

UPSC Sociology Mains 2026

Paper 1

Section A

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

- a) In what ways do class and caste intersect and overlap in shaping social structure? (10 Marks)
- b) Critically examine the position of women in the informal economy. (10 Marks)
- c) Discuss the role of geographical factors in social change and development. (10 Marks)
- d) Although sociology, as a subject of study, overarches all disciplines in social sciences yet it maintains its distinctiveness. Comment. (10 Marks)
- e) Explain in brief the relationship between social movement, collective action and revolution in bringing about social and political changes. (10 Marks)

Question 2.

- a) Describe the impact of capitalist mode of production on society (20 Marks)
- b) Differentiate between social hierarchy and social exclusion and substantiate your answer with reference to the caste system. (20 Marks)
- c) 'Data without theory is blind and theory without data is empty.' Comment. (10 Marks)

Question 3.

- a) Discuss the relationship between religion and science in modern society. Do they necessarily remain in conflict? (20 Marks)
- b) Is 'interpretativism' more effective than 'positivism' in analysing social reality? Discuss. (20 Marks)
- c) How does Emile Durkheim conceptualize religion as a 'social fact'? Explain. (10 Marks)

Question 4.

- a) Elaborate major sociological theories of power. How do power elite shape the political process in modern societies? (20 Marks)
- b) Evaluate the socio-economic impacts of migration on rural households. (20 Marks)
- c) 'The methods of sociology are inadequate in understanding the complex social phenomena'. Discuss. (10 Marks)

Section B

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

- a) The major challenge for sociology researchers is to analyze social reality objectively. Critically analyze. (10 Marks)
- b) Explain the concept of 'definition of the situation' and its significance in sociology. (10 Marks)
- c) In what way the concept of 'patriarchal bargain' be applied to the institution of marriage? Comment. (10 Marks)
- d) How does Max Weber's 'theory of authority' shape bureaucracy? Analyse. (10 Marks)
- e) How do different theories explain social dimensions of social movements? Discuss. (10 Marks)

Question 6.

- a) Discuss the intellectual origins of sociology and the historical antecedents of its evolution as a distinct field of study. (20 Marks)
- b) Critically analyse the 'mode of production' debate from different perspectives. (20 Marks)
- c) How does the rise of new 'cults' and 'sects' influence intercaste relations? (10 Marks)

Question 7.

- a) Compare and critically assess 'the grounded theory' with 'theory-driven research method' in sociology. (20 Marks)
- b) According to Weber, how do class, status and power interact to produce and sustain social inequality? (20 Marks)
- c) Compare the social organisation of work in industrial capitalism and platform capitalism. (10 Marks)

Question 8.

- a) How are the concepts of nation, state and citizenship interrelated in a democracy? Elaborate. (20 Marks)
- b) Critically evaluate the relevance of the cyclical theory of social change in understanding contemporary societies. (20 Marks)
- c) Discuss the significance and limitations of 'intersectionality' in social research. (10 Marks)