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Q2(b)

How are Hierarchy and Exclusion the major impediments in the transformation of societies ? Discuss.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · 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

- How are Hierarchy and Exclusion the major impediments in the transformation of societies? Discuss
- Keep the discussion within a 15-mark length

Revision summary

Hierarchy moralises rank; exclusion hoards opportunities.

Together they capture factories, votes, and schools for old groups.

Weber, **Tilly**, Dumont, **Walby**, Barth, and Du Bois name the mechanisms.

Census and NFHS gaps are the evidence.

Transformation without opening doors is elite modernisation.

Introduction

Transformation means a durable shift in how resources, honour, and power are organised. Hierarchy ranks people. Exclusion shuts doors. Together they slow, distort, or capture change so that the new factory or the new vote still feeds the old rank.

Body

Hierarchy as impediment

- Louis Dumont and Indian caste show rank as a moral cosmos, not only a pay scale. Reform then looks like pollution.
- **Max Weber**'s status honour and party oligarchies, after Robert Michels, keep transformation inside a thin elite, as Pareto's circulation also warns.
- Gender hierarchy, as Sylvia **Walby** argued, can survive industrialisation as a double day.

Exclusion as impediment

- **Charles Tilly's durable inequality**: opportunity hoarding and exploitation block newcomers.
- Land, English schooling, and networks exclude groups from the modern sector. **Census** and NFHS gaps are the file.
- Ethnic and racial boundaries, after Fredrik Barth and W. E. B. Du Bois, turn citizenship into a gated good.

How they jointly stall transformation

- Modernisation theory expected class to replace ascription. Hierarchy re-enters as caste in the union and race in the city.
- **Karl Marx** expected polarisation to simplify struggle. Exclusion fragments the proletariat into honour ranks.
- Affirmative action tries to cut exclusion; hierarchy re-marks the reserved seat as lesser merit.

Discuss

- They are major impediments, not the only ones. Capital flight and state violence also stall change.
- Transformation that ignores them becomes elite modernisation.

Flow diagram

Hierarchy -> Capture of new institutions
Exclusion -> Capture of new institutions
Capture of new institutions -> Stalled transformation
Open chances -> Actual change

Conclusion

Hierarchy ranks worth; exclusion hoards chances. They impede transformation by capturing new institutions for old groups. **Weber**, **Tilly**, **Walby**, and Indian caste-class show the mechanism. Count new laws, then ask who still cannot enter.

Facts & figures

Tilly

Durable inequality through exploitation and opportunity hoarding.

Weber

Status closure can block the market's transformative promise.

Walby

Patriarchal structures that persist through industrial change.

Census / NFHS

Education, work, and health gaps that show exclusion's yield.