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Q4(c)

Discuss the relationship between poverty and social exclusion

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · Sociology GS 1 · 15 marks · Stratification and Mobility: Concepts

Stratification and Mobility: Concepts - equality, inequality, hierarchy, exclusion, poverty and deprivation; Theories of social stratification - Structural functionalist, Marxist, Weberian; Dimensions - Class, status groups, gender, ethnicity and race; Social mobility - open and closed systems, types, sources and causes.

Core demand of the question

- Discuss the relationship between poverty and **social exclusion**
- Keep the discussion within a 15-mark length

Revision summary

Poverty is resource lack; exclusion is denied participation and honour.

They cause each other without being the same fact.

Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and Merton supply class, status, integration, and blocked means.

Indian caste, gender nutrition, and informal work show splits between rupees and belonging.

Discuss both indicators, not a single line.

Introduction

Poverty is lack of resources relative to a standard of living. **Social exclusion** is being shut out of participation, rights, and recognition. They overlap and they are not twins. One can be poor inside a community; one can be excluded without being the poorest on a consumption line.

Body**Two concepts**

- Poverty, in a Marxian key, is rooted in class relations and surplus. A line of rupees is an indicator, not the whole relation.
- **Exclusion, after later European and Indian debates, names denied citizenship:** work, housing, law, and honour.
- **Max Weber's** class, status, and party already split market chance from honour closure and organised power.

How they relate

- **Poverty often produces exclusion:** no fee, no document, no network, no "clean" occupation.
- **Exclusion produces poverty:** caste boycott, gendered property denial, stigma of disability or locality.
- **Emile Durkheim's** low integration is a cousin of exclusion; anomie can sit with both plenty and want.
- **Robert K. Merton's blocked means is a structural bridge:** approved goals, closed channels.

Indian illustration

- **Census** consumption poverty misses unpaid work and stigma. **NFHS** shows nutrition exclusion inside non-poor houses, especially for women.
- Dalit and Adivasi exclusion is status and power, not only a poverty residual.
- Informal and gig work can include people in markets while excluding them from social security.

Discussion

- Policy that only raises income may leave honour closed. Policy that only names inclusion may leave class intact.
- **George Herbert Mead's generalised other**: exclusion is also a denied self in public space.

Flow diagram

Poverty resources -> Social exclusion
Social exclusion -> Poverty resources
Status caste gender -> Social exclusion
Class -> Poverty resources

Conclusion

Poverty and **social exclusion** reinforce each other but are not identical. **Marx** roots want in class; **Weber** and caste studies root closure in honour and party. Measure resources and participation together, as **Census** lines and **NFHS** dignity gaps both require.

Facts & figures

Social exclusion

Shutting out from work, rights, services, and recognition, not only low income.

Weber status

Honour closure can exclude even when some market income exists.

Merton strain

Blocked legitimate means link deprivation to structured non-participation.

NFHS

Shows intra-household nutrition and agency gaps that a household poverty line can hide.