

Explain the sociological model developed by Talcott Parsons to analyze the functional requirements of a social system. How can it fit in our current society?

1) Introduction:-

Contemporary functionalist, Talcott Parsons developed a sociological model to explain and stress the functional requirements for a society to work smoothly. This model provides a clear roadmap consisting of four distinct functions for a smooth social system. We can apply this model to our current society to study and interpret how well our society is functioning towards based on the standards of that model.

2) Parson's' Social Model:

Parson's model for analyzing the functional requirements of a social system posits that a functional system must fulfill four basic requirements for it to be successful and viable. His model is also

Known as the 'AGIL Model' and has the following components

i) Adaptation :-

This function requires that a ^{system} function is able to adapt to the changing requirements of environment, science and economy. Failure of the system to adapt to change can lead to dysfunction, chaos and eventual collapse of the entire system.

Example:-

Adaptation of agriculture to the changing environmental factors with the help of new technological tools.

ii) Goal Attainment :-

This means that a functional social system is able to set new goals and provide means to attain those goals. This allows the system to improve continuously.

Example:-

Government setting visions for specific purposes e.g. for environment and making policies

to achieve that vision. Vision 2025 is an example here.

iii) Integration:-

This requirement means that a social system should be able to promote solidarity among its members and regulate peaceful relationships. Failure of the system maintain integration can lead to weakening of social fabric. A system does that via laws and religious norms.

Example:-

Islamic laws about the importance of family are a strong integration factor in Pakistan society.

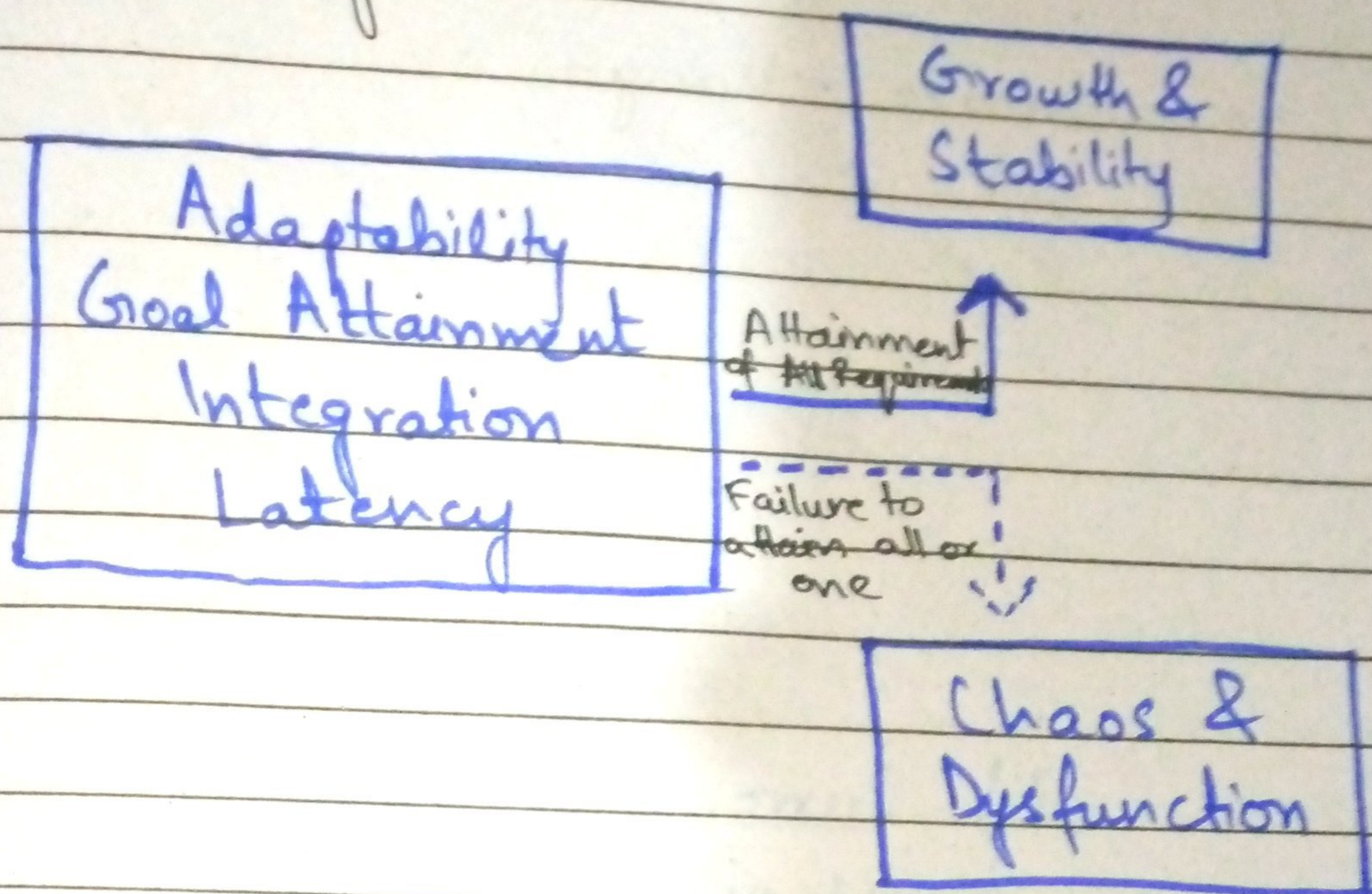
iv) Latency (Pattern Maintenance)

This stands for maintenance of social norms, values and customs from one generation to another. This ensures that while the social system improves for better, it doesn't forget its roots.

Example:-

Use of education to transmit norms and values to

the new generations to maintain latency.



3) Fitting Parson's Model to Current Society :-

Using Parsons' Model, we can measure how well our current system is performing, what are its flaws and what are the areas that need improvement.

a) Current Society in terms of Adaptability :-

Although the government and civil society is working continuously to adapt the social system to the change, it is failing in terms of pace or speed. Consider the following examples :-

Example:-

Government response to climate change is slow while the rate at which this change is devouring our agriculture and economy is too fast. The slow response is unprecedented levels of human and economic losses each year.

b) Current Society in terms of Goal Attainment

In this realm our current society is performing very well by offering new growth opportunities and methods to attain them to the young population of Pakistan.

Example:-

Government jobs and ways to attain those job positions via one-paper exams and CSS or PMS. These opportunities however, are not sufficient to meet the demands of whole population and so we see delinquency or crime in the society too.

c) Current Society in terms of Integration :-

Our current society is facing integration challenges because the law and religious norms that are responsible for ensuring integration are facing resistance from within the society and from the non-state actors.

Example:-

i) Rise of inter-provincial disunity on the issue of water distribution

ii) Rise of ethnic clashes in the tribal areas

iii) Rise of religious divide between Shia and Sunni groups

d) Current Society in terms of Latency:

Current society is doing well in transmitting social norms and values to the new generation but there is also the rising influence of Western ~~if~~ values today.

Example:-

Onslaught of Western values via media and educational institutions and waning influence of Islam.

4) Ensuring that Our Society fits Parsons' Model:

We can use Parsons' model to ensure that our social system is growth oriented and sustainable. To ensure this, we will have to ensure that it efficiently fulfills the four functional criteria that Parsons has laid down:

5) Conclusion:-

Parsons' sociological model is a great method to check the functional dimensions of any social system. It provides four clear criteria that can be applied to any society to measure its functional capacities and ~~measure~~ point out lacunas.