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

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Q1(d)

Can Merton's reference group theory be relevant in understanding 'identity making' in digital world? Explain.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2025 · 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.

Facts & figures for this PYQ only.

Numbers move. Confirm the latest Budget, Economic Survey or census round. This sheet is for revision, not a substitute for the model answer.

<https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/sociology-gs-1/2025/can-mertons-reference-group-theory-be-relevant-in-understanding-identity-making-in-digital-world-explain/>

Anticipatory socialisation

Merton's term for adopting a reference group's norms before one belongs to it, often in mobility situations.

Relative deprivation

Felt lack produced by comparison with a reference group, familiar from Stouffer's soldier studies and Runciman.

Non-membership reference

A group used as a yardstick even when the person is not a member, now routinely an influencer or online public.

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