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The Institute For Competitive Excellence

SOCIOLOGY / GENERAL STUDIES / ESSAY

WRITING EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Test Code Registration No.

Name of Candidate

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REMARKS

- you are rich in information but at some point loss of continuity is observed.
- Try organising more cohesively.

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Q1) Many founding fathers of sociology believed that it was possible to create a science of society and used the same concepts and principles as used in the study of natural sciences. This approach came to be known as positivism.

Main Premises of Positivism

Positivists believe that it was possible to study society by observing from outside. By repeated observations, it was possible to arrive at correlations, causations and hence derive laws of society.

Positivism argues that behaviour of man like behaviour of matter is amenable to objective observation. It believes that social behaviour is patterned. Humans react to the external stimuli and these reactions could be objectively measured.

Positivists believe in studying the society to arrive at universal laws which could then be used to

Positivism
↓
Fact-value
dichotomy

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create a better society called social engineering. They emphasize the importance of value neutrality and objectivity.

Advocates of positivism include August Comte, Herbert Spencer. Systems theory of society is also based on positivism. For eg. Karl Marx sees human behaviour as a reaction to economic infrastructure. Similarly, Functionalists see human behaviour as a response to the functional pre-requisites of society.

Critique of Positivism

Neo-Kantians, ^{like Wittgenstein and Ricardo} argued that reality is of two types:

Social Reality and Physical Reality.

The two are fundamentally different because social reality is based on human will or geist. Humans attach meanings to situations, Motives

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develop which influence the social action. This has been neglected by positivists.

Positivism belief that Meanings and Motives are invariable has been contested by Interpretative sociologists. Symbolic Interactionism, Phenomenology and Ethnomethodology argue that meanings and motives are central to understanding human behaviour and they keep changing.

Max Weber argued that only positivist methods were not sufficient to study social behaviour; interpretation of behaviour was needed to be studied.

Further, 'objectivity' in social study has also been criticised by sociologists who argue that complete objectivity is not possible. Gunnar Myrdal argues 'total objectivity is a myth'.

Feminists further criticise positivist methods of study and propose close involvement of researcher in the study.

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Incorporate
 ① Popper's criticism that positivism kills the critical spirit of science
 (ii) Frankfurt & Feminist school
 ↓
 Positivism is status quoist
 why is must. Merely stating will not do.

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Thus, today it is accepted that sociology is not a positivist science. Positivism was a feature of early sociology.

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Q.14)

Objectivity refers to that frame of mind of researcher which leads to freedom from any bias or prejudice in the course of sociological research.

Value neutrality is absence of any value-driven bias in research which may contaminate the study.

Early sociologists laid great emphasis on objectivity and value neutrality.

Emile Durkheim argued that social facts should be considered as things and any bias in the study of social facts should be removed.

Max Weber espouses importance of value neutrality in research. In fact, it is one of the points of his methodology. ✓

However, complete objectivity is not possible because when one studies a phenomenon, one does so with a point of view. A point of view invariably includes values. ✓

Gunnar Myrdal argues that complete objectivity is a myth. ✓

Not just objectivity but bias about value neutrality.

why?

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The very selection of ~~subject~~ topic of study is influenced by one's ideological background. for eg: Max Weber's ^{choice of} study on Protestant capitalism was a result of his religious background ✓

Method of study further introduces bias. for eg: Participant observation leads to 'nativisation'. ✓

Perspective with which study is conducted has a great bearing on the findings. for eg: Robert Redfield and Oscar Lewis, both studied a village in Mexico. The former studied it from functional perspective and the latter studied it from Marxian perspective and their findings were quite opposite. ✓ good ✓

Conditions of study and research also introduce bias. for eg: Andre Beteille while conducting a study on caste system, in a village in Tanjore was not allowed to visit the Dalit region. As a result, his view was one-sided only. ✓

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Not only the possibility of objectivity but the desirability of value neutrality and objectivity has been questioned too.

Karl Marx did not do his research in a dispassionate way, rather he was value-driven and studied from pro-proletariat perspective. And this led to an impressive work on social structure being a function of economic infrastructure.

Further, critical sociologists reject the ideal of objectivity in social study. Feminists like Ann Oakley conducted her study on mothering experience and she was thoroughly involved with the mothers, helped them with child care and encouraged them to participate in study.

She rejects the impersonal and detached manner of study and proposes involvement of researcher in the study.

Researchers start reacting rather than recording

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to get better insights.

There is one more problem associated with objectivity. A totally detached manner of study reduces the sociologist to a mere observer.

And, there is no purpose of such a study. It is meaningless because the ultimate objective of sociological study is improvement of society.

Today, there is no hard and fast focus on objectivity as the ideal way of study but a variety of methods and techniques are acceptable.

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(c) 'Value' refers to standards of desirability in the society. It represents what is worthwhile.

Role of values in sociological enquiries

Values invariably influence the analysis and findings in any sociological enquiry.

Advocates of positivism see 'value-neutrality' as an ideal way of study. They see values as a source of contamination.

Values of sociological researcher impact:

- (1) 'Topic of study' choice ✓
- (2) Sociological research method, ✓
- (3) Evaluation of data
- (4) And Research findings —

Method of data collection
 ontological/epistemological
 stance).

for egi. Study of caste system in India studied from a functionalist perspective, it is seen as a useful institution which helps maintain economic relations in society. On the other hand,

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studied from a conflict perspective, it is seen as an instrumentation of exploitation.

On the other hand, critical sociologists perceive values as important for sociological enquiry and not as a source of contamination. They argue that value-committed research is important to bring out the underlying essence of social relationships which they see as oppressive and hence required to bring out a change in the society.

Similarly, there are sociologists who espouse "value-desirability". Only a value committed research can help construct a better society.

Karl Marx's important work on economic-relations affecting the social structure was a result of value driven research.

Thus, values play a significant role in sociological research.

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Q2 (a) Modernisation refers to ^{social} transformation of political, social, economic and psychological aspects of society. Anthony Giddens says that Modernisation represents a break from the traditional past.

Incorrect
 Other views of modernisation briefly & then state this to is most acceptable

Modernisation of Europe and emergence of Sociology

Europe was undergoing several changes in all aspects of society in 18th century. This was a result of cumulative effects of developments over the centuries such as Renaissance, Reformation, Commercial Revolution, Scientific Revolution and Industrial revolution.

These modernisation changes ~~were~~ affected all aspects of society as discussed below:

Political Aspect → There was a change from 'subject' to 'citizen' having an inalienable set of rights. There was a transition towards democratic form of Government.

Economic Aspect → The European society

How did it lead to emergence of sociology?

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You need to explain
what are the effects of
these changes that
required need of a new
discipline

↑

This point
is only
valid
point that
you have
raised

underwent a change from subsistence economy to market economy. factory system of production replaced household manufacturing. land no longer remained the source of power. 'Capital' became increasingly ^{important} ~~powerful~~ source of power.

Social Aspect → There emerged a greater degree of geographical and social mobility. No longer, one's status in society was decided at birth but it was a factor of one's skills and power. New social classes emerged.

Psychological Aspect → There was an increasing acceptance of change. Tradition was no longer accepted unquestioningly. There was increased focus on reason and ^{social} rationality. Reflexivity represented the psychological aspect of modernity.

These changes, did not take place in a smooth manner. There were contradictions. On the one hand, there was optimism reflected in increased wealth,

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increased levels of production, scientific advances etc. Simultaneously, there was despair in the form of sufferings of the working class, loss of intimate family and kinship ties.

There emerged the need of a new body of knowledge to understand these changes and prescribe solutions to these changes. Religious or philosophical knowledge proved inadequate to account for them.

This need was fulfilled by the combination of Enlightenment and conservative thinkers of 18th century.

Enlightenment thinkers ^{such as Rousseau, Montesquieu & Voltaire} viewed these changes as marks of human progress. They proposed to develop a science of society using scientific methods to study these changes.

On the other hand, anti-enlightenment thinkers ^{such as Burke} saw these changes as signs of despair and sorrow. They bemoaned the loss of community life.

you have written here so missing context contiguous

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and sufferings of working class which lived in miserable conditions.

Now, these enlightenment thinkers provided the method of study of changes (scientific methods similar to natural sciences) and conservatives provided the goal of study of society (love, peace and harmony).

This way, modernisation in Europe created the need for sociology and the intellectual environment provided by Enlightenment and anti-enlightenment thinkers supplied the knowledge for study of society. And, this paved the way for emergence of sociology.

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Q22b

"Sociology emerged in Europe, developed in America and will mature in Asia"

Sociology developed in Europe in 18th century. It was a result of the sweeping changes that took place in Europe in 18th century in political, social, economic and psychological aspects of life. There was a rational transformation of society called Modernisation.

The contradictions presented by Modernisation were viewed with different viewpoints by two sets of scholars viz. the Enlightenment and Anti-Enlightenment thinkers. Enlightenment thinkers viewed the changes as signs of human progress. They believed in creating a science of society and arriving at scientific laws to bring about social engineering. Some of these thinkers were:

- France → Rousseau, Voltaire, Montesquieu
- Italy → Vico
- England → Adam Smith, Robertson

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Anti-enlightenment thinkers provided the goals of sociology → harmony and social order.

Post-enlightenment thinkers such as August Comte ^(France), Herbert Spencer ^(Britain) are among the founding fathers of sociology. Other founding fathers were Georg Simmel, Ferdinand Tönnies (both German) and Emile Durkheim (France).

Thus, all these European scholars contributed to emergence of sociology. ✓

In the next phase, sociology was greatly influenced by scholars like Talcott Parsons (American sociologist). He ~~conducted~~ ^{formulated} in-depth sociological theories under 'functional' school. He accounted for both change and order in society using the functionalist perspective. ✓

He became immensely popular. Functionalism remained the dominant school till 1960s. Beyond 1960s, its popularity declined due to ✓

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superior explanation offered by competing schools and partly due to change in fashion. Marxism became popular during this time.

Thus, efforts of T. Parsons and other sociologists (like Chicago School of Sociology) represents a phase of development of sociology after its emergence in Europe.

Next phase in development of sociology is 'Asia' centric. There are two reasons: firstly, Asian cities are in various stages of flux, thus attracting the interests of various sociologists. Secondly, they are under-studied i.e. have not been studied thoroughly due to late beginnings of sociology here. Thirdly, due to enormous variety in social groups, forms and institutions, Asian societies offer a great deal of opportunity and scope for study as compared to European

Turning into an
Urban Society
Sociology is mainly
Study of modern social
- for evolution
of a more
general theory
(Universal)
in sociology,
it needs to
cover whole
new world
for a scientific
culture.

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or American societies which have relatively matured and stabilised and also extensively studied.

In India, for eg: sociological research gained prominence in the post-independence era. GS Ghurje, MN Srinivas, Prausati Karve etc are pioneers of sociology in India.

Therefore, it is argued that sociological research will mature in Asia.

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(C) Feminists critique of objectivity in Social Science

Feminists believe that sociological research has been mainstream and malestream research. They argue that it has been conducted by male sociologists on male subjects and from male perspective.

So, they take a critical look at sociology and study it from feminine perspective to bring about a change in their condition for better.

For this reason, they reject objectivity in social research. They argue that positivist scientific methods are not suitable for study from women's perspective. They are inspired by Karl Marx and favour undertaking a value-driven approach.

Ann Oakley, a feminist, for eg. argues that the researcher should not be value-neutral and detached. Rather, he should be thoroughly involved.

Positivists (functionalist) explain social order as natural order hence turn status-quoist which goes against the interests of women

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in his^{her} study. The researcher should be involved in the study, establish a rapport with those being studied so that he/she can draw insights and truthful information.

This way, feminists reject the objective and value-neutral research.

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Section B

Q5)

(a) Participant observation is a method of research in which the researcher is a part of the social condition being studied. For eg. Andre Beteille study on caste system was done using Participant observation ✓

The benefit of this method is the deep insights and better interpretation of social reality. It reduces the chances of misrepresentation, especially important if area of study is culturally different from that of sociologist.

However, its drawback is that participant observation introduces 'nativisation' bias ✓. Also, it is not possible to conduct participant observation in all set-ups. For eg: Study of drug addicts, prisoners or Mafia-bosses is not easy to be set-up. ✓

underline such key terms

*① Suitable for
 ② Time taken & expenses.*

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(b)

Quantitative methods of research are the ones which involve data in numerical form. Egs. of quantitative research are surveys using questionnaire, structured interview etc.

Limitations of this method

- It does not capture the meanings and motives of the respondents.
- It is not useful in getting insights into social reality.
- Though reliability is high, validity of quantitative methods is low.
- It relies on ability of researcher to frame precise questions and ability of respondents to ^{understand the question &} articulate their responses.

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(C)

Documentary Method

It involves case-study of a particular phenomenon. Data required can be collected by the researcher himself or he can study existing data sets. This way, there is a flexibility of data source.

It gives insights into the particular subject being studied and can be done at ease, without disturbing the reality being studied. However, it is a time consuming method. Generalisations are not possible using this method.

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(A)

Comparative Method involves

comparison of social reality over a period of time or two or more instances of reality existing at the same time.

It is a very common and useful method of social research. For eg: Herbert Spencer used comparative method to study the evolution of society through several stages.

Max Weber, in his study on Protestant Capitalism, also did a comparative study of various societies.

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(c) Intellectual antecedents of emergence of Sociology :

Sociology in its formative years was influenced by following intellectual ideas :

Idea of progress → It viewed humans as Capable of attaining perfection and society as moving from simple to complex stages, ~~marked by~~ seen as sign of human progress.

Idea of Civil Society → It was considered that sociology could be studied using same methods as natural sciences and scientific laws could be derived. These laws could then be used for developing a better society.

Philosophy of history → ~~was~~ Society has passed through distinct stages over a period of time from simple to complex.

Philosophy of biological theory of Evolution → Spencer used organic analogy to study society. He argued society to, like an organism, evolved from simple to complex stages.

Social Surveys → It was believed that society could be studied using same methods as physical sciences. Therefore,

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social surveys should be conducted to understand social reality. It was also based on the belief that poverty was not natural but social poverty, hence suitable for study through social surveys.

Q6) (a) Historians study events of past. They are concerned with dating of past events. of late, historians are also interested in studying the past events statistically and not merely arranging them on a time scale.

They, therefore are using sociological methods to study history increasingly. This branch of study is called sociological history & therefore, it is argued that history is past sociology.

Sociologists study social behaviour, and social institutions. No social phenomenon can be understood in isolation, divorced from its history. Sociologists therefore study ^{both -} present

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and past society. They are especially interested in recent history, ^{this} being more relevant to their study. ✓

This sociological understanding of past events is called historical sociology and for this reason, it is argued that sociology is essentially present history. ✓

It should be noted that there are no hard divisions between sociological history and historical sociology. In fact, E.H. Carr argued the more the sociological history becomes historical sociology, the better. ✓

The close relation and minor differences between the two social sciences can be summed up as below:

SOCIOLOGY	HISTORY
- It studies similarities in different events	It studies differences in similar events
- It is concerned with patterns	It is concerned with uniqueness ✓

Read Bettelheim's take on comparative method

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<p><u>Sociology</u> - It aims at generalisation</p>	<p><u>HISTORY</u> - It aims at arrangement of events on a timeline</p>
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~~Essay~~
Also, Recently, the interaction between the two sciences is drawing closer. Hence, it is rightly argued that History is past sociology and sociology is present history.

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Q.7) (c)

Sociology is not a positivist science but a social science. It aims at generalisation but these efforts have not been successful widely.

This is because diff of the subject matter of sociology which is human behaviour. Humans are characterised by Geist or consciousness. Meanings and motives that develop due to this Geist keep changing and therefore generalisations are not possible.

At best, correlation or tendency statements can be arrived at.

This way, accumulative growth of theories is not possible. A researcher looking at the same phenomenon from a different perspective will, most certainly, arrive at a different conclusion.

So, for sociology, progress of this branch of science cannot be judged by accumulative growth of theories. On the other hand,

This is a statement made by philosopher of Science T. S. Kuhn which criticising both Inductivism & Hypothetico-deductivism while criticising he introduced the concept of paradigm which needs to be describe to their answer

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development of sociology has been characterised by emergence of different viewpoints and methodologies.

for eg: While early sociologists were inspired by positivistic view and aimed at arriving at laws of society. Later, scholars have argued that no generalisations are possible because social reality is subjective (eg. Phenomenologists)

Therefore, progress of a science like sociology has not witnessed cumulative growth rather a multitude of views and methods, all of which are considered equally true today.

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Q8) (a)

Common sense is derived from our accumulated experiences and ingrained prejudices and biases. It is ~~same~~ same as what is called folk-wisdom.

Sociology on the other hand is based on empirical observations and scientific research.

Often, it happens that Common sense and Sociology yield same results. For eg: "Give the dog a bad name and it will most likely live up to it" is a common saying. The same has been proved by Howard Becker's Theory of Deviance.

Similarly, observations like Women have low literacy rate than men in developing countries or that developing countries have higher percentage of poor population are based on common sense and most likely corroborate with Sociological findings.

So, ^{here,} Common sense knowledge is same as science. But, how it is

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a science in embryo is discussed below.

There are several instances wherein sociological research yields different and unexpected results. For eg. Mead conducted a study on primitive tribes and found that in the Tchambauli tribe, women performed roles which are normally associated with men. Such as they took care of public business, were outgoing while men were shy, homebound and took care of children. This shatters commonly held belief that differences in habits of men and women is primarily biological.

Common sense can provide only the fodder for hypothesis. Sociology is much more rigorous. It has a debunking attitude. While common sense would give naturalistic and individualist inferences, sociology would give empirical findings. Common sense views are variable, sociological findings tend to be stable (relatively).

Thus, it can be argued that common science is a science in embryo

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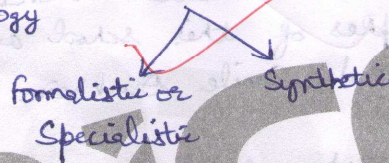
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8) (C)

Scope of sociology is extremely wide. On one hand, it can study social interaction like that between a customer and seller. (i.e. microsociological interaction). On other hand, it can study problems of national importance or global importance such as unemployment, poverty, globalisation etc.

There are two schools regarding scope of sociology



(1) Formalistic school believes that scope of sociology is limited - confined to study of forms of sociology. Advocates of this school argue that sociology is a pure and independent science. Ex. are Georg Simmel, Ferdinand Toennies and Max Weber.

(2) Synthetic school → Advocates of synthetic school criticise the narrow view of formalistic school. They argue that study of sociology divorced from other social sciences is impractical.

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~~form~~ Study of form of sociology without studying the contents is superficial. Sorokin argues that a change in content invariably changes the form of social relationship too.

Therefore, they argue that scope of sociology incorporates the subject matter of all other social sciences. Other examples of this school are Ginsberg and Emile Durkheim.

This way, study of sociology encompasses everything that can be called social and is therefore encyclopaedic. What differentiates it from others is the view with which sociology studies or approaches the subject matter.

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