

Question: 5Introduction

Social stratification refers to the systematic ranking of individuals and groups in society based on access to resources, power, and prestige. Sociologists have long debated whether stratification serves a functional role or operates as a mechanism of exploitation. Functional theorists justify inequality as necessary for social order, whereas conflict theorists view it as an outcome of domination and unequal power relations.

1. Functional Theory of Stratification

Functional theory, most notably articulated by Davis and Moore, argues that stratification is a universal and necessary feature of society. According to this view, societies must ensure that the most important positions are filled by the

most qualified individuals. Differential rewards motivate individuals to undergo training and perform complex roles.

a. Core Assumptions of Functional Theory

Functional theory rests on the following assumptions regarding social stratification:

- Stratification is universal in all societies
- Positions differ in functional importance
- Differential rewards ensure motivation.

From this perspective, inequality is seen as merit based and beneficial for societal continuity.

2. Criticism of the Functional Perspective

Functional has been criticized for its idealistic assumptions. It presumes equal opportunity, ignoring +

barriers such as inherited privilege, discrimination, and unequal access to education.

2-1 Key Limitations

- i) It ignores power and coercion.
- ii) It justifies existing inequalities.
- iii) It fails to explain unequal rewards for socially essential work.

For example, teachers and healthcare workers perform crucial social functions but receive lower rewards compared to corporate elites, undermining the claim that rewards reflect functional importance.

3. Conflict Perspective on Stratification

The conflict perspective, rooted in Marxist theory, views stratification as a product of economic and political domination. According to Marx, class inequality arises from

the unequal ownership of the means of production, enabling the ruling class to exploit the labor of the working class.

3.1 Core Arguments of Conflict Theory

- i. Stratification benefits dominant groups
 - ii. Inequality is maintained through ideology and institutions
 - iii. Social order reflects elite interests
- Conflict theorists reject the notion that inequality is necessary or fair, emphasizing its historical and structural origins.

4. Comparative Analysis of Stratification Systems

4.1 Class

Functionalists argue that class differences reflect skill and effort. Conflict theorists counter that class positions are largely inherited and maintained through exploitation, making

inequality structurally entrenched.

4.2

Caste

Functional explanations fail to justify caste stratification, which is rigid and hereditary. Conflict theory better explains caste as a system of exclusion designed to preserve power and privilege for dominant groups.

4.3

Gender

Functionalists often justify gender inequality through role specialization. Feminist conflict perspectives highlight patriarchy, unpaid domestic labor, and institutional discrimination, viewing gender stratification as exploitative rather than functional.

5.

Evaluation of Both Perspectives

Functional theory contributes to understanding social order and role

differentiation but overlooks inequality of opportunity and power asymmetries. Conflict theory provides a stronger explanation for persistent inequalities but may overemphasize economic factors and understate social consensus.

A comprehensive understanding requires acknowledging both stability and structural injustice.

Conclusion

The debate over social stratification reveals fundamental differences between functional and conflict perspectives. While functionalism portrays inequality as necessary for efficiency and stability, conflict theory exposes its exploitative nature across class, caste, and gender. Empirical evidence suggests that stratification is more closely linked to power and privilege than functional necessity, making conflict perspectives more persuasive in explaining enduring social inequalities.

Question : 6

Introduction

Max Weber's typology of authority provides a framework for understanding how power is legitimized and exercised in society. He identifies three types of authority: traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational. In contemporary states, legal-rational authority predominates, where formal rules and bureaucracy ensures efficiency and predictability, it can also limit democratic participation and constraint individual agency.

1. Weber's Typology of Authority

1.1 Traditional Authority

Traditional authority is based on customs, hereditary succession, and established norms. Obedience is owed to individuals because of their position within a histo-

socially sanctioned structure rather than their personal qualities. In Pakistan, traditional authority is visible in rural areas where feudal landlords exercise significant influence over local governance and resource distribution. Such authority often operates alongside formal state institutions, affecting political mobilization and social order in rural Sindh and Punjab.

1.2 Charismatic Authority

Charismatic authority arises when individuals wield power based on exceptional personal qualities that inspire devotion and loyalty. Followers obey not because of law or tradition, but because of the leader's perceived extraordinary abilities.

Example: Pakistan has witnessed charismatic authority in political movements such as the leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in the 1970s,

where large segments of the population supported these leaders due to personal admiration rather than institutional legitimacy.

1.3 Legal-Rational Authority

Legal-rational authority derives legitimacy from codified laws and formal rules. Obedience is owed to the office rather than the individual occupying it.

Example: In Pakistan, legal-rational authority forms the basis of the federal bureaucracy and judicial institutions. Civil servants and judges are expected to operate according to established laws and procedures, ensuring formal predictability and consistency in governance.

3. Bureaucratic and Administrative Efficiency

Bureaucracy embodies the principles of legal-rational authority. Hierarchical

organization, specialization, and adherence to formal rules ensure that public administration operates efficiently and consistently. In Pakistan, the Federal Board of Revenue implements tax collection and compliance through structured procedures, while programs like the Ehsaas social protection initiative rely on bureaucratic processes to identify beneficiaries and deliver aid. So such systems demonstrate the capacity of bureaucracy to achieve technical efficiency and maintain continuity in governance.

3. Bureaucracy, Democracy, and Human Agency

Despite its efficiency, bureaucracy can also constrain democracy and individual agency. Rigid adherence to rules and hierarchical authority can limit responsiveness to citizen needs. For example, the

slow judicial process in Pakistan often denies timely access to justice, particularly for marginalized groups. Similarly, centralization of decision-making within federal ministries can reduce participatory governance, as provincial and local actors have limited discretion.

Public servants, bound by strict procedures, may also find their ability to exercise initiative constrained, reducing the flexibility of service delivery.

4. Critical Evaluation

Weber's framework accurately explains the efficiency and predictability of modern bureaucracies. In the Pakistani context, bureaucracy has enabled the implementation of key policies and sustained institutional functioning. However, it simultaneously reproduces hierarchical power relations, limits public

participation, and constrains the agency of individuals and lower-level officials. This tension illustrates that while bureaucracy is essential for state functioning, it requires reforms to balance efficiency with democratic accountability.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Weber's typology of authority highlights modern state institutions operate primarily under legal-rational authority, with bureaucracy as the central mechanism. In Pakistan, bureaucracy has ensured administrative efficiency and policy implementation, but the same structures can undermine democracy and individual agency through rigid rules and centralized power.

Strengthening participatory mechanisms and allowing discretion in implementation are essential to reconcile efficiency with democratic governance.

Question: 7

Introduction

Social order in any society is maintained through shared values, norms, and systems of control. Culture provides a framework of beliefs and practices that guide behavior, while ideology legitimizes power and existing social arrangements. In countries like Pakistan, cultural norms such as respect for elders, religious practices, and biradari loyalty shape everyday behavior. At the same time, ideological narratives from political and religious leaders reinforce compliance with societal expectations. This answer examines the role of culture and ideology and evaluates formal and informal mechanisms of social control.

1. Role of Culture in Maintaining Social Order

1.1 Shared Values and Norms

Culture provides shared expectations for behavior that promote stability and cohesion. For example, family honor, communal dispute resolution, and hospitality norms regulate social interactions in Pakistan, while in Japan, respect for hierarchy and social harmony maintains order. Cultural norms create predictable behavior patterns, reducing conflict and supporting social stability.

1.2 Cultural Transmission

Cultural practices are passed across generations through education, media, and family socialization. Schools promote national values, religious teachings emphasize moral conduct, and television or social

media reinforces societal expectations. This transmission ensures that younger generations internalize socially approved behavior, maintaining social continuity globally, whether in rural African communities or urban European cities.

3. Role of Ideology in Social Control

2.1 Legitimization of Power

Ideology shapes beliefs about what is fair or legitimate, influencing obedience and compliance. In Pakistan and India, religious or nationalistic narratives support authority and civic norms, encouraging citizens to follow laws. Similarly, in Western democracies, ideologies such as liberalism or civic nationalism guide perceptions of lawfulness and social responsibility.

2.2

Ideology and Inequality

Ideology can also reinforce inequalities. Gender roles, class dominance, and social hierarchies are often justified through cultural or religious arguments, such as expectations of women's domestic roles in South Asia or elite privilege in Western institutions. Ideology therefore maintains order but may also perpetuate structural inequalities.

3.

Formal Mechanisms of Social Control

3.1

Legal and State Institutions

Formal social control is exercised through codified laws, regulations, and enforcement agencies. Globally, the judiciary, police, and regulatory bodies uphold social order by sanctioning deviations.

from laws. For example, traffic regulations in urban Pakistan or anti-corruption initiatives in European countries illustrate structured means to regulate behavior and maintain predictability.

3.2 Efficiency and Limitations

Formal mechanisms face challenges such as bureaucratic delays, corruption, and unequal access to justice. Efficiency alone does not guarantee social stability without public legitimacy.

4. Informal Mechanisms of Social Control

4.1 Community and Family Norms

Informal control operates through social norms, peer pressure, and family expectations. Community councils in rural Pakistan or

village elders in parts of Africa enforce social order without legal authority. Individuals comply with rules to gain social approval and avoid criticism.

4.2 Media and Peer Influence

Social media and peer networks shape behavior by promoting social approval or criticism. Public opinion, amplified through online platforms, often regulates conduct faster than formal enforcement, particularly among youth in urban areas worldwide.

4.3 Advantages and Challenges

Informal mechanisms are flexible and culturally grounded, making them effective where formal law is weak. However, they may perpetuate inequality or restrict freedoms, for instance, enforcing

conservative gender norms or
limiting minority rights.

5. Critical Evaluation

Formal and informal mechanisms complement each other but have limitations. Formal mechanisms provide legal legitimacy and accountability but may lack cultural acceptance. Informal mechanisms are socially accepted but can reinforce inequality. Effective social order requires a balance between institutional enforcement and cultural influence to ensure fairness and social cohesion globally.

Conclusion

Cultural and ideology shape social order by providing norms, values, and legitimizing authority. Formal mechanisms such as

judiciary and police, alongside informal family, community, and peer controls, jointly regulate behaviour. Examples from across the world show that while these mechanisms maintain order, attention must be given to inclusivity, justice, and individual freedom to prevent reinforcement of inequality.

Question: 8

Introduction

Social change involves transformations in social structures, culture, and institutions, while development focuses on economic, political, and social progress. Sociological theories provide different explanations for how societies evolve and why some countries remain underdeveloped. Evolutionary theory emphasizes gradual, linear progress; modernization theory highlights the adoption of Western-style economic and social practices; dependency and world-systems theories stress structural inequalities in the global economy.

1. Evolutionary Theory

1.1 Core Assumptions

Evolutionary theory, associated with

Comte and **Spencer**, posits that societies develop in a linear, progressive manner from simple to complex forms. Institutions, culture, and technology evolve gradually, and change is seen as inevitable.

1.2 Critique

This approach is deterministic and Eurocentric, assuming all societies must follow the same path. It cannot explain the persistent underdevelopment of countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, or parts of Africa, where historical, social, and structural disruptions prevent linear progression.

2. Modernization Theory

2.1 Core Assumptions

Modernization theory attributes

underdevelopment to internal factors, such as weak institutions, low education, or traditional cultural practices. Societies develop by adopting modern economic, political, and technological models, often inspired by Western nations.

2.2 Examples:

Pakistan's Green Revolution and industrialization projects aimed to modernize agriculture and industry, but elite capture and uneven implementation limited their impact. Similar experiences in Africa and Southeast Asia show that adoption of Western methods alone does not guarantee development.

2.3 Critique

Modernization theory ignores global inequalities and external exploitation. Its prescriptive approach

can justify foreign intervention and oversimplify complex social realities.

3. Dependency Theory

3.1 Core Assumptions

Dependency theory argues that underdevelopment results from exploitative relationships between developed (core) and developing (peripheral) countries. Peripheral nations export raw materials and cheap labor while wealth flows to industrialized nations.

3.2 Examples

Pakistan's reliance on IMF loans, trade imbalances, and export of raw materials illustrates structural dependency. Latin American and African nations

similarly remain trapped in global economic hierarchies despite internal reforms

3.3 Critique

Dependency theory highlights external constraints but sometimes underplays internal factors like governance and elite capture, which also shape development outcomes.

4. World-Systems Theory

World-systems theory expands dependency theory, emphasizing the global economic system of core, semi-periphery, and periphery nations. It explains how global trade, capital flows, and international institutions shape local development outcomes.

4.1

Examples

Pakistan's semi-peripheral

position involves exporting labour and raw materials while importing technology and high-value goods. Global shocks and financial dependence limit domestic growth, illustrating structural constraints in development.

5. Theory that Explains Underdevelopment in the Global South

5.1 World-Systems Theory

World-systems theory best explains underdevelopment in the Global South because it integrates both global and local factors. Peripheral countries, such as Pakistan or Bangladesh, remain dependent on core nations due to unequal trade, capital flows, and technology gaps. At the same time, internal issues such as weak governance, elite capture, and social inequality interact with global structures to

* sustain underdevelopment. Examples from Latin America and Africa confirm that development is shaped by both global hierarchies and domestic realities, making world-systems theory the ~~most~~ most comprehensive framework.

Conclusion

Social change and development theories offer distinct explanations for progress and stagnation. Evolutionary and modernization perspectives emphasize global economic hierarchies and their impact on local development.

Among these, world-systems theory provides the clearest explanation for underdevelopment in the Global South, highlighting the need for policies that strengthen domestic capacities while addressing global structural constraints.