



Instructions to the candidate:

- There are 10 Questions.
- All Questions are Compulsory.
- You should download the question-and-answer booklet, take its print-out, attempt the questions and then scan the same using various mobile apps like Cam Scanner etc. on your mobile, Convert the file using these apps to PDF and upload.
- You will be able to upload the file from where you had downloaded the question-and-answer booklet.
- In case you face any difficulties, you can write to us at sleepy.classes@gmail.com.
- Those candidates who are not writing on the printed booklet are to leave margins on their answer sheet for comments.
- The above-said candidates are to then make their own evaluation sheet in the format stated below to be uploaded with the answer.
- Compulsory to name your PDF file in the following format (Student Complete Name_Test Number) e.g.: (Kriti Rathor_Mains Test-5)

Comments for the purpose of evaluation of Answer Writing:

Relevance to the question	
Structure of Answer	
Content	
Presentation (Neatness, charts, diagrams as required)	



Sociology Mains Test Series

HLT 1 (Chapter 1 to 4)

Question 1. How did Intellectual currents of the Enlightenment era facilitated the genesis of sociology as a discipline? Discuss. (20 Marks)

Question 2. In light of the burgeoning significance of interdisciplinary paradigms, elucidate the interconnections between sociology and other social sciences. (20 Marks)

Question 3. Sociology focuses on the analysis of social interactions. How may one demarcate it from commonsensical knowledge? (10 Marks)

Question 4. Explain how qualitative and quantitative methods complement each other in sociological research. (20 Marks)

Question 5. How much is it right for sociologists to use the positivist approach to understand society? Explain with suitable examples. (10 Marks)

Question 6. How social hierarchy and exclusionary practices act as barrier to the societal transformation? Discuss (10 Marks)

Question 7. Explain the stages in the formation of gender identity using Mead's theory of symbolic interactionism. (10 Marks)

Question 8. For Marx, class divisions are outcomes of 'exploitation'. Discuss. (10 Marks)

Question 9. Discuss the importance of interpretive understanding in studying social phenomena and point out its limitations. (20 marks)

Question 10. How does reference group theory illuminate the process by which individuals adopt behaviors and styles promoted by social media personalities in modern society? (20 Marks)

**(10 Marker Questions shall be answered in not more than 150 words
20 Marker Questions shall be answers in not more than 250 words)**



Question 1. How did Intellectual currents of the Enlightenment era facilitated the genesis of sociology as a discipline? Discuss. (20 Marks)

Enlightenment era was driven by intellectual awakening in Europe and belief in human reason, empiricism and progress. It provided the generalised context for the development of sociology (socio) as a distinct body of knowledge.

Impact of enlightenment ideas

↳ For a quest to develop an independent discipline, August Comte described the need for positivist-inductivist methods and coined the term "sociology" as science of society.

↳ Durkheim provided the subject matter for the study of society and called them social facts.

For ex - Material social facts like law, technology and non-material social facts like culture, morality, collective consciousness, etc.

↳ Durkheim also provided for scientific methods in his book rules of sociological methods to liberate sociology from mysterious methodology.

Positivist bias is apparent in the use of terminologies like material density and moral density by Durkheim



in his analysis of division of labour.

Durkheim's multivariate analysis of "suicide" is again an example to elevate the status of socio. through distinct methods.

Counter-enlightenment and quest for social order

Heinrich Heine argues that the conservative reaction to enlightenment helped socio. to emerge as a separate subject. Catholics like Bonald and Maistre, were concerned with the disruptive effects of French Revolution, Industrialization, urbanisation and modernisation and wanted to revive social order in the society.

Ideas of conservative reaction that led to development of socio.

→ Society was given emphasis over individual and was considered to be "sui-generis" having existence of its own.

→ Individuals were seen as products of socialization who were merely filling the gaps in the societal roles.



→ change brought due to forces of modernisation was seen as disruptive and hence early sociologists were focused upon reformist measures.

For ex - Marx advocated for worker empowerment to ~~enhance~~ enhance their collective bargaining power.

Chicago school was setup in USA to deal with ill effects of urbanisation.

→ changes in family structure, increasing rates of divorce, emergence of new social classes, decreasing importance of religion in the society and the establishment of democracy, were all concerning the sociologists and there was a quest to find solutions to such problems.

Initial endeavours that inspired socio.

Enlightenment philosophers like Descartes, Hobbes and Locke propounded rational ideas emphasizing supremacy



of human reason. This substantiated the fact that since society is a creation of humans, and not god, humans have the potential to change it.

- Comte gave his three stages - theosophical, metaphysical and scientific, emphasizing socio. as queen of science which ~~go~~ will govern the modern times.

- These ideas were later carried forward to USA, where they developed socio. with a social reformist orientation.

Hence, the intellectual currents of the enlightenment era provided the required force for building the premise for socio. as an independent discipline providing solutions to then prevailing moral crisis.



Question 2. In light of the burgeoning significance of interdisciplinary paradigms, elucidate the interconnections between sociology and other social sciences. (20 Marks)

Study of society is comprehensive as well as complex process, wherein interdisciplinary paradigms relating socio. with other social sciences, are not only inevitable but desirable as well.

Interconnections of socio. with other social sciences

① socio and history

"socio. without history is rootless, while history without socio. is fruitless."

History provides the context for studying sociological problems, whereas socio. combined with history gives meaning by analyzing societal issues.

for ex - CW Mills combines historical issues with current personal troubles concerning people through his sociological

Imagination.

Current poverty among lower castes can only be explained by taking into account the historical marginalisation that hampered their development.



However, history differs from socio as it is ideographic and particularistic, while socio is nomothetic and generalistic.

② Socio and Economy

Economy studies how resources are produced and distributed in the society, whereas sociology studies the impact of production and distribution relations among various social classes.

For ex - Perpetuation of caste system can be understood due to production relations in village like land ownership with high castes.

Marx being an economic determinist considered relations of production as the base of the society in his materialist conception of history.

Advertisements are affected by social norms and values prevailing in a society.



③ socio and Political science

Political science studies the power relations in a society and how power is utilized. whereas, socio studies the impact of these power relations upon other institutions in a society.

for ex - weber studied the impact of rational political systems like bureaucracy that led to the rise of capitalist economy.

Impact of politics on caste leads to politicisation of caste and strengthening of caste identities in the modern world.

④ Socio and Anthropology (Anthro.)

Socio has borrowed several methods from Anthro like fieldwork, quantitative analysis, participant observation.

The major difference between Anthro and socio is that the former studies primitive societies, while the latter studies modern societies.

However, the two can supplement each other in their research.



For ex - Durkheim used indirect experimentation by studying ethnography of Arunta tribe to understand modern religion.

MN Srinivas has used fieldwork to study the ground realities of caste system in the village of Kampur.

⑤ Socio and Psychology

Psychological viewpoints have been used in socio. to understand individual motivations behind actions and during the meaning making process. Symbolic interactionism propounded by Mead uses psychological concepts like mind and self to understand sociological impacts on individual.

Hence, due to growing overlap between various social sciences, there perspectives have been enlarged and have given a more holistic view of reality.



Question 3. Sociology focuses on the analysis of social interactions. How may one demarcate it from commonsensical knowledge? (10 Marks)

Social interactions form the foundation for the systematic study of society. For symbolic interactionism, self concepts are framed through exchange of gestures, symbols and constructs during interactions. Parsons also focuses upon social interactions forming the social structure.

Common sense also arises out of every-day social interactions and according to Schutz, it refers to "organized, typified and taken for granted stocks of knowledge."

Differences between socio. and common sense

Common sense is unverified and paradoxical, while socio focuses upon testability and reliability during inquiry.

For ex - common sense says, "absence makes the heart grow fonder," but at the same time, "out of sight, out of mind."

Common sense is generally unquestioned, while socio.



as a science has element of refutability and is skeptical of common sense.

For ex - Common sense defining behaviours during social gathering is accepted by people. However socio. tries to understand the role-defining expectations.

However, common sense provides fuel and fodder to sociological research and gives direction to inquiry.

For ex - Common sensical notions about lack of girls in STEM fields might fuel sociological interest in unravelling the patriarchal narratives hampering the presence of girls in such fields.

Hence, although both socio and common sense have crucial differences, they are inter-related and continue shaping each other, in the words of Giddens, "sociological research gradually becomes common sense with time."



Question 4. Explain how qualitative and quantitative methods complement each other in sociological research. (20 Marks)

Sociological inquiry requires a comprehensive analysis of social phenomena that requires both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

For Alan Bryman, purposive research shall be conducted where methods shall be chosen in accordance with the purpose of sociological research.

Benefits of quantitative methods

Methods like polls, questionnaires, surveys and statistical analysis lead to the much desired objectivity, reliability and validity in sociological research.

Empirical testability provides credibility to the research.

For ex - Socio-economic survey gives credible data about the number of people belonging to marginalised castes, percentage of population below poverty line, etc. leading to its utility in policy making.

Durkheim used police records during his "suicide" analysis to substantiate his arguments.



Even, weber, who propounded Interpretivism, used quantitative data in protestant ethics and spirit of capitalism (PESC) to show co-relations among capitalism and protestantism.

Benefits of qualitative methods

As per Gunnar Myrdal, "Chaos do not organize themselves into cosmos, we need viewpoints."

Qualitative methods like In-depth interviews and fieldwork provided the essential context to make sense of the quantitative data.

For ex- Data regarding the attendance of marginalised students in the schools, will only represent the numbers of students availing benefits of schemes like Right to Education (RTE).

However, interviews and fieldwork will reveal the actual experiences of such students and the feedback for continuous policy improvement.



Qualitative methods reveal the individual orientation towards certain actions and describe the various kinds of social interactions.

for ex - Simmel's various forms of interactions.

mead's idea of socialization through significant others and generalised others.

Limitations

Quantitative methods used alone will downplay human agency and are not closer to reality.

while qualitative methods used alone could result in imposition of researcher's biases in research leading to flawed conclusions.

Mixed Method

Hence, both qualitative and quantitative methods complement each other in finding the most accurate outcomes during social research.

Combination of both is known as triangulation,



which enriches the explanation given by the one method through verification by the other method.

for ex- A questionnaire on domestic violence against women, can be complemented by conducting in-depth interviews with some women that could give lived experiences and might unravel various reasons behind continued domestic violence.

Hence, according to Ray Pawson, the debate between qualitative and quantitative is exaggerated and we need both of the methods to give more realistic theories having practical utility.



Question 5. How much is it right for sociologists to use the positivist approach to understand society? Explain with suitable examples. (10 Marks)

Ans:- Positivist approach focuses upon establishing cause-effect relationship among social phenomena. It is composed of:- naturalism (focusing upon external factors), Inductivism (fact-based study) and empiricism (study of observable things).

Benefits of positivism

Early sociologists like Comte, Durkheim, used positivistic terms and methods to establish socio. as a distinct "body of knowledge" by decoupling it from various social sciences.

Limitations of positivism

↳ For interpretivists, like Weber, it is crucial to understand individual motivations and meanings behind social actions. Objective study of humans is not possible.

↳ Sociology is subjective understanding of objective reality, hence certain set of data might have separate and various meanings.



for ex - higher dropout rate among girls might indicate family pressure as well as internalisation of patriarchal values at the same time.

↳ for Phenomenologists like Berger and Schutz, generalisations are not possible, as reality is constructed, disrupted and reconstructed according to lived experiences of people.

for ex - failure can be associated with hopelessness as well as opportunity for betterment at the same time by different individuals.

↳ Structuration theory of Giddens emphasizes the role of human agency in the small acts of rebellion like the cult of subcultures among youth.

Hence, although positivism is crucial for empirical testability of theories, it is just a means to an end and methods in sociological research shall be purposive rather than glorifying objective anarchism of positivism as termed by Horkheimer.



Question 6. How social hierarchy and exclusionary practices act as barrier to the societal transformation? Discuss (10 Marks)

Ans:- Societal transformation refers to change within the normative structures of the society paving the way for adoption of modern, rational values of liberty and equality. However, in highly traditional societies, hierarchy and exclusionary practices become a barrier to societal transformation.

as:-

↳ Weber in his PESC, identified that traditional ideals of Dharma, karma and punarjanma and caste hierarchies prevented the rise of capitalism in India.

Similarly, affinity to family values and collective orientation results in traditional forms of authority like dynastic political rule and gerontocracy.

↳ Pattern variables of Parsons giving rise to particularistic ascriptive societies lead to closed systems like caste system in India hindering social mobility and perpetuating historical injustices to the marginalised.



Similarly, for Merton closed reference groups are seen as exclusionary as they prevent social mobility.

↳ For Mead, Gender identities are developed through agents of socialisation. Internalisation of exclusionary practices during menstruation by women hinder their productivity and development through affecting education and employment activities.

↳ For Ambedkar, caste system in India has prevented unification of Hindu society due to segregation of residence, dining habits and even endogamous marriages. Hence, he has advocated for "annihilation of caste" to bring about societal transformation.

Hence, hierarchy and stratification along class, caste, gender, ethnicity, etc. pose serious challenges to transformation of society that need to be tackled through awakened social consciousness among people and social movements.



Question 7. Explain the stages in the formation of gender identity using Mead's theory of symbolic interactionism. (10 Marks)

Symbolic interactionism as propounded by Mead, explains the development of self-concept through interactions involving use of gestures and significant symbols to create shared understandings. For Mead, consciousness is a product of social interactions.

Formation of gender identity

1. Play stage - During this stage, socialization of children takes place through significant others like their family members. Children understand their gender identities through communication with the significant others.

For ex - Boys are given adventurous toys like aeroplanes, remote control cars, etc. to instill the notions of strength associated with masculinity.

Whereas, girls are given dolls to play with, emphasizing their role as care-givers in a social setup.



Similarly, children internalize gender identities through observing how decision-making takes place in their family. Whether, father asks the opinions of mother, or simply impose their decisions on everyone in the house.

2) Game stage

In this stage, children are socialized through "Generalised Others" and learn role-taking behaviours in a larger social setup.

For ex - Girls internalise the roles of "good homemakers" by observing care-giving roles of most women around them. Similarly, boys internalise values like protecting their families by observing the behaviour of men around them and through media as well.

Hence, Mead's

Hence, Mead's theory can be used to explain the building of gender identities from the childhood and explain the idea of gender as a "social construct" that is created and reinforced through societal norms.



Question 8. For Marx, class divisions are outcomes of 'exploitation'. Discuss. (10 Marks)

For Marx, class is the social position of an individual in relations of production. Hence, he traced several class divisions throughout various phases in history due to modes of production. Marx, majorly divided classes on the basis of ownership and non-ownership of productive assets. He made a distinction between 'haves' and 'have-nots'. Through his material conception of history, he proved that, economic base led to superstructure like family, law, religion, etc. that in turn, maintain the underlying class divisions and conceal the hidden oppression and internal contradictions among classes. For instance, serfs and lords also had class conflicts and led to extraction of more produce from serfs by the lords. However, when this exploitation reached its maximum level, the transition to system of capitalism was aided by lords who became the 'haves' in capitalism. This was referred as false



consciousness by Marx. However, in capitalism, although there is social production by the labour, the ownership of assets rests with bourgeoisie. Hence, the profits reaped by bourgeoisie is a result of exploitation and pauperisation of the proletariat. The moment, workers will realise this, they will become a "class for itself" and revolt against the capitalists. Since, there is no emerging class to aid them, it was referred as "true consciousness" by Marx. For Marx, "History repeats itself, first as tragedy, then as farce."

However, Karl Popper accuses Marx of being an economic determinist, feminists like Rosa Luxemburg argue that Marx missed the dimension of gender and exploitation of cheap female labour.

Nonetheless, Marxist idea of class conflict gave fresh perspectives and was later refined by scholars like Gramsci to explain hegemony.



Question 9. Discuss the importance of interpretive understanding in studying social phenomena and point out its limitations. (20 marks)

Interpretivism was pioneered by Weber in understanding individual meanings and motivations behind social actions. He gave distinct methods like "verstehen" to objectively assess individual actions. For Weber, human beings shall be studied by taking into regard their agency and creativity. Hence, he gave four types of actions like - traditional, affective, rational and instrumental.

Importance of Interpretivism

→ Providing realistic explanation for social phenomena that could not be captured through generalised and abstract functional theories.

for ex - Durkheim's idea of social facts determining individual actions like thinking and feeling independent of the will of actors, does not take into account different emotions across people, that is captured through affective actions of Weber.

↳ Provides the orientation of individuals towards other people as well as social norms within the society.

~~For~~ ex - instrumental action of weber focuses upon value-based actions of humans, like soldiers going for a war due to patriotic orientation.

Limitations of Interpretivism

↳ Weber over-emphasized upon individuals and was criticized for neglecting macro-sociological structures. Later, Parsons modified weber's approach by taking both individual orientation (motivational) as well as value orientation of society into account, hence bridging the gap between micro and macro.

↳ According to Merton, interpretivism focuses only upon manifest and conscious actions of individuals, whereas ignoring their latent functions / dysfunctions.

For ex → Individual motivation behind performance of religious rituals through intermediation of Brahmin priests,



might be belief and success of rituals. However, it performs the latent functions of perpetuating supremacy of Brahmins.

↳ Interpretivism is criticized due to potential loss of objectivity at several stages of research, like choice of problem, methods used, and explanation of individual motivation.

Critics argue that subjectivity in choosing ideal types and vagueness of verstehen might impact researcher's objectivity and produce erroneous results.

For ex → difficulties in maintaining value-neutrality while analyzing situational constraints of actors during use of verstehen.

ways to overcome limitations

- Reflexivity - Researcher shall be aware of his biases and maintain value-neutrality by reflecting on his hypotheses.
- Peer review and collaboration with other researchers could bring in diverse perspectives eliminating bias.



- Use of methods like triangulation to combine qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure verifiability.
- Disclosure of researcher's background and personal value orientations, accompanied by continuous improvement of theory.

Hence, although interpretivism has several limitations, it is crucial for having subjective understanding and diverse viewpoints and shall be combined with other methods to ensure reliability and validity.



Question 10. How does reference group theory illuminate the process by which individuals adopt behaviors and styles promoted by social media personalities in modern society? (20 Marks)

"Reference group" theory was given by Merton to analyse the various types of social interactions among individuals. He described reference group as an inspiration-cum-benchmark for other social groups, who aspire to become like their chosen reference groups to attain social prestige and status in the society. This idea was also used by MN Srinivas to explain the concept of dominant caste and sanskritization by lower castes to attain social mobility.

Merton called the imitation of reference groups by various social groups as "anticipatory socialisation".

Feeling of relative deprivation among individuals in their existing groups might prompt them to elevate their social position through reference group emulation.

Reference Group along social Media Paradigm

With increasing penetration of social media, among all age groups, several reference groups have



emerged due to the "cult" of social media personalities and their huge fanbase.

⇒ According to weber's rationalisation actions, individuals might be prompted to become social media influencers to gain material success and popularity among peers.

⇒ As per Parson's pattern variables, social media achievements are seen as open systems which one gains through their qualities and hardwork. Individuals find it attractive to enter "universalistic achievement" oriented domains of social media driven through modern values.

⇒ For weber, rise of conspicuous consumption promoted by social media personalities indicates their high social status. This leads to emulation among masses to showcase social stature by referencing consumerism promoted by social media.

⇒ For marx, social media acts as superstructure to drive capitalism and influence consciousness of people.



Hence, consumerism adopted by people on account of imitation, is itself driving capitalist forces further.

- ↳ For Mead, social media promotes socialization through multiple generalized others leading to increased choices of reference groups among individuals.

For ex - Individuals adopting western dressing styles through social media.

- ↳ In a way, reference group socialization might also be seen as perpetuating "hegemony" of elite behaviours. (Gramsci)

For ex - Promoting use of luxury brands by social media influencers, promotes elite culture while downplays hybrid local cultures.

Hence, reference group theory can be applied in several contexts to explore anticipatory socialization in the era of social media.