

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q1(d)

Explain whether Durkheim's theory of Division of Labour is relevant in the present day context

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2021 · Sociology GS 1 · 10 marks · Sociological Thinkers: Karl Marx

Sociological Thinkers: Karl Marx - Historical materialism, mode of production, alienation, class struggle; Emile Durkheim - Division of labour, social fact, suicide, religion and society; Max Weber - Social action, ideal types, authority, bureaucracy, protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism; Talcott Parsons - Social system, pattern variables; Robert K. Merton - Latent and manifest functions, conformity and deviance, reference groups; Mead - Self and identity.

Core demand of the question

- Explain whether **Durkheim's** theory of division of labour is relevant in the present-day context
- Keep the explanation within a 10-mark length

Revision summary

- **Durkheim:** specialisation shifts solidarity from likeness to interdependence.

Global supply chains illustrate **organic solidarity**.

Anomie and **forced division of labour** fit gig work, caste-typed jobs, and lockdown rupture.

Marx and unpaid care mark the gaps.

Relevant, not sufficient.

Introduction

Emile Durkheim treated the division of labour as the move from mechanical solidarity of likeness to **organic solidarity** of interdependence. The map still reads factories, professions, and global supply chains. Abnormal forms also still read gig precarity and lockdown rupture.

Body

What still fits

- **Organic solidarity** is visible when a phone, a vaccine, or a garment gathers parts and skills across countries.
- Restitutive law, contracts, and professional ethics remain the glue of specialised work, as he expected.
- **The non-contractual basis of contract still matters:** trust, standards, and logistics make exchange possible.

Abnormal forms today

- **Anomic division of labour** appears when rules lag behind new trades, as in platform work without clear hours or security.
- **Forced division of labour** appears when caste, gender, and race assign tasks irrespective of talent.

- The **2020 reverse migration** showed how urban organic links can snap when the state and firm treat labour as disposable.

Limits

- **Durkheim** underplayed class exploitation that **Marx** placed at the centre of the same specialisation.
- He did not theorise unpaid care, which Ann Oakley made visible as labour outside the factory map.
- Relevance is high for interdependence and anomie; it is incomplete as a full political economy.

Flow diagram

Division of labour -> Mechanical likeness

Division of labour -> Organic interdependence

Organic interdependence -> Global supply chains

Anomie forced Division of labour -> Gig lockdown caste

Conclusion

Durkheim's division of labour remains relevant for global interdependence and for diagnosing anomie and forced specialisation. It is not a complete theory of gig work, care, or class. Use it with **Marx** and gender analysis.

Facts & figures

Organic solidarity

Social cohesion from complementary differences in a specialised economy.

Anomic division of labour

Specialisation without moral regulation; **Durkheim's** abnormal form.

Forced division of labour

Positions allocated by inherited constraint rather than aptitude.

2020 reverse migration

Showed how urban interdependence collapsed for informal workers when lockdown cut wages and transport.