BSOC 105: POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY

Tutor Marked Assignment

Course Code: BSOC 105
Assignment Code: BSOC-105/ASST/TMA/2026-27
Total Marks: 100

There are three Sections in the Assignment. You have to answer all the questions.

Section I

Answer the following Descriptive Category questions in about 500 words each.

1. Define power and authority in the context of politics. 20

2. What are the two categories within the governing elites according to Pareto? Discuss. 20

Section II

Answer the following Middle Category questions in about 250 words each.

3. Who are the power elites? 10

4. What do you mean by citizenship? Discuss. 10

5. What are the theories of the origin of the state? Discuss. 10

Section III

Answer the following Short Category questions in about 100 words each.

6. Authority 06

7. Cultural Capital 06

8. Nation 06

9. Globalization 06

10. Bio- politics. 06

1. Define power and authority in the context of politics. 20

Answer

Power and authority are central concepts of political sociology because politics is concerned not only with government offices but also with the ways decisions are made, obedience is obtained and resources are distributed in society. Power refers broadly to the capacity of an individual or group to influence the conduct of others, even when their preferences conflict. Authority is a particular form of power that is regarded as rightful or legitimate by those who are expected to obey it. The relationship between them helps explain why some political orders depend mainly on fear and force whereas others secure a more stable acceptance of rules.

Meaning and dimensions of power

Max Weber described power as the probability that an actor in a social relationship can carry out his or her will despite resistance. This definition shows that power is relational: it operates between people and groups, not simply as something a ruler owns. An elected government can make laws; an employer can influence working conditions; a pressure group can change policy debates; and a community movement may force officials to reconsider a decision. The source and extent of their powers differ. Power can also be exercised indirectly by controlling what issues reach the public agenda, shaping information or encouraging people to accept certain policies as natural.

Power may rest on several resources. Economic power comes from control over property, employment and investment. Political power is linked with offices, lawmaking and administrative decisions. Coercive power relies on the possibility of punishment, including the lawful use of force by the state. Ideological and cultural power work through education, mass communication, religion and prevailing ideas. In practice, these resources overlap. A wealthy corporation may possess economic resources that give it influence over political discussions, even when its leaders hold no elected office. Conversely, citizens organised in a trade union or public campaign may influence decisions through collective action rather than wealth.

Sociologists also study unequal distribution of power. Karl Marx linked the modern state's decisions to relationships between social classes and control over productive resources. Elite theorists, including Pareto and Mosca, argued that a relatively small organised minority often exercises decisive influence. Pluralist approaches stress competition among several groups and institutions,