaining social order.
 - Michels: Elites are self-perpetuating rulers, prioritizing organizational control.
 - Pareto: Elites are dynamic and constantly changing, replaced based on competence.
- **Mechanism of Change:**
 - Mosca: Stability is maintained through elite control and institutions.
 - Michels: Change is limited; oligarchy persists within organizations.
 - Pareto: Social change occurs via the circulation of elites.
- **Implication for Democracy:**
 - Mosca: Elite dominance continues in political systems.
 - Michels: Even democratic organizations eventually become oligarchies.
 - Pareto: Democracy cannot eliminate elite dominance; elites remain in power.

Key issues in the elite theories

- **Power of Public Opinion:** Elite theory ignores the significant influence of public opinion in shaping political decisions and holding leaders accountable.
- **Karl Mannheim distinguishes elites from totalitarians**, emphasizing democratic voters can remove leaders who fail to serve public interests.
- **David Riesman rejects elite theory's uniformity**, arguing that diverse interests and opinions in society prevent power concentration.
- **Altruistic Motives:** People often act out of genuine altruism, such as charity, not solely to achieve or maintain power.

- **Robert Dahl's "Who Governs" study in New Haven** reveals power is dispersed among various groups, challenging elite dominance.
- **Arnold Rose** reaffirmed Dahl's findings, showing that democratic societies have pluralistic patterns of power, not concentrated elite control.

Elite theory explains power concentration in modern institutions, yet social media activism, grassroots movements, and increased citizen participation challenge elite dominance. Today, power is more dispersed and contested, reflecting a dynamic balance between elites and democratic pluralism in contemporary society.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

c) Critically analyse the sociological significance of informal sector in the economy of developing societies. (10 Marks)

- Define informal sector
- Significance of informal sector
- Issues with informal sector
- Conclusion

The **informal sector**, a concept coined by **Keith Hart**, refers to unregulated economic activities outside formal labor protections, including street vendors, domestic workers, and small artisans. In developing societies, it provides employment, sustains livelihoods, and supports economic survival.

Significance of informal sector

- **Employment Generation** – It absorbs surplus labor from agriculture and formal sectors. For example, **street vendors in Mumbai and hawkers in Delhi** provide jobs for millions who might otherwise face unemployment.
- **Social Mobility** – The sector enables marginalized groups to become entrepreneurs. **Textile units in Tirupur and artisan clusters in Rajasthan empower disadvantaged communities to earn livelihoods through small-scale enterprises.**
- **Survival Economy** – Provides affordable goods and services to urban and rural populations alike. **Examples include street food vendors and local vegetable markets that cater to everyday needs.**
- **Flexibility & Adaptability** – The informal economy quickly responds to changing economic conditions. **During the COVID-19 pandemic, gig workers and home-based tailors adapted to shifting demand and lockdown restrictions.**
- **Gender Inclusion** – Offers financial independence to women, **especially in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in Kerala and domestic helpers in Mumbai, improving women's economic empowerment.**
- **Urbanization & Migration** – Absorbs rural migrants moving to cities for work, such as construction laborers in Delhi and domestic workers in Hyderabad, facilitating urban labor market integration.

Issues with informal sector

- **Job Insecurity** – Workers lack job protections and benefits, often described as the “**precariat**” by Guy Standing due to their vulnerable status.
- **Low Wages & Exploitation** – Earnings are generally insufficient to ensure decent living standards, with middlemen and contractors exploiting workers' labor.
- **Limited Productivity** – The sector operates with low technology and limited skill development. **Amartya Sen highlights these capability constraints, restricting workers' economic advancement**
- **Tax Evasion & Regulation Gaps** – The informality leads to significant tax losses for the state and undermines efforts to strengthen the formal economy through regulation and social protections.

The informal sector employs millions, particularly women, rural migrants, and marginalized communities, sustaining livelihoods and preserving traditional skills.

Policies like India's new labor codes and social security schemes can reduce exploitation, enhance income security, and formalize work, making the sector safer, equitable, and crucial for inclusive economic and social development.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

Section B

Question 5. Answer the following questions in about 150 words each

a) In what way is the scope of sociology unique? Explain. (10 marks)

Approach:

- Define sociology and briefly state why its scope is debated.
- Highlight the key features that make its scope unique.
- Compare briefly with other social sciences.
- Conclude by underlining sociology's distinctiveness.

Solution

Introduction

Sociology is the systematic study of social relations, institutions, and shared meanings. Its scope is *unique* because it connects everyday interactions with large social structures, and does so using multiple methods and theories, unlike economics, political science, anthropology, psychology, or history taken alone.

Core uniqueness

1. **Micro-macro bridge:** Sociology links the micro world of face-to-face interaction and meanings (roles, identity, norms) with the macro world of institutions (family, economy, state, religion). This allows it to explain how personal choices are shaped by structures, and how structures change through collective action.
2. **Methodological pluralism:** It combines surveys and statistics with ethnography and historical-comparative analysis. This mix captures both measurable patterns and lived experience.
3. **Holistic focus:** Sociology studies interdependent institutions and patterned relations rather than a single sphere (only markets or only states).
4. **Theory + evidence integration:** From Marx, Durkheim, and Weber to interactionist, feminist, and postcolonial approaches, sociological explanations are explicitly theory-guided and empirically tested.

In relation to other disciplines Sociology is Unique

- **Economics:** Goes beyond utility and markets to show how family, caste, and norms organize labour and exchange. **Example -** Caste shaping **labour markets**.
- **Political science:** Looks past formal power to its social bases – participation, legitimacy, identity, and civil society.
- **Anthropology:** Shares interest in culture but extends analysis to complex, industrial and urban settings (with growing convergence today).
- **Psychology:** Moves from the individual mind to supra-individual patterns – roles, groups, social facts. **Example - Social media** interactions producing polarization.
- **History:** Uses the record of events to build generalizable causes and comparisons across times and places.

Conclusion

Sociology is distinctive because it **weaves individual meanings with institutional structures**, using **plural methods** and **explicit theory** to generate explanations no single social science can offer on its own.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

b) Does the structural-functionalist perspective on social stratification promote a status quo? Give reasons for your answer. (10 marks)

Approach:

- Define structural-functionalism and its view of stratification.
- Show how it tends to legitimise the status quo.
- Present key critiques.
- Conclude on its limits and alternatives.

Solution

Introduction

Structural-functionalism views society as an interrelated system seeking order and equilibrium. In this frame, stratification is seen as universal and functionally necessary: according to Davis–Moore, society attaches higher rewards to positions considered more important or demanding so that able people are motivated and allocated to them.

So largely yes – it tends to legitimise the status quo as can be seen below:

- **Functional necessity leads to naturalisation of hierarchy:** By claiming that stratification is required to fill “the most important” roles, the theory risks treating current hierarchies as natural, even when the criteria of “importance” are defined by dominant groups.
- **Meritocratic assumption hides inherited advantage:** Davis–Moore presumes open competition. In reality, class, caste, gender, and cultural capital shape schooling, networks, and confidence. Outcomes then look like “merit” while privilege is reproduced.
- **Role-allocation justifies unequal rewards:** High pay/prestige are framed as needed incentives, which deflects demands for redistribution and overlooks essential but under-rewarded work (e.g., nurses, teachers, ASHA workers).
- **Stability over correction:** Functionalism prioritises consensus and order; conflict is seen as disruptive rather than a vehicle for redressing inequality, which dampens reform impulses.
- **Teleological reasoning:** Explaining inequality by its supposed “functions” becomes circular and discourages asking whether fairer arrangements could perform the same tasks.

Key critiques

- **Melvin Tumin:** “Importance” is hard to measure; steep inequality wastes talent, lowers motivation among the deprived, and narrows opportunity.
- **Conflict perspective (Marx):** Stratification serves ruling-class interests, not a vague “societal need.”
- **Weber (closure):** Groups use closure to restrict entry and mobility. **Example -** Caste-based occupational closure and networks in hiring.
- **Bourdieu:** Cultural and social capital transmit advantage across generations, undermining merit claims.

Conclusion

While structural-functionalism highlights integration and motivation, its claims of universality and necessity tend to **naturalise and functionalise inequality**, thereby supporting the status quo. Conflict, Weberian, and cultural-capital critiques show why stratification is historically produced and reformable – not an unquestionable social need.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

c) Do you think that the formal workspaces are free of gender bias? Argue your case. (10 marks)

Approach:

- Begin with a clear stand that formal workspaces are not free from gender bias.
- Explain how gender bias appears in workplace.
- Highlight intersectionality to show layered disadvantages.
- Suggest systemic reforms as way forward.
- Conclude by stressing equity as essential for legitimacy and productivity.

Solution

Introduction

Formal workspaces – regulated, contractual organisations in the public and private sector – are **not** free of gender bias. Even with equal-opportunity policies, patterned disadvantages appear in **hiring, role allocation, evaluation, promotion, everyday culture, and grievance redressal**.

Hiring and entry:

Bias often starts at recruitment. Stereotypes about “role fit” and availability shape shortlists. Unstructured interviews encourage **affinity bias**, and referral-heavy hiring reproduces existing demographics. Screening tools trained on past data can also **downgrade non-linear careers**, penalising women who took care-related breaks.

Segregation inside firms:

Women cluster in “feminised” functions (HR, admin, teaching, nursing), while men dominate profit-and-loss roles, operations, and field sales that feed leadership pipelines (**horizontal segregation**). At senior levels, the **glass ceiling** thins women’s presence; at the base, a **sticky floor** limits mobility. Sometimes women are promoted into high-risk turnarounds – the **glass cliff** – and then blamed when outcomes falter. Access to informal networks and **sponsorship** (often formed after hours) further tilts opportunity. Joan **Acker’s** idea of **gendered organisations** shows how “neutral” rules mirror the unencumbered male worker.

Pay and performance:

Unexplained **pay gaps** arise from opaque increments and bonus criteria tied to travel or late-night visibility. The same behaviour is judged differently: men’s “assertiveness” becomes women’s “abrasiveness,” creating **likeability penalties**.

Life-course effects:

The **motherhood penalty** lowers ratings and slows promotions. Part-time or flexible work attracts stigma even when output is strong. “Always-on” cultures and travel-heavy assignments clash with care burdens still borne mostly by women, restricting access to stretch roles. Arlie **Hochschild’s** “**second shift**” explains this reduced availability.

Culture and safety:

Microaggressions, credit stealing, sexist humour, and fear of retaliation persist. Many systems show **checkbox compliance** to harassment rules instead of survivor-centred redressal. Pierre **Bourdieu’s** **symbolic violence** helps explain how everyday meanings reproduce male advantage.

Intersectionality:

Not all women face the same workplace. **Caste, class, religion, disability, region, and queer/trans status** multiply barriers in allocation, mobility, and evaluations.

Way forward

Addressing workplace gender bias needs a **system-wide redesign**, not isolated measures. Recruitment must use **gender-balanced panels** to limit subjective bias. Pay equity requires **transparent salary bands**, annual **equity audits**, and bans on discriminatory bonus criteria. Parental support must go beyond maternity leave – **equal, non-transferable parental leave** encourages men to share care responsibilities. Flexible work should be designed as **gender-neutral** and free from career penalties

Conclusion

Formal workspaces remain gender-biased. **Equity is not a favour**; it is central to productivity, retention, and institutional legitimacy.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

d) How does Weber's *Verstehen* address the objectivity-subjectivity debate in sociology? (10 marks)

Approach:

- Start by stating the problem of subjectivity vs objectivity in sociology.
- Introduce Weber's idea of *Verstehen* as interpretive understanding of social action.
- Explain how *Verstehen* addresses the objectivity-subjectivity debate in sociology.
- Substantiate with an example (Protestant Ethic).
- Conclude that *Verstehen* provides a middle path between positivist objectivity and pure subjectivism.

Solution

Introduction

One of the main challenges in sociology is that it studies **human meanings and motives**, which are subjective, but also seeks **objective knowledge** that is verifiable by others. Max Weber proposed *Verstehen*, meaning "interpretive understanding," as a way to bridge this gap. Through *Verstehen*, sociology can treat subjective meanings as **data** while ensuring explanations remain systematic and open to scrutiny.

Verstehen

Weber argued that sociology's task is to understand **social action**, i.e., behaviour oriented towards others. This requires entering the actor's perspective—asking **what the action means** to them. *Verstehen* is not about personal empathy but about developing a **methodical grasp of motives** that others can check.

Levels of Verstehen

- **Immediate (aktuelles) understanding:** grasping the direct meaning of an act (e.g., handing over money = paying a bill).
- **Explanatory (erklarendes) understanding:** going deeper into the **motive** (e.g., paying promptly to maintain credit reputation). This second level turns interpretation into causal explanation, showing why the act happened.

It addresses the objectivity-subjectivity debate in the following manner

- **Subjective meanings as data:** Instead of ignoring meanings, sociology systematically collects them through interviews, documents, and observations.
- **Intersubjectivity:** Other researchers can check whether the interpretation is reasonable, making it more objective.
- **Causal orientation:** By linking motives to outcomes, *Verstehen* avoids pure relativism and provides causal adequacy.
- **Comparative method:** Cross-case comparison (e.g., across religions or economies) allows findings to be tested and generalised.

Example

In *the Protestant Ethic*, Weber used *Verstehen* to interpret the motives of Calvinists—worldly asceticism, discipline, and a sense of “calling.” These meanings made rational capitalist conduct more probable. He then checked this interpretation against historical and regional evidence, showing that it was not just an impression but a **causally adequate explanation**.

Conclusion

Weber’s *Verstehen* makes subjective meanings **methodically knowable** and **publicly verifiable**. It shows that sociology can respect the **inner world of actors** while producing explanations that others can **test and debate**. Thus, it offers a middle path between positivist objectivity and pure subjectivism, giving sociology a **qualified but reliable objectivity**.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

e) To what extent can education and skill development be an agent of social change? Critically analyze. (10 marks)

Approach:

- Define education and skill development in relation to social change.
- Discuss their role as agents of change.
- Critically highlight their limitations.
- Conclude on their conditional but important potential.

Solution

Introduction

Education refers not only to formal instruction but also to the transmission of values, norms, and ways of reasoning; skill development refers to job-relevant competencies acquired through vocational training, apprenticeships, and workplace learning. Together they are powerful **agents of social change**.

They enable change in following ways:

- **Socialisation and cohesion (Durkheim/Parsons):** Schools inculcate shared norms (punctuality, cooperation, civic duty) and prepare individuals for specialised roles, smoothing modernisation and institutional trust.
- **Human capital formation:** Literacy, numeracy, and digital skills raise productivity and earnings, facilitating **sectoral and urban mobility** and strengthening a competitive economy.
- **Life chances (Weber):** Credentials expand opportunities across class, caste, gender, and region; education converts raw talent into **recognised qualifications**, widening access to bureaucracy, professions, and entrepreneurship.
- **Empowerment and critical consciousness (Freire):** Exposure to rights, deliberation, and critical thinking encourages political voice, associational life, and resistance to oppressive practices (e.g., reduced tolerance for child marriage or dowry).
- **Skill ecosystems:** TVET, apprenticeships, recognition of prior learning, and industry-institution linkages improve **employability**, productivity of MSMEs, and local entrepreneurship.
- **Demonstration effects:** Educated women and first-generation graduates alter **aspirations** in their families and communities, shifting norms around fertility, work, and girls' schooling.

However, their impact may stall due to following reasons:

- **Reproduction of inequality (Bourdieu):** Schools privilege **cultural capital** (language, manner, prior exposure). Tracking, elite curricula, and "soft skills" expectations reward the already advantaged.
- **Credentialism and signalling (Collins):** Inflation of degrees without commensurate jobs can convert education into a **screening device**, preserving hierarchy rather than transforming it.

- **Mismatch and informalism:** Training unaligned to local demand, weak counselling, and **jobless growth** push graduates into underemployment or precarious gig work; skills depreciate without practice.
- **Intersectional barriers:** Caste, gender, disability, and region restrict entry, retention, and placement; the **digital divide** and language of instruction further widen gaps.
- **Hidden curriculum:** Textbooks and classroom interactions may reproduce stereotypes, blunting emancipatory effects even as enrolments rise.
- **Quality deficits:** Poor foundational learning, weak teacher preparation, and limited hands-on training reduce the **transformative yield** of years spent in school or skilling centres.

Example

- Expanding **girls' secondary education** is associated with delayed marriage, lower fertility, and higher labour-force participation, shifting household bargaining power.
- Robust **community colleges/ITIs with industry tie-ups** can catalyse local mobility; where tie-ups are weak, placement outcomes and social mobility are modest.

Conclusion

Education and skill development are **necessary but not sufficient** for social transformation. To realise their potential, systems must ensure **equity** (scholarships, safe transport, inclusive language and disability access), **quality** (teacher development, practice-rich curricula), **market linkages** (regional clusters, apprenticeships with safeguards, career services). Crucially, they must be coupled with **anti-discrimination enforcement, social protection, and job creation**. Only in such enabling ecosystems do education and skills reliably convert into durable, egalitarian social change.

Question 6.

a) What is science? Do you think that the methods used in natural sciences can be applied to sociology? Give reasons for your answer. (20 marks)

Approach:

- Define science and raise the issue of applying natural-science methods to sociology.
- Explain where such methods are useful.
- Discuss why full application is limited.
- Suggest a balanced approach
- Conclude that sociology must adapt natural-science methods while combining them with interpretive ones.

Solution

Introduction

Science is organised, evidence-based knowledge. It explains the world through **testable ideas** and **methods** that others can check. Sociology studies human social life, which is full of meanings and intentions. Some methods of natural science can be used in sociology, but they must be **adapted** to the special nature of social life.

Where natural-science methods help

- **Identifying patterns** : Early positivists like **Comte** and **Durkheim** believed social facts can be studied systematically. Durkheim's *Suicide* used official data and comparisons across groups. He showed that **statistics and correlations** can reveal patterns between suicide and social integration.
- **Measurement and inference** : Modern sociology uses **surveys, sampling, indices**, and sometimes **experiments or natural experiments** (like sudden policy changes) to identify causal tendencies.
- **Scientific norms** : Standards like **clear methods, transparency, replication, falsification, and peer review** can apply in sociology, just as in natural sciences.

Why full application is limited

- **Meanings matter**: Weber argued for *Verstehen* (interpretive understanding). The same behaviour can mean different things in different contexts. Sociology cannot ignore meanings.
- **Open social systems**: Social life has many shifting causes. Strict laboratory-style control is rare. Explanations are usually **probabilistic and context-dependent**.
- **Reflexivity and ethics** : People change behaviour when they know they are being studied (Hawthorne effect). Also, ethics – like consent and privacy – limit experimental methods.
- **Historical concepts** Ideas like “class,” “caste,” or “identity” are not fixed. They need careful **conceptualisation**. As Giddens says, sociology faces a “**double hermeneutic**”: researchers interpret actors who already interpret their own actions, and theories can reshape reality.

A balanced approach

The best way forward is **methodological pluralism**. Sociology should combine:

- **Quantitative methods** (surveys, statistics, experiments).
- **Qualitative methods** (ethnography, interviews).
- **Historical-comparative methods**.

Using **triangulation** (checking if different methods lead to the same conclusion) strengthens findings. The aim is both **causal adequacy** (credible evidence of cause) and **interpretive validity** (faithfulness to actors' meanings).

Conclusion

Natural-science methods make sociology stronger by improving **measurement, testing, and transparency**. But because social life is **meaningful, open, and ethically constrained**, sociology must adapt these methods and combine them with interpretive approaches. This blended strategy gives sociology a **rigorous yet humane objectivity**, suited to understanding people in society.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

b) What do you understand by gender-based domestic division of labour? Is it undergoing a change in the wake of increasing participation of women in formal employment? Clarify your answer with illustrations. (20 marks)

Approach:

- Define gender-based domestic division of labour.
- Discuss how women's entry into formal work has pushed changes in household roles.
- Highlight why such changes remain partial and uneven.
- Substantiate with examples.
- Conclude with measures needed for durable equality.

Solution

Introduction

The gender-based domestic division of labour is the patterned way households allocate **unpaid** work—cooking, cleaning, child-care, elder-care, emotional coordination, and daily logistics—along gender lines. In most societies, women have carried the larger share of this work, while men have specialised in paid market work. With rising female participation in **formal employment**, this arrangement is changing, but the change is **partial and uneven** across class, caste, region, and life-stage.

Formal employment can reduce gender bias at home for following reasons:

- **Time scarcity and renegotiation:** When both partners are earners, the total hours available for domestic work shrink. Couples often **reallocate** tasks more symmetrically (leading to **Michael Young and Peter Willmott's symmetrical family**).
- **Bargaining power:** Independent income increases women's **voice** to refuse unfair loads and to demand predictable sharing of chores.
- **Norm shifts:** Urban, educated couples increasingly see **shared parenting and housework** as normal. Father-friendly parenting cultures (bedtime routines, weekend cooking) slowly spread through peer examples and media.
- **Marketisation of care:** Services such as crèches, domestic help, tiffin/meal plans, and laundry reduce the **total unpaid burden**, making sharing more feasible.
- **Supportive policies:** Workplace crèches, flexible hours, and **parental** (not just maternity) leave encourage men's involvement and reduce default assignment to women.

However, change is limited as seen below:

- **"Second shift" and the mental load:** Even in dual-earner homes, women often do a larger share, including **planning and coordination** (appointments, groceries, uniforms). This invisible management keeps the divide alive (Hochschild).
- **Motherhood penalty and flexibility stigma:** Pregnancy, nursing, and school-timings still pull women toward flexible or part-time work, which households then read as a signal to keep chores **gendered**.

- **Masculinity norms:** Boys and men are rarely socialised into routine care; helping is framed as “**assistance**,” not responsibility, limiting durable change (Connell).
- **Classed outsourcing:** Middle-class families may hire domestic workers; labour shifts from one set of **women** (wives) to another (low-income women), not to men – so gender justice at home is **externalised**.
- **Long hours and weak services:** Long commutes, irregular shifts, and unreliable public care push households back to the **traditional default**, especially during crises.
- **Cultural sanctions:** In many regions, men doing visible housework still attracts ridicule; younger couples change faster than extended households.

Examples:

- **Pandemic/WFH:** Many men learned or increased chores, but overall, women’s hours in cooking and care rose sharply; the gap **narrowed modestly** but did not close.
- **Urban middle-class homes:** Hiring a maid or day-care reduces women’s fatigue, yet **task-planning** often remains with them.
- **Small-town dual earners:** Men may take outdoor chores (bank work, shopping), while time-intensive daily cooking/cleaning stays with women.

Conclusion

Women’s formal employment **nudges** domestic equality but does not **erase** gendered divides. Durable change needs: (i) **shared parental leave** and father-specific leave, (ii) affordable, reliable **child-care and elder-care**, (iii) **gender-neutral** flexible work without career penalties, (iv) school-level **life-skills curricula** that teach boys routine care tasks. Only when norms, skills, and policies align will households move from “helping” to **equal responsibility**.

c) How can you assess the significance of social movements in the digital era? Explain. (10 marks)

Approach:

- Define social movements and briefly note how the digital era reshapes them.
- Discuss their significance: mobilisation, organisation, framing, resources, inclusion, institutional impact (with examples).
- Point out the limits: digital divide, disinformation, surveillance, fragility, and resource asymmetries.
- Conclude on their conditional but transformative potential when linked with sustained offline organising.

Solution

Introduction

A social movement is a sustained, collective effort to challenge or defend existing social arrangements. The **digital era** is marked by networked platforms, smartphones, and datafication, which reshape how people connect, speak, and organise.

Significance of digital-era movements

- **Mobilisation & scale:** Messages travel fast with low entry costs, enabling translocal and transnational reach. Hashtags and messaging groups reduce coordination costs and help synchronise actions across places.
- **Organisation form:** Many campaigns shift from hierarchy to “**connective action**” – loose, networked, and leader-light coordination – where personalised content and peer networks substitute for formal membership.
- **Framing power:** Memes, testimonies, and short videos reframe issues, pressure legacy media, and set public agendas. Personal stories convert abstract injustice into **recognisable harm**.
- **Resource flow:** Platforms enable **crowdfunding**, volunteer matching, and rapid coordination of legal aid, medical help, and logistics.
- **Participation & inclusion:** Youth and previously marginalised groups can enter public debate more easily; lateral leadership and micro-influencers diversify voice.
- **Institutional impact:** Effective campaigns can move **policy, courts, and corporations** – from internal policy rewrites to legislative review – and keep issues alive beyond a single news cycle.

Examples

- **#MeToo:** Triggered workplace policy changes, activated internal complaints committees, and catalysed legal cases; also saw countersuits and backlash.
- **Climate strikes:** Youth-led, globally synchronised actions spurred city-level pledges and curricular debates on climate literacy.
- **Black Lives Matter:** Helped secure reforms in some jurisdictions (e.g., limits on chokeholds, body cameras), alongside polarised pushback.

- **Indian farmers' movement:** Messaging apps supported large-scale coordination and narrative reach; sustained sit-ins contributed to **repeal of the farm laws**, while episodes of content takedown revealed platform dependency.

Limits of digital-era movements

- **Visibility ≠ victory:** Virality can exaggerate power; institutional change may stall without offline organisation and negotiation.
- **Digital divide:** Gender, caste/class, region, language, and disability shape who can participate and be heard.
- **Disinformation & toxicity:** Trolling, doxxing, and coordinated smear campaigns deter participation and distort frames.
- **Surveillance & control:** Data tracking, internet shutdowns, and opaque platform moderation constrain action.
- **Fragility of leader-light networks:** Message drift, factionalism, and co-option arise without stable structures.
- **Resource asymmetries:** States and corporations wield superior data analytics, advertising tools, and legal capacities.

Conclusion

Digital-era movements can amplify movements dramatically, yet lasting significance depends on building institutions, safeguarding participants, and bridging online energy with sustained, grounded organising.

Question 7.

a) What is sampling in the context of social research? Discuss different forms of sampling with their relative advantages and disadvantages. (20 marks)

Approach:

- Define sampling in the context of social research.
- Explain probability sampling: outline main forms with advantages and disadvantages.
- Explain non-probability sampling: outline main forms with advantages and disadvantages.
- Note criteria for choosing designs and possible mixed approaches.
- Conclude on balancing precision, cost, access, and ethics.

Solution

Introduction

Sampling is selecting a subset of units (people, households, villages, posts, etc.) from a **defined population** to draw conclusions about the whole. A good design specifies the **population**, a **sampling frame**, clear **inclusion rules**, and the **sample size**. It manages both **sampling error** (random variation) and **bias** (systematic distortion).

Probability sampling (each unit has a known, non-zero chance)

- **Simple Random Sampling (SRS)** – selection by lottery or random numbers.
 - **Advantage:** Unbiased estimators; simple formulas for margins of error.
 - **Disadvantage:** Needs a complete frame; high contact cost for dispersed units; weak for rare subgroups.
- **Systematic Sampling** – pick every k -th unit after a random start.
 - **Advantage:** Easy to implement; spreads sample evenly across the list.
 - **Disadvantage:** List **periodicity** can introduce bias (e.g., repeating patterns by shift/section).
- **Stratified Sampling** – split into strata (gender/caste/region/urban-rural) and sample within each.
 - **Advantage:** Higher **precision**; reliable **subgroup estimates**; control over sample composition.
 - **Disadvantage:** Requires accurate stratification info; disproportionate sampling needs **weights** and more complex analysis.
- **Cluster Sampling** – sample natural groups (villages/blocks/schools), then survey all or some units inside.
 - **Advantage:** Major savings in travel/time; practical for scattered populations.
 - **Disadvantage:** Units in a cluster are correlated; **design effect** inflates variance, so larger sample sizes are needed.

- **Multistage Sampling** – select in stages (districts → villages → households → persons).
 - **Advantage:** Feasible for large geographies; aligns with administrative frames; lowers field cost.
 - **Disadvantage:** Complex design and weighting; higher variance than SRS; needs trained fieldwork and documentation.

Non-probability sampling (selection probabilities unknown)

- **Convenience Sampling** – easy-to-reach units.
 - **Advantage:** Fast and low cost; useful for pilots/instrument testing.
 - **Disadvantage:** High risk of bias; weak external validity.
- **Purposive / Theoretical Sampling** – select information-rich or theoretically relevant cases.
 - **Advantage:** Depth, context, and mechanism discovery; aligns with qualitative aims.
 - **Disadvantage:** Subjective selection; cannot estimate population parameters.
- **Quota Sampling** – fill fixed quotas on traits (e.g., 50% women), but choose non-randomly within quotas.
 - **Advantage:** Ensures surface diversity; quick in field settings.
 - **Disadvantage:** Non-random within quotas (bias); no defensible margins of error.
- **Snowball / Network Sampling** – recruit via referrals (hidden or stigmatized groups).
 - **Advantage:** Access when frames do not exist; efficient for hard-to-reach populations.
 - **Disadvantage:** Over-represents dense networks; estimates sensitive to initial “seeds.”

Decision to choose a design

- Use **probability sampling** for **generalisation** with known precision; plan for **non-response**, **weights**, and **design effects**.
- Use **non-probability sampling** for **exploration**, **mechanism tracing**, or **hidden populations**; be explicit about limits.
- **Mixed designs** are common (e.g., stratified survey for breadth + purposive interviews for depth).

Conclusion

No single method is best. Choose the design that balances **inference quality** (precision and bias control) with **cost**, **access**, and **ethics**. Probability designs underpin credible estimates; non-probability designs illuminate meanings and mechanisms. The strongest studies align design with question, **triangulate methods**, and report limitations transparently.

b) How do theories of Marx, Weber and Durkheim differ in understanding religion? Explain. (20 marks)

Approach:

- Introduce the three thinkers and their distinct perspectives on religion.
- Explain each view separately: Marx (power/ideology), Durkheim (order/solidarity), Weber (meaning/social change).
- Compare their approaches along key dimensions (causality, role, method).
- Conclude by noting how their differences together provide a fuller picture of religion.

Solution

Introduction

Marx, Durkheim, and Weber study the same phenomenon – religion – but through different lenses. **Marx** uses a conflict-material lens (historical materialism), **Durkheim** a functional-positivist lens (social facts and solidarity), and **Weber** an interpretive-historical lens (*Verstehen*, ideal types).

Marx:

For Marx, the **economic base** shapes the **superstructure** of ideas; religion is part of this superstructure. It offers **consolation** amid exploitation (“the opium of the people”) and **legitimises** hierarchy by presenting suffering as natural or divinely ordained. By promising **other-worldly rewards**, religion diverts attention from material injustice and stabilises class rule (false consciousness). With **emancipation** through class struggle and abolition of exploitation, the **social need** for religion declines.

Durkheim:

Durkheim defines religion as a system of **beliefs and rituals** about the **sacred** which expresses the **collective conscience**. Its key **function** is to generate **social cohesion**, moral regulation, and group identity; rituals produce **collective effervescence** that renews bonds. The **form** of religion changes – from totemism to modern “**civil religion**” (shared national symbols and ceremonies) – but its **integrative function** persists across societies.

Weber:

Weber treats religion as a source of **meaning** (theodicies that answer “why me?”) which can **re-orient conduct**. Through “**elective affinities**,” certain doctrines align with certain life-orders: the **Protestant ethic** (worldly asceticism, calling) supported the rise of **rational capitalism**. Charismatic religious leadership becomes durable via the **routinisation of charisma** (church, law, office). Modernity tends toward **rationalisation** and **disenchantment**, but paths differ cross-culturally (e.g., Hinduism/Confucianism fostered different economic-bureaucratic logics than Calvinism).

Key differences

Dimension	Marx	Durkheim	Weber
Causality	Economy → Religion (ideas reflect class relations).	Society → Religion (sacred symbolises society itself).	Religion ↔ Economy/Politics via meanings and ethics (two-way, historically specific links).
Role of Religion	Mystification and legitimization of domination.	Integration and regulation; maintains social order.	Provides motivation and meaning; can enable change or block it.
Method	Historical materialism; critique of ideology.	Positivist functionalism; study of social facts, rituals.	Interpretive sociology; ideal types, comparative history, causal adequacy.

Conclusion

Taken together, the three lenses give a fuller picture: religion as **power** (Marx), **order** (Durkheim), and **meaning** with **historical consequences** (Weber). Their differences explain why religion can **stabilise hierarchy** (Marx, Durkheim) and yet at times **transform** economies and politics (Weber).

c) What is the nature of relationship between science and religion in modern society? Analyze with suitable examples. (10 marks)

Approach:

1. Define science and religion, and introduce the debate about their relationship in modern society.
2. Discuss multiple modes of relationship: differentiation, conflict, dialogue/coordination, and selective integration, with examples.
3. Analyse how these modes vary by social context.
4. Conclude that modern societies need to balance scientific standards with religious freedom for public welfare.

Solution

Introduction

Science is organised, evidence-based, testable knowledge produced through public methods and peer scrutiny. Religion is a system of beliefs, rituals, and moral rules oriented to the sacred, providing meaning, identity, and community. In modern society the relationship between them is **plural**.

1. **Differentiation and relative independence:** Modernity separates roles: laboratories, universities, and hospitals handle empirical inquiry and technology; temples, churches, and mosques address meaning, community, and moral guidance. This reflects secularisation and Weber's idea of **disenchantment**—a wider reliance on calculation and procedure. In everyday life many people consult doctors for illness and clergy for grief or ethical dilemmas, indicating partially distinct domains.
2. **Conflict and competition over overlapping claims:** Tensions arise when both address the **same** questions. Classic flashpoints include evolution vs creationism in school curricula; bioethics debates on abortion, IVF, stem-cell research, euthanasia, and newer issues like gene editing; and public health, where vaccine hesitancy can clash with epidemiology. Here, both sides engage in "boundary work," each defending what counts as valid knowledge and authority.
3. **Dialogue and practical coordination:** Equally visible are negotiated arrangements. **Bioethics committees** bring scientists, clinicians, ethicists, and religious voices into the same room to reason about dignity, consent, and risk. **Hospital chaplaincy** operates alongside evidence-based medicine to support patients' spiritual needs. During polio and COVID-19 campaigns, endorsements from religious leaders significantly improved vaccine uptake in hesitant communities, blending scientific protocol with trusted local authority.
4. **Selective integration and pluralism :** A Durkheimian lens highlights a civic sacralisation of "**science and progress**"—national celebrations of space missions or vaccine breakthroughs function like **civil religion**, uniting citizens around scientific achievement. At the same time, religion adapts to technology (online rituals, livestreamed services) and sometimes aligns with science, as in faith-based environmentalism where stewardship teachings support climate action.

Conclusion

In modernity, science and religion relate through **differentiation, contestation, and negotiated cooperation**. The balance varies with education, media quality, legal frameworks, and trust in institutions. Societies are most successful when they protect scientific standards and religious freedom **and** manage boundaries in ways that advance public welfare.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

Question 8.

a) What do you understand by sustainable development? Discuss the elements of sustainable development as proposed in the UNDP's Sustainable Development Goals Report-2015. (20 marks)

Approach:

- Define sustainable development and state its core principles.
- Present the elements of SDGs (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, Partnerships) with illustrations.
- Critically note trade-offs, gaps, and challenges in implementation.
- Conclude by stressing integrated, inclusive, and coordinated action for success.

Solution

Introduction

Sustainable development means meeting the needs of people today **without** reducing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It rests on three linked pillars – **economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection**.

Core principles

- **Intra-generational equity:** reduce poverty and inequality now, so development benefits are fairly shared.
- **Inter-generational equity:** protect ecosystems, climate, and resources so that future generations inherit viable options.
- **Integration principle:** design policies that **jointly** advance growth, social justice, and ecology rather than treating them in silos.

Elements in the UN (UNDP-supported) Sustainable Development Goals, 2015

The 17 SDGs translate the above principles into an integrated agenda often summarised as **People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, Partnerships**:

- **People (human development)** – end poverty and hunger; ensure health and well-being; quality education; gender equality and empowerment (SDGs 1–5).
- **Planet (ecological limits)** – clean water and sanitation; affordable and clean energy; sustainable cities; responsible consumption and production; climate action; life below water; life on land (SDGs 6–7, 11–15).
- **Prosperity (economic transformation)** – decent work and inclusive growth; industry, innovation, and resilient infrastructure; reduced inequalities within and between countries (SDGs 8–10).
- **Peace (institutions)** – peace, justice, and strong institutions that curb violence and corruption and protect rights (SDG 16).
- **Partnerships (means of implementation)** – global and local partnerships, finance, technology transfer, capacity building, and data systems to monitor progress (SDG 17).

SDG in Action includes things like:

- **Educating girls** and strengthening **maternal health** raise human capital and support a healthy demographic profile (SDGs 3–4–5).
- **Clean cooking fuels** and **renewable energy** improve health and cut emissions (SDGs 7, 13).
- **Mass transit** and **solid-waste management** enable inclusive, low-carbon cities (SDGs 11–12).
- **Watershed restoration** enhances farm livelihoods and biodiversity together (SDGs 1, 15).

Critical View

Trade-offs still arise (e.g., infrastructure growth vs ecological loss). Gaps in **finance, technology, and data** slow implementation. Without attention to **inequality and participation**, benefits may bypass vulnerable groups. Weak **policy coherence** across departments undermines the integration principle.

Conclusion

Sustainable development is an **integrated pathway** that links human well-being, fair economies, and a safe planet. The 2015 SDGs provide a practical checklist and shared language; achieving them requires coordinated policy, inclusive institutions, reliable data, and multi-level partnerships that convert goals into **local action**.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

b) How do Civil Society Organizations such as NGOs' and Self-Help Groups contribute to grassroot level social changes? Discuss. (20 marks)

Approach:

- Define Civil Society Organisations and their role in society.
- Explain how they contribute to grassroots change with examples.
- Critically assess their limitations.
- Conclude on their significance as force multipliers when embedded locally and linked with state and institutions.

Solution

Introduction

Civil-Society Organisations (CSOs) are voluntary, non-state, not-for-profit collectives that act between the family and the state. They include **NGOs**, **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** and their federations, community-based organisations (CBOs), and cooperatives.

CSOs drive change in following ways:

1. **Access and service delivery:** CSOs extend **last-mile** health, education, nutrition, and WASH services where public systems are thin. They run learning centres, nutrition kitchens, water user groups, and help citizens enrol in schemes – closing information and access gaps.
2. **Awareness and behaviour change:** Through village meetings, street plays, and peer educators, CSOs spread **rights literacy** (RTI, PDS, MGNREGA), promote sanitation and hygiene practices, and challenge harmful gender norms (early marriage, domestic violence).
3. **Empowerment and voice :** SHG **sanghas** and federations give especially women a **collective platform** to negotiate with officials and markets, contest local wrongs, and participate in Gram Sabhas. Collective identity reduces fear and isolation.
4. **Livelihoods and financial inclusion :** SHG-bank linkage, micro-credit, savings groups, skilling, producer collectives, and market linkages raise **incomes** and smooth shocks. Regular savings and credit histories build **financial citizenship** for the poor.
5. **Social capital and trust :** Regular meetings, mutual aid, and peer monitoring create **dense ties** that enable joint problem-solving – what sociologists call **collective efficacy**.
6. **Accountability and local governance :** CSOs facilitate **social audits**, community scorecards, participatory budgeting, and evidence-based advocacy, improving **transparency** and reducing leakages in programs.
7. **Inclusion focus :** Targeted work with **women, Dalits, Adivasis, migrants, and persons with disabilities** ensures that benefits reach groups often excluded by mainstream channels.

Examples

- **Kudumbashree (Kerala) and NRLM SHG federations:** gains in women's income, nutrition, and participation in local governance.
- **SEWA:** organising informal women workers for fair wages, health insurance, crèches, and producer companies.

- **MKSS social audits (Rajasthan):** exposing ghost entries and improving MGNREGA delivery.
- **Community WASH and health mobilisation:** village teams that enabled ODF status and improved immunisation uptake.

Critical view

- **NGO-isation and donor dependence:** short project cycles can fragment agendas and chase metrics.
- **Elite capture and exclusion:** better-off members may dominate SHGs; the very poor or single women can be left out.
- **Depoliticisation risk:** a narrow service focus may mute structural issues of **land, labour, and caste**.
- **Sustainability and scale:** staff turnover, funding volatility, and uneven state buy-in affect continuity.
- **CSO accountability:** CSOs themselves need transparency, safeguarding norms, and credible impact measures.

Conclusion

CSOs act as **force multipliers** for grassroots change when they are **locally embedded**, build strong **federations**, link to **panchayats, banks, and markets**, and work within **rights-based frameworks**. Durable impact requires co-production with the state, inclusive finance, and clear accountability on **both** sides—so that collective voice converts into lasting improvements in welfare, dignity, and citizenship.

c) In what way does queer kinship challenge the traditional kinship system? Substantiate by giving illustrations. (10 marks)

Approach:

1. Define traditional kinship vs queer kinship.
2. Show how queer kinship challenges traditional assumptions (heteronormativity, parenthood, gender roles, kin boundaries, legal rights, rituals).
3. Substantiate with illustrations.
4. Conclude on how queer kinship expands family to care- and commitment-based ties, challenging conventional norms.

Solution

Introduction

Traditional kinship is usually organised around **blood (consanguinity)** and **marriage (affinity)**, assumes **heterosexual** unions, and privileges **lineage, inheritance, and gendered roles** (male breadwinner–female caregiver). **Queer kinship** refers to family forms created through **chosen ties, non-heterosexual partnerships, and diverse parenting arrangements** (adoption, donor conception, co-parenting), including families with **trans** and **non-binary** members.

Queer kinship challenges the traditional system in the following manner:

1. **Heteronormativity:** Queer kinship **decouples marriage from procreation**, validates **same-sex partnerships**, and recognises intimacy and care as sufficient grounds for family status.
2. **Filiation and parenthood:** It centres **social parenthood**—who **cares, nurtures, and takes responsibility**—over strictly biological descent. Children may be raised by two mothers/two fathers, or by co-parents who are not romantically partnered.
3. **Household roles and gender:** Queer households redistribute **care and authority** without defaulting to the breadwinner–homemaker split. Roles are negotiated, showing that domestic labour divisions are **social arrangements**, not natural facts.
4. **Kin boundaries:** Queer communities elevate **“chosen family”** and **fictive kin** (close friends, house-mates, collective “houses”) alongside blood and marital ties, expanding who counts as kin.
5. **Law, inheritance, and rights:** They press states and employers to recognise **partners and co-parents** for **custody, next-of-kin, insurance, pension, hospital visitation, and inheritance**, exposing the limits of policies built around heterosexual marriage and binary parenthood.
6. **Rituals and language:** Commitment ceremonies, naming practices (e.g., **co-mother, parent-1/parent-2**), and inclusive surnames broaden kinship **idioms and rites**.

Examples

- **Same-sex couples** parenting through **adoption** or **IVF** with donors/ gestational carriers.
- **Trans and non-binary “houses”** (support collectives) that share housing, finances, health care navigation, and crisis support like families.
- **Urban chosen families** that co-own homes, rotate caregiving, and make end-of-life decisions; some employers extend **domestic-partner benefits** to such households.

- **Co-parenting** between two friends (e.g., a gay man and a lesbian woman) who raise a child without a conjugal relationship.

Conclusion

Queer kinship **redefines family** from a unit based on **bloodline and gendered roles** to one grounded in **care, commitment, and co-parenting**. By widening kin boundaries, reshaping household roles, and seeking legal recognition, it challenges taken-for-granted norms and pushes societies toward more **inclusive** understandings of kinship.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

2025 - Paper 2

Section A

Question 1. Answer the following questions in about 150 words each

a) Textual perspective is important in understanding of Indian Social System. Discuss. (10 Marks)

- Define textual approach
- Importance of approach
- Limitations
- Conclusion

The **textual perspective**, rooted in Indology, studies Indian society through scriptures such as the Vedas, Smritis, Dharmashastras, Arthashastra, and epics. Thinkers like G.S. Ghurye relied on texts to explain caste, kinship, and religion. It highlights how classical ideals continue to shape social life in India.

Importance of Textual Perspective

- **Normative Framework** - Texts such as Manusmriti outlined rules on varna, ashrama, and dharma, shaping the caste hierarchy and duties of individuals.
- **Religious Legitimacy** - Dharmashastras presented caste, purity, and gender hierarchy as divinely sanctioned, legitimizing inequality. For example, restrictions on inter-dining and marriage were grounded in religious texts.
- **Continuity of Tradition** - Rituals, marriage customs, and inheritance practices still reflect textual roots. For instance, the Hindu Marriage Act (1955) drew partly from classical dharmic norms while modernizing them.
- **Cultural Values** - Texts emphasized dharma, karma, and rebirth, shaping moral obligations and collective life. **Dumont's Homo Hierarchicus** used textual sources to argue that hierarchy, not equality, is the organizing principle of Indian society.
- **Indological Contribution** - **Max Muller** studied Vedic texts to interpret Indian culture, while others stressed how civilizational ethos must be understood through Sanskritic traditions.
- **The national motto "Satyameva Jayate", from the textual tradition of the Mundaka Upanishad**, bridges ancient wisdom with modern constitutional values of truth and justice.

Limitations of Textual Perspective

- **Ideal vs. Reality** - Texts reflect what elites prescribed, not what people practiced. For example, village studies by M.N. Srinivas revealed caste mobility and flexibility absent in texts.
- **Elitist Bias** - Most texts were written by and for upper-caste men, ignoring voices of women, lower castes, and tribes. Thus, they present a partial view.
- **Static Outlook** - Textual perspective treats Indian society as timeless and unchanging. In contrast, field studies show how modernization, migration, and globalization reshape social institutions.

Conclusion

The textual perspective remains crucial for understanding the ideological foundations of Indian society, especially caste and kinship. However, for a fuller picture, it must be complemented by empirical, historical, and sociological approaches that capture lived realities and ongoing transformations.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

b) Justify that the Indian traditions are modernizing. Also discuss its contributing factors. (10 Marks)

- Mention idea of modernization of tradition
- Mention how they are modernizing
- Factors responsible
- Conclusion

Indian traditions are not disappearing but undergoing modernization, where old practices adapt to new contexts. Yogendra Singh, in *Modernization of Indian Tradition*, argued that Indian society modernizes not by abandoning tradition but by transforming it. Traditions adapt to new institutions, technologies, and values, creating continuity within change.

Justification: How Traditions Modernize

- **Marriage Practices** – **Patricia Uberoi** states that arranged marriage adapts to modern contexts, with matrimonial portals and greater personal choice.
- **Caste System** – While caste persists, democracy and reservations enable mobility, reflecting **M.N. Srinivas's idea of "dominant caste" adjusting to electoral politics.**
- **Religious Rituals** – Rituals like Diwali or Durga Puja continue but now involve digital platforms and eco-friendly practices, showing modernization within continuity.
- **Family Structure** – **I.P. Desai argues joint families give way to nuclear units**, yet kinship support remains through remittances and online connections

Factors Driving Modernization

- **Education Expansion** – Formal education fosters rationality, literacy, and social mobility. **G.S. Ghurye emphasized education's role in social change.**
- **Democratic Institutions** – Voting, reservations, and rights weaken traditional hierarchies while preserving cultural practices.
- **Urbanization and Industrialization** – **A.R. Desai** highlighted how migration to cities reduces caste rigidity and redefines occupational identities through new class relations.
- **Globalization and Technology** – **Arjun Appadurai's idea of "global flows"** explains how media, migration, and internet spread global values, reshaping youth aspirations and consumer culture. (e.g., Valentine's Day coexists with Karva Chauth, Bollywood weddings mix Western and Indian styles).

Conclusion

Indian traditions are evolving by blending continuity with transformation. Emerging trends – digital religion, intercaste marriages, gender equality, and diaspora influences – suggest a future where tradition coexists with global modernity in innovative forms.

c) According to you, which social reform movement has played the most effective role in modernizing Indian women? Explain. (10 Marks)

- **Introduce social reform movement and brahmo samaj**
- **Role of brahmo samaj**
- **Role of other movements**
- **Conclusion**

Social reform movements in colonial India aimed to improve women's status through education, marriage reform, and legal rights. Among them, the Brahmo Samaj, founded in 1828 by Raja Rammohan Roy, stood out for its progressive and comprehensive reform agenda.

Role of Brahmo samaj

- **Education for Women** – Established schools for girls and emphasized literacy, inspiring initiatives like Vidyasagar's educational reforms for widows and young women.
- **Marriage Reforms** – Opposed child marriage and polygamy while promoting widow remarriage, improving women's dignity and status in society.
- **Legal Awareness** – Inspired progressive legislation such as the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act (1856), linking moral reform with legal change.
- **Gender Equality in Society** – Encouraged women's participation in public life and challenged orthodox patriarchy, laying foundations for modern gender reform.

Other Reform Movements

- **Arya Samaj** – Advocated widow remarriage and female education, but its Hindu revivalist orientation restricted universal appeal.
- **Prarthana Samaj** – In Maharashtra, supported women's education and marriage reforms, though its influence was largely regional.
- **Self-Respect Movement** – In South India, attacked patriarchy and caste oppression, promoted self-choice marriages, but remained limited to Dravidian society.
- **Aligarh Movement** – Encouraged Muslim women's education, yet progress was slow due to opposition from conservative groups.

Brahmo Samaj's holistic blend of education, legal reforms, and social awareness made it the most effective. Other movements contributed significantly, but women's empowerment in India remains an evolving process shaped by ongoing social struggles.

d) How did Colonial Policies for the tribes affect their socio-economic conditions in India? Discuss (10 Marks)

- **Briefly mention in tribal condition**
- **Various colonial policies**
- **Impact on socio-economic conditions of tribes in India**
- **Conclusion**

Tribal communities in India traditionally lived in forests, practicing shifting cultivation and collective resource management. Colonial policies disrupted these arrangements, restructuring tribal economies and societies, creating long-lasting marginalization.

Key Colonial Policies

- **Forest Laws** - The Indian Forest Acts (1865, 1878, 1927) restricted shifting cultivation, hunting, and forest use. Verrier Elwin highlighted how these laws alienated tribes from their ecological base.
- **Land Revenue Systems** - Introduction of zamindari and ryotwari systems imposed private property on communal lands. **A.R. Desai** emphasized that this made tribes vulnerable to exploitation by landlords and moneylenders.
- **Commercialization of Agriculture** - Cash crops were promoted over subsistence farming, reducing food security. This integrated tribal communities into exploitative market systems.
- **Penal and Administrative Controls - The Criminal Tribes Act (1871)** stigmatized entire communities as hereditary criminals, curtailing mobility and freedoms.
- **Labor Recruitment** - Tribals were drawn into tea plantations, mines, and colonial industries, losing economic autonomy and traditional livelihoods.

Socio-Economic Impacts

- **Loss of Livelihoods** - Denial of forest rights and restricted access to land forced many tribes into wage labor.
- **Indebtedness and Land Alienation** - Moneylenders acquired tribal land, creating widespread landlessness.
- **Social Disruption** - Traditional self-governance institutions weakened under colonial administration.
- **Uprisings and Resistance** - Tribal revolts such as the Santhal (1855-56) and Birsa Munda's Ulgulan (1899-1900) reflected collective resistance.
- **Cultural Marginalization** - Policies labeled tribal customs as primitive, undermining social identity and cohesion.

Colonial policies reshaped tribal life by dispossessing communities from land, forest, and autonomy, creating structural poverty. The legacy of these disruptions continues today, making tribal development and rights central issues in contemporary India.

e) How would you appropriate to characterise G. S. Ghurye as a practitioner of 'theoretical pluralism'? (10 Marks)

- Briefly introduce Ghurye
- Theoretical Pluralism in Ghurye's Work
- Issues with his idea
- Conclusion

G.S. Ghurye is recognized for his theoretical pluralism, which refers to his approach of integrating multiple theoretical perspectives—historical, functionalist, and comparative—to study Indian society comprehensively. His approach combined empirical research with openness to multiple methodologies, facilitating a holistic understanding of India's diverse social fabric.

Theoretical Pluralism in Ghurye's Work

- **Integration of Structural-Functionalism and Historical Analysis:** Ghurye viewed caste as both a functional social institution and a historically evolving structure, blending these perspectives to explain its role and transformation.
- **Cultural and Comparative Sociology:** He compared Indian caste and kinship systems with racial and ethnic groups abroad, such as African tribes, highlighting universal themes of hierarchy and difference while stressing India's distinct cultural patterns.
- **Flexibility in Methodology:** Ghurye combined archival work (e.g., Vedic and Dharmashastra texts), census data, and limited field studies on tribes, showing pluralism in methods to analyze Indian social structures.
- **Emphasis on Indigenous Perspectives:** His pluralism allowed the inclusion of Indian cultural concepts, resisting complete domination by Western theoretical models, thus contextualizing sociological understanding.

Limitation of Ghurye's approach

- **Textual Bias – Andre Beteille** argued that Ghurye's reliance on Sanskrit texts over fieldwork ignored lived experiences of caste and tribal communities, making his sociology overly Brahmanical and elitist.
- **A.R. Desai** noted that Ghurye emphasized cultural integration and harmony, while ignoring class exploitation, economic inequalities, and power struggles in Indian society.
- **G.S. Ghurye has been criticized for being an armchair theorist** because much of his work relied heavily on secondary sources, textual analysis, and established knowledge rather than extensive fieldwork or empirical research

In conclusion, Ghurye's theoretical pluralism significantly advanced Indian sociology by embracing multiple frameworks and methods, offering nuanced insights into complex social realities. Despite certain limitations, his approach remains influential in understanding India's diverse and layered society.

Question 2.

a) Do you think that in a society like India orthogenetic changes take place through differentiation? Do you observe continuities in the orthogenetic process? Elaborate your answer with suitable examples. (20 Marks)

- Define orthogenetic changes
- Orthogenetic Change through Differentiation
- Continuity in Orthogenetic Process
- Role of Heterogenetic Influences (External)
- Conclusion

Yogendra Singh, in his work on Modernization of Indian Tradition, explained that social change in India occurs through both orthogenetic (internal, tradition-driven) and heterogenetic (external, externally induced) processes. Orthogenetic change emphasizes differentiation—where old institutions evolve into more specialized and adaptive forms while retaining continuity with tradition.

Orthogenetic Change through Differentiation

- **Caste Transformation:** M.N. Srinivas's concept of Sanskritization highlights internal mechanisms of social mobility. Caste, once occupationally rigid, differentiated into new roles—such as OBC participation in modern politics—while retaining hierarchical structures.
- **Religion and Social Duties:** Hindu institutions adapted by differentiating functions. Temples became centers not only of worship but also education, charity, and local governance, showing how tradition evolved into multi-functional institutions.
- **Panchayati Raj:** Traditional panchayats differentiated into modern democratic panchayati raj institutions, carrying forward indigenous decision-making into a constitutional framework, as Yogendra Singh emphasized.
- **Education and Knowledge Systems:** Traditional gurukul learning transformed into modern universities, yet Sanskrit texts and Vedic studies remain within curricula, blending continuity and change.

Continuity in Orthogenetic Process

- **Caste in Politics:** Despite modernization, caste remains central in electoral mobilization, showing continuity in new contexts.
- **Selective Modernization :** Yogendra Singh argued India absorbs modern values selectively, e.g., adoption of Western science while preserving joint family ideals.
- **Cultural Symbols in Governance :** The inclusion of the Ashoka Chakra, drawn from ancient Buddhist symbolism, in the national flag demonstrates how indigenous cultural heritage continues to guide modern state identity and values of justice and dharma.
- **Marriage and Family :** Arranged marriages persist but coexist with love marriages and inter-caste alliances, reflecting tradition's adaptive resilience.

While internal differentiation is key, external forces also significantly shaped Indian modernization.

Role of Heterogenetic Influences (External)

- **Colonialism** introduced railways, bureaucracy, and English education, creating a new middle class, as A.R. Desai noted.
- **Western Education and Print Culture** fostered nationalist consciousness and social reform. Raja Rammohan Roy and later leaders used print media to spread reformist and democratic ideals, linking India with global intellectual currents.
- **Christian Missionary Activities** brought modern schooling, especially for marginalized castes and women. This not only expanded literacy but also generated movements like Dalit conversions under B.R. Ambedkar, reshaping identities.
- **Economic Liberalization (1991 onwards) integrated India into the global economy**, producing an urban middle class with new consumption patterns

Conclusion

India's modernization is best understood as a synthesis of orthogenetic differentiation and heterogenetic influences. Traditions evolve by internal specialization while selectively absorbing external ideas. Contemporary society – marked by technology, migration, and global networks – shows this dual process continues, ensuring both continuity and transformation.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

b) Agrarian class structure has been undergoing changes due to modern forces. Critically examine (20 Marks)

- Define agrarian class structure
- How it is going through change
- How old structure is still relevant
- Conclusion

Agrarian class structure refers to patterns of landownership, labour, and surplus control. In India, it has historically overlapped with caste and kinship, producing a rigid hierarchy. Daniel Thorner's classic classification of maliks, tenants, and labourers captures this stratified order. But modern forces—state reforms, technology, and markets—are transforming this structure or simply reshaping older inequalities

Traditional Agrarian Setup

- **A.R. Desai** argued that colonialism created a semi-feudal agrarian order by linking villages to global markets without dismantling landlordism.
- Andre Beteille, in *Studies in Tanjore*, showed how dominant castes-controlled land, labour, and politics, embedding agrarian classes within caste hierarchies.

Thus, traditional agrarian relations were feudal, caste-based, and resistant to social mobility.

Modern Forces of Transformation

- **Land Reforms and Political Mobilization - Operation Barga in West Bengal** empowered sharecroppers by granting tenancy security. **Thorner** observed that in some cases, reforms weakened old zamindars but enabled rich peasants to emerge as a new elite.
- **Green Revolution and Capitalist Farming - D.N. Dhanagare** highlighted how the Green Revolution created capitalist farmers in Punjab and Haryana. Jat Sikhs consolidated landholdings, mechanized agriculture, and employed wage labour—signaling a shift from feudalism to capitalist farming.
- **Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph** described how middle peasants became '**bullock capitalists**,' using profits to reinvest in agriculture and driving commercialization. This marked a shift from feudal landlords to agrarian entrepreneurs.
- **State Programs and Labour Dynamics** - Policies such as MGNREGA weakened landlord dependence. **S.C. Dube** noted how state interventions alter traditional village institutions, creating partial empowerment while also reinforcing inequalities (e.g., MSP favoring large farmers).
- **Labour migration- Jan Breman's "footloose labour"** weakens stable agrarian ties as landless workers migrate, fragmenting rural classes and shifting dependence from landlords to volatile market relations.
- **Women's Increasing Role in Agriculture** - With male outmigration, women form the "**feminization of agriculture**." **Bina Agarwal** shows that despite women's major contribution; their lack of land ownership keeps gender inequality embedded in agrarian class relations.

Continuities in the Agrarian Structure

- **Caste-Land Nexus** - Despite reforms, dominant castes like Jats and Reddys retain control over land and village institutions, showing agrarian hierarchy persists through caste-based land ownership.
- **Semi-Feudal Labour** - Bardhan observed bonded labour, sharecropping, and debt-dependence endure in many regions, revealing how traditional exploitative labour ties coexist with modern agricultural practices.
- **Interlinked Credit and Land** - Landowners still function as moneylenders in rural economies. Credit dependency perpetuates economic control, sustaining old class relations under a modernized façade of agriculture.

Conclusion

The agrarian class structure is hybrid: undergoing differentiation through capitalist farming, migration, and globalization, but also reproducing old caste, gender, and tenancy inequalities. Thus, agrarian transformation reflects both continuity and change, with future reforms needing to secure rights for small farmers, tenants, and women to build a more egalitarian rural economy.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

c) How same sex marriages are responsible for population dynamics in India? Discuss. (10 Marks)

- **Briefly introduct population dynamics in india**
- **Impact of same-sex marriages on population dynamics**
- **Conclusion**

Population dynamics in India are shaped by fertility, mortality, migration, and household structures. While heterosexual marriage has historically been tied to reproduction, same-sex unions challenge the assumption that marriage is solely for procreation, thereby influencing demographic patterns.

Impacts on Population Dynamics

- **Diversification of Family Forms:** Same-sex couples can contribute to population care and family structures through adoption, surrogacy, or assisted reproductive technologies. The Indian Psychiatric Society notes that such families are equally capable of raising children, countering stereotypes of declining fertility.
- **Social Acceptance and Household Data:** The 2023 Pew Research Centre survey showed 53% of Indians support same-sex marriage, indicating a demographic trend towards inclusion, which could impact census categories and policy design.
- **Care Economy and Migration:** Recognition of same-sex households may redistribute caregiving roles, with ripple effects on labour migration and household dependency structures.
- **Policy Implications:** Demographic planning depends on accurate recognition of all family forms. Legalizing same-sex marriage would necessitate policy changes in housing, health, and census documentation.
- **Minimal fertility impact** - Demographers argue that large-scale legalization might slightly lower fertility rates, particularly in urban centers where acceptance is higher. However, the overall demographic impact in India remains marginal given the small proportion of same-sex couples.
- **Cultural Resistance:** Household dynamics may not shift significantly because rural and conservative populations remain resistant, limiting widespread demographic restructuring.

Same-sex marriages may not drastically change India's fertility-driven population growth, but they reshape household structures, adoption patterns, and urbanization trends. Their recognition highlights how population dynamics are increasingly influenced by social justice, rights, and cultural change alongside demographic processes.

Question 3.

a) What do you mean by nation building? What is the role of religion in nation building? Elaborate your answer. (20 Marks)

- Define nation building in intro
- Key aspects of nation building
- Positive role of religion
- Challenges posed by religion
- Conclusion

Nation building is the conscious process of forging unity and shared identity in diverse societies. **Benedict Anderson described nations as “imagined communities,” bound by shared narratives, symbols, and institutions.** Religion, as one of the oldest forms of collective imagination, provides moral codes, rituals, and symbols that can unify people. At the same time, its divisive misuse in politics has fragmented societies.

Aspects of Nation Building

- **Political Integration** – Indian Constitution 1950 institutionalized democracy, ensuring equality before law; **Ambedkar called it a tool of social transformation.**
- **Economic Development** – Amartya Sen stressed inclusive growth; Five-Year Plans sought equitable progress, reducing inequality crucial for stable nation building.
- **Social Cohesion** – Reservations for Dalits/OBCs; Ambedkar argued national unity rests on annihilation of caste-based discrimination.
- **Cultural-Symbolic Unity** – National anthem, tricolor flag, and shared rituals; Anderson noted nations are sustained by common cultural symbols.

Positive Role of Religion in Nation Building

- **Moral-Ethical Values** – **Gandhi’s satyagraha** rooted in Hindu, Jain, and Christian ethics created moral legitimacy for India’s freedom struggle.
- **Social Service** – Sikh langar, Christian missionary schools, Islamic zakat strengthen welfare networks, supporting inclusive nation building.
- **Inspirational Reform Movements** – Bhakti and Sufi saints like Kabir, Guru Nanak, and Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti preached harmony, strengthening interfaith unity.
- **Unity in Diversity** – National celebration of Diwali, Eid, Christmas, and Guru Nanak Jayanti reinforces pluralism; **Tagore described India as a “confluence of cultures.”**
- **Community Solidarity in Crisis** – During COVID-19, Sikh gurdwaras, Islamic charities, and Hindu temples offered food and medical aid, showcasing religion’s humanitarian role.

Challenges Posed by Religion in Nation Building

- **Minority Exclusion** – Sachar Committee (2006) found Muslims face educational and economic backwardness, undermining equal participation in nation building.
- **Politicization of Faith** – **Christophe Jaffrelot notes “Hindu nationalism”** mobilizes religion electorally, risking erosion of India’s secular foundations.
- **Religious Violence** – Gujarat riots (2002), Delhi riots (2020) show how communal tensions weaken integration; **Paul Brass called it “institutionalized riot system.”**

- **Communalism** – Partition of 1947 killed one million; religion-driven violence fractured unity, exposing risks to fragile nation building.
- **Religious Extremism** – Groups like ISIS, Taliban destabilize states; misuse of faith erodes peace and national consolidation worldwide.

Conclusion

Nation building in the 21st century demands inclusive citizenship, plural identities, and respect for constitutional values. Religion strengthens social bonds through service and festivals, yet its politicization fuels communalism. Upholding secularism and *sarva dharma sambhava* is vital for harmony, integration, and democratic stability.



b) Do you think that the new economic reforms of British rule have disrupted the old economic system of India? Substantiate your answer with suitable examples. (20 Marks)

- **Briefly introduce british system**
- **Economic Reforms Introduced During British Rule**
- **Disruptions of the Old Economic System**
- **Conclusion**

The British introduced new economic reforms in India from the late 18th century, including land revenue settlements, free-trade policies, railways, and commercialization of agriculture. While these were framed as modernization, they disrupted India's traditional agrarian and artisanal economy, leading to stagnation and deindustrialization.

Economic Reforms Introduced During British Rule

- **Land Revenue Systems** – Permanent Settlement (1793) in Bengal created zamindars as landowners, fixing revenue in perpetuity; Ryotwari in Madras directly taxed peasants; Mahalwari in North India vested ownership in village communities. These systems eroded customary land rights and promoted exploitation.
- **Commercialization of Agriculture** – Peasants were coerced to grow cash crops like indigo, cotton, opium, jute, and tea. This transformed subsistence farming into export-oriented production, leaving little food security.
- **Trade and Tariff Policy** – Free trade imposed; Indian goods heavily taxed while British imports entered duty-free. India became a raw material supplier and consumer of British finished goods.
- **Deindustrialization** – Traditional handicrafts, especially Bengal muslin and handloom weaving, collapsed under the flood of Manchester textiles. Skilled artisans lost livelihoods.
- **Infrastructure Development** – Railways (from 1853), canals, and roads were introduced, but mainly to transport raw materials and military forces.
- **Modern Industry** – Jute mills, tea plantations, and coal mining grew but were dominated by Europeans. Indian entrepreneurship (e.g., Tatas) was restricted by discriminatory policies.

Disruptions of the Old Economic System

- **Agrarian Crisis** – R.C. Dutt argued that British land settlements were destructive to India's self-sufficient village economy, fostering indebtedness and insecurity.
- **Class Restructuring** – A.R. Desai underlined how British policies created new classes: zamindars, moneylenders, and colonial bourgeoisie, while pauperizing peasants and artisans.
- **Peasant Distress** – The Indigo Revolt (1859–60) and Deccan Riots (1875) revealed the resentment of peasants against forced cropping and oppressive moneylenders.
- **Decline of Artisans** – Dadabhai Naoroji in his **Drain Theory** highlighted how machine-made imports ruined Indian weavers, pushing them into poverty. India's share in world industrial output declined from **25% in 1750 to 2% by 1900**.
- **Ruralization of Economy** – Artisans displaced by industrial decline were pushed into agriculture, causing overpopulation of land and stagnation.

- **Colonial Dependency** – Jawaharlal Nehru wrote in *Discovery of India* that India was reduced to “an exporter of raw cotton for Manchester and importer of Lancashire cloth.”
- **Social Stratification** – Bipan Chandra noted that commercialization widened social inequalities, with moneylenders and traders exploiting peasantry, reinforcing rural hierarchies.

British reforms reshaped India's economy to benefit colonial interests, disrupting traditional communities and occupations. Land settlements, cash-crop farming, and deindustrialization increased poverty and inequality, turning a self-sufficient pre-colonial economy into a dependent colonial system.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

c) Describe the main features of Indian new middle class. How is it different from the old middle class? (10 Marks)

- Introduce new middle class
- Features of new middle class
- Comparison of Old and New Middle Class in India
- Conclusion

The new middle class in India emerged primarily during the late colonial and post-independence periods, shaped by education, urbanization, and new employment opportunities. Unlike the old middle class, which was closely linked to traditional professions and colonial administration, the new middle class is more dynamic, consumer-oriented, and influenced by modern values, media, and global culture.

Features of new middle class

- **Aspirational and Merit-Oriented Identity** – The New middle Class constructs social identity through education, professional achievement, and career success, reflecting Weberian ideas of status groups and social mobility
- **Cultural Capital and Lifestyle Practices** – Following Bourdieu, NMC demonstrates its social distinction through consumption of global media, cultural products, lifestyle practices, and leisure activities, reinforcing symbolic capital.
- **Individualism and Nuclear Family Orientation** – NMC increasingly prioritizes individual choice, nuclear family structures, and autonomy in personal and professional life.
- **The NMC exhibits aspirational consumption**, buying branded goods, luxury electronics, automobiles, and engaging in modern leisure activities

Comparison of Old and New Middle Class in India

- **Economic Base** – The old middle class relied on colonial administration, clerical work, and traditional professions, as **B.B. Misra** noted. The new middle class thrives in IT, private sector, services, and entrepreneurship (Example: Bangalore's tech industry).
- **Social Mobility** – According to Pavan Verma old middle class was dominated by upper castes and constrained by social hierarchy. The new middle class emphasizes education and merit, allowing lower-caste households to enter, promoting upward mobility.
- **Cultural Outlook** – Old middle class followed traditional and colonial norms, focusing on social conformity. The new middle class adopts modern, globalized lifestyles, consumerism, and liberal values. **Gurcharan Das** calls them the "knowledge class."
- **Political Role** – Old middle class was not largely involved in political sphere. The new middle class actively participates in democratic processes and civic movements, such as the **India Against Corruption (2011) movement**, reflecting reformist and participatory values.
- **Urban and Technological Orientation** – Old middle class was concentrated in administrative centers; new middle class is urban, tech-savvy, globally connected, and exposed to Western education. **They are more globalized than localized.**

The new middle class in India underpins contemporary social, economic, and political transformation, fostering meritocracy, globalized outlooks, consumer culture, and civic engagement, while negotiating traditional norms and reinforcing urban, knowledge-based societal structures.



Question 4.

a) Who is said to be the pioneer of village studies in India? Illustratively describe contributions of some Indian sociologists on village studies. How their approaches are different from each other? (20 Marks)

- Define village studies and mention some thinkers
- M.N. Srinivas's contribution to village studies in India:
- Contribution of other sociologists
- Differences in their approach
- Conclusion

Village studies in India are foundational to the development of Indian sociology as they provide a microcosmic view of social structures, traditions, and changes within rural society. **M.N. Srinivas** fieldwork-based studies brought a new methodological rigor. Alongside him, scholars such as **D.P. Mukerji, S.C. Dube, and Andre Beteille** etc. enriched understanding of caste, kinship, power, and social change in Indian villages.

M.N. Srinivas's contribution to village studies in India:

- He viewed villages as dynamic and complex social systems, challenging the notion of them as unchanging entities.
- Srinivas introduced the concept of Sanskritization, explaining how lower castes emulate upper caste customs to improve social status.
- He developed the idea of the Dominant Caste, identifying caste groups that control economic, political, and social power within villages.
- His ethnographic studies, especially in Rampura, revealed the interplay between caste hierarchy, social mobility, and the effects of modernization in rural India.

Contribution of other sociologists

- **S.C. Dube, in his study of Shamirpet village**, gave a holistic ethnography of religion, kinship, and economy, showing tensions between tradition and modernity, and how reforms and education reshaped yet preserved village institutions.
- **A.R. Desai** – Through a Marxist lens, Desai exposed villages as unequal, conflict-ridden, shaped by colonial land policies and capitalist penetration, rejecting harmonious portrayals, and situating them within broader political-economic transformations.
- **Andre Beteille's study of Sripuram village in Tamil Nadu** analyzed how caste, class, and power intersect to shape rural stratification. Moving beyond purely cultural explanations, Beteille highlighted how economic resources and political influence mediated caste dominance, offering a structural perspective on inequality within Indian villages.

Differences in their approach

Thinker	Focus of Study	Theoretical Lens	View of Villages	Level of Analysis	Orientation to Change
M.N. Srinivas	Caste mobility, Sanskritization, Dominant Caste	Functionalist, ethnographic	Dynamic social systems, not static entities	Localized caste hierarchy, social mobility	Internal mobility within caste and hierarchy
S.C. Dube	Kinship, religion, economy, tradition-modernity tensions	Cultural-anthropological	Repositories of cultural continuity	Institutional life of villages	Gradual reform via state, education, reforms
A.R. Desai	Exploitation, class conflict, colonial policies	Marxist political-economic	Sites of inequality and exploitation	Macro structures: colonialism, capitalism	Structural change through class struggle
Andre Beteille	Caste, class, power intersections	Structural-comparative	Stratified power structures	Bridging micro village with wider society	Negotiations of caste, class, and power

Village studies in India highlight that villages are dynamic spaces shaped by social, economic, and cultural change. Contemporary approaches should focus on globalization, migration, digitalization, gender dynamics, and sustainability to capture ongoing transformations and guide inclusive rural development.

b) “Industrial class structure is a function of social structure of Indian society.” Do you agree with this statement? Analyze (20 Marks)

- **Define industrial class**
- **Industrial Class Structure as a Function of Social Structure**
- **Industrial Class Structure Not Entirely a Function of Social Structure**
- **Conclusion**

In India, industrial classes—workers, petty bourgeoisie, and capitalist elites—emerged within a society stratified by caste, kinship, and community. Unlike the West, class here cannot be seen purely economically, as Desai and Beteille show caste and kinship shape mobility.

Industrial Class Structure as a Function of Social Structure

- **Caste and Occupation Continuity** - M.N. Srinivas highlighted caste-occupation linkages. In industries, Dalits and Adivasis remain confined to low-paying jobs, while upper castes dominate managerial roles, showing persistence of traditional inequalities.
- **Kinship - Based Recruitment** - A.R. Desai noted kinship and caste networks mediate industrial labor. Migrants from Bihar clustered in Bengal’s jute mills, while specific castes dominated Bombay textile mills, reproducing social structure inside factories.
- **Entrepreneurial Classes** - D.P. Mukerji observed industrial bourgeoisie emerged mainly from mercantile castes—Baniyas, Marwaris, Chettiers—who translated social capital into economic dominance, showing continuity between traditional elites and modern entrepreneurs.
- **Labor Fragmentation by Caste** - Caste and communal loyalties weakened worker solidarity, with strikes often divided along social lines rather than uniting all laborers.
- **Patriarchy in Industrial Class** - Patricia Uberoi shows industrial class is gendered; women confined to low-paying jobs or unpaid family labor reflect patriarchal norms embedded in wider social structure
- **Status Overlap** - André Beteille stressed caste, class, and status intersect. Industrial middle class is disproportionately upper-caste, while marginalized groups lack mobility despite economic growth, showing caste conditions class positions.

Industrial Class Structure Not Entirely a Function of Social Structure

- **Urbanization and Mobility** - “Westernization” shows urban-industrial life reduces caste rigidity. Dalits entering IT and service sectors show class mobility independent of traditional hierarchies.
- **Trade Unions and Class Solidarity** - Despite caste divisions, trade unions sometimes fostered solidarity beyond caste, uniting workers around shared grievances against capitalist exploitation.
- **Education and Reservation** - Positive discrimination enabled marginalized groups’ upward mobility. Dalit bureaucrats, OBC entrepreneurs, and professionals exemplify industrial class positions shaped by state policy rather than caste.

- **Emergence of New Middle Class** - Dipankar Gupta notes urban middle class identity is more occupational and lifestyle-based than caste-based, especially among educated professionals in cities.
- **Women's Workforce Entry** - Modern industries and services enabled women's greater participation, especially urban middle-class women in IT and education sectors, challenging patriarchal constraints of traditional social structure.
- **Globalization Effects** - Arjun Appadurai highlighted economic liberalization and global markets create new industrial roles that transcend traditional social categories.

India's industrial class structure reflects both ascribed social factors like caste and religion and achieved aspects such as education and skills. Contemporary changes – urbanization, globalization, and affirmative policies – are increasing the role of achievement, making class more fluid and dynamic today.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

c) What is kinship? Briefly explain G. P. Murdock's contribution to the study of kinship system (10 Marks)

- Briefly define kinship
- G.P. Murdock's Contribution
- Criticism of Murdock's approach
- Conclusion

Kinship refers to the social bonds based on real or supposed blood relations (consanguinity), marriage (affinity), or adoption. It organizes individuals into social groups by defining rights, duties, inheritance, marriage rules, and residence patterns, ensuring social cohesion and cultural continuity. G. P. Murdock significantly contributed by systematically studying kinship across cultures and emphasizing the universal role of the nuclear family in maintaining social order.

G.P. Murdock's Contribution

- **Comparative Study of Kinship** – Murdock was a leading anthropologist who systematically studied kinship across cultures.
- In his major work “**Social Structure**” he analyzed kinship as a universal institution and core of social organization.
- **Nuclear Family as Universal** – He argued that the nuclear family (husband, wife, and children) exists universally, serving functions of reproduction, economic cooperation, and socialization.
- **Classification of Families** – Distinguished between nuclear and extended families, matrilineal vs. patrilineal residence, and polygyny vs. monogamy.
- **Kinship Terminology** – Developed a cross-cultural classification of kinship terms (e.g., Eskimo, Hawaiian, Sudanese, Iroquois systems), showing how terminologies reflect social organization.
- **Functionalist Perspective** – Saw kinship as essential for regulating sexual relations, reproduction, child-rearing, and economic cooperation, thereby maintaining social stability.

Criticism

- **Fortes** argued that many societies prioritize extended or joint family systems rather than the nuclear family, challenging Murdock's claim of nuclear family universality.
- **Ethnocentric Bias - Leach** criticized Murdock for applying Western cultural norms to classify kinship, potentially distorting the understanding of kinship in diverse non-Western societies.
- **Functionalist Limitations - Oakley** and other feminist scholars point out that Murdock's functionalist perspective overlooks power imbalances and gender inequality within kinship and family structures.

Conclusion

In today's diverse societies, Murdock's kinship insights remain foundational, but contemporary changes—like varied family forms and gender roles—call for more inclusive, dynamic understandings beyond traditional models.

Section B

Question 5. Write short answers, with a sociological perspective, on the following questions in about 150 words each:

a) "The transfer of land from cultivating to the non-cultivating owners is bringing about transformation in Indian society." Justify your answer by giving suitable illustrations. (10 Marks)

Approach

- Define land transfer to non-cultivating owners.
- Link to social transformation: class shifts, power changes, labour patterns, inequality, gender roles, and ecological impact.
- Substantiate with 1–2 short illustrations.
- Conclude with mixed outcomes and need for fair policies.

Solution

Introduction

By "transfer of land to non-cultivating owners" we mean farm land moving from households who till it to owners who do **not** cultivate—absentee individuals, real-estate developers, firms, contractors, or the state (for corridors/SEZs). This shift occurs through market sales, acquisition, distress sale, or long leases. It is reshaping rural India well beyond agriculture.

It transforms society in following manner:

1. **Class re-composition (de-peasantisation):** Small and middle peasants who sell or lease out land often become **tenants or wage labourers**. Landlessness and casual work rise; rural youth enter construction, transport, security, and gig work—classic **proletarianisation**.
2. **Power shift:** Village power moves from cultivating castes to **trader-contractor-realtor** elites who control credit, sand/brick contracts, and brokerage. **Panchayat** alignments change as new patrons emerge.
3. **Production and labour changes :** Absentee owners lease to contractors who operate with **mechanisation** (combine harvesters, hired managers). Cropping shifts to high-value/low-labour options (horticulture, poultry sheds) or to **non-farm uses** (warehouses, housing). Labour becomes seasonal and expendable in **Jan Breman's** words **footloose labourer**.
4. **Inequality and dependency :** Where self-cultivation is replaced by **rent extraction**, insecure tenancies (often informal) increase vulnerability. Without land titles, households face poorer access to institutional credit and migrate under distress.
5. **Gendered effects :** Compensation is usually paid to **male title-holders**. Men migrate, while women become **de-facto cultivators** or care managers with weak land rights. This is **feminisation of agriculture without ownership**, lowering bargaining power within households and markets.
6. **Community and ecology :** Loss of **commons** (grazing/water bodies), fragmentation, and **peri-urban sprawl** erode kinship reciprocity and caste-based labour ties. Land conversion

increases **water stress**, pollution, and human-wildlife conflict; village layouts and rituals around harvest change.

Examples

- **Peri-urban NCR (Gurugram/Noida):** Cultivators sell to developers; former farmers become brokers, guards, drivers, or room-renting landlords. Inequality widens between early sellers and latecomers; farm skills devalue.
- **SEZ/industrial corridors:** Acquisition of multi-crop land brings cash windfalls but few stable jobs; after spending, many families face long-term **precarity**.
- **Absentee leasing/contract farming:** Contractors run large tracts with machines and migrant crews; local households get **seasonal labour** at best.

Conclusion

Yes – the shift to **non-cultivating ownership** is a powerful driver of social change. The outcomes are mixed: some short-term gains, but rising inequality, insecure work, and ecological stress. Policies on **tenancy security, women's land rights, protection of commons, planned peri-urbanisation, compensation with skills/jobs**, and **transparent local planning** are essential to make this transformation fair and sustainable.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

b) Bring out various factors responsible for declining of village industries in India. (10 Marks)**Approach**

- Start with defining village industries.
- Identify broad factors responsible for their decline.
- Substantiate with brief illustrations.
- Conclude with way forward for revival of village industries.

Solution**Introduction**

Village industries are small, labour-intensive, and rooted in local resources and skills – handloom and khadi, pottery, coir, cane and bamboo, leather, bell-metal, woodwork, and related crafts. Their decline in many regions is **multi-causal**, shaped by economic change, technology, policy frameworks, and social transformation.

Key factors

1. **Dis-embedding of markets:** With the spread of factory goods, e-commerce, and retail chains, price competition is intense. Community-embedded exchange gives way to impersonal markets; crafts are undercut on cost and speed. **Example** - Handloom weavers moving to power-loom wage work
2. **Westernisation and urbanisation (M. N. Srinivas):** Hereditary **jati** crafts and **jajmani** patronage weaken as clients move to towns and adopt mass-produced styles. Ritual and status functions that once sustained demand fade.
3. **Informalisation and footloose labour (Jan Breman):** As local orders shrink, artisans shift to **casual, seasonal** wage work in power-looms, construction, or brick kilns.
4. **Loss of cultural and social capital (Bourdieu):** Traditional design knowledge is **devalued**. Many producer groups lack the **social capital** (networks, branding links) to reach niche markets that would reward authenticity.
5. **Raw-material and commons pressure:** Privatization of forests, sand, and water bodies, plus ecological stress, raise input costs for clay, fuel, timber, reeds, and dyes. Environmental rules are often enforced unevenly, favouring larger units.
6. **Credit and capability gaps:** Weak bank linkage and reliance on moneylenders mean high interest and low investment. Upgrading to improved looms, kilns, dyes, or design support is delayed; digital and marketing capabilities lag.
7. **Infrastructure and policy bias:** Irregular power, poor logistics, and compliance costs (e.g., GST, standards, paperwork) **favour scale**. Cluster and export incentives tend to reach organised firms more easily than dispersed artisans.
8. **Gendered effects:** Male out-migration pushes women into **low-paid home-based** tasks (spinning, finishing) while unpaid care work limits training and collective action. Female producers face weaker bargaining power with traders.

Way forward

Revitalisation requires **patient credit**, design and technology extension, raw-material security (including protected commons), **producer cooperatives/SHG federations**, and **cluster development** with common facilities. Equally vital are **branding and GI protection**, fair procurement, digital market access, and **gender-responsive** training and childcare.

Conclusion

The decline stems from intertwined **market, state, and social** forces. Rebuilding the **status and social capital** of artisan groups is key if village industries are to survive and provide dignified, place-based livelihoods.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

c) Discuss the social bases of political mobilization in Independent India. Has some change occurred in these during the last 60–70 years? (10 Marks)

Approach

- Define political mobilization and its social bases.
- Outline key bases: caste, religion, region, class, tribe, and gender.
- Trace the changes since Independence.
- Conclude highlighting continuity of old bases with evolving forms in a multi-level democracy.

Solution

Introduction

Political mobilization means the collective activation of people to vote, protest, join parties, or influence policy. In India, mobilization rests on *social bases* (caste, religion, region, class, gender, tribe) and on *organizational carriers* (parties, unions, associations, welfare groups). These bases shape who speaks, who is heard, and how power circulates.

Core social bases

- **Caste/jati blocs:** Dominant agrarian castes, OBC federations, and assertive Dalit movements provide enduring vote banks and cadre networks.
- **Religion/sect:** Temple–mosque organizations, sampradayas and clerical bodies mobilize moral authority, festivals, and charity networks.
- **Region/language/ethnicity:** Linguistic identities and sub-regional claims (statehood, autonomy) sustain powerful regional parties.
- **Class/occupation:** Peasants, agricultural labour, workers, traders, public employees, and the informal sector mobilize around prices, wages, and regulation.
- **Tribes/Adivasis:** Land and forest rights, displacement, and autonomy councils anchor mobilization.
- Etc.

How the bases have shifted over 60–70 years

- **From Congress dominance to multi-party federalism:** The “Congress system” gave way to coalition politics and **regionalization**, making state-level identities and leaders central. **Example** - Regional forces (DMK, TMC, BJD, Shiv Sena).
- **The Mandal turn (1990s):** OBC reservations consolidated **Bahujan** politics; Dalit parties broadened representation. **Example** - Mandal/OBC parties (SP, RJD, JD(U)).
- **Religious nationalism and polarization:** Mass organizations and cultural groups increasingly mobilize religious identities, reshaping party competition and agendas.
- **From agrarian blocs to welfare-beneficiary politics:** PDS, MGNREGA, health insurance, DBT and subsidies produce new **programmatic constituencies**.

- **Women as decisive voters:** Turnout parity (and in some states, female turnout advantage) plus **SHG-state linkages** increase women's voice in panchayats and assemblies. **Example -** SHG-led participation in Kerala through **Kudumbashree**.
- **Urban middle class, youth, and digital media:** Anti-corruption waves, climate/citizenship protests, and online campaigns show **issue-based, networked** mobilization that can spill into electoral change.
- **Migration and peri-urban growth:** Housing rights, documents, services and transport needs create **city-level** mobilizations among migrants and informal workers.

Conclusion

India's political mobilization has diversified from broad nationalist umbrellas to **hybrid coalitions** that mix caste, religion, region, class, gender, and welfare claims—now also mediated by civil society networks and digital platforms. Old bases persist, but their **form and alliances have been reworked**, producing a fluid, competitive, and multi-level democracy.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

d) What are the major problems faced by the labour migrants while working in informal sectors of Indian States? Discuss. (10 Marks)

Approach

- Define labour migrants and their link to informal sector work.
- Highlight major problem by the labour migrants while working in informal sectors.
- Substantiate with brief illustrations,
- Conclude by pointing to layered vulnerability and the need for stronger protections.

Solution

Introduction

Labour migrants are workers who move across districts or states – often seasonally or circularly – in search of work. Most find employment in the **informal sector**, where jobs are low-wage, unregulated, and rarely backed by written contracts. This location in informality creates **multiple, overlapping vulnerabilities** – economic, legal, social, and health-related.

Major problems

1. **Precarious employment:** Work is arranged through contractors or brokers, with **no written contracts**, easy dismissal, and frequent **delays or non-payment of wages**. Advance-debt cycles tie workers to worksites (e.g., brick kilns, stone quarries).
2. **Low wages and long hours :** Payment by **piece rate** or output targets pushes very long working days. **Minimum-wage norms** and overtime rules are rarely enforced; “waiting time” is unpaid.
3. **Lack of social protection and portability:** Access to **PDS rations, health insurance, pensions, maternity benefits** is weak or non-portable across states. Many workers are unaware of entitlements or cannot navigate registration.
4. **Occupational safety and health risks:** Sites often lack **safety gear**, training, or compensation mechanisms. Injuries, and chemical exposure are common in construction, mining, kiln work, and small factories.
5. **Poor housing and basic services:** Migrants live in **crowded rentals, makeshift huts, or worksheds** near sites, with unsafe **water, sanitation, and electricity**. Contractors may charge **high rents** or deduct for utilities.
6. **Documentation and financial barriers:** Without local **ID, address proof, or bank accounts**, workers face exclusion from services and wage theft. Middlemen sometimes **retain documents**, deepening dependency and debt.
7. **Discrimination and weak voice:** **Language, caste, region, and religion** shape **everyday discrimination** in housing and hiring. Fear of retaliation limits **unionisation** or collective bargaining.

8. **Gendered Discrimination** : Women migrants face **wage gaps, harassment, absence of toilets and lighting**, and lack of **childcare**. They carry the **unpaid care burden**, limiting their shift options and earnings.
9. **Family and children's risks** : Frequent moves disrupt **schooling**; children may be pulled into **work** at sites. **Malnutrition** and poor immunisation are common where health outreach is weak.
10. **Platform/gig precarity** : New migrant streams in **delivery and ride-hailing** face **algorithmic targets, fuel/asset costs**, and no clear insurance or sickness cover.

Conclusion

Migrant workers in informality confront **layered precarity** produced by weak regulation, poor portability of welfare, and power asymmetries with contractors and platforms. Any serious response must strengthen **enforcement, portability, housing and OSH standards, documentation and financial access**, and **gender-responsive services** so mobility does not mean vulnerability.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

e) Do you think that law has been able to abolish child labour in India? Comment. (10 Marks)

Approach

- Begin by defining child labour and noting India's legal framework against it.
- Examine why, despite laws, child labour persists.
- Provide way forward (briefly).
- Conclude that law alone is insufficient—abolition requires enforcement plus social and economic support measures.

Solution

Introduction

Child labour refers to work undertaken by children (UN - Below 18 years) that **harms their physical, mental, or moral development**, or **disrupts schooling**. Despite strong legal framework UNICEF report around **5 crore child labourers in India's informal sector**.

Legal framework

- **Child & Adolescent Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 amended in 2016:** bans all employment of children **under 14**; prohibits hazardous occupations and processes for **14–18**; raises penalties for employers.
- **Right to Education Act, 2009:** mandates **free and compulsory education** for 6–14 years, making school the default activity.
- **JJ Act, POCSO, and anti-trafficking provisions:** support **rescue, care, and prosecution** in cases of abuse and forced labour.

Despite legal framework abolition of child labour remains incomplete due to:

- **Invisible exemptions and home-based work:** The **family-enterprise exception** and the prevalence of **home-based piecework** (beedi, zari, garments) blur the line between “helping” and exploitative labour, keeping violations out of sight.
- **Large informal economy and subcontracting:** Multi-tier **supply chains** push production into small units and households; inspectors struggle to locate the real employer.
- **Structural poverty and shocks:** **Poverty, debt, seasonal migration, crop failure, and health crises** pull children into work to stabilise family income.
- **Schooling gaps:** Poor **quality**, long distances, hidden costs, and language barriers make school unattractive, leading to **dropouts** who enter work.
- **Weak enforcement capacity:** Few inspections, **low conviction rates**, and local **collusion** produce “symbolic compliance” — laws exist but are thinly enforced.
- **Gendered burdens:** Girls' **unpaid care and domestic labour** rarely appear in statistics, yet they limit schooling and normalise child work within the household.

Way forward

- **Convergence:** rigorous enforcement **plus** universal **secondary** education, mid-day meals, **cash transfers**, and **hostels/creches** for migrant children.
- **Supply-chain due diligence:** mandatory contractor registration, buyer audits, and **community monitoring**.
- **Gender focus:** recognise and reduce girls' unpaid labour; provide safe transport and toilets to retain them in school.

Conclusion

Law is **necessary but not sufficient**. Abolishing child labour requires **enforcement, poverty reduction, quality schooling, and accountable supply chains**—so that families do not have to choose between **survival** and their children's **education and well-being**.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

Question 6.

a) In what respects have the constitutional provisions changed the socio-economic and political conditions of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India? Critically examine. (20 Marks)

Approach

- Start by stating constitutional intent toward SC/ST empowerment.
- Outline major provisions in constitution for SC/ST empowerment.
- Discuss the positive impacts and assess the gaps of the measures taken.
- Conclude by stressing that constitutional change is significant but incomplete without effective enforcement and inclusive development.

Solution

Introduction

Since 1950, India's Constitution has tried to correct historical exclusion of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) through rights, reservations, special schedules, and dedicated institutions.

Constitutional Provisions

- **Equality with protective discrimination:** Articles 14–16 guarantee equality; 16(4), 16(4A) enable reservation in public services; 15(4), 15(5) support educational measures.
- **Abolition of untouchability:** Article 17 (backed by the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989) criminalises caste-based exclusion and violence.
- **Directive principles:** Article 46 urges promotion of SC/ST educational and economic interests.
- **Political representation:** Articles 330–342 provide lists and reserved seats in Parliament and State Assemblies; the 73rd/74th Amendments extend reservations in panchayats/municipalities (including for women).
- **Tribal self-governance and land rights:** Fifth/Sixth Schedules, PESA 1996 (Gram Sabha powers in scheduled areas), and the Forest Rights Act 2006 (individual and community forest rights).
- **Institutions:** National/State Commissions for SCs and for STs; special courts for atrocity cases.

Positive changes

- **Political voice and presence:** Sustained representation of SCs/STs in legislatures; rise of SC/ST sarpanches; Gram Sabhas in scheduled areas claim authority over local resources and social justice decisions.
- **Education and public employment:** Reservations, hostels, scholarships, and remedial support raised school retention and college entry; first-generation entry into government services widened.

- **Dignity and legal protection:** Criminalisation of untouchability and atrocities, special courts, and welfare schemes have expanded **rights consciousness** and avenues for redress.
- **Community and livelihood rights:** FRA titles (where implemented) secure cultivation and community forest rights; targeted schemes improve housing, sanitation, and credit access.

Limits and challenges

- **Implementation gaps:** Under-reporting and **low convictions** in atrocity cases; **vacancy backlogs** in reserved posts; contractualisation and outsourcing reduce the **effective domain** of reservations.
- **Persistent socio-economic deficits:** **Landlessness**, inferior schools and health facilities, continuing manual scavenging and bonded-type labour in pockets.
- **Tribal dispossession and slow rights realisation:** Displacement due to mining, dams, corridors; **uneven FRA processing** and weak enforcement of Fifth/Sixth Schedules and PESA (limited devolution of funds and functionaries).
- **Inequality within groups:** Benefits cluster among relatively better-placed sub-castes/tribes which Sachidanand Sinha calls “**Harijan Elite**” and SD Badgaiyyan calls “**Tribal Elite**”.
- **Private sector exclusion:** No reservation mandate in private employment; **bias in credit, housing, and hiring** constrains mobility.
- **Gendered disadvantage:** SC/ST women face **layered violence**, wage gaps, and low asset ownership; support services and safe mobility remain inadequate.
- **Unable to change Attitude:** Thorat and Joshi in “**The Continuing Practice of Untouchability in India**” found that even in 2020 “*The mindset prevalent amongst the upper castes is that people belonging to the lower castes are physically and/or ritually unclean not be allowed to enter the kitchen or use the utensils ...*”

Conclusion

Deepening change needs - time-bound filling of reserved posts; quality schooling and hostels in SC/ST areas; **strict PoA enforcement**; fuller **PESA/FRA implementation**; **targeted support** to the most deprived sub-groups; anti-discrimination norms in private education, hiring, credit and housing; and empowered local institutions with **real resources**. Only then can constitutional promises translate into sustained **substantive equality**.

b) Discuss the trend of urbanization in India. Do you think that Industrialization is the only precondition of urbanization? Give your arguments. (20 Marks)

Approach

- Define urbanisation,
- Outline its broad trends in India.
- Analyse whether industrialisation is the only driver, showing multiple other engines.
- Conclude that Indian urbanisation is multi-causal, with industrialisation important but not the sole precondition.

Solution

Introduction

Urbanisation is the process by which a growing share of people live in settlements with **dense built-up areas, non-farm occupations, and urban services**. It involves not only population movement, but also **reclassification** of places and the spread of urban ways of life into surrounding villages. In India, the urban transition has been gradual but persistent since Independence.

Trends of urbanisation in India

- **Steady rise with recent acceleration:** The proportion of people living in towns and cities has increased decade by decade, with faster growth in the last three decades due to migration, natural increase in cities, and reclassification of large villages as “**census towns**.”
- **Metropolitanisation and primacy:** Growth concentrates in **million-plus cities** and their regions (e.g., Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad). Small and medium towns grow too, but big city-regions dominate jobs, higher education, and advanced services.
- **Peri-urban sprawl and the rural-urban continuum:** Villages on city edges become **urban fringes**, mixing warehouses, small industries, housing colonies, and farms. Daily commuting blurs the line between rural and urban.
- **Regional disparity:** **Western and southern corridors urbanise faster** than central and eastern belts (with notable nodes such as mining or port towns).
- **Service-led pattern:** Alongside manufacturing, **IT, finance, logistics, retail, health and education** have become major urban job creators, shifting the composition of urban economies.
- **Informality and infrastructure lag:** Much growth occurs through **informal jobs and housing**, producing slums, overcrowding, and pressure on water, sanitation, and transport.

Industrialisation the only precondition - No.

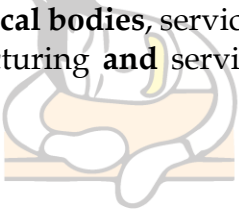
Industrialisation is important but not sufficient, and not necessary everywhere. India's urbanisation is **multi-engine**, driven by several forces:

- **Yogendra Singh:** In India the process of migration to urban areas is characterized by “**over urbanization**” where there is Migration without Industrialization.

- **Services and corporate offices:** IT/ITeS parks and back-office hubs (e.g., new business districts in Gurgaon or Whitefield) create urban jobs **without large factories**.
- **Administrative and political capitals:** New state capitals, district HQs, and cantonments attract staff, contractors, and service economies.
- **Education-health hubs:** Universities, medical colleges and super-speciality hospitals generate **rental markets, transport, retail**, and steady in-migration.
- **Transport and logistics:** Ports, airports, expressways, industrial corridors, and warehousing belts turn rural peripheries into **logistics towns**.
- **Tourism and pilgrimage:** Visitor economies support hotels, markets and transport, urbanising small places over time.
- **Mining/energy and real estate:** Extractive projects, townships, and **speculative conversion** of farmland reshape settlement patterns.
- **State classification effects:** Government reclassification of large, non-farm villages as **census towns** raises the official urban share even without major industrial bases.

Conclusion

India's urbanisation is **diversified**. Industrialisation matters, especially for scale and formal jobs, but it is **not the only precondition**. Planning for sustainable urbanisation requires **empowered urban local bodies**, serviced land and affordable housing, **inclusive transport**, and support for **both** manufacturing **and** services—so that city growth is productive, equitable, and environmentally sound.



Awakening Toppers

c) Which measures would you suggest for preventing caste conflicts in India? Justify your view. (10 Marks)

Approach

1. Begin with causes of caste conflict.
2. Suggest preventive measures across domains.
3. Justify each measure by linking it to reducing inequality, humiliation, or polarisation.
4. Conclude that legal action plus social reform ensures durable peace.

Solution

Introduction

Caste conflicts arise from **status humiliation**, **competition over resources** (land, jobs, welfare), **political mobilisation** around caste which **Rajni Kothari** calls **politicization of caste** and **weak justice delivery**. Durable prevention must act on these mechanisms through **structural** (power, resources) and **procedural** (law, mediation) measures.

Measures:

1) Enforce the law with speed and certainty

- **Strict use of the SC/ST (PoA) Act**, fast-track courts, time-bound FIRs, **witness protection**, and independent investigation.
- **Reasons:** It reduces **impunity** and affirms **status dignity**, which is central in caste conflict.

2) Early-warning and mediation systems

- District peace committees with credible local informers; **rumour-control cells**, community policing, conflict calendars for festivals/processions.
- **Reasons:** It interrupts **escalation** and opportunistic mobilisation before violence hardens group boundaries.

3) Inclusive local governance

- Empower **Gram Sabhas**, rotate reserved posts, train SC/ST elected representatives; institutionalise grievance hearings and social audits.
- **Reasons:** It gives **voice and recognition** reduce relative deprivation and everyday domination by local elites.

4) Land and livelihood security

- Land/house-site titles, tenancy protection, **FRA** implementation; **MGNREGA**, skilling, market linkages, and fair credit.
- **Reasons:** As per **Andre Beteille** in past caste conflict was identity centric but now it is slowly moving towards interest focused conflict. Hence reducing **patron-client dependence** reduces the material base of coercion, and the sparks of resource conflict.

5) Desegregate everyday spaces

- Enforce anti-discrimination at water points, temples, shops; common facilities; support **inter-caste marriages** (protection officers, incentives).
- **Reasons:** Meaningful **contact** lowers prejudice; ending spatial segregation shrinks occasions for humiliation.

6) Education and norm change

- Equality-focused curricula, teacher training, inter-caste activities and youth clubs.
- **Reasons:** It shifts **symbolic boundaries** and produces long-term attitudinal change.

7) Regulate electoral incentives and hate speech

- Enforce **Model Code of Conduct**; prosecute hate propaganda and boycott calls; regulate processions in sensitive zones.
- **Reasons:** It lowers **political returns to polarisation**, a key driver of conflict.

8) Platform and media accountability

- Rapid takedown of caste hate and doxxing; fact-checking networks; community radio/WhatsApp admin codes; digital-literacy drives.
- **Reasons:** It curbs **rumour cascades** and misinformation that ignite violence.

9) Victim-centred rehabilitation

- Immediate compensation, safe housing/relocation options, counselling, livelihood packages, legal aid.
- **Reasons:** It breaks **cycles of fear**, encourages reporting, and signals state commitment.

10) Data, monitoring, and police reform

- Public atrocity dashboards, independent audits, command responsibility; diversity in police, bias-sensitisation.
- **Reasons:** Transparency creates **accountability loops**; representative policing improves trust.

Conclusion

Caste conflict prevention works when **justice is swift, livelihoods are secure, everyday spaces are integrated, and hate incentives are curbed**. Law is necessary, but **law plus social reform** – voice, resources, recognition, and accountable institutions – makes peace **durable and just**.

Question 7.

a) What are the Private and Public network and support systems operative in Indian society for care givers? Discuss their role and the challenges before care givers. (20 Marks)

Approach

- Start by defining ageing in India and noting its demographic significance.
- Identify the Private and Public network and support systems operative in Indian society for the aged.
- Identify caregiver challenges and suggest measures.
- Conclude with the need for combined private–public support to ensure dignified ageing and reduce caregiver burden.

Solution

Introduction

India is witnessing a rapid ageing process due to declining fertility rates and increasing life expectancy. According to the **UNFPA India Ageing Report (2023)**, the **elderly population (60+)** is **projected** to rise from 149 million (10.5%) in 2022 to **347 million (20.8%) by 2050**. Private and Public network and support systems operative for the aged becomes very important in India. Most elders rely on a mix of both.

Private networks and supports

- **Family, kin, neighbours:** Adult children, daughters-in-law, and nearby kin provide daily care, escort to hospitals, help with banking, remittances, and **emotional support**. This reflects intergenerational reciprocity but also the **feminisation of care**, with women doing a larger share.
- **Community bodies:** Residents' associations, caste/ward committees, and **senior-citizen clubs** organise social meetings, festival visits, micro-funds for emergencies, and help in resolving neighbourhood disputes.
- **Religious/charitable trusts:** Gurudwara/langar and temple/ashram trusts offer meals, free medicines, and sometimes **old-age homes or day-care**.
- **Employer/retiree associations:** Health camps, insurance top-ups, and peer networks that help navigate hospitals and claims.

Public systems

- **Legal and rights measures:** The **Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act** enables elders to claim support and protection from neglect/abuse; police helpdesks and senior cells assist with safety.
- **Income security:** **Social pensions** (including widow pensions), contributory pensions, and priority access to **PDS** and basic services reduce economic dependence.
- **Health care:** Geriatric OPDs, district hospital wards, community health workers (ASHA/ANM), **ambulance/telemedicine**, and subsidised medicines.

- **Care infrastructure:** Government-supported **day-care centres** such as **Pakal Veedu** in **Kerala**, elder helplines, and disability/assistive devices.

Challenges faced by caregivers

- **Time and burnout:** Care is daily and long-term; many caregivers are also in paid work – the “**second shift**.”
- **Financial strain:** Costs of medicines, transport, diets, home modifications, and possible loss of earnings. **Pradeep Kumar Panda’s study in Orissa** found that economic stress in families leads to reduced quality of elder care.
- **Skills gap:** Managing **dementia, stroke, incontinence, bedsores** requires training most families do not have.
- **Migration/urbanisation:** **Empty-nest** elders and fragmented neighbourhood ties reduce informal support; long commutes limit family time.

Measures to ease caregiver challenges

- **Caregiver training and certification** (home nursing, dementia care, safe lifting), with community colleges/NGOs, to improve safety and confidence.
- **Flexible work and leave:** formal **care leave**, part-time/remote options, and protection from career penalties for employees with eldercare duties.
- **Integrated elder-care teams** (doctor + nurse + ASHA/SHG volunteer) offering home visits, medicine delivery, rehab exercises, and teleconsults – a **single-window** that reduces hospital dependence.
- **Community watch and helplines** for quick response to neglect, abuse, or fraud; police verification and periodic check-ins for **lone elders**.

Conclusion

India’s elders depend on a **web of private care and public guarantees**. Such integration allows older persons to **age with dignity** while preventing caregivers from sliding into **exhaustion or poverty**.

b) “Educational development is the only Panacea for country’s all ills and evils.” Critically examine the above statement with reference to NEP-2020. (20 Marks)

Approach

- Start by defining educational development in the context of NEP-2020.
- Highlight how NEP can tackle social and economic challenges.
- Critically assess its limits.
- Conclude that education is central but not the sole solution.

Solution

Introduction

The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** is India’s most comprehensive reform of school, higher and vocational education in decades. By “educational development” we mean improvements in **access, quality, equity, and relevance**, supported by strong **teacher capacity**, effective **governance**, and **adequate financing**. Education can be a powerful driver of social change – but calling it the *only* cure is an overstatement.

NEP-2020 can address major social and economic “ills” in following ways:

- **Learning poverty and inequality:** A national push for **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN)**, universal **ECCE** (early childhood care and education), and **school complexes** aims to raise early learning and reduce dropouts – crucial for first-generation learners.
- **Employability and skills gap:** Vocational exposure from **Grade 6**, **internships**, and **multidisciplinary higher education** with **multiple entry-exit** and an **Academic Bank of Credits** can smooth school-to-work transitions and recognise diverse learning paths.
- **Gender and social inclusion:** A focus on **SEDGs** (Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Groups), a proposed **Gender-Inclusion Fund**, scholarships, hostels, and flexible pathways can lift participation of girls, **SC/ST** communities, migrants, and children with disabilities.
- **Regional and language barriers:** **Mother-tongue/home-language** instruction in the early years and **open/distance learning** can improve retention in underserved areas.
- **Innovation and productivity:** A **National Research Foundation**, autonomy for **HEIs**, and multidisciplinary universities can widen research capacity and spur local innovation.
- **Citizenship and ethics:** Emphasis on **constitutional values**, **critical thinking**, and **ethical reasoning** supports prosocial behaviour and informed democratic participation.

Education is necessary but not a complete panacea because of following reasons:

- **Financing and capacity constraints:** The **6% of GDP** unfulfilled aspiration, teacher vacancies, uneven state capability, and weak governance can blunt NEP’s promise unless budgets, training, and monitoring improve.
- **Digital divide:** Devices, connectivity, and digital literacy are unequal; tech-heavy delivery can **widen gaps** by caste, gender, region, and disability unless supported by offline options and assistive tech.

- **Labour-market structure:** If job growth is **informal or slow**, education alone cannot secure mobility; credentials risk turning into mere **screening** rather than ladders of opportunity.
- **Social norms and reproduction:** **Patriarchy, caste bias, early marriage**, and unsafe transport still restrict girls' schooling and work. As **Bourdieu** reminds us, schools can **reproduce** advantage unless supported by scholarships, language bridges, and affirmative action.
- **Regulation and equity in private provision:** High fees, coaching dependence, and variable quality can entrench stratification unless **fee regulation, benchmarking**, and public alternatives improve.
- **Federal diversity:** Implementation will vary by state capacity; without **cooperative federalism**, the same policy can produce unequal outcomes.
- **According to Meenakshi Thapan** a one-size-fits-all approach would not work; policies must take into account the many types of conditions that exist on the ground in a country as diverse, multifarious, and complicated as India.

Conclusion

NEP-2020 rightly places education at the **centre** of India's development strategy. But durable gains require **decent job creation, social protection, safe transport and housing, anti-discrimination enforcement**, and **adequate, predictable financing**. In short, education is a **cornerstone**, not a magic wand. It works best when embedded in a wider architecture of inclusive growth and social justice.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

c) How Dalit movements in India have facilitated their Identity formation? Analyze. (10 Marks)

Approach

- Define Dalit movements as struggles for dignity and rights.
- Show identity formation through dignity, symbols, culture, organisations, legal-political action, and digital activism.
- Note limits like sub-caste divides and intersectionality.
- Conclude: movements forged an assertive Dalit identity.

Solution

Introduction

Dalit movements are collective actions by formerly “untouchable” castes to challenge oppression and claim **dignity, rights, and representation**. They have not only demanded reforms; they have **produced** a shared, assertive **Dalit identity** that goes beyond local jatis and regions.

1. **From stigma to dignity:** B. R. Ambedkar’s movements reframed social identity from a label of **pollution** to one of **self-respect** and citizenship. The message “educate, agitate, organise” converts humiliation into a moral and political claim.
2. **Shared symbols and rituals:** Collective markers—the **blue flag**, portraits and **Jayanti** processions for Ambedkar, and **mass Buddhist conversions (1956 onward)**—create a sense of belonging. Symbols help strangers recognise one another as part of a common public.
3. **Counter-narratives and cultural production:** **Dalit literature, poetry, street theatre, music, and autobiographies** narrate caste violence and everyday resistance. These texts and performances replace silence with **voice**, build a **collective memory**, and make pride and injustice speakable.
4. **Organisations and leadership:** Groups such as **BAMCEF, Dalit Panthers, BSP**, and more recently **Bhim Army** have provided networks, training, legal aid, schools, and rallies. Organisational routines—**study circles, hostels, unions**—socialise members into a **Dalit public sphere**.
5. **Legal-rights framing:** Mobilisation around the **SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act**, reservations, and the pursuit of justice in atrocity cases tie’s identity to the **Constitution**.
6. **Electoral and coalition politics:** The **Bahujan** framing (linking SCs with STs, OBCs, and minorities) pushes identity from narrow caste loyalties to a **pan-Dalit/Bahujan** bloc with negotiating power.
7. **Digital activism:** Online campaigns and solidarity after incidents (e.g., **Una, 2016**) create horizontal ties. Social media amplifies grievances knitting a dispersed community.

Critical view

Fragmentations by **sub-caste and region**, **leader-centric** politics, and **co-optation** by parties can blunt unity. **Intersectionality** matters when it comes to identity formations. For example, **Dalit women** often face gendered violence and under-representation.

Conclusion

Through symbols, narratives, organisations, rights-based claims, and coalition politics, Dalit movements have crafted a **modern, assertive Dalit identity** rooted in dignity and citizenship.

Question 8.

a) Is it possible to have sustainable development in India? Cite major environmental issues and suggest a few measures to achieve the sustainability (20 Marks)

Approach

- Define sustainable development in Indian context.
- Identify major environmental issues: air, water, land, biodiversity, climate risks, and industrial hotspots.
- Suggest key measures: clean energy, pollution control, water management, climate adaptation, circular economy, conservation, and livelihood equity.
- Conclude that sustainable development is possible through integrated, justice-oriented policies.

Solution

Introduction

Sustainable development means meeting present needs **without** reducing the options of future generations. **D. N. Dhanagare** conceptualised it as "*growth with justice*," emphasizing equity alongside progress. At the same time, scholars like **V. Ratna Reddy** opined that it is very difficult to assess the needs of future generations.

Major environmental issues

- **Air pollution and energy mix:** High PM2.5 in many cities; a **coal-heavy** power system and diesel use in transport and backup power.
- **Water stress: Groundwater depletion,** polluted rivers, untreated **sewage** and effluents; declining wetlands.
- **Land degradation:** Soil erosion, **desertification**, stubble burning, chemical overuse, and shrinking commons.
- **Biodiversity loss/deforestation:** Habitat fragmentation, **human-wildlife conflict**, and erosion of coastal/mangrove shields.
- **Climate risks:** Intensifying **heatwaves, floods, cyclones, sea-level rise**; high vulnerability of small farmers and coastal livelihoods.
- **Mining/industrial hotspots:** Displacement, contaminated land and water, abandoned mines without remediation.

Sustainable development is possible in India but it requires some measures.

Measures to achieve sustainability:

- **Clean energy transition:** Scale **renewables, storage**; phase-down coal with a **just transition** (reskilling, social protection) for coal regions.
- **Air-shed management:** Cleaner industrial fuels; **public transport**, EVs, and tighter vehicle norms; control dust from construction.

- **Water security:** Regulate **groundwater extraction**; 100% **sewage treatment** and reuse; protect wetlands.
- **Climate adaptation:** Flood-safe drainage, climate-smart agriculture (diversification to millets/pulses), and **crop-insurance**.
- **Circular economy for waste:** **Source segregation**, Material Recovery Facilities, promote repair-reuse markets and safe recycling for informal workers.
- **Forests and biodiversity:** **Community-based conservation**, ecological corridors, mangrove/coastal-zone protection; recognise and secure **community rights** where applicable.
- **Equity and livelihoods:** Target pollution hotspots affecting the poor; clean cooking fuels; support for street vendors and waste workers during transitions.

Conclusion

Sustainable development in India is **feasible** when environmental limits **shape** growth choices and social justice **guides** them. The pathway is an integrated one—**clean energy, resilient cities, regenerative agriculture, circular materials, and accountable institutions**—so that both **people and the planet** thrive together.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers

b) Do you think that forced displacement of labourers has caused their deprivation and resultant inequalities during the recent past years? Elaborate. (20 Marks)

Approach

- Define forced displacement of labourers.
- Show how it causes deprivation and inequalities for them.
- Substantiate with examples (SEZ acquisition, pandemic migration).
- Suggest measures.
- Conclude that displacement deepens inequalities unless supported by safeguards.

Solution

Introduction

Forced displacement of labourers refers to movements not chosen freely but driven by **evictions and land acquisition, natural disasters and climate events, conflict/riots, or sudden economic shutdowns** (e.g., lockdowns).

Displacement produces deprivation in the following manner:

- **Loss of livelihoods and assets:** Sudden job loss, destruction of tools/shops, and sale of livestock or jewellery to survive cause **income collapse and indebtedness**. Remittances to home villages stop, pulling whole households into distress.
- **Erosion of capabilities (Amartya Sen):** Breaks in **schooling, malnutrition**, overcrowded shelters, and interrupted health care reduce people's real freedoms to lead a decent life; these effects persist long after the shock.
- **Informalisation and "footloose labour" (Jan Breman):** Displaced workers re-enter labour markets as **casual, low-wage, contract-less** workers – construction hands, kiln workers, or gig couriers – without insurance or bargaining power.
- **Social protection gaps:** Weak **portability** of welfare measures such as PDS rations, plus documentation barriers excludes migrants at destinations from legal rights.

Displacement also intensifies inequality in the following manner:

- **Class and caste stratification:** Landless **SC/OBC/Adivasi** workers and urban informal households bear the heaviest shocks. Better-off groups draw on savings, networks, or formal jobs to **recover faster**, widening gaps.
- **Gendered burdens:** Women face **job loss plus unpaid care spikes**, restricted mobility, and heightened risks of harassment/violence; when they return to work, wages are often lower and work more informal.
- **Regional and sectoral divides:** Poor **source districts** lose remittances and skills; **destination cities** externalise risks to slums and peri-urban fringes through evictions and service denial.
- **Labour-market segmentation:** A glut of displaced workers willing to accept **worse terms** depresses wages and conditions for similar low-skill segments, reinforcing a **dual labour market**.

Example

- **Project/mining/SEZ acquisition:** Adivasis in central India losing common forests and farmland shift to wage migration; nutrition worsens as cash incomes fluctuate and public services lag.
- **Pandemic-era reverse migration:** Workers walked or were bussed back to villages; many faced **long job breaks**, irregular rations/cash support, and re-entry on **shorter, harsher contracts**.

Way forward

- **Portable welfare and IDs:** Nationwide **portability** of PDS, health insurance, pensions, and scholarships; one-nation-one-ID-linked services.
- **Migrant labour protections:** Registration of contractors, enforceable **written contracts**, accident insurance, and hostels near worksites.
- **Livelihood and housing rehabilitation:** Time-bound **cash-for-work**, skill bridging, rental vouchers, and **trauma-informed** community centres.
- **Planned urban-rural governance:** Pro-poor urban planning, inclusionary zoning, and rural regeneration to reduce distress migration.

Conclusion

So yes forced displacement has **deepened deprivation** and **stratified inequalities** along class, caste, gender, and region. Unless India secures **portable rights, decent work standards, and inclusive planning**, each shock will reproduce a more unequal social order; with these safeguards, mobility can become a **pathway to recovery** rather than a **trap of precarity**.

c) What are the Indian government's schemes launched for poverty alleviation after the United Nation's Declaration of 'Sustainable Development Goals - 2015'? Briefly describe (10 Marks)

Approach

- Link India's post-2015 schemes with SDG-1.
- Group schemes under housing/services, health/nutrition, income/livelihoods, social protection, and convergence.
- Show how they address multidimensional poverty.
- Conclude: shift toward integrated, multi-engine poverty alleviation.

Solution

Introduction

After the UN adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, India aligned new and re-designed programmes to address **multidimensional poverty** (SDG-1) through income support, livelihoods, basic services, and social protection.

Below are major schemes launched post-2015 and how they reduce deprivation.

1) Housing and basic services

- **PMAY-Urban (2015) / PMAY-Gramin (2016)**: Subsidised **pucca houses** via grants/interest subvention; improves safety, dignity, and reduces rent/leakage to weather.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission (2019) and AMRUT 2.0 (2021)**: Household **tap water** and urban water-sewer upgrades; cuts time-poverty (especially for women) and water-borne disease.
- **Saubhagya (2017)**: Last-mile **electrification**; improves study time, home enterprises, and safety at night.
- **Ujjwala (2016)**: Free **LPG connections** for poor women; lowers indoor air pollution and time spent collecting fuel.

2) Health protection and nutrition

- **Ayushman Bharat (2018)**: PM-JAY hospital cover up to ₹5 lakh for poor families + **Health & Wellness Centres**; protects against catastrophic health spending.
- **POSHAN Abhiyaan (2018) and PMMVY (2017)**: Nutrition mission and maternity cash help; tackles stunting/anaemia and income loss during childbirth.

3) Income support and livelihoods

- **PM-KISAN (2019)**: ₹6,000/year **income support** to small/ marginal farmers—smoothing consumption and shocks.
- **PM-SVANidhi (2020)**: Working-capital loans for **street vendors**; revives urban informal livelihoods post-pandemic.
- **MUDRA (2015) and Stand-Up India (2016)**: Micro and enterprise loans for **self-employment**, with special focus on **SC/ST and women** entrepreneurs.

4) Social protection for shocks and exclusion

- **PMGKAY (2020–):** Free **foodgrains** during crises—preventing hunger when incomes collapse.
- **One Nation, One Ration Card (2019–21 rollout):** **Portability** of PDS rations for **migrant households** across states.

5) Place-based convergence

- **Aspirational Districts Programme (2018):** Focused governance push on **health, education, agriculture, and basic services** in lagging districts—data-driven monitoring to close gaps.

Together, these initiatives target **capabilities** (health, education conditions), **assets** (housing, water, energy), **income/risk** (cash support, insurance), and **livelihoods** (credit for self-employment). They also recognise **gendered time-poverty** (water, clean fuel) and **migrant exclusion** (ration portability).

Conclusion

Post-2015, India's anti-poverty approach has moved beyond cash to a **multi-engine** model—basic services + income support + risk protection + livelihoods. Sustained progress will depend on **adequate funding, federal coordination, robust monitoring**, and inclusion of the **poorest and most mobile** households.



Sleepy Classes IAS
Awakening Toppers