

Week 1 (Day 4)

1. According to Marx, how are human beings alienated from their human potential and what does he suggest to change this? 20

Model Framework:**Introduction**

- Define Alienation
 - A Sense of disconnect from aspects - 4 factors (process, product, self and society), brought about by the conditions of labor present in a capitalist society.

Main Body

- Four Stages of Alienation -
 1. From Produce - they sell their labor to produce not for themselves but for the capitalist.
 2. From Process - they relinquish control over the means of production, which they clearly do not own.
 3. From Self - they are estranged from his ability to create what he desires of his own volition and is thus kept from his human potential.
 4. From Society and other labors - conditions of labor present in a capitalist society, meagre interactions with fellow beings.
- Through the above stages humans get alienated from their potential.
- In alienation dead labour i.e. capital dominates the living labour
- Reasons for alienation
 - Repetitive kind of work
 - Economic infrastructure constraints creative potential of human beings
 - Workers are subjected to impersonal mechanisms such as law of supply and demand
- Examples - IT professionals working for longer time without any creative efforts get alienated, Workers in assembly line of Car mfg expected to follow daily routine procedure thus making them cog in a machine, Working at lower wages, Refusal of rights to entitlement to women cashing alienation etc

- Marx's Solution to Alienation (de-alienation)
 - Haves and have nots → Alienation of have nots → objective opposition of interests (CLASS IN ITSELF) → Subjective awareness (CLASS FOR ITSELF)
 - Class polarisation → Revolutionary forces unleashed → Dictatorship of Proletariat → Advanced Communism (egalitarian society with equal control over forces of production) → Alienation Disappears.

Conclusion:

- Relevance of theory of Alienation
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2. What are social facts? Do you think pandemics are social facts?**10****Model Structure****Introduction**

- Define Social Facts (Ways of feeling, thinking, acting which is constrained, above individual, has life on its own, and diffused throughout society.)

Main Body

- Emile Durkheim doled out the concept of social fact to lay a scientific foundation for the newly developed discipline i.e. Sociology.
- Durkheim considered Social fact is the thing-
 1. Independent of Individual will
 2. External to Individual
 3. Constraints individual action
 4. Universal/General
- According to him, the task of a sociologist is to study social facts as things as we study things in the natural world.
- 2 types
 - Material

- Non-material

(Note: There is a lot to write about social fact, but as it is 10 marker question with two sub-parts in it, it is advisable to explain important points only- as illustrated above)

Pandemic are social fact as well.

- It is sui generis
- It exists outside the individual. (individual cannot control it)
- Has life on its own even an individual cannot influence it.
- Some pandemics are universal as well (E.g. – Covid-19)
- It constraints individual behaviour (eg. Lockdowns, need of sanitization, etc.)
- Durkheim opines that social fact can be explained using cause and function
 - Social facts exists only till it functions properly, since pandemic doesn't have a function it should cease to exist

You can also take a view that Pandemic are NOT a social fact as-

- Pandemic is concerned with individual subjectivity and emotions- which are ignored in the conception of social fact (Stefan Lukes)
- Social fact is an objective concept which does injustice by ignoring individual human behaviour in the wake of pandemic. (eg. upper class and migrant workers perceived Covid pandemic differently) - Peter Berger
- Pandemic as a social fact can't explain why some pandemics influence different individuals differently.