

# 202SO21

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# INDIAN SOCIETY - STRUCTURE AND CHANGE

M. A. Sociology First Year

Semester – II, Paper-I



Director, I/c

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## 202SO21: Indian Society: Structure and Change

**Course Objectives:** The main objective of this paper is : To Provide/disseminate knowledge on Hindu Social Organization – Its Normative and Scriptural Bases, Major Change Processes and changes in institutions i.e. marriage, family, caste system.

**Course Outcomes:** Train up the students to gain knowledge on theories, and significance of social institutions, Social Movements and Major Change Processes in Indian Society.

### Unit I

1. Hindu Social Organization – Its Normative and Scriptural Bases
2. Historical Perspective on Indian Society
3. Composition of Indian Society – Racial, Ethnic, Religious – Linguistic and Cultural Groups – Unity in Diversity

### Unit II

1. Contemporary Indian Society – Structural Features, Function
2. Changing aspects of Varna, Caste and Religion
3. Changing aspects of Kinship, Marriage and Family

### Unit III

1. Social Organisation
2. Problems of Minorities with reference to Christians, Muslims, Sikhs
3. Problems of Indian Society – nationalism, Regionalism, Casteism, Communalism and Linguistic Problems.

### Unit IV

1. Major Change Processes in Indian Society: Islamisation
2. Sanskritization, Westernization
3. Modernization and Secularization

### Unit V

1. Social Movements – Social Movements and Social change in India
2. Social Reform Movements
3. Dalit Movement and National Movement.

### Readings:

P. N. Prabhu	:	Hindu Social Organisation
David C. Mandelbaum:		Society in India
M. N. Srinivas	:	Social Structure
M. N. Srinivas	:	Caste in Modern India
Singer & Cohen	:	Structure and Change in Indian Society
Yogendra Singh	:	Modernisation of Indian Tradition
Bose N. K.	:	Problems of National Integration
Andre Beiteile	:	Caste, Class & Power
Leela Dube	:	Kinship System in India
M. S. A. Rao	:	Social Movements in India (Vol. I & II)

**INDIAN SOCIETY - STRUCTUE AND CHANGE – 202SO21**

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## Lesson 1

## TRADITION AND CONTINUITY OF INDIAN SOCIETY

### Objective:

The main objective of the lesson is to discuss the Tradition and Continuity of the Indian society.

### Structure

- Objective
- Introduction
- Meaning of Values
- Meaning of Norms
- Importance of Norms
- Conflict in norms
- Deviant Sub-cultures
- Causes of Deviant Behaviour
- Sanctions
- Types of Sanctions
- The Meaning of Folkways
- The Variety of Folkways
- The Meaning of Mores
- The Functions of Mores
- Summary
- Key Words
- Self Assessment Questions
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### Introduction

The society at times appears to be chaotic, when there is a hysterical rush from an impending crisis: but soon order is restored and the society gets going. Indeed order rather than disorder is the rule of the world. Social order as it is called, is obtained through regulation of human behaviour according to certain standards. - All societies provide for these standards specifying appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Traditions will define a belief system. The passing down from generation to generation of beliefs, laws, doctrines and customs that help that particular group make sense of their world and the cosmos. It also refers to the reasons why these are passed down. This continuity gives society stability.

### Meaning of values

In sociology our concern is with social values. Social values are cultural standards that indicate the general good deemed desirable for organised social life. These are assumptions of what is right and important for society. They provide the ultimate meaning and legitimacy for social arrangements and social behaviour. They are the abstract sentiments or ideals. An example of an important social value is, "equality of opportunity". It

is widely considered to be a desirable end in itself. The importance of such a value in social life can hardly be exaggerated. A social value differs from individual value. An individual value is enjoyed or sought by the individual which a man seeks for himself. Even though these values are commonly shared, they do not become social values. As distinct from individual values, a social value contains a concern for others' welfare. Social values are organised within the personality of the individuals. They regulate human beings thinking and behaving. The process of socialization aims to include these values in his personality, the ethos or fundamental characteristics of any culture are a reflection of its basic values. Thus if the American culture is dominated by a belief in material progress, the Indian culture is marked by spiritualism, the forgetting of self, abandonment of personal desire and elimination.

### Meaning of Norms

Norms are standards of group behaviour. An essential characteristic of group life is that it is possessed of a set of values which regulate the behaviour of individual members. As we have seen already, groups do not drop out of the blue with stabilized relationships among members. Groups are the products of interaction among individuals. When a number of individuals interact, a set of standards develop that regulate their relationships and modes of behaviour. These standards of group behaviour are called social norms. That brothers and sisters should not have sexual relations; a child should defer to his parents and an uncle should not joke with his nephews and nieces are the illustrations of norms which govern relationships among kinsmen.

Norms incorporate value judgments. Secord and Buckman say "A norm is a standard of behavioural expectation shared by group members against which the validity of perceptions is judged and the appropriateness of feeling and behaviour is evaluated." Members of a group exhibit certain regularities in their behaviour. This behaviour is considered desirable by the group. Such regularities in behaviour have been explained in terms of social norms. Norm, in popular usage, means a standard. In sociology our concern is with social norms, that is, norms accepted in a group. They represent "standardized generalizations" concerning expected modes of behaviour. As standardized generalizations they are concepts which have been evaluated by the group and incorporate value judgments. Thus it may be said that norms are based on social values which are justified by moral standards or aesthetic judgment. A norm is a pattern setting limits on individual behaviour. As defined by Broom and Selznick, "The norms are blueprints for behaviour setting limits within which individuals may seek alternate ways to achieve their goals." Norms do not refer to an average or central tendency of human beings. They denote expected behaviour, or even ideal behaviour. Moral values are attached to them. They are model practices. They set out the normative order of the group."

### Importance of norms

A normless society is an impossibility. Norms are of great importance to society. It is impossible to imagine a normless society, because without norms behaviour would be unpredictable. The standards of behaviour contained in the norms give order to social relations interaction goes smoothly if the individuals follow the group norms. The normative order makes the factual order of human society possible. If there were no normative order there could be no human society. Man needs a normative order to live in society because human organism is not sufficiently comprehensive or integrated to give automatic responses that are functionally adequate for society. Man is incapable of existing alone. His dependence on society is not derived from fixed innate responses to mechanical social

stimuli but rather from learned responses to meaningful stimuli. Hence his dependence on society is ultimately a dependence upon a normative order.

Norms give cohesion to society. We can hardly think of a human group apart from norms. A group without norms would be to use the words of Hobbes, "Solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short." The human organism in order to maintain itself must live in a normatively regulated social system. The normative system gives to society a cohesion without which social life is not possible. Those groups which cannot evolve a normative order and maintain normative control over their members fail to survive because of the lack of internal co-operation.

Norms influence individual's attitudes. Norms influence an individual's attitudes and his motives. They impinge directly upon a person's self-conception. They are specific demands to act made by his group. They are much more stable. They have the power to silence any previously accepted abstract sentiment which they may oppose. They take precedence over abstract sentiments. Becoming a member of a group implies forming attitudes in relation to group norms. The individual becomes a good member to the extent he abides by the norms. The norms determine and guide his intuitive judgments of others and his intuitive judgments of himself. They lead to the phenomena of conscience, of guilt feelings, of elation and depression. They are deeper than consciousness. Becoming a member of a group consists of internalizing the norms of the group. Through internalization they become a part of himself automatically expressed in his behaviour.

### **Conflict in Norms**

Conformity to norms depends largely upon agreement as to what the norm demands. Without this agreement there would be a wide range of behaviour. As already seen norms are agreed upon standards of behaviour. Without such agreement, norms have a weaker force. Further we have seen that norms differ from society to society and from group to group in the same society. It is obvious that norms do not apply equally to all members of all societies or to all members of a society. They are adjusted to the needs of a society and to the positions people hold in particular social orders or to the occupations they practice, etc. Since there are different norms for different groups, a conflict among them is inevitable.

While norms set limits to individual behaviour, variation in conformity is often permitted and exceptions also are provided for. Some norms are more specially stated than others; some have wide range of application than others; some permit individual interpretation to a greater extent than others. There are reasons why norms are not followed without deviation

- (i) Some norms are perceived less important than others and so the less important ones are violated when one has to make a choice between two norms. In this case it may be said that strictly speaking there is conflict because the relative importance of the norms is clear.
- (ii) Norms may so conflict with each other that an individual must disobey one if he is to conform to the other. A student who sees a friend cheating in an examination must choose between conflicting norms. One norm instructs him to be loyal to his friend while another instructs him to see that honesty is upheld.
- (iii) An individual may deviate from a norm because he knows it is weakly enforced. Using college stationery for personal use, letter writing is rarely punished.

(iv) Some norms are not learned by all persons even in the same society. For example, there are wide differences in life styles, food habits and etiquette.

Thus, though the normative element in society is millions of years old, yet it is not so old as to make the human organism completely passive in its conformity. The organism is still resistant to normative control. The students resist any such control over them by the authorities. The children resist the control by the parents. The conflict between organic resistance and social control is one of the unsolved problems of human life. It may not, however, be supposed that individual resistance to norms necessarily threatens them or shakes the solidarity of the group. But when large numbers of people resist the norms and evade them for over long periods of time, they are weakened and groups are shaken. However, some norms may be so important that they persist in spite of deviations. We know that the norms regarding sex behaviour are often evaded but it is unlikely that these deviations will change the sex norms. In spite of the fact that there are conflicts between norms and there are deviations from norms, they have, nevertheless, evolved as part of human society because they helped to satisfy the fundamental social and individual needs thus enabling societies and the human species to survive.

#### **Deviant Sub-cultures**

When an individual deviates from the norms of his sub-culture he is an individual deviant. But in a complex society there may be a number of deviant sub-cultures. It "refers to a set of shared understandings, values and ways of doing things that are at odds with conventional society, and yet, are accepted in common by members of a particular community." In such a sub-culture the participating members gain some of the gratifications and rewards, though it may be at the cost of rejection by the conventional world. Such a sub-culture usually develops whenever a relatively large number of individuals share a common problem of adjustment to conventional society and find difficulty in solving that problem within the conventional framework. Thus in an area we may find a delinquent sub-culture in which many of the youths participate. In such areas delinquent behaviour is as normal as law-abiding behaviour. It is the group not the individual that is deviant from the conventional norms of society. A criminal gang has a deviant sub-culture. The members of such a gang are confirmative within the deviant sub-group but at the same time they are alienated from the main institutional structure.

The deviant persons usually tend to join with similar other persons into deviant groups or they force others to their line. The bad boys in the college tend to form a clique. Individual hippies, drug addicts or homo sexual tend to drift together into groups of deviants. These groups reinforce and sanction the deviation and give the members emotional protection against critics. These groups of deviants develop a set of rigid behavioural norms of their own. These norms are called deviant sub-culture. The hippie culture may be called a deviant sub-culture.

#### **Causes of Deviant Behaviour**

Deviant behaviour may be caused due to inability or failure to conform. The inability to conform may be the result of mental or physical defect. On account of mental defect the individual has limited capacity to learn. On account of mental illness a person is unable to perceive and respond to realities in an orderly and rational manner. Hence he becomes a social deviant. The causes of mental illness may be both physical and social. The stresses and strains of modern social life produce mental illness. Culture conflicts also are responsible for mental illness.

But some people fail to conform even though they are physically and mentally capable of learning conventional behaviour. To explain such cases of deviation some theories have been put forward. These are:

- (i) Physical-type Theories. These theories seek to relate deviant behaviour with body type. Lombroso was of the view that certain body types are more given to deviant behaviour than others. Deviants were classified into physical types to explain their behaviour. However, the physical type theories are no longer accepted. A number of serious errors have been pointed out in the method of their classification.
- (ii) Psychoanalytic Theories. These theories attribute deviant behaviour to the conflicts in human personality. Freud was a leading psychoanalyst. He gave the concepts of id, ego and super ego. Deviant behaviour is the result, of conflicts between the id, and the ego, or between the id and the super ego. The psychoanalytic theory is still unproved by empirical research. Sometimes, culture frustrates biological drives and impulses leading thereby to deviant behaviour. Thus our culture makes no approved provision for the satisfaction of sexual drives of the unmarried, widowed or separated. If one gratifies such impulses in contravention of social taboo, he is engaging in deviant behaviour.
- (iii) Failures in Socialization. Both the above types of theories fail to explain deviant behaviour adequately. Everyone affected with physical or mental illness does not become a deviant. Likewise, every member of a society is frustrated by the clash of his biological drives with the taboos of his culture, but not everyone becomes a deviant. The social scientists are of the opinion that some persons are deviant because the socialization process has failed in some way to integrate the cultural norms into the individual's personality. Where the socialization process is successful, the individual internalizes the social norms and he behaves in the expected manner. His lapses are rare. Family, as we have studied earlier, is the most important agent of socialization. Behaviour norms are mainly learnt in the family. Although it is difficult to prove direct relationship between deviant behaviour and family atmosphere, yet a variety of behavioural difficulties have been traced to some disturbance in the parent child relationship.
- (iv) Cultural Conflicts. The society is an extremely heterogeneous society. There are many sets of norms and values which compete with one another. The family norms may come into conflict with the norms of trade union. One religion teaches one thing, another teaches a different thing. The school teaches respect and obedience, the party teaches resistance and revolt. The family teaches God worship, the state teaches secularism. The religious system teaches that one should be generous and self-sacrificing, but our economic system rewards those who are ruthless and selfish. Our formal mores demand chastity until marriage, but our films present too much sex. The young people are exposed to obscene literature. Thus culture conflicts are a unique feature of the modern complex and changing society. They are found virtually in all societies. And wherever they exist, culture conflicts encourage deviant behaviour. It may be said that a high rate of deviation is the price we pay for a complex, rapidly changing society.

### **Sanctions**

**Aim of Sanctions.** The basic purpose of sanctions are to bring about conformity, solidarity and continuity of a particular group, community or larger group. In primary groups and small societies, sanctions are not so much needed as in secondary groups and large societies. As societies become heterogeneous, not only complexity of interaction increases but there are found cross-currents of warring factions. Employers get at odds with labour unions over hours of work and wages. Caste groups conflict with each other over jobs. Communal groups argue over theological differences. Professional classes are in

competition and conflict. There is always a danger that strong vested groups may disrupt the ongoing of the society and threaten its existence. Sanctions control the individuals or groups who threaten solidarity. They prevent social disorganisation and ensure conformity to expected norms of social behaviour.

### **Types of Sanctions**

Sanctions have been classified variously. Sanctions can be positive or negative. Positive sanctions are essentially pleasant or rewarding such as praise, flattery, promotions, honours, medals etc. Negative sanctions are essentially unpleasant. They inflict pain or threaten to do so. Such sanctions may vary from a mild expression of disapproval to fines and imprisonments or death. Sanctions can be formal and informal. The informal sanctions are illustrated by customs, the mores and public opinion. The formal sanctions are worked out by a legally constituted authority. Such sanctions are physical torture, punishment, imprisonment or death.

Sanctions can be symbolic or take the form of overt force. Symbolic sanctions are praise and flattery, promises, persuasion, propaganda, rewards, satire, commands, censure and threats. The form of overt force includes fines, punishment, imprisonment, torture and death. A brief description of sanctions used in all human societies may be desirable.

- (i) Conscience. Conscience is self-imposed sanction. It is the inner acceptance of certain moral norms as right and necessary, with the feeling of guilt if one violates them or is even tempted to do so. Conscience is an automatic warning signal that is tripped off when one wanders from one's right path. Conscience checks the self from doing things that might bring ridicule or punishment. Though all the moral norms are never internalized as conscience, yet it is sufficient if the majority show respect for such social ideals which are necessary for the preservation of order.

### **The Meaning of Folkways**

The concept of „folkways“ is associated with the name of William Graham Sumner (1840-19 10) who made one of the most fruitful and clarifying analysis of culture and its implications. He was one of the best-loved and most inspiring teachers at Yale where he used to teach political economy but later he changed his interest to sociology. In his sociological classic „Folkways“ (1906) Sumner has made a notable contribution to the understanding of individual behaviour. His pupil and disciple, Keller, extended the teachings of his master and made important contributions of his own. Sumner conceived of culture in terms of folkways and mores and used the terms „folkways“ in a very comprehensive sense. According to him,

Folkways are like products of natural forces which men unconsciously set in operation, or they are like the instinctive ways of animals, which are developed out of experience, which reach a final form of maximum adaptation to an interest, which are handed down by tradition and admit of no exception or variation yet change to meet new conditions, still within the same limited methods, and without rational reflection or purpose. From this it results that all the life of human beings, in all ages and stages of culture, is primarily controlled by a vast mass of folk-ways handed down from the earliest existence of the race, having the nature of the ways of other animals, only the top-most layers of which are subject to change and control, and have been somewhat modified by human philosophy, ethics, and religion, or by other acts of intelligent reflection.”

- (i) Folkways are behaviour patterns of every day life which generally arise unconsciously in a group.” Glum and Glum

- (ii) The folkways are in general the habits of the individual, and the customs of the group arising naturally and spontaneously and growing up slowly around different phases of life." H. W. Odum
- (iii) The folkways of a group include the mores and all the other ways of behaving that are considered interesting but not essential to the welfare of the group"  
E. S. Bogardus
- (iv) Those ways of acting that are common to a society or a group and that are handed down from one generation to the next are known as folkways."  
A. W. Green

Characteristics of Folkways. From the above definition the following characteristics of folkways may be pointed out:

- (i) Spontaneous Origin. Folkways arise spontaneously. They are not deliberately planned or designed. They are developed out of experience. They are unplanned and uncharted.
- (ii) Approved Behaviour. Folkways are the recognised ways of behaviour. The group accords recognition to certain ways while rejects others. Only such ways of behaviour are folkways as have been approved by the group to which they relate.
- (iii) Distinctiveness. There is found a wide variety of folkways in different societies. The folkways become related to a particular group. There is a considerable variation in the folkways between groups.
- (iv) Hereditary. Folkways are passed on from one generation to another. An individual receives folkways from his ancestors.

Folkways versus Customs. Loosely, custom is quite often referred to as a folkway. But the sociologists make a difference between the two. The difference between folkways and customs is that the former are of a more general and wider character than customs and cover all those modes of behaviour or spontaneous usages which are not included in the term „customs“. Thus, for example, shaking hands, eating four meals a day, dividing responsibilities so that the husband is the supporter of the family and the wife is independent, not killing the cow, the regular brushing of the teeth, the use of tables, chairs, books etc., or taking drink after dinner are examples of folkways rather than of customs. Customs are related to the survival and growth of the group, but folkways are not necessarily so related. They are not made obligatory by the group. They are sanctioned informally. However, the difference between folkways and custom is largely a matter of degree. We shall study the characteristics of custom in the next chapter.

#### **The Variety of Folkways**

Folkways are numerous and range from the most trifling acts and behaviour to the most serious. Their number is infinite. The folkways of eating are interesting. The Hindus do not take meat. The Bengalis prefer rice to bread. The Jams do not take curd. Horse meat is eaten in continental Europe, but not in the United States. Ants and insects are eaten by Indians in Brazil, but not in Europe and America. Some people regard cow's milk with great prejudice. Many people do not take a particular food because they do not like its colour or smell. In regard to the manner of taking the food also the folkways make an interesting reading. The Madrasis take rice with the hand in a peculiar way while people in U.P. prefer to have it with spoon. The Brahmins take food in the kitchen while other castes may have their food outside it. Thus there is a considerable variation in the folkways, within any culture as well as between cultures. Variation according to age and sex is universal within all cultures. Smoking by men is part of the folkways where as smoking by women and children

Is a violation of the folkways. Similarly, there is a wide variety of folkways in different cultures about marriage, sex, worship, birth, kinship, dress and art etc.

### The Meaning of Mores

Mores are regulators of behaviour. Sumner applied the term „mores“ to those folkways which are considered by the group to be of great significance and, therefore, rather indispensable to its welfare. He writes, “Mean by mores the popular usages and traditions when they include a judgment that they are conducive to social welfare, and when they exert a coercion on the individual to conform to them, although they are not co-ordinate by any authority.” When the elements of truth and right are developed into doctrines of welfare, the folkways are raised to the plane of mores. The term „mores“ is derived from the Latin word „mos“ which stands for customs and just as customs cannot be violated by any individual, so mores also cannot be violated without incurring severe punishment. There is a great feeling of horror about violating a „mos“. The mores relate to the fundamental needs of society more directly than do the folkways. Mores are in fact the folkways considered as regulators of behaviour conformity. Of which required on pain of group coercion they express the group sense of what is fitting, right and conducive to social welfare. They are the only right ways of thinking and acting. They imply a value judgment about the folkways. Sumner has written, „The Latin word „mores“ seems to be, on the whole, more practically convenient and available than any other for our purpose, as a name for the folkways with the connotations of right and truth in respect to welfare embodied in them.”

Some definitions. Some important definitions are the following:

- (i) Mores are folkways which have added to them, through some reflection, the judgment that group welfare is particularly, dependent upon them.  
"Dawson and Gettys
- (ii) "Mores are those customs and group routines which are thought by the members of the society to be necessary to the group's continued existence."  
GIU and GIUth
- (iii) „When the folkways have added to them conceptions of group welfare, standards of right and wrong, they are converted into mores“.  
R.M. Maclver
- (iv) The term mores is best reserved for those customs which connote fairly strong feelings of the rightness or wrongness of modes of behaviour."  
Edward Sapir
- (v) "Commonways of acting which are more definitely regarded as right and proper than the folkways and which bring greater certainty and severity of punishment if violated are the mores."  
A. w. Green

To clarify the distinction between folkways and mores the following points may be summed up

- (i) Folkways are of a more general and wider character than mores.
- (ii) Mores imply a value judgment about the folkways.
- (iii) Mores are more effective and are always moulding and restraining the tendencies of the individuals than the folkways.



- (iv) It is out of mores and not folkways that our profound convictions of right and wrong come.
- (v) Folkways are less deeply rooted in society and change more rapidly than the mores which are more deeply rooted and change less frequently.
- (vi) Folkways change with one's social status and occupational position but mores do not change that way.
- (vii) Violations of the mores, but not of the folkways, are looked upon as an evident danger to the rights of others.

It may also be remarked that mores need not be rational. Some of the mores may look to be irrational to outsiders. Thus Purdah system, untouchability, forbidding of widow remarriage may look to be irrational to the westerners. Mores of one culture may be unknown in other cultures and seem to have no necessary connection with group welfare. It is not necessary that the act forbidden by the mores should actually be injurious. If a society believes that the act is injurious, it is condemned by the mores. Mores are beliefs in the rightness or wrongness of acts.

#### **The Functions of Mores**

The meaning of mores will become more clear to us if we just consider their general functions in social life. Maclver enumerates the following functions of mores.

- (i) They determine much of our individual behaviour. They both compel behaviour and forbid it. They are forever molding and restraining the tendency of every individual. In other words, they are the instruments of control. In society there are innumerable mores like monogamy, anti-slavery, democracy and prohibition conformity to which is regarded as necessary.
- (ii) The mores identify the individual with the group. By conforming to the mores the individual gains identification with his fellows and maintains those social bonds which are essential for satisfactory living.
- (iii) Finally, the mores are the guardians of Solidarity. The mores hold the members of the groups together. The members of the group though characterized by the consciousness of the kind, are also competing with one another for the good things of this life and status. They are held in line by the constraints of mores. There is a sense of unreflecting solidarity among people who share the same mores because their sentiments are alike.

#### **Summary**

Indian culture has a long and continuous history. It extends over 5000 years. India developed a way of life, which she modified and adjusted as and when she came into contact with outside elements. In spirit, however, it was quite in keeping with the indigenous doctrines and ideas. This accounts for the long and continuous period of Indian culture. It is this characteristic of Indian culture that enabled it to withstand many vicissitudes, and to continue to mould the life of Indians. The most outstanding feature that has made Hindu culture a living force is the tradition of tolerance. Indian culture is primarily and fundamentally religious. The religious note generally permeates all the intellectual and artistic creations of the Hindus. Hinduism believes in Universal toleration and accepts all religions as true. The

Hindu mind is all-embracing. This is seen in the word manavadharma or manavasamskriti or human culture which the Hindus gave to their culture. Indian culture is comprehensive and suits the needs of everyone, irrespective of caste, creed, colour or sex. It has universal appeal and makes room for all. It has the modesty to admit the propriety of other points of view.

### KeyWords

Innate

Stimuli

Impinge

Intuitive

Impulses

### SelfAssessmentQuestions

1. Explain what is meant by social norms and social importance of norms
2. Discuss what are sanctions and how do they regulate social behaviour?
3. What do you mean by deviant behaviour? Distinguish between individual and group deviants.
4. Explain the concept of folkways and the functions of mores.

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**Lesson: 2**

# **UNITY IN DIVERSITY IN INDIA**

## **3.0 OBJECTIVE:**

The main objective of this lesson is to understand various diversities in India and unity in diversity.

## **CONTENTS:**

- 3.0 Objective
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Racial Diversity
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## **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Unity implies one-ness or a sense of we-ness, meaning integration wherein hitherto divisive people and culture are synthesized into a united whole, along with higher levels of cooperation, mutual understanding, shared values, common identity and above all national consciousness. It holds tightly together the various relationships of ethnic groups or institutions in a dovetailed manner through the bonds of contrived structures, norms and values. It has also been described as a social psychological

condition. However, unity does not mean uniformity which implies similarity. Unity may be born out of similarity.

The reverse of the term 'unity' is 'diversity' denoting collective differences so as to find out dissimilarities among groups of people: biological, religious linguistic etc. Ethnic diversity is perceived on the basis of biological diversity. Religious diversity is visualized on the basis of religion or faith. Linguistic diversity is marked on the basis of languages spoken by a group of people. Thus all these differences presuppose collective differences or prevalence of variety of groups and cultures.

India, a vast peninsular sub-continent, also known as 'Bharat Varsha', has a total land area of about 33 million sq.kms. and population exceeding 800 millions. The seventh largest and the second most populous nation of the world (with 2.4 percent of world's land area and 15.0 percent of the population of the world) India, possesses varieties of social, economic, geographical and ecological conditions. Its hoary past stretching over five thousand years of human civilization provides the most distinctive features in the coexistence of unity in diversity. "This overworked cliché has become a part of India's self-identity. In the past, foreign travelers- among others Megasthenes(C.315 B.C.), like Fa-Hsien (A.D. 405-11), Huan Tsang (A.D. 630-44), Alberuni (A.D. 1030) Marcopolo (A.D. 1288-93) and Ibn Batuta (A.D. 1325-51) – observed and recorded this" (1) The distinctive feature of India in its unity and diversity is also reflected in the social ethos. The causative factors leading to the emergence of this unique feature of the Indian polity are not far to seek. This trend of unity in diversity in India can be examined by identifying on the one hand, the factors that have led to regional differentiation and diversities and the factors operating as bonds of unity.

The sources of diversity in India may be traced through a variety of ways, the most obvious being the ethnic origins, religion, castes, tribes languages, social customs, cultural and sub-cultural beliefs, political philosophies and ideologies, geographical variations etc. The various diversities are given below.

### 3.2 RACIAL DIVERSITY

India is an ethnological museum. The waves of immigration has drawn the ancestors of the majority of present population into India from the surrounding territories across the Himalayas. Their dispersal into this subcontinent has resulted in the consequent regional concentration of a variety of ethnic element and creation of a social mosaic along with ethnic distinctiveness.

Dr. B.S. Guha identifies the population of India into six main ethnic groups, namely (1) The Negrito, (2) Proto-Austroloid, (3). Mongoloids (4) Mediterranean or Dravidian, (5) Western Brachycephals and (6) Nordic Aryans

Herbert Risley had classified the people of India into seven racial types: (1) Turko-Iranian, (2) Indo-Aryan, (3) Scytho-Dravidian, (4) Aryo-Dravidian, (5) Mongolo-Dravidian, (6) Mongoloid (7) Dravidian. However three basic types can be made by reducing Risley's seven racial types into the Indo-Aryan, the Mongolian and the Dravidian racial stocks. According the Risley the tribes in India may be said to have belonged to the Mongolian and Dravidian types.

Risley's seven fold classification may be reduced to a three fold division i.e.

1. The Dravidian,
2. The Mongolian
3. The Indo-Aryan.

The Turko-Iranian type of racial stock inhabit in Beluchistan and Afghanistan, outside the Indian territory at present.

The Indo-Iranian type live in Rajasthan, East Punjab and Kashmir. Generally the Rajputs, Khattris and Jats belong to their strain line.

An intermixture of the Scythians and Dravidians constitute the Scytho-Dravidians who are found in the hilly tracts of Madhya Pradesh, Coorgs and Saurashtra.

The Aryo-Dravidian category is a mixed social type of Indo-Aryan and the Dravidian races. This racial type is found in U.P. and Bihar. The high caste people such as the Brahmins and the others consider themselves as Aryans, the Harijans and other lower caste people may be said to have contained the Dravidian element.

The inter-mixture of Dravidian and Mongolian races forms the Mongolo-Dravidian racial stock. It is said that the Brahmins and Kayasthas of Orissa and Bengal belong to this category.

The Mongoloid racial element is generally seen among the North-Eastern frontier tribes and also in Assam.

In South India and Madhya Pradesh the Dravidian racial stock is found.

However, Risley has not mentioned the presence of Negrito racial stock in India.

From the above different classifications of Sir Herbert Risley, J.H. Hutton and Dr. B.S. Guha it is clear that the population of India is divided broadly into six main ethnic groups. They are.

### **1. NEGRITOS:**

The earliest and the ancient origin of this group were Negritos. The survivals of these are found among the kadars and pallavans of Cochin and the Travancore hills the Angami Nagas of Nagaland; in some of Rajmahal Hill tribes in Eastern Bihar and among the Andamans. They were pastoral food gatherers. Their contribution to the primitive civilization is insignificant, According to J.H. Hutton the negrito races were probably the original occupants of India. Now these races we can find in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The kadara Trulas, Palvans and Kurambas of the hill tribes of

South India belong to Negrito race but the Negroid language is found only in Andaman islands.

## **2. PROTO-AUSTROLOIDS:**

The traces of this race are survived in many aboriginal tribes of India. Some of them crossed over to the South East Asia and finally to Australia. The traces of their language and of their racial characteristic are found in Indonesian, Malenesean, Polynesean and Australlian tribes. People belong to this race have heavy hair long head, dark complexion, medium height and brown body. Their language is still in practice among the Munda tribes of Central India.

## **3. MONGOLOIDS:**

Mongoloids are divided into two sub-types namely palaco (ancient) Mongoloids who are long and broad headed types and the Tibeto Mongoloids. This racial group can be found in Sikkim, Bhutan and North Eastern region (Assam, Nagaland, Mizo, Garo and Jainti Hills) The basic characteristic features of this race are yellow complexion oblique eyes medium height high cheekbones and sparse hair.

## **4. MEDITERRANEANS:**

This racial people popularly known as Dravidians. Basically they are of 3 types namely

**(a) Plalaco-Mediterraneans:** Who are medium atatured dark skinned and slight built. They are found largely in the Kannad, Tamil and Malayalam trackis.

**(b) The Mediterraneans:** They are of fail complexion. Their traces are found in the Punjab and in the upper Gangetic valley. They are taken to be pre-aryan civilized "Dravidian" people, who got subsequently Aryanised and contributed to the culture of India. And

**(c) The oriental Mediterraneans:** Also known as the semetic and Jewish Mediterraneans, They have long nose and fair skin. Their traces are found in Punjab, Rajasthan, Western Utter Pradesh and in other parts of the country including Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala.

## **5. BRACHY CEPHALS:**

This racial group is popularly identified on the basis of the shape of the head which is round. These groups who are said to have evolved in the Central Asian Mountain regions. Of these, the Alpinoid traces are found in Gujarat and the broad headed are found along with the West Coast. The Dinalu type of this category are in West Bengal, Orissa, Kathaiwar and in Kannada. Tamilnadu and Coorg tracts in Mysore as well. Some of the early Bracy-Cephalic while passing through the Gangetic plain settled also in this region. Their traces are found in Central India, Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Their migration is traceable along the Himalayas from Leh to Simla and to Western Nepal. Their third group is the Armenoids. The parsis in Bombay – Gujarat are allied to them.

## **6. NORDIC:**

This race is popularly known as and also described as the Aryan race, the Sanskrit speaking group. They are said to have entered the country during the second half of the second millennium B.C. (2500 B.C.) there by “their organizing imagination and adaptability helped to bring about a great cultural synthesis leading to the foundation of the Indian civilization. The colour of the skin varies from white to brown and to certain extent they are tall in stature.

### **3.3 LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY**

India is called a ‘veritable tower of Babel’ and according to A.R. Desai “India presents a spectacle of museum of tongue.” While the famous linguist Grierson ha noted in his “Linguistic Survey of India” that India has 179 languages and 544 dialects. The 1971 census, on the other hand, reported 1652 languages in India as the mother tongue. Most of the languages are spoken in the North India. Not all these languages are however equally distributed, while some of these languages are spoken by crores of people, many of them are tribal speeches and have less than one percent of the speakers of the total population.



The multiplicity of Indian languages may be in the linguistic families such as :  
(1) the Indo-Aryan (2) the Dravidian, (3) the Austric and (4) the Sino-Tibetan.

Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Assamese, Bengali, Oriya, Gujarathi, Marathi and Kashmiri belong to the Indo-Aryan speech family. The Dravidian linguistic group includes four Southern languages namely, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam. The tribes of Central India speak Austric languages and the tribes of the North Eastern India speak the Sino-Tibetan languages.

### **3.4 RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY**

India has no state religion, it is a secular state. It is the land where almost all the major religions of the world are practiced by their respective followers. Nevertheless the religious diversity has been a major source of disunity and disharmony in the country. This is because in India religious affiliation appears to be overemphasized and many a time people seem to forget the national unity and express their loyalty more towards their own religion. The glaring example of such feeling is the partition of our country due to the development of the two nation theory But the matter has not ended there. The communal feeling among different religious groups still persists.

Among the major religions in India are : Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Bahaim are the religions with lesser following.

Hinduism is the religion of the majority in India. It comprises of Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Pre-Dravidian religious elements. The follower of Hinduism believe in the doctrine of 'Karma', 'Dharma', rebirth, immortality of soul, renunciation and salvation. Hinduism allows a number of possible conceptions of God. It also prescribes various alternative paths of attaining God. The sakta, the Saiva, the Satnami, the Lingayat, the Kabirpanthi, the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj etc., are different sects of Hinduism.

### **3.5 CASTE AND CLASS DIFFERENTIALITY:**

As a form of stratification, the caste is peculiar to the Indian society. It may be called as an extreme form of closed class system. The status of individuals in the social hierarchy is determined by birth or descent. The caste system is also found in other parts of the world, but not in a complete form as it is evinced in India. Roman order into patricians, plebians and slaves was akin to the Indian caste system with the hierarchy of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. The Greek society was also divided into the closed class of citizens, helots and slaves. Medieval Europe had also a set of hereditary endogamous classes of nobility, yeomen, burghers and serfs. In Japan nobility was the top hereditary class which was followed by military personnel and commoner. The commoners were divided into three sub-castes of husbandmen, artisans and traders. The prevalence of outcastes or hinim was also found in Japan. The existence of the Negroes and their social segregation from the whites possesses apparently all the characteristics of an endogamous caste system.

In India, the caste system is not confined to Hindus alone. We also find castes among other communities like Muslims, Christians or Sikhs. These castes are linked with four varnas such as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras, for determining their ritual status. Among the Muslims we find the hierarchy of Shaikh, Saiyed, Mughal and Pathan. Similarly the Christians also have caste consciousness due to conversion from the Hindu fold. The Sikhs have many castes, the most prominent being the Jat, Sikt and the Majahabi Sikhs. It is believed that there are about 3,000 castes in India, out of this one can well imagine the extent of caste diversity in India.

### **3.6 THE UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN INDIAN SOCIETY (OR FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE UNITY IN INDIAN CULTURE):**

Indian society is the best example for unity though there is a diversified social, economic, religious and political groups existed in it. According to Radha Kamal Mukerji "each man fails to find unity in diversity when the life of the people is

complex and complicated but it is a false notion with regard to Indian society. The idea of cultural unity is not new to India, it is a concept which has been common to Indians of the past. The sears who gave birth to Indian culture were perfectly aware of the unity in India, the unity derives from many common and uniform elements.

#### **GEOGRAPHICAL UNITY :**

India like every other country has its own fixed natural boundaries. India is limited within these boundaries which is an evidence for its geographical unity. The very name Bharata Varsha implies a historical significance that symbolizes unity.

#### **RELIGIOUS UNITY :**

Although the various religious groups in India present elements of difference, it is not impossible to trace elements common to all. Each religious group exhibits one single feeling and each accepts the truth of immortality of soul, temporary nature of world, rebirth, the law of karma, Monism, salvation, Nirvana, contemplation and all the other things that go to make up the religious unity. In Indian society there are differences in the way the elements are treated but each religion preaches a fundamentally single religious faith and shares a belief in the purity and value of life, faith in an invisible power, benevolences, pity, honesty and liberality with every other religious system.

#### **CULTURAL UNITY:**

Indian culture possesses a fundamental Unity, a unity the impress of which can be found in the literature of different communities, despite the obvious difference in customs and traditions. The fundamental approach to literature, philosophy traditions and customs is typical. The basis of the social and cultural unity of the country is common to every group. One finds this common element in our social intercourse, religious rites ceremonies etc. All groups and communities accept the very nature of family, sanctity of Samskaras. Many of the Indian festivals are celebrated all over the country in one and the same manner. This is possible because of a cultural unity.

### **EMOTIONAL UNITY (OR UNITY OF LANGUAGES)**

A large number of languages makes it difficult to promote a national unity. While large number of races makes this even more difficult. It has been difficult to discover why the South Indian languages have remained confined to that area. Both these elements are present in India but since Sanskrit was the common base of the Indian languages, the problems of linguistic multiplicity has been solved. People of the north as well as of the south accepted Sanskrit. At the same time Sanskrit became the language of Hindu culture and all classics were composed in this languages. It was the protective atmosphere of Hindu Culture and Sanskrit that this land of many languages became one nation. Through the influences of Sanskrit on all the other languages is maintained unity in the country.

### **POLITICAL UNITY:**

The Political unity of the country is in-fact an off shoot of religious and cultural unity that has characterized India in the past. In ancient India the various territorial princes rebelled against the central authority, but each one realized the value of the ideal of universal overlord. Kings released horses to be called universal overlords namely Chakravarti and Vedic literature contains numerous instances in which kings did achieve this position. At times it was observed that the kings did achieve this position. At times it was observed that the kings declare war on other kings for no purpose other than to gain the title of Universal overlord. Even during the Vedic period the kings did several Aswamedha Yagas to achieve this position. At times it was observed that the kings maintained a political unity. From the earliest times many of the rulers wanted to create political unity and some of them were succeeded. From the above discussion even in the ancient period there was a political unity. Many of the dynasties like Maurya, Gupta maintained a political Unity. Even now we can find the political unity by adopting constitution, parliamentary system and democracy.

### 3.7 SUMMARY:

Unity implies one-ness or a sense of we-ness, meaning integration wherein hitherto divisive people and culture are synthesized into a united whole, along with higher levels of cooperation, mutual understanding, shared values, common identity and above all national consciousness. The reverse of the term 'unity' is 'diversity' denoting collective differences so as to find out dissimilarities among groups of people: biological, religious linguistic etc. Ethnic diversity is perceived on the basis of biological diversity. Dr. B.S. Guha identifies the population of India into six main ethnic groups, namely (1) The Negrito, (2) Proto-Austroloid, (3) Mongoloids (4) Mediterranean or Dravidian, (5) Western Brachycephals and (6) Nordic Aryans. Herbert Risley had classified the people of India into seven racial types: (1) Turko-Iranian, (2) Indo-Aryan, (3) Scytho-Dravidian, (4) Aryo-Dravidian, (5) Mongolo-Dravidian, (6) Mongoloid (7) Dravidian. The multiplicity of Indian languages may be in the linguistic families such as : (1) the Indo-Aryan (2) the Dravidian, (3) the Austric and (4) the Sino-Tibetan.

Among the major religions in India are : Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Bahaism are the religions with lesser following. It is believed that there are about 3,000 castes in India, out of this one can well imagine the extent of caste diversity in India.

Though there are diversified Races, Religions, Castes, Regions, Languages, Geographical Unity, Religious unity, Cultural Unity, Emotional Unity and Political Unity are strengthening oneness among people. So **unity in diversity** in India can be found to be specific feature of Indian Society.

### 3.8 GLOSSARY

Diversity  
Civilization  
Salvation  
Sub-culture

### 3.9. QUESTIONS:

1. Explain the concept of Unity in Diversity?
2. Discuss various diversities in India?

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### Lesson 3

#### Changing structure of Indian Society

#### Objective:

This lesson explains about the change in structure and change of structure in Indian society.

#### Structure:

- Objective
- Introduction
- Structure of Indian Society
- Untouchability
- Slavery
- Purushartha, Ashrama and Samskara
- Jajmani System
- Family
- Marriage
- Summary
- Key Words
- Self Assessment Questions
- Reference Books

#### Introduction

We have been discussing about the diversity in Indian culture, the various kinds of people inhabiting this country and their diverse customs and traditions. Perhaps more than in any other part of the world, India is a country where people have come to acquire multiple identities based on region (e.g. North India, North East India, Deccan and South India), language (e.g. Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu), religion (e.g. Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jain, and Sikh), etc. Each set of these and other identities corresponding to a distinct set of social relations, i.e., a distinct social structure. However, there are threads which bind many of them together. Therefore understanding Indian social structure is necessary because it explains our relations with each other in society. It tells us what kind of social institutions exist in society and how they got modified over a period of time. In this lesson you will read about the evolution of Indian society through the ages and the shape it took when we read about it today.

#### Structure of Indian society

Tribe is one of the earliest identifiable ethnic cum social organizations. A fairly good number of tribes such as Munda, Ho, Oraon, Bhil, Gaddi, Santhal, Kol, Kandh, Khasi, Garo, Mizo, Naga exist in different parts of India. These have been clubbed together in a group in a schedule of the Constitution of India and are known as the Scheduled Tribes.

The pertinent question here is: Who is a tribal, and what differentiates a tribe from other groups based on caste or Varna? The answer to this lies in the functioning of the institution. We can identify a tribe by the following features: (i) All members are related to each other by blood (ii) All members are equal in status (iii) All members believe that they have descended from a common ancestor (iv) All members have equal access to the resources (v) The sense of private property is least visible (vi) Social differentiation exists only on the basis of age and sex. Tribes are very often made up of more than one clan. A clan is an exogamous institution whereas a tribe is endogamous.

Such tribes existed during the Vedic period. The Bharatas, Yadus, Turvasas, Druhyus, Purus and Anus were some of the prominent Tribes. The head of the Tribe was known as Raja or King who was first among the equals. The major differentiation existed between people on the basis of „varna“ or color. Thus, the people who did not belong to the Vedic tribes were termed as *dasa varna*. They are said to have had an alien language, a dark complexion and worshiped different gods.

This initial differentiation later developed into a complex „Varna system“, which in place of the Tribe had divided society into Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra categories. These categories emerged principally because of frequent inter-tribal and intra-tribal wars, subjugation of the vanquished, appropriation of loot by the war-leaders, and unequal distribution of wealth.

The members of the Brahman „Varna“ usually functioned as priests. The Kshatriyas were associated with the political functions, the Vaishyas were mostly agriculturists and the Shudras were the servile class. The first two „Varnas“ exploited the most numerous and productive Vaishya *varna*, whereas the three in unison exploited the Shudras. The three higher „Varnas“ were also entitled to the sacred (*upanayana*) thread ceremony and were known as „*dvijas*“ (twice-born).

Many changes took place in the economy during the post-vedic period. These changes needed new ideological support which came in the form of numerous unorthodox religious movements such as Buddhism which ridiculed the Hindu social system. But Buddhism could not negate the caste system completely. The Kshatriyas were considered the highest „varna“ in the social hierarchy as seen by the Buddhists. The Vaishyas who were exploited under Brahmanism became members of these religions in large numbers in order to gain respectability. However, there was no caste hierarchy within the Buddhist and Jain monastic communities.

„Varna/Jati“ system underwent further changes when new groups such as the *Shakas*, *Kushanas*, *Parthians* and *Indo-Greeks* people arrived in India. The economy was also undergoing changes. Growth of urbanization, craft production, and trade resulted in the rise of guilds or „*shreni*“ which in later times became castes. The behavior of guild members was controlled through a guild court. Customarily the guild (*shreni-dharma*) had the power of law. These guilds could act as bankers, financiers and trustees as well. Generally, these functions were carried out by a different category of merchants known as the „*shreshthins*“ (present day *seths* of North India and the *Chettis* and *Chettiyars* of South India). Thus, the period between 500 BC and 500 AD saw the crystallisation of the caste system. The number of castes increased manifold because of the growth of a number of crafts, arrival of new elements in the population, inter-caste marriages (*anuloma* and *pratiloma*) and inclusion of many Tribes into caste hierarchy. The Dharmashastras and the Smritis tried to fix the duties of each caste. The



relations between castes were generally governed by the rules of endogamy, commensality and craft-exclusiveness.

Between the fifth and seventh centuries further changes occurred in the *varna/caste* organization. A creation of landlords through land grants resulted in the transformation of Vaishyas into servile peasants. Large numbers of tribal cultivators were enrolled as Shudras. Consequently the Shudras now emerged as farmers like the Vaishyas. Now, the Vaishyas and Shudras were lumped together. However, in regions other than the Ganga basin, the caste system took a different shape. In Bengal, South India and other border areas mainly two castes emerged i.e. the Brahmanas and the Shudras. The Rajputs emerged as a significant factor in the society of Northern India from the seventh century onwards. In this period caste system became so entrenched in the psyche of the people that even the plants were divided on the basis of the *Varna/caste* system. One text prescribes varying sizes of houses according to the *Varnas*.

An important development during medieval times, particularly in South India, was the division of the Shudras into „pure“ (*sat*) and „impure“ (*asat*) categories. Also typical of the south were the so-called „left-hand“ (*idangai*) and „right-hand“ (*velangai*) castes. Manu noted 61 castes whereas a later text counted hundreds of mixed castes (*vamasankara*). Other than the Rajputs, another caste that developed during this period was the Kayastha. The Kayasthas were traditionally scribes who got transformed into a separate caste as all types of scribes got clubbed together to form one endogamous group. Very often a large number of these castes claim origin from highly respected ancestors and explain their current lower status in terms of economic or other factors. The Khatrias, an important caste in Northern India, claim that they were of Kshatriya origin, but took to commerce, which brought them the contempt of their caste fellows and they had to accept Vaishya status. The Gurjaras, Jats and Ahirs all claim Kshatriya origin, the status they came to lose late for various reasons. This process of claiming high caste origin continued till the 1950s when the Constitution of India provided for reservations for lower castes in most government jobs.

The caste system has its regional variations. The formation of regions and regional consciousness after the eighth century AD contributed to this variation. The North Indian Brahmanas are divided not only on the basis of *gotra* but also on the basis of their residence. Thus we have Kanyakubja, Sarayuparier and Maithila brahmanas belonging to Kanauj, Sarayu river and Mithila respectively. A large number of Rajput sub-castes carry their earlier tribal names such as, Tomaras, Kacchavahas, Hadas and Chauhanas. These sub-castes also acquired *gotras* for themselves. Thus the number of castes and sub-castes as well as that of the *gotras* kept increasing in medieval times. The Marathas also became a caste.

In modern times the caste system acquired some new features. Thus, the idea of „surnames“ was also added. One particular caste or sub-caste came to acquire one, sometimes more, „surnames“. However, ample variation is found in this matter. Caste and anti-caste movements of the modern period resulted in the formation of further new castes. Thus the Brahma-samajis acquired status which is very similar to a caste.

The caste system, as can be seen from the above description, has a complex working method. Substantial regional variation is found and hence it has been impossible to define it in a precise manner region, sub-region, economic status, nearness to political authority, craft, vocation, following a particular deity all have come to play a role in its formation and subsequent changes.

The influence of caste system has been so great that even though the egalitarian religious reformers of the medieval period such as Basava, Ramanand and Kabir, tried to abolish caste among their followers, their sects soon took on the characteristics of new castes. The Sikhs, could not overcome caste feelings. Even the Muslims formed caste groups. Syrian Christians of Kerala, earlier divided into sections, took on a caste character. The Christian converts brought their caste prejudices with them and high caste converts consider themselves aloof from those of the lower orders.

### Untouchability

- (A) M.E. Jones: "Social change is a term used to describe variations in, or modifications of, any aspect of social processes, social patterns, social interaction or social organization".
- (B) Kingsley Davis: "By social is meant only such alterations as occur in social organization, that is, structure and functions of society".
- © Majumdar, H.T. "Social change may be defined as a new fashion or mode, either modifying or replacing the old, in the life of a people -or in the operation of society".
- (D) Maciver and Page: "Social change refers to „a process" responsive to many types of changes; to changes in the manmade conditions of life; to changes in the attitudes and beliefs of men, and to the changes that go beyond the human control to the biological and the physical nature of things".
- (E) Maciver (in some other context) also refers to social change as simply a change in the human relationships.

### Slavery

Slavery as it existed in India was different both in form and essence, from the classical Greek and Roman slavery. That is why Megasthenes could not find slaves in India. And he was certainly wrong in his judgment. Slavery was an established institution and the legal relationship between the owner and slave was clearly defined. For example, if a female slave bore her master a son, not only was she legally free but the child was entitled to the legal status of the master's son. The „*Arthashastra*' states that a man could be a slave by birth, by voluntarily selling himself, by being captured in war, or as a result of a judicial punishment. The Sanskrit word for slave is „*dasa*' which initially meant a member of the people captured by migrating Aryan hordes. Many such „*dasas*' were reduced to bondage. In India, the slaves were generally employed as domestic servants and personal attendants. The slave was, in fact, a subordinate member of his master's household. The masters had no rights over the lives of their slaves. There were no slave markets in the early periods, however in the early centuries of the Christian era, there was trade in slave-girls between India and the Roman empire in both directions, and slave markets existed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Vijayanagara empire.

The Sultans of Delhi kept a large number of slaves (*Bandagans*). However, their situation was quite different. One of the slaves named Malik Kafur became the commander-in-chief of Alauddin Khilji. In the sixteenth century the Portuguese indulged in slave trade on a large scale. Linschoten has given harrowing accounts of the slave trade at Goa saying, "they drive slaves as we do horses here". A large number of slaves were used in Khalisa (crown land) land and in *karakhanas* (workshops). This kind of slavery continued during British domination and was attacked by Lord Cornwallis in a proclamation. The slave trade is now completely prohibited.

## Purushartha, Ashrama and Samskara

The three concepts of „*purusharth*‘, ‘*ashrama*‘, and *samskara*‘ are inter linked. ‘*Purushartha*‘ means aims of life which is divided into four „*ashramas*‘ or stages of life. For each of the ‘*ashramas*‘ there are prescribed „*samskaras*‘ or rites that need to be performed. We often hear of *vamashrama*‘ – ‘*dharma*‘ i.e., the *dharma* of *varna* and stages of life. There are four aims of life „*dharma*‘ (right conduct), „*artha*‘ (pursuits through which livelihood is earned), „*kama*‘ (worldly desires) and „*moksha*‘ (salvation).

To enable a person to practise the four ‘*purusharthas*‘, the life of a person is divided into four ‘*ashrama*‘ or stages. Detailed rules of conduct to be observed in each ‘*ashrama*‘ is also laid down. The four „*ashramas*‘ are like the four steps of a ladder.

The first ‘*ashrama*‘ is known as „*brahmacharya*‘, which a person enters after the „*upanayana samskara*‘ or the sacred thread ceremony. During the period of this ‘*ashrama*‘ he receives education and learns to discipline his will and emotions. He has to live with the *guru* at his ‘*ashrama*‘ in the forest and learn to obey and serve him. He begs alms for himself and his teacher and does odd jobs like fetching water and cleaning around the „*ashrama*‘. He practises the ideal of plain living and high thinking. Even a royal prince performed all these duties. The „*brahmacharya*‘ stage thus prepared the individual to take on the responsibilities of a householder.

The „*grihastha ashrama*‘ is the most important stage in a person’s life. In this stage he practices *artha* and *kama* in accordance with the *dharma*. He gets married, begets children and earns livelihood to support his family and discharge his obligations towards the society.

After discharging all the duties of a householder, he enters the „*vanaprastha ashrama*‘. During this stage he leaves the family and retires to the forest, where he practises detachment from all worldly pursuits and interests. He had to live only on fruits and vegetables and wear clothes made of deer-skin or barks of a tree. He practices meditation and austerities as well, and if he dies in this stage he attains *moksha*. Otherwise, he enters the „*sanyasa ashrama*‘ in which he practices complete renunciation. Breaking all bonds with the society, he lives like an ascetic striving constantly for the attainment *moksha*.

This scheme represents the ideal and not the real situation. Most men never passed through the first stage of life in the form laid down, while only a few went beyond the second. This could also be an attempt to find room for the conflicting claims of study, family life, and asceticism in a single life time. It is also possible that the system of the *ashramas* was evolved partly to counter the unorthodox sects such as Buddhism and Jainism which encouraged young men to take up asceticism and by-pass family life altogether, a practice which did not receive the approval of the orthodox, though in later times provision was made for it.

According to the scheme, the four stages of life began not with physical birth, but with sacred thread ceremony. Thus the child could become the full member of the society only after investiture with the sacred thread. This was one of the important ceremonies or „*samskara*‘ at all the stages of life of a man from his conception to death. There are some forty such ‘*samskaras*‘. Some important ones are: „*garbhadana*‘ (conception), ‘*pumsavana*‘ (male child), ‘*simantonnayana*‘ (safety), „*jatakarma*‘ (birth ceremony) ‘*nishkramana*‘ (showing the sun) ‘*annaprashana*‘ (first feeding of solid food), ‘*chudakarma*‘ (tonsure) ‘*upanayana*‘ (investiture with

sacred thread), „*samavartana*’ (end of the first stage) „*vivaha*; (marriage), „*antyeshti*” (the last rites) etc. All these „sanskaras are prescribed for the three upper varnas and not for the shudras and untouchables. In fact even the women of the higher varnas were not entitled to a large number of the „sanskaras”.

### Jajmani System

An important institution that developed during the early medieval period and continued till modern times in the rural society was the „Jajmani System”. It was a complementary relationship between the groups of dominant peasant castes on the one hand and service and artisan castes on the other. In this system the service castes rendered services to the land-owning peasant castes as well as to the high and dominant castes and were entitled to traditionally fixed shares of the produce and in some cases to a small plot of land. Thus, the leather-workers, the barbers, the priests, the garland makers, the ploughmen, and various types of smiths worked for the high castes or dominant landowning groups and were paid in kind on certain occasions or in the form of a land allotment. However, such service castes always retained some freedom to sell their goods and services. This system of service-relationship is now breaking up under the influence of monetization, urbanization and industrialization. During medieval period this system of relationships acted as a safeguard in times of distress and calamities. Thus, it was noted that during famines the artisans who were not tied into the Jajmani system were harder hit than even the rural poor.

### Family

The traditional Indian family is a large kinship group commonly described as joint family. A joint family is one in which two or more generations live under one roof or different roofs having a common hearth. All the members own the immovable property of the line in common. This family is generally patriarchal and Patrilineal, that is, the father or the oldest male member is the head of the house and administrator of the property and the headship descends in the male line. In modern towns a large number of nuclear families exist which consist of wife, husband and the children. Such families are also patriarchal and patrilineal. But there are many regions where families are matrilineal in which the headship descends in the female line such as in Kerala and the northeastern region of Nagaland and Meghalaya.

Whatever be the nature of the family it is the primary unit of the society. The members of the family are bound together by „*shraddha*’, the rite of commemorating the ancestors. ‘*Shraddha*’ defined the family; those who were entitled to participate in the ceremony were ‘*sapindas*’, members of the family group. The bond between the members of the family gave a sense of social security to its members. In distress a man could rely on the other members of the extended family. At the time of festivals and marriages, the responsibilities were shared reinforcing the family bond.

Traditionally the family in India is governed by two schools of sacred law and customs. These are based on ‘*Mitakshara*’ and ‘*Dayabhaga*’. Most families of Bengal and Assam follow the rules of „*Dayabhaga*’ while the rest of India generally follows „*Mitakshara*’. The sacred law made provisions for the break-up of the very large and unmanageable joint families. Such break-ups took place on the death of the patriarch. The joint family property did not include individual properties of the members at least from medieval times onwards and hence such properties could not be divided. In the post-independence period the Constitution provided that



2 each religious community would be governed by their religious personal laws in matters of marriage, divorce, inheritance, succession adoption, guardianship, custody of children and maintenance. Thus, the Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh and Jain communities are governed by the codified Hindu Acts of 1955-56. The Muslim and Christian and Parsi families have their own set of personal laws based on religion.

## Marriage

Families are the result of a very important „samskara“ ceremony known as marriage. Depending on its nature, marriage is of many kinds such as hypergamous (man of so called high caste and woman of low caste) or anuloma and hypogamous (man of low caste and woman of high caste) or pratiloma based on an alliance between different Varna/ caste; monogamous, polygamous and polyandrous based on the number of spouses. Examples of all kinds of marriages can be found in the Indian society. Traditionally speaking, marriages were arranged by the parents of the couple who usually belong to the same caste, but of different „gotras“ (persons having common ancestor) and „pravaras“ (prohibited degree), if they were of „dvija“ category „Gotra“ and „pravara“ did not exist for the lower Varna/ caste categories. However a large number of communities have acquired „gotras“ for themselves. „Pravara“ relates to the “rules of prohibited degrees” which are very strict where marriage is forbidden between persons with a common paternal ancestor within seven generation or a maternal ancestor within five. In the southern part of India, however, this rule has never been followed and there are records of marriage between cousins and cross-cousin marriage which are considered legal and socially approved. Exemptions are provided for these groups in the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955.

Commonly monogamous marriages in which one person is married to only one person at a time, is followed but traditionally polygamy was not prohibited. The rich and powerful could have, and often had more than one wife. Polygamy was generally, followed for a variety of reasons. In ancient time the kings needed to forge alliances with powerful people and marriage was a convenient method. Marriages of Chandragupta and Akbar are of this nature. The religious idea behind having a son also becomes a reason for taking many wives. However, under the modern laws polygamy has been rendered illegal. Only Muslims can marry four times that too with some preconditions.

The Brahmanical Sacred Law considered a marriage indissoluble once the seven steps (i.e. seven *phera*) had been taken together. This means that there was no place for divorce. The *Arthashastra* however, shows that in certain cases divorce was allowed. In later times such provisions were forgotten. Among many lower castes, however, divorce is still permitted. In modern times, mutual consent, incompatibility, desertion, cruelty are considered valid reasons for getting a divorce on both sides.

We all know about the case of Draupadi marrying five Pandava brothers. This kind of marriage is known as polyandrous marriage. There are a number of communities in which this type of marriage is considered a valid and preferred type of marriage. Generally the woman marries brothers and rarely men of different parentage in such communities. Such marriages are considered anti-social by the upper-Varna/caste people of the plains but in the societies where such marriages are solemnized having more than one husband is considered a matter of pride and not of shame.

## Summary

Society is undergoing endless changes. These changes cannot be stopped. Social change is a complex phenomenon in which the cause and effect relationship is not always clear. The Indian society had divided into Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra categories. The members of the Brahman, "Varna" usually functioned as priests. The Kshatriyas were associated with the political functions, the Vaishyas were mostly agriculturists and the Shudras were the servile class. Untouchability, Slavery, Purushartha, Ashrama and Samskara, Jajmani System, Family and Marriage brought deep grounded changes in the structure of Indian society.

## Technical Terms

DIFFERENTIATION	ANCESTOR	PATRIARCHAL
ENDOGAMOUS	ASCETICISM	PATRILINEAL

## Self Assessment Questions:

- (1) Examine the Structure of Indian Society
- (2) Write about Untouchability, Slavery and Janmani System
- (3) Elaborately discuss on Purushartha, Ashrama and Samskara
- (4) Write briefly about the Family and Marriage

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## Lesson 4

### Changing Aspects of Marriage

#### **Objective:**

The objectives of this lesson are to explain the marriage system in Indian society, forms and types of marriage.

Objectives  
Introduction  
Definition of Marriage  
Characteristics of Marriage  
Functions and Importance of Marriage  
Forms of Marriage  
Polygyny  
Polyandry  
Monogamy  
Other Forms of Marriage  
Summary  
Technical Terms  
Self Assessment Questions  
Reference Book

#### **Introduction**

Marriage is one of the universal social institutions. It is established by the human society to control and regulate the sex life of man. It is closely connected with the institution of family.

In fact, family and marriage are complementary to each other. As *Gillin* and *Gillin* have said, "marriage is a socially approved way of establishing a family of procreation". As *Westernmarck* has remarked, "Marriage is rooted in the family rather than the family in the marriage". Marriage is an institution of society which can have very different implications in different cultures. Its purposes, functions and forms may differ from society to society, but it is present everywhere as an institution.

#### **Definition and Characteristics of Marriage**

There is no definition which adequately covers all types of human marriage. It has given a number of definitions and explanations among which the following may be noted.

- i. Edward *Westernmarck* in his "History of Human Marriage" defines marriage as "the more or less durable connection between male and female lasting beyond the mere act of propagation till after the birth of offspring".

- ii. Malinowski says that marriage is a “contract for the production and maintenance of children”.
- iii. According to Robert H. Lowie, “Marriage is a relatively permanent bond between permissible mates”.
- iv. Broadly speaking, however, marriage may be defined as “a socially sanctioned sex relationship involving two or more people of the opposite sex, whose relationship is expected to endure beyond the time required for gestation and the birth of children”.- Duncan Mitchell’s “A dictionary of Sociology”.
- v. Alfred McClung Lee writes, “Marriage is the public joining together, under socially specified regulations of a man and woman a husband and wife”.

### **CharacteristicsofMarriage**

- 1) **Universality** Marriage is more or less a universal institution. It is found among the preliterate as well as literate peoples. It is enforced as a social rule in some of the societies. Examples: in Japan, celibacy is publicly condemned. In Korea, unmarried individuals are called ‘half’ persons. Among the Hindus, marriage is a sacrament which is regarded as more or less obligatory. The Todas of Nilagiri refuse to perform funeral rites for a girl if she dies before her marriage. But they do perform it after completing some sort of marriage ceremony for the corpse. According to the Chinese philosopher Confucius, an individual who remains unmarried throughout his life commits a great crime. As Levi-Strauss has observed that the unmarried primitives of Central Brazil are made to lead to miserable life.
- 2) **Relationship Between Man and Woman** Marriage is a union of man and woman. It indicates relationship between one or more men to one or more women. Who should marry whom? One should marry how many? – are the questions which represent social rules regarding marriage which differ significantly.
- 3) **Marriage Bond is Enduring** Marriage indicates a long lasting bond between the husband and wife. Hence it is not coextensive with sex life. It excludes relationships with prostitutes or any other sexual relationship which is viewed as casual and not sanctioned by custom, law or church. Marital relationship between man and woman lasts even after the sexual satisfaction is obtained. The Hindus, for example, believe that marriage is a sacred bond between the husband and wife which even the death cannot break.
- 4) **Marriage Requires Social Approval** A union of man and woman becomes a marital bond only when the society gives its approval. When marriage is given the hallmark of social approval, it becomes a legal contract.
- 5) **Marriage is Associated with Some Civil or Religious Ceremony** Marriage gets its social recognition through some ceremony. This ceremony may have its own rites, rituals, customs, formalities, etc. It means marriage has to be concluded in a public and



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**Lesson 5****Changing Aspects of Family****Objective:**

The objectives of this lesson is to explain Family as a Social Institution, types of families and Changing Trends in Family system.

**Structure:**

Objectives  
Introduction  
MeaningofFamily  
CharacteristicsofFamily  
NatureoftheFamily  
FunctionsofFamily  
EssentialFunctions  
Non-essentialFunctions  
TheChangingFamilyPatterns  
FormsofFamily  
Summary  
TechnicalTerms  
SelfAssessmentQuestions  
ReferenceBooks

**Introduction**

The family is the most important primary group in society. It is the simplest and the most elementary form of society. It is the most basic of all social groupings. It is the first and the most immediate social environment to which a child is exposed. It is an outstanding primary group, because, it is in the family that the child develops its basic attitudes.

Further, of all the groups that affect the lives of individuals in society none touches them so intimately or so continuously as does the family. From the moment of birth to the moment of death the family exerts a constant influence. The family is the first group in which we find ourselves. It provides for the most enduring relationship in one form or other. Every one of us grows up in a family and every one of us too will be a member of one family or other.

The family, almost without question, is the most important of any of the groups that human experience offers. Other groups we join for longer or shorter periods of time for the satisfaction of this interest or that. The family, on the contrary, is with us always. Or rather more precisely, we are with it.

## Meaning of the Family

Some of the definitions of family are as follows:

- (i) 'family is a group defined by a sex relationship sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children'. – MacIver
- (ii) 'Family is a more or less durable association of husband and wife with or without children or of a man or woman alone, with children'. – Nimkoff
- (iii) 'Family is a group of persons whose relation to one another are based upon consanguinity and who are therefore, kin to another'. – Davis
- (iv) 'Family is the biological social unit composed of husband, wife and children'. – Eliot and Merrill

## Characteristics of the Family

On the basis of these definitions, the following characteristics of a family may be deduced.

- (i) **A mating relationship:** A family comes into existence when a man and a woman establish a mating relation between them. This relation may be of a shorter duration or lifelong. When the marital relations break up, the family disintegrates.
- (ii) **A form of marriage:** Mating relationship is established through the institution of marriage, which may be solemnized in a simple way as is the case in Europe, or its celebration may be a long process as is generally in India.
- (iii) **A system of nomenclature:** Every family is known by a name and has its own system of reckoning descent. Descent may be reckoned through the male line or through the female line. Usually, the wife goes and joins her husband's relatives, but sometimes the husband may also go and join his wife's relatives.
- (iv) **An economic provision:** Every family needs an economic provision to satisfy the economic needs. The head of the family works to earn money to maintain the family.
- (v) **A common habitation:** A family requires a house for its living. Without a dwelling place the task of child bearing and child rearing cannot be adequately performed.

## Nature of the Family

Besides the characteristics mentioned above, a family is possessed of several distinctive features.

- (i) **Universality:** Family is the most universal group. It is the first institution in the history of mankind. It has existed in every age and in every society and is found in all parts of the world. No culture or society has ever existed without some form of family organization. Each one of us is a member of a family. No other group is so universal as the family is.
- (ii) **Emotional basis:** The family is a fundamental unit of human society. It is based on out impulses of mating, procreation, and parental care. It is a close-knit group that fortifies these emotions.
- (iii) **Limited size:** A family is usually a small-sized organization. Its size is generally defined by biological conditions, which it cannot transcend. Other groups may be smaller than a family, but they are not formed because of biological condition.

- (iv) **Formative influence:** The family exercises the most profound influence over its members. It moulds the character of individuals. Its influence in infancy determines the personality structure of the individual. From its initial units, the father and mother, the child receives his/her physical inheritance. Freud and other psychologists have proved that a child exhibits the same character and mental tendencies in adult age that he acquires in the family. Confucius rightly remarked that if you want to improve society, improve family. 'to be well born is to possess the greatest of all gifts. To be ill born there is nothing which this world can afford that will be adequate compensation for the lack of good heredity'.
- (v) **Nuclear position:** The family is the nucleus of all other social groups. The distinctive characteristics of marriage, parental obligations, and sibling relations make family the primary institutional cell of a society. The whole social structure is built of family units.
- (vi) **Responsibility of the members:** In the family the child learns the meaning of social responsibility and the necessity for co-operation. As Maclver aptly describes, 'In times of crisis men may work, and fight and die for their country, but they toil for their families all their lives. In it, the child develops his basic attitudes and ideals. It is a great agency of the socialization of the child'.
- (vii) **Social regulations:** The family is peculiarly guarded by social customs and legal regulations. It is not easy to violate them. Family is the group in which the consenting parties may freely enter, but which they cannot easily leave or dissolve. Marriages are not trivially taken.
- (viii) **Permanent and temporary:** Family as an institution is permanent and universal, while as an association it is temporary and transitional. When the son marries, he goes out of the family and starts another family, which again may give rise to more families.

All these tend to show that although the family is one of the most limited groups of the society, it differs from all of them in being a distinct type of group. It is the smallest kinship group. It usually begins when the partners marry; it changes when the sons marry, it ends when one of the partners dies. When the children are young and entirely dependent on parents, the family looks like a compact human group. When children grow in age, this compactness becomes loose and when they marry the old family disintegrates and new families rise up. The original relations are reversed, the parents become dependent on the children.

### Functions of the Family

Davis has characterized the main social function of the family into four divisions: reproduction, maintenance, placement and socialization of the young. It also performs individual functions, but these are a corollary of its social functions.

Lundberg has enumerated the following basic functions of the family:

- (i) The regulation of sexual behaviour and reproduction.
- (ii) Care and training of children.
- (iii) Co-operation and division of labour.
- (iv) Primary group satisfactions.

Besides, there are many auxiliary functions as well. Ogburn and Nimkoff have divided family function into six categories: (i) Affectional, (ii) Economic, (iii) Recreational, (iv) Protective, (v) Religious, and (vi) Educational.

Reed has described the following functions of the family: (i) Race perpetuation, (ii) Socialization, (iii) Regulation and satisfaction of sex needs, (iv) Economic functions.

Maclver divides the functions of the family into two categories – essential and non-essential. Under the essential he includes three functions: (i) stable satisfaction of sex need, (ii) production and rearing of children, and (iii) provision of a home.

Under the non-essential functions he mentions religious, educations, economic, health, and recreations which, he says, have now been transferred to specialized agencies in society.

#### **Essential Functions**

(i) **Satisfaction of sex need:** This is the first essential function that the family performs. Manu, the Ancient Indian law-giver, regarded sexual satisfaction as the aim of family; Vatsyayan also looked upon sexual satisfaction as the primary objective of the family. Satisfaction of sex instinct brings the desire or lifelong partnership among males and females. The satisfaction of sex instinct makes for normal personality. If sex instinct is suppressed, it may produce personality maladjustments and disrupt social relations. According to Havelock, 'With failure of sexual harmony, the marriage structure rests on shifting sand'. The modern family satisfies this instinct in greater degree than the traditional family. In the traditional family the sexual act was combined with reproduction. The fear of pregnancy, as a result of intercourse, prevented the couple to satisfy their sex urge. But in the modern families the task of sexual satisfaction has been eased by the invention of contraceptives and other methods of birth control. The present wife is in a better position to satisfy sex instinct without any fear of conception.

(ii) **Production and rearing of children:** The inevitable result of sexual satisfaction is procreation. The task of race perpetuation has always been an important function of the family. The Hindu scriptures hold that the religious activities of man cannot be consummated unless he has a son. They permit a second marriage if there is not issue from the first wife. In the Hindu marriage, the groom says to his bride that 'I accept you in order to obtain good progeny'. Although childbirth can occur outside the family, nowhere is illegitimacy approved. Family is an institution par excellence for the production and rearing of children. Some countries, especially Soviet Russia after the Revolution practiced experiments in communal child rearing, but they soon abandoned it. The function of child rearing is better performed today than in the past because now more skill and knowledge are devoted to the care of the unborn and newborn child. The infant death rate has shown a marked decline. In the achievement of this result, specialized agencies such as nursing and child welfare centres have come to the aid of the family. Looking at the data collected in the west it is seen that the number of illegitimate children is falling down, the practice of prostitution is vanishing away and the number of marriages is increasing, which clearly shows that the function of procreation of race is only performed through family. It is claimed that with the practice of birth control methods the function of child procreation is now being given up by modern families.

#### **Non-essential Functions**

**Economic:** The non-essential functions of a family are various and varied. First, it serves as an *economic unit*. In the traditional families, most of the goods for consumption were made at home. The members of the family were all engaged in the family industry. The ancient Hindu joint family served as a type of mutual insurance society. It was a unit of production and the centre of economic activities. Today, the importance of family as an economic unit has been lessened, as most of the goods for consumption, including food, are purchased ready-made from the market. The members of the modern family do not work together as they did in the past times. They are engaged in different activities outside the home. However, the old pattern has not been completely destroyed, it has merely changed. In the family, one or the other task has not been completely destroyed, it has merely changed. In the family, one or the other profession is still carried on though of a different sort and in a different atmosphere. There is a clear division of labour between man and woman. The family members help in the economic adjustment of the family. Every family has its own economic capacity. The members purchase

property-movable and immovable for the family. Property is an important economic institution that is protected and maintained by the family. The use and transmission of the property is usually prescribed by rules of the society. The equal distribution of property is an important function of the family.

**Religious:** The second non-essential function that the family performs is of a religious character. It is a centre for the religious training of the children who learn various religious virtues from their parents. In the traditional family, different religious practices such as idol worship, yagya, religious discourses, and sermons by pundits were held, which made the outlook of the children religious. In the Hindu scriptures, religious rituals are considered incomplete in the absence of wife. The modern family, however, does not observe religious practices and has become secular in outlook.

**Educational:** Another function performed by a family is the education of children. Family is an important educational agency. Every child learns the first letter under the guidance of parents. The traditional family was the centre of vocational education also because the children from the early childhood were associated with the family task. The modern family has delegated the task of vocational education to technical institutes and colleges.

**Health:** The functions related to health that were performed in the old family have now been transferred to hospitals and clinics. Formerly, a sick man was cared for in the family by his own kith and kin, but today he is admitted to a hospital and looked after by nurses. The child is born today not in the comforting fragrance of a home, but in the maternity wards of a well-equipped hospital. Instead of 'the house where I was born', the phrase 'the hospital where I was born' is more relevant to modern conditions.

**Recreation:** The old family provided recreation to its members. They used to sing and dance together and visit the family relations. In modern family, relation is individual rather than collective. The present forms of recreation such as bridge, tennis, carom, and movies provide for only individual or couple participation. Today, people prefer to go to a club or a hotel for recreation.

**Civic:** Family is the school of civic virtues. The child learns the first lesson of citizenship in the family. The virtues of love, co-operation, toleration, sacrifice, obedience, and discipline are first learnt by the child in the family. These qualities enable him to grow into a good citizen. That is why family has been called the cradle of civic virtues.

**Social:** Family imparts the knowledge of social customs, mores, etc. to the younger generation. It exercises social control over its members, which helps in the maintenance of a well-organized society. Family is an important agency of social control. It is also the custodian of culture and serves as the natural and convenient channel of social continuity.

### **The Changing Family Patterns**

The family as a basic social institution has been undergoing change. The modern family radically differs from that of the traditional one. The family has never been at rest. Both in its structure and functions changes have taken place. Some of these changes may be examined here.

### Changes in the Functions of the Family

Some of the functions of family have radically changed today while some others have received more attention of the public. A glance at these changes would clarify this point.

1. *The Sexual Regulation Function* of the family has not changed much. The family through its agent, marriage, still regulates the sexual impulse of the people. Illicit sexual behaviour is fairly uncommon. But it is true that in the Western societies pre-marital and extra-marital sex relations are on the increase.

2. *The Reproductive Function* of the family has suffered particularly in the Western societies. In the Western societies, it is said, parents no longer desire more children. Absence of children has become the most glaring feature of the Western families. However, it is impossible to take away this reproductive function of the family. The very survival of the human race is based on reproduction.

3. In the past fifty years *the Parental and the Educational Functions* of the family have been shifted to certain external agencies like hospitals, out-patient clinics for mothers, maternity homes, the baby clinics, nurseries, kindergartens, etc. "The modern home is not equipped to train children for their adult careers, because the specialized division of labour requires specialized training, which only the specialized agency of the school can supply". —A.W. Green.

4. *The Protective Functions* of the family have declined particularly in the West. Families are no more the place of protection for the physically handicapped, mentally retarded, aged, diseased, infirm and insane people. Other agencies have taken over this function. But, for the young children it continues to provide physical and emotional protection.

5. *The Economic Function* of the family has been disturbed a great deal. The family is no longer the economic unit, neither is it self-sufficient. It is not longer united by shared work. For its members work separately. It is more a consuming unit than a producing centre. However, the family is not completely losing this function, but it is transforming this function to some external agencies.

6. It seems that the *Socialization Function* of the family is gaining increased attention particularly in the Western society. An earlier generation knew little about the personality development. We know something today of the role of emotional development, school progress, career success, physical well-being, and practically all other aspects of the good life.

7. *The Status-Ascription Function* has been weakened since in modern society much emphasis is laid on achieved status. Still, the ethnic, religious, class, residential, nationality and other kinds of statuses are ascribed by the family to the individual at least in the initial stages in some way or other.

8. *The Recreational Function* of the family is losing importance. External agencies have taken away this function. Modern recreation is highly commercialized. Movies, dance halls, night clubs, gambling centres have come into being. People leave home to seek these commercialized recreations. But they tend to leave home as single adults or married couple, as adolescents or children, rather than as a family unit. This has affected the cohesion of family.

### Forms or Kinds of Family

Families may be classified variously, as follows:

#### 1. On the basis of authority a family may be patriarchal or matriarchal.

- (i) **The Patriarchal Family:** Under the patriarchal family the male head of the family is possessed of inclusive powers. He is the owner and administrator of the family property; to him all persons living in the family are subordinated. He presides over

the religious rites of the family. In short, the father or the eldest male descendant is the protector and ruler of the family, enjoying full authority over the family members. The chief characteristics of patriarchal family are the following:

- a) The wife after marriage comes to live in the husband's house.
- b) The father is the supreme lord of the family property.
- c) Descent is reckoned through the father. The children are known by the name of their father.
- d) The children can inherit the property of their father only. They have no right over the property of the mother's family.

- (ii) **The matriarchal Family:** MacIver prefers to call it by the name of maternal family rather than the matriarchal family. In a matriarchal family, the authority vests in the woman head of the family with the males being subordinate. She is the owner of the property and rules over the family. There are grave doubts whether this type of family ever existed in society, although L.H. Morgan, McLennan, and Bachop believe it to have been the earliest form of family. Bachop maintained that in early times, mankind lived in a state of promiscuity and that the earliest type of family was the matriarchal. Morgan referred to as the 'father of American anthropology' postulated that the family evolved through various stages, from the lowest promiscuity to the highest monogamy. The chief characteristics of matriarchal family are the following.

- a) Descent is reckoned through the mother and not the father, because maternity is a fact, whereas paternity is only an opinion.
- b) Marriage relations are transient. The husband is sometimes merely a casual visitor.
- c) The children are brought up in the home of the wife's relatives.
- d) The authority in the family rests in the hands of the wife or in the hands of some representative of the wife's kin.
- e) Property is transferred through the mother and only females succeed to it.

The Matriarchal family is said to prevail among the primitive people who led their lives as wanderers or hunters. The father roamed far and wide, coming home irregularly and staying away for long periods of time. The absence of the father from the home made it necessary for the woman to 'stay on the job'. She was the leader of the clan for a great deal of time. Hence, she came to possess authority in the family. Briffault is of the opinion that the earliest form of family was matriarchal and that the patriarchal type emerged only with the development of agriculture and economic dominance of men.

## 2. On the basis of Structure the family can be classified as nuclear and extended family.

A nuclear family is one which consists of a husband, a wife, and their children. The children leave the parental household after marriage. A nuclear family is an autonomous unit free from the control of the elders.

An extended family can be viewed as a merger of several nuclear families. Thus, a small extended family may include grandparents, their son, the son's wife, and the son's children. A large extended family may include multiple generations in the family. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins, their unmarried children, married sons and their wives along with their married/unmarried children live together within the same household.

There are two important features of an extended family. First, an extended family is continuous, whereas a nuclear family is not. In an extended family, a person is a member of a residential kin group that has probably persisted for many generations. Second, while a nuclear family is, to some degree, a separate and independent unit run by husband, wife, or both, an



extended family is usually run by the patriarch. Its constituent nuclear families may have little power for independent decision-making.

**3. On the basis of Residence** the family may be classified as follows:

- (i) **Matrilocal Family:** In this type of family, the husband goes to live in the house of his wife.
- (ii) **Patrilocal Family:** In this kind of family, the wife goes and lives in the house of her husband.

**4. On the basis of Marriage** the family may be classified as follows:

- (i) **Monogamous family:** In which one man marries only one woman at one time.
- (ii) **Polygamous family:** In this kind of family, one man marries many women at one time.
- (iii) **Polyandrous family:** In this kind of family, one woman marries many men and lives with all of them or with each of them alternately.

**5. On the basis of Ancestry** the family is classified into (i) matrilineal and (ii) patrilineal.

In the matrilineal family mother is the basis of ancestry. A woman is believed to be the ancestor of the family. The rights of each member of the family depend on his relation to the mother.

In the patrilineal family, ancestry continues through the father. This is the common type of family prevalent today.

**6. On the basis of in-group and out-group affiliation** a family may be classified into endogamous family and exogamous family. An endogamous family is one that sanctions marriage only among the members of the in-group, whereas an exogamous family sanctions marriage of members of an in-group with the members of an out-group.

**7. On the basis of blood relationship:** A family may be conjugal family or consanguineous family. A conjugal family consists of spouses, their offspring, and relatives through marriage.

A consanguineous family consists of blood relative together with their mates and children. It may also be pointed out that the patriarchal or patrilineal or patrilocal family is more common also undergoing the process of disintegration, which is partly due to the influence of Christianity and partly due to the migrations, of educated Khasis to the cities. Although it may also be said that the patriarchal family, in traditional sense, has also changed in its nature on account of the new social and economic forces, particularly the women's liberation movement, yet the fact still remaining that family system is patriarchal in the greater parts of the world.

## Summary

Family is a group of persons whose relations to one another are based upon consanguinity and who are therefore, kin to another. The family is the most important primary group in society. It is the simplest and the most elementary form of society. It is the most basic of all social groupings. It is the first and the most immediate social environment to which a child is exposed. Family is the most universal group. It is the first institution in the history of mankind. It has existed in every age and in every society and is found in all parts of the world. No culture or society has ever existed without some form of family organization. Each one of us is a member of a family. No other group is so universal as the family is.

**Technical Terms**

Polyandrous  
Monogamous  
Polygamous  
Patrilocal  
Ancestry

**Self Assessment Questions**

1. Define family and discuss its characteristics and features.
2. Explain the various kinds or forms of family.
3. Discuss the essential and non-essential functions of family.

**Reference Books**

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**Lesson: 6**

**SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN INDIA : : COMMUNALISM AND CASTEISM**

**9.0 OBJECTIVE:**

The main objective of this lesson is to understand various social problems in India and its characteristics.

**CONTENTS:**

- 9.0 Objective
- 9.1 The Concept of Social Problem.
- 9.2 Characteristics of Social Problems
- 9.3 Causes of Social Problems
- 9.4 Communalism
- 9.5 Main Characteristics of Communalism
- 9.6 Causes for the Growth of Communalism
- 9.7 Immediate Remedial Measures
- 9.8 Casteism
- 9.9 Consequences of Casteism
- 9.10 Solutions to the problems of Casteism
- 9.11 Summary
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- 9.13 Model Questions
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**9.1 THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL PROBLEM**

A social problem has been defined as “a situation confronting a group or a section of society which inflicts injurious consequences that can be handled only

collectively” (Reinhardt, 1952:14). Thus, no one individual or a few individuals are responsible for the appearance of a socially problematic situation, and the control of this situation is also beyond the ability of one person or a few persons. This responsibility is placed upon society at large. Walsh and Furfey (1961:1) have defined a social problem a “deviation from the social ideal remediable by group effort” (Walsh and Furfey, 1961:1). Two elements are important in this definition: (i) a situation which is less than ideal, that is, which is undesirable or abnormal; and (ii) one which is remediable by collective effort.

## **9.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

On the basis of the above definitions, we can identify the following characteristics of social problems:

- All social problems are situations which have injurious consequences for society.
- All social problems are deviations from the ‘ideal’ situation
- All social problems have some common basis of origin.
- All social problems are social in origin
- All social problems are caused by pathological social conditions.
- All social problems are interconnected.
- All social problems are social in their results, that is, they affect all sections of society.
- The responsibility for social problems is social, that is, they require a collective approach for their solution.
- Social problems occur in all societies.

### **Reactions to Social Problems**

Different people react differently to social problems. The differences may be explained in terms of the following four factors:

#### **1. An attitude of unconcern:**

Many people remain indifferent to a problem thinking that it does not affect them. Sometimes their own individual problems like family tensions and job pressures keep them so engaged that they do not find time to be interested in what affects others. It is only when their own interests are involved that they become agitated and start taking interest in the problem.

**2. Fatalism:**

Some people are so fatalistic that they attribute every thing to destiny. Issues like poverty and unemployment, are explained in terms of misfortunes and past Karma. They, therefore, suffer the misfortune quietly and wait for some miracle to happen.

**3. Vested interest:**

Some people take no interest in the existing problems because they stand to gain so long as the problem exists. Motivated by self interest, they describe the problem as insoluble and talk about its eradication as a waste of time.

**4. Absence of expert knowledge:**

Some people, though deeply concerned about the problem, do not take much interest in it believing that its solution is impossible unless people change their attitudes and values. As the changes must be initiated by a change in outlook they remain unconcerned about finding alternative possibilities of treatment. Dowry is one such problem in our society.

**9.3 CAUSES OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

Social problems arise out of pathological social conditions. They occur in all societies—simple (that is, small, isolated and homogeneous with a strong sense of group solidarity, and which change slowly) as well as in complex (which are characterized by impersonal secondary relations, anonymity, loneliness, high mobility and extreme specialization, and where change is faster), that is, wherever and whenever a relationship is affected between a group of individuals leading to maladjustments and conflicts.

These factors are important in the understanding of the causal factors in social problems

1. The casual conditions are numerous. Broadly, the potential causes of social problems found in social environment are
  - a. contradictions in social systems,
  - b. malfunctioning of economic systems
  - c. lack of change in religious systems and
  - d. defective functioning of political systems
2. Social problems provide a strong basis of common causal factors.
3. Social problems are interrelated and interdependent in the sense that they are cumulatively . promotive and provocative, that is, they foster and encourage one another.

Reinhardt (1952:7-12) has referred to three factors in the development of social problems:

**(1) Differentiation and Multiplication of interests and functions:**

The principle that the greater the number of parts in a machine or an organism, the greater the probability of maladjustment among the parts holds good for human societies too, where there is increased opportunity for the collision of interests of various individuals, groups, institutions and systems. Untouchability, communal riots and political crimes, are the social problems which are the result of the clash of interests of different castes and classes.

**(2) Accelerating Frequency of Social Change or Growth of Civilization:**

This has been made possible due to the multiplication of scientific and mechanical innovations. For example, the invention of machines has destroyed many old forms of employment resulting in the migration of millions of people, and has given rise to class conflicts. It is, thus, the structural and functional maladjustments arising from revolutionary inventions which create many social problems.

**(3) Man's Developed Insight to make a Scientific Analysis:**

Ever since man has developed his social insight of looking into the working of nature, issues which were formerly regarded as simple are now perceived as the result of various kinds of natural conditions which influence man and society.

#### **9.4 COMMUNALISM:**

Communalism has become one of the biggest menaces of modern India. Problem that arises between the socio-religious relations of the people who belong to various minority communities on the one hand and the majority community on the other, can be referred to as “communalism” or “communal problem.” Communalism and communal riots normally arise when religious matters are politicalised. Communalism is often understood as an ideology which states that the society is divided into religious communities whose interests differ and are, at times, even opposed to each other. It is a kind of antagonism which is found between the religious communities.

#### **Definition of “Communalism”**

1. **Bipin Chandra:** “--- the concept of communalism is based on the belief that the religious distinction is the most important and fundamental distinction and this distinction overrides all other distinctions.” ..... He further adds “Since Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs are different religious entities, their social, economic, cultural and political interests are also dissimilar and divergent. As such the loss of one religious group is the gain of another group and vice versa. If a particular community seeks to better its social and economic situation, it is doing at the expense of the other.”
2. **Ram Ahuja:** “The antagonism practiced by the members of one community against the people of other community and religion can be termed as communalism”.

#### **9.5 MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNALISM**

Communalism as a socio-political problem is becoming more and more complex today. Unless we know the real nature of communalism it becomes difficult for us to differentiate between what communalism is, and what it is not. It is

important to note that adherence to a religion is not communalism. Attachment to a religious community is not communalism. The religiosity of a community is not communalism. But using a religious community against other communities and against the whole nation is communalism. Let us now discuss the main characteristics of communalism especially in the Indian context.

1. Communalism considers a particular religious community separate from the rest of the communities.
2. It believes that not only religious but also secular interests of that community are separate from similar interests of other communities.
3. Communalism believes that the specific interests of the community can be promoted by maintaining its separate identity and organizing it separately for the promotion of those interests.
4. Communal interests always super impose themselves on the national interests.
5. Communalism breeds mutual distrust and disharmony among the communities. It adopts an attitude of hostility towards other religious communities.
6. Communalism treats some citizens not as citizens but as members of some specific religious community.
7. Communalism makes a particular religious community to impose its religious views and social norms on the members of other religious communities also. It denies freedom to the members of other religious communities and the right to have their own religious views and social norms. The freedom in religious and social matters is also denied to them.
8. Communalism fails to separate religion from politics. It tries to conduct government on the basis of religious dogmas.
9. Communalism leads to the abuse of power. It seeks to impose the social and religious norms of the community on other communities by several means including force, fraud, economic and other allurements and even assistance from foreign powers.
10. In its extreme form, communalism claims nationhood for the community concerned and seeks to raise it to a status of sovereign state.



## **9.6 CAUSES FOR THE GROWTH OF COMMUNALISM**

The main factors and forces which have encouraged the growth of communalism in India as listed by A.P. Avasthi (Page – 580), can be mentioned below.

1. Communal political parties and organizations that have been fanning the fire of separatism.
2. Minority appeasement policy which the Indian National Congress and some other political parties have been nursing since decades.
3. The elections which make the political parties and organizations to make a communal appeal to the voters and to keep alive the communal feelings.
4. The media, literature and textbooks that have communal slant and that give support to communal forces.
5. Separation and isolationism found among the Muslims.
6. The economic and educational backwardness found amongst the big minority group that is the Muslims.
7. The aggressive Hindu chauvinism championed by a few forces.
8. Political opportunism which is found in almost all the political parties in India which makes the political leader to give priority to their partisan political interests rather than to the national interests.
9. “Divide and rule” policy which the British had followed caused lot of damage to out national interest. The same type of policy is continued in a surreptitious manner even now.

In addition to the above factors mentioned by Prof. Avasthi, we can also list a few other factors which are contributing to the phenomenon of communalism.

10. Role of foreign forces which have been instigating communal activities and communal riots in India.. The role of these forces in giving training to the communal extremists and in supplying sophisticated technical equipments for fanning the fire of communalism.

11. Large scale conversion activities taking place in India are also contributing to communalism. Both the Christian and Muslim minority forces are indulging in these kinds of conversion activities. These conversions are often made in a forcible manner and sometimes by means of temptations and so on.
12. The subversion of secularism by the political parties is also a factor encouraging communalism. Political parties which speak of secularism only lip sympathy to secularism but in practice support communalism.
13. The growing disappointment among the Hindus who constitute the majority community is also a factor in favour of communalism. The Hindus believe that due to the "vote bank politics" of the minority community the larger national interests are sacrificed.
14. The Hindu militancy too has added to the problem of communalism. In their attempt to defend Hindu interests and counteract attacks on it, some Hindu organizations have resorted to militant activities. These activities have caused communal frictions and conflicts.

### **9.7 IMMEDIATE REMEDIAL MEASURES**

1. **Setting up Peace Committee:** In the riot-torn places peace committees consisting of the respected leaders of the different religious communities are to be formed immediately after the outbreak of communal violence. These leaders must exercise their good will on the respective communities and persuade them to maintain peace and harmony.
2. **Use of New Strategies and Plans by the State:** Since rioters are making use of modern sophisticated equipments and weapons to spread communal riots everywhere, it is necessary for the State to resort to new strategies and plans to hook and book those rioters and instill confidence in the minds of riot-hit individuals and innocent people.
3. **Supervision of the Media:** The role of the media is very important in the course of communal riots. The media must exercise great restraint in spreading rumors and reports of communal riots. The State must have strict vigilance over the media.

4. **Suppressing the Extremists:** The Government in power must use its authority and power in suppressing the communal riots. It should not hesitate to impose ban on communal organizations directly or indirectly indulging in communal riots. All dangerous and extremist communal leaders must be arrested during the course of communal riots preventing them from fanning the fire of communal riots.

5. **Other measures:**

- i. In the riot-torn areas efficient and secular minded police officials must be posted.
- ii. Special Courts should be established to deal with the cases of communal riots. Speedy disposal of the cases is an essential step in this direction.
- iii. The riot affected people must be given protection immediately and sufficient care should be taken to make arrangements for their rehabilitation if needed.
- iv. Immediate legal action should be instituted against those who instigate communal riots.

**LONG TERM REMEDIAL MEASURES:**

- i. **To Make the People Free From Communal Frenzies and Passions:** It is necessary to educate the people to become free from communal prejudices, feelings, etc. Steps should be taken to expose the communalist tendencies of the leaders who normally instigate riots.
- ii. **Preventing Communalization of the State and the Political Elites in Power:** Communal riots often reach new heights due to the support given to it by the political parties, leaders and some bureaucrats. Hence it is necessary to see that the political elites in power become free from communal attitude. All communal forces to be tackled and treated equally.
- iii. **Protecting the Civil Society from being Communalized:** Communal riots grow into new proportions when supported by people. Sometimes, ordinary people are also drawn into communal carnage. Hence it is necessary to see that

people do not become the victims of communal strategies of the leaders. It is in this regard that the intellectuals, writers, journalists, voluntary organizations freedom fighters and non-controversial political leaders should take a lead in building up public opinion against communalism and communal riots.

iv. **Educational System should be Free from Communal Ideas and Ideologies:**

It is necessary to see that importance is given to the development of communal harmony at all levels of education. The young minds should not be polluted with the narrow communal ideas. Hence patriotic feelings and sentiments must be strongly encouraged. Extra care should be taken in writing and teaching lessons in History. Distorting historical facts is also unfair.

v. **Role of the Media.:** This is an era of publicity and propaganda. The electronic media such as television, radio, newspaper, etc. must play a very responsible role. They must not be allowed to contribute to communal feelings or riots. Communal press must be banned and legal actions must be instituted against communal writers.

vi. **Ideology that Economic Development by itself brings down Communalism is not Correct:**

Some argue that economic development, industrialization, growth of capitalism, and the growth of working class would automatically weaken communalism. But our experience has proved to be contrary. Unless special care is taken communal riots cannot be suppressed even in times of economic prosperity. Economic development alone cannot contain communalism. In fact, communal violence is more prevalent in developed states like Maharashtra, Gujarat and also in developed cities like Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Jamshedpur and Kanpur. Hence, separate and well planned efforts are needed to curb the growing disease of communalism.

vii. **Legislation against Forcible Conversions:** Since forcible conversion of persons from one religion to another, particularly from Hinduism to Christianity and Islam, is one of the major causes of communal riots. It is necessary that all conversion activities be banned and declared illegal. In fact,

a legislation could be introduced in this regard at the all-India level. At the State level. Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Tamil Nadu governments have already made legislations prohibiting conversion activities.

## **9.8 CASTEISM**

Casteism is social problem associated with the caste system. Just as the caste system is exercising its influence in all the fields of social life Casteism too has become all pervasive.

### **What is Casteism ? / Meaning of Casteism**

Casteism is understood as a partial or one-side loyalty in favour of any particular caste. It makes members of the caste to become conscious of their membership of the caste and look at everything from the standpoint of the caste.

1. According to D.N. Prasad, "Casteism is loyalty to the caste translated into politics."
2. According to Kaka Kalelkar, "Casteism ..... is an over-riding, blind and supreme group loyalty that ignores the healthy social standards of justice, fairplay, equity and universal brotherhood.

It is clear from the above that Casteism is a blind group loyalty towards one's own caste or sub-caste which does not care for the interests of other castes and their members.

### **Causes of Casteism:**

Casteism which exercises a negative influence on the network of social relations is caused by several factors of which the following may be noted.

1. **Endogamous Nature of the Caste:** Casteism is often the result of restrictions imposed on the marriage that takes place in the Hindu society. Each caste and sub-caste is endogamous in nature. It means that members of a caste or sub-caste has to marry within his or her own caste or sub-caste. Because of this rule

of endogamy, marital relations are confined to a small circle / section of the people. Individuals are more prone to develop their loyalties and admirations to their own caste or sub-caste people. This practice of endogamy makes the people to become somewhat narrow-minded.

2. **Strong Desire to Enhance Caste Prestige:** People belonging to a particular caste or sub-caste have the tendency of developing loyalty to their caste or sub-caste and to become more conscious of its relative prestige in society. Every member thus tries his level best to see that his caste prestige is safeguarded and enhanced. This type of loyalty towards the caste makes the members of the caste to favour their own members of the caste wherever they get the opportunity. Excessive caste loyalty tends to keep other caste people at a distance.
3. **Improvement in the Means of Transport and Communication Leading to a Better Organization of Caste:** Advancement that has taken place in the field of transport and communication has helped the members of the caste to be in touch with one another regularly. It has also helped them to strengthen their caste organization and conduct activities on caste lines. Caste organizations and caste-get-togethers are on the increase now.
4. **Urbanization Indirectly Favouring Casteism:** Industrialization and urbanization have been attracting people in a large number towards the cities. When the rural people go to the cities they naturally search for their nearer and dearer ones on the basis of the caste. They consider their own caste people as their potential friends and well-wishers. Hence the city atmosphere has also contributed to the strengthening of caste feelings and caste-mindedness.
5. **Powerful Hold of the Caste Over the Members:** Caste is a strong cohesive group. It has a powerful hold over its members. Members of the caste also look to the caste to obtain the needed help and assistance in times of crises, difficulties and emergencies. Dependence of the members on the caste in this way has further added to the problem of Casteism.

## 9.9 CONSEQUENCES OF CASTEISM:

Casteism though has certain benefits to the members of the caste on the individual basis, it has several harmful effects on the society as a whole. Some of the major harmful consequences of Casteism can be noted here.

1. **Hinderance to the Development of National Feeling:** Members of the caste imbued with the spirit of Casteism are more prone to show their loyalty to the caste rather than to the community at large. Casteism divides people in the name of caste and encourages intolerance, jealousy, rivalry and conflicts among members of the caste. Caste clashes and tensions that arise in society for one reason or another wrecks the unity of society and damages social harmony.
2. **Dangerous to Democracy:** Strictly speaking, caste and democracy cannot go together. Caste is based on inequality, whereas democracy assures equality and equal opportunities to one and all. Since democracy and caste system are co-existing in India clashes between them are inevitable. Indian politics has become very much complicated because of the caste interference. Caste plays its role in the processes of selection of candidates to the elections, electioneering, formation of cabinet, distribution of portfolios, and so on. It means at every stage in politics caste creates tensions, misunderstandings, infights, rivalries, etc. It is in this way national interests are undermined and national unity is underscored.
3. **Encourages Moral Degeneration:** Casteism contributes to the moral fall. It encourages nepotism. It makes one go out of the way to help and favour people of one's own caste. People of the same caste also look to the caste leaders to favour them in all the situations. This kind of favour damages the moral values and encourages corruption.
4. **Casteism may even Lead to Brain-Drain:** It has been observed that some of the most efficient and talented persons have left India and gone abroad for the simple reason that their merits and talents are not properly recognized. Casteism which comes in the way of the recognition of merit and efficiency indirectly promotes brain-drain.

It is clear from the above that Casteism has dangerous effects on the society. Though people know Casteism is bad they have become the victims of that. Even those who condemn it in public are practicing it privately. Prof. M.N. Srinivas has rightly said that the caste “is so tacitly and so completely accepted by all, including most vocal elements in condemning it, that it is everywhere the unit of social action.”

More than the common people politicians seem to be contributing much to the survival of Casteism. “Political leaders belonging to different castes seem to secure political and other advantages for themselves at the expenses of others, and to this end they utilize the caste sentiment. Caste consciousness and caste prejudices which exist among the masses are thus turned by politicians into caste passions.

One of the seasoned politicians of India by name Namboodripad himself has stated “The existence of caste consciousness, caste prejudices, discontent on the basis of caste inequalities –all these are impediments in the way of the development of the country as a whole, and therefore, of the development of “lower’ and “backward” castes themselves. Caste separatism, therefore, rather than helps, the advancement of the “lower” castes themselves.

#### **9.10 SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM OF CASTEISM.**

Casteism is no doubt a social evil that has to be counteracted and removed. Some have even gone to the extent of telling that even caste system is to be wiped out. But removal of caste and Casteism is not an easy thing. Caste has very strong roots in our social set up and hence it cannot be uprooted from our society. It is not the need of the hour; only the ugly face of the caste, that is, Casteism, is to be wiped out. We can suggest some solutions in this regard to counteract the problem of Casteism.

1. **Education:** Education seems to be the most ideal solution to the problem of Casteism. People must be properly educated about the dangers of practicing



- Casteism. Parents, teachers, elderly people, political leaders should take precautions against contaminating the young minds with Casteism.
2. **Encouragement of Intercaste Marriages:** Marital relations represent the most intimate relations between men and women. Encouragement and promotion of intercaste marriages will help young men and women of different castes to come closer and to develop healthy relations among them.
  3. **Minimum use of the term “caste” :** Necessary precautions must be taken to see that the word “caste” is used only in limited context. The young generations must be encouraged to give the least importance for it. This is possible only when we make lesser and lesser use of the term ”caste:.
  4. **Promotion of Economic Equality:** Wide economic gap is found between the upper caste people and the lower caste people. This economic gap widens the social distance and contributes to the development of caste prejudices. Hence, efforts must be made to provide equal economic opportunities for the lower caste people to attain economic prosperity.

### 9.11 Summary:

A social problem has been defined as “a situation confronting a group or a section of society which inflicts injurious consequences that can be handled only collectively”.<sup>8</sup> Social problems arise out of pathological social conditions. They occur in all societies—simple (that is, small, isolated and homogeneous with a strong sense of group solidarity, and which change slowly) as well as in complex (which are characterized by impersonal secondary relations, anonymity, loneliness, high mobility and extreme specialization, and where change is faster), that is, wherever and whenever a relationship is affected between a group of individuals leading to maladjustments and conflicts.

<sup>3</sup> Communalism has become one of the biggest menaces of modern India. Problem that arises between the socio-religious relations of the people who belong to various minority communities on the one hand and the majority community on the other, can be referred to as “communalism” or “communal problem.”

Casteism is social problem associated with the caste system. Just as the caste system is exercising its influence in all the fields of social life Casteism too has become all pervasive. Causes of Casteism are (1) Endogamous Nature of the Caste (2) Strong Desire to Enhance Caste Prestige (3) Improvement in the Means of Transport and Communication Leading to a Better Organization of Caste (4) Urbanization Indirectly Favouring Casteism (5) Powerful Hold of the Caste Over the Members. The major harmful consequences of Casteism are (1) Hinderance to the Development of National Feeling (2) Dangerous to Democracy (3) Encourages Moral Degeneration (4) Casteism may even Lead to Brain-Drain.

Casteism is no doubt a social evil that has to be counteracted and removed. Some have even gone to the extent of telling that even caste system is to be wiped out. But removal of caste and Casteism is not an easy thing. Caste has very strong roots in our social set up and hence it cannot be uprooted form our society. We can suggest some solutions in this regard to counteract the problem of Casteism that is (1) Education (2) Encouragement of Intercaste Marriages (3) Minimum use of the term "caste" (4) Promotion of Economic Equality.

#### 9.12 Glossary:

Fatalism  
Communalism  
Casteism  
Brain Drain

#### 9.13 Questions:

1. Explain the Characteristics and causes of Social Problems?
2. Discuss the causes and remedial measures of Communalism and Casteism?

#### 9.14 References:

1. Madan G.R. : Social Problems in India Rawat Publishers Ltd., New-Delhi.
2. Ram Ahuja : Social Problems in India Rawat Publications, New Delhi.
3. Shankar Rao. C.N.: Sociology of Indian Society, S.Chand & Company Ltd., New-Delhi.
4. Vidya Bhushan & Sachdeva D.R. : An introduction to Sociology, Kitab Mahal, New Delhi.

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## Lesson 7

### Problems in Indian Society

#### Objective:

The main objective of the lesson is to discuss the various Socio-Economic Disparities such as social discrimination, gender disparity, social disparity and environmental degradation and regional disparities.

#### Structure:

Objective  
Introduction  
The Meaning of Socio-Economic Development  
Growth and Equity  
Socio-Economic Disparities  
Social Disparity and Environmental Degradation  
Regional Disparities  
Social Discrimination  
Gender Disparity  
Summary  
Technical Terms  
Self Assessment Questions  
Reference Books

#### Introduction

Social disparities may have many causes. At different times in history, a variety of factors have combined to determine an individual's lot. At present, income inequality largely determines social disparities, while other factors such as social class and aristocratic titles no longer matter. In other words, economic disparities determine social disparities, no matter whether these disparities are reflected in terms of inequality between city and countryside, between men and women, or between coastal and inland regions.

#### Socio-Economic Development

There is considerable disagreement over the meaning and measurement of socio-economic development and what actually constitutes "true development". Socio-Economic Development, in this sense, refers to the ability to produce an adequate and growing supply of goods and services productively and efficiently, to accumulate capital, and to distribute the fruits of production in a relatively equitable manner. The gap between rich and poor, developed and underdeveloped, or First and Third World national reflects variations in these socio-economic capacities. While there is widespread agreement that socio-economic development involves

production, accumulation, and distribution processes, the study of development has been heavily influenced by particular sociological concepts and economic measures. Sociological studies have emphasized the traditional-to-modern transition as part of the larger process of social change. Economists, on the other hand, tend to view development in terms of economic growth. Each of these perspectives has shaped the contemporary definition of socio-economic development.

India is often characterized as an emerging economic super power. In fact, it is the only large potential market awaiting to be conquered by the multinational corporations. The process of integration of India into the global market is progressing fast. Almost all economic indicators are showing healthy trend and India is one of the fastest growing major economies of the world.

India has several strengths which can be fully exploited in the coming decades. The relatively young population which is still growing at about 2 per cent per annum in a world inhabited by nations with ageing populations can be considered an important asset. This asset can generate huge demographic dividend in the coming decades. India can become the principal supplier of skilled workers to developed countries with ageing societies experiencing acute labour shortage. The powerful Indian Diaspora can work as a potential facilitator for the smooth transition of India into a world economic power. The high quality engineering and management talent of India is universally acclaimed. Home grown Indian companies have been entering international arena to set new trends of mergers and acquisitions.

There is an altogether different profile of India, a country with the largest number of poor and destitute in the world. India also accounts for the largest number of illiterates; and the largest number of unemployed. It has the largest number of anemic women and children, and huge infant/child and maternal mortality.

Economic development and social development are mutually reinforcing. Disparities in economic development and social development are also mutually reinforcing. Socially excluded are economically marginalized. Economically marginalized remain socially excluded. The gains of economic development accrue disproportionately to the socially developed groups. The economic gains will help them to further hone up their social skills which in turn will enable them to gain even more from the economic opportunities. On the other hand, socially backward may gain only marginally from economic development which may not be sufficient for them to improve their social skills to enable them to earn more. This vicious circle transcends from generation to generation. There exist several dimensions of economic and social disparities of development in the country.

### **Growth and equity**

Since World War II, growth has been a major concern of policy makers. For both socialist and capitalist countries, the key to development was assumed to be faster economic growth. As socialist and capitalist countries were competing to prove the superiority of their social system, a higher rate of economic growth was considered by both to be the most important goal.

To attain a high rate of growth, socialist countries focused on rapid industrialization based on large-scale nationalization of industries and a centralized command economy, which disadvantages the agricultural sector. Although socialist countries insist on equal distribution of revenues, social disparity exists between city and countryside. Farmers have much smaller

income than city dwellers, due to the higher prices of manufactured goods and lower government-fixed prices of agricultural products.

Turning to the capitalist countries, competition with socialist countries forced countries on the front line to adopt a relatively equitable economic policy, building up a welfare state with a generous system of social redistribution. But in other countries, growth was often accompanied by increasing social disparities, with rich groups gaining the lion's share of national wealth, while the poor saw their living standards declining.

Social disparity in terms of income inequality was not a cause of widespread concern, as long as growth was not jeopardized. Indeed, under the influence of some economic theories, people believed that there was a trade-off between equity and efficiency: to distribute income too equally would undermine incentives, thus lowering the rate of economic growth, so that everyone's income would decline in the end.

### **Socio-Economic Disparities**

Some of socio-economic disparities are:

- Social Disparity and Environmental Degradation
- Regional Disparities
- Social Discrimination
- Gender Disparity

#### **Social Disparity and Environmental Degradation**

Income inequality also has other implications, particularly in the field of the environment. Economic growth has been considered to be the remedy for poverty both in rich and poorer countries. Economic growth, however, does not always reduce income inequalities between rich and poor; instead it tends in some circumstances to enlarge social disparities, and so another relationship between social disparities and environmental degradation becomes obvious. In other words, people seem aware that without protective measures growth may be environmentally destructive. This is particularly so if poor people are left to their miserable lot without social assistance, because poverty and environmental destruction are linked in a vicious circle. There are several links between poverty and the environment.

Firstly, poor people live closely to nature; they are presumed to live essentially on the raw resources that nature provides. As their productivity is very limited, poor people tend to have a lot of children as safety insurance on the one hand, and to raise their living standard on the other hand. The increase of poor population exerts a direct pressure on the exploitation of natural resources, sometimes at the expense of natural regenerative capability, causing irreparable damage to nature.

Secondly, poor people don't have a secure livelihood. In the countryside, poor farmers don't have access to land tenure, so they are often forced for their survival to exploit marginal areas of forests or unfavorable areas in a way that is called "cut and run". As they are not able to invest in land exploitation and they can't exploit land in a sustainable way, their activities are destined to contribute to soil erosion and environmental destruction.

Thirdly, poor people don't have many assets; they cannot obtain credit from formal financial institutions in order to develop more profitable activities. This lack of financial resources forces them to resort to an informal but high interest capital market. These high interest loans represent a heavy burden for poor families, and they certainly want to be rid of this burden as quickly as possible. So they are often compelled to use the borrowed money for short-term exploitation, instead of investing in long-term projects.

### **Regional Disparities**

At the time of independence, considerable difference in economic and social development of different regions of the country existed. One of the main objectives of the planning process initiated in the early 1950s was to reduce these regional differences and to achieve, regionally balanced development. Various policy instruments including direct public investment by the centre in infrastructure, guided private investment and building up of capacity enhancing institutions have been tried to achieve this objective. These policies were continued during the first three decades of planning. Though these measures were not getting aggravated during this period. With the initiation of economic reforms in the early 1980s which culminated in full-fledged deregulation, liberalization and globalization in the early 1990s, the role of the government in investment decisions has diminished. Private investment became the principal engine of economic development. Private investments flowed to those regions where conditions are favourable to achieve maximum return on investment. As a result, states with better physical and social infrastructure, adequate forward and backward linkages and other conducive environment attracted the lion's share of private investment over the last two decades. The year wise and state wise private investment proposals since August 1991 regularly published by the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion clearly indicate that the major share was accounted for by Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Only recently some of the backward states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa started attracting large private investment proposals mainly in mining and industries based on mineral extraction.

On the other hand, States which did not have the above characteristics were, by and large, by-passed by private investment. The only chance for these States to attract private investment is to create conducive environment including adequate physical and social infrastructure, better law and order situation and improved administrative efficiency. However, these can be achieved only through sizeable public investment either by the Centre or the respective State governments. The dilemma is that the fiscal resources of neither the Centre nor the States have been adequate enough to carry out such investments. Only recently, as a result of higher economic growth and better tax compliance resulting from tax reforms, there have been some improvement in the finances of the Centre and the States. However, the fiscal responsibility enactments of the various States following the 12<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission recommendation imposes constraint on borrowings and expenditures. Currently most States have revenue balances, while expenditures are severely curtailed. This includes some of the most backward States where sectors like education, health, drinking water, sanitation, road connectivity, etc., are crying for investment.

Differential economic performance of the last two decades has increased the regional disparities in the country. Broadly speaking, while the western and southern States have experienced faster economic growth, the northern and eastern States lagged behind. On the other hand, population growth continues to be significantly higher in the lagging regions as compared to the forward regions. As a result, the per capita income differentials have been widening even further. Thus, while the economic centre of gravity has been shifting in the south-

westerly direction, the demographic centre of gravity has been moving in the opposite direction. Another dimension of the same problem is that while more and more employment opportunities are created in the developed regions of the country, the labor force growth is much higher in the backward regions. This will necessarily imply that large scale migration in search of employment will take place from the backward regions to the developed regions. This will have adverse implication socially as well as economically. Apart from the social and cultural dislocation of the migrant, the response of the recipient community also may have adverse social impact on the migrant. While the remittances of the migrant may add to the purchasing power back at home, a larger economic issue is that often migration depletes the availability of skills in the home market which will impede the development of the region.

### **Social Discrimination**

Indian society has been traditionally highly hierarchical in nature. The caste system practiced by the Hindu society did not allow social mobility across the classes. Though other religions are supposed to be casteless, in the Indian context all religious groups covertly practice caste-based discrimination. *Dalits* who are outcastes are the worst victims of caste discrimination followed by the *adivasis* who are outside the caste hierarchy. Our Constitution has special provisions to protect the interest of these groups who are characterized as scheduled castes (SCs) and scheduled tribes (STs). All the affirmative action in favour of them so far has helped only a small proportion of them.

The SCs who account for over 16 per cent of the population, remain backward in economic and social development. Mostly landless and asset less being largely agricultural labour in rural areas, their living conditions and access to basic amenities of life are pathetic. As a result, the incidence of poverty, illiteracy and ill health among the SCs is significantly higher compared to the rest of the population. Though untouchability has been abolished by the Constitution more than 50 years ago, still they continue to be victims of various forms of discrimination.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau of the Ministry of Home Affairs the incidence of crime against the SCs has been on the increase in recent years. Three States viz. Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh together account for almost two-third of such reported cases. A sad aspect of such crimes and civil rights violations is the fact that they are often perpetrated by other backward castes and communities who themselves are victims of various forms of discrimination by higher castes.

Scheduled tribes account for about 8 per cent of the population of the country. But their share among the poor and illiterates is more than double their population share. The STs are concentrated in the central and north – eastern parts of the country. Unlike SCs, landlessness is not a major problem for the STs. But most of the land owned by them is of inferior quality and less productive. Another important problem is their isolation from the mainstream on account of geographical location. This is especially true of the north-east where STs are in a majority in several small states.

Most of the mineral wealth of the country is in the tribal belt. Mining and other developmental activities like power and immigration projects often lead to large scale displacement of tribals from their habitats. Often they are not properly rehabilitated economically, socially and culturally. Indeed, they have been often victims of the development process.



There is a qualitative difference between the development experience of STs in the north-east and in the central regions. In the north-east where they are in a majority and have the freedom to shape their destiny the outcome in terms of economic, social and human development has been better. In other parts of the country where tribals are dominated by others, their living conditions have not significantly improved. Often they become victims of exploitation by non-tribals in various ways. They are often alienated from their own land and made to work as bonded agricultural labour by usurious money lenders. The fate of the tribals has not really improved even in the two newly created tribal States of Chhattisgarh and Jharkand. In both states the real economic and political power is wielded by the non-tribal majority.

### **Gender Disparity**

The fourth major divide in terms of economic and social development is in between the genders. Varying levels of male domination exists in most societies. Indian society is highly patriarchal. Indeed, the superiority of men was legitimized by the code of Manu in the 8<sup>th</sup> century and there was never a looking back. Despite the Directive Principles in the Constitution, we continue to practice gender discrimination in all spheres of life. Indeed, the UNDP Human Development Report had come up with comparative figures to establish that gender discrimination in South Asian Countries including India is more acute than even in Arab countries.

Gender discrimination is evident even in the demographic indicators of the country. While most of the major countries have a sex ratio favourable to women, our sex ratio continues to remain favourable to men. Not only that, child sex-ratio has been moving inexorably against the girl child in the recent decades. Of course, this is not a biological phenomenon. It is the result of sex-selective abortions and the blatant violation of PNDT Act, 1994. The 2001 census figures indicate that illegal sex-selection is more prevalent in some of the most prosperous parts of the country, like Punjab, Haryana and Delhi. Studies based on hospital statistics in South Delhi indicate that sex-ratio at birth is as low as 500 females per 1000 males. This truly reflects the frightening gender discrimination of the middle class and elites in Delhi.

Though the gender gap in literacy has been declining over the decades, still there exists considerable difference. According to 2001 census while male literacy is 76 per cent, female literacy is as low as 54 per cent at the national level. In States like Bihar, UP, Rajasthan, MP and Orissa, the gender gap in literacy is even more. Indeed, this gap could be taken as an indicator of the level of gender discrimination in these societies. Low level of female literacy is often associated with poor access to health and family planning facilities, poor awareness of proper child care and other hygienic practices which adversely affect the welfare of the whole family.

Lower literacy and educational attainments result in lower earning capacity. The ratio of estimated female to male earned income in India at 31 per cent is one of the lowest in the World. Though women constitute a third of the labour force in India, they account for less than one-fifth of the employees in the organized sector. Further, often they are engaged in activities of repetitive nature which can be characterized as drudgery. With globalization there is a trend of feminization of certain activities especially in textile and garment industries, electronics and agro-processing industries. These are often repetitive in nature and low-paying. Women earners often have to bear the double burden of work in the sense that they are expected to carry on

their traditional role as homemakers also. Many of their socially highly valued activities like caring the children are not assigned any economic value in national income accounting.

Gender-empowerment has become a catch word without much achievement. However, the reservation of one-third of elected posts for women in the local bodies on the basis of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments to the Constitution has made a difference. Participation in the functioning of the *Panchayats* and Municipalities as elected representatives and office bearers has contributed significantly to empowerment of women over the last decade. The reluctance of the male politicians to allow similar representation for women in Parliament and State Assemblies is a clear indication of the sense of male insecurity.

## Summary

It is clear that various dimensions of economic and social-disparity-regional, social class or gender have aggravated in the recent period. That to during a period when India has been achieving accelerated economic growth and has been emerging as a global player. This trend, if not arrested and reversed fast, will have serious adverse implications for the Indian economy, society and polity. As of today, a majority of Indians have been bypassed by the process of economic development either are able to contribute to the growth process or receive any tangible benefits.

## Technical Terms

Inequality	Disparity	Enactments
Degradation	Destruction	Affirmative

## Self Assessment Questions:

1. Explain the concept of Socio-Economic Development
2. Write elaborately on Socio-Economic Disparities
3. Critically analyze the Social Discrimination and Gender Disparity

## Reference Books

1. **Rajkishor Meher:** Development Disparities in a Backward Region
2. **David Jaffee:** Level of Socio-Economic Development Theory
3. **N.J. Kurian:** Widening Economic & Social Disparities: Implications for India
4. **Yifan Ding:** Social and Economic Disparities

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## LESSON 8

**SOCIAL TENSION AND SOCIAL RESILIENCE**

**Objective:** This lesson explains about different group of tensions in the society and about social resilience

**Structure:**

Objective  
Introduction  
Meaning of Tension  
Different group of Tensions  
Causes of Intergroup Tension to External Circumstances  
The concept of Resilience  
Summary  
Technical Terms  
Self Assessment Questions  
Reference Books

**Introductions**

Today, man lives under the strain of mounting tensions that affect every aspect of life whether personal, social, religious, political or economic perhaps, in no other period in the history of mankind were tensions so powerful and encompassing as in the present age. Every sphere of life has become depersonalized and unsurveyable and society disintegrated and unstable. The complicated social machinery has brought differentiation of functions which has led to the differences in claims for social recognition and privileges. Various large scale organizations lack of adaptation to each other's function which results in the cancellation of each other's effectiveness. Social stability is tried to be maintained by differentiation of classes. "There remain no basic, permanent values in social life: everything is scattered, confused and disintegrated. The confusion of norms and values leads to the destruction of the network of socio-cultural relationship.

**Meaning of Tension**

In Psychology the term denoted "upsets in complacency or optimum balance on emotional upheaval, being the principal characteristics of hypertension". **The New Dictionary of Psychology**

This disharmony or upset may result in restlessness, anxiety, instability, in coordination, hyper activity etc. **Kane**

In general an organism is accommodated to a certain optimal level of external, stimuli. Any change in these stimuli produces disequilibrium or tension in the organism; the resulting tension involves, the conscious accompaniment of which is sensation.

Motive implies tensions so that motivated behavior is related to some sort of tension. Motivated behavior is organized behavior that shows a direction of efforts motives and tensions are so interrelated that in order to organize many small tensions into one unified pattern, the process of developing motive is followed. Thus in motivated behavior many small tensions are managed. Even those tensions that have social, cultural or individual habits as their patterns may also be managed in the same way. The whole organism is an unstable equilibrium in relation to its environment, and represents an infinitely complex configuration or tensions, the more persistent of which are referred to as structures, attitudes, character. Since normal mental life oscillates between two extremes; a plan of action in which sensor motor functions occur and a plan of dream, in which we live our imaginative life, of which memory is major part, there are as many corresponding intermediate planes as there are degrees of „attention of life“ adaption to reality. The mind has a power sui-generis to produce contractions and expansions of itself thereby calling attention to the need of distinguishing various heights of tension of tones in psychic life. Interprets the life of the universe and the life of human personality in terms of tension. **The Dictionary of Philosophy**

In Social and Political thinking the term “Tension” means an attitude of hostility among persons or groups towards each other, expressing itself in strained relationship which may break or rupture. **(Avasthi)**

Tensions have been defined as the act of stretching the condition of being stretched light or mental strain or any strained relations as between government. **Sachchidananda and Iyer**

It is the emotional concomitant of something else, for the „Uneasiness“ and „mental strain“ must have source, and something, presumably relations must be „stretched“ or „strained“ to give rise to the conflict and uncertainty implied by emotional reaction. Change, in the sense of any challenge to the status quo appear to be the central factor in the emergence of tension, for a given social arrangement or more or less accommodation a situation of intergroup antagonism, in any disruption or stable expectations with reference to intergroup conduct can be expected to lead to an increase in tension. Whenever one group ceases to acquiesce or presses for a change in previous accepted social patterns while the other group wishes to maintain them without being sure of their ability to do so, these exist the typical setting in which conflict and the possibility of violence emerge. The doubt, strain, uncertainty and concern over the outcome of the conflict, the uneasiness experienced over the possible course of events, make up the subjective experience of the conflict referred to as tension. **Sachchidananda and Iyer**

Tension results from discrepancies between people’s actual situation and their needs and goals. Therefore, the motivation to drop out of a complex and highly interdependent society and to establish a simpler self sufficient community in perhaps a response to the particular tensions and strains experienced in a large complex society. **Paul**

**R.M. Maclver** in his valuable text book on sociology „Society“ brings in inter group tensions and tells that the phenomenon of prejudice, tension and discrimination between groups an extremely variable.

## Different group of Tensions

Japanese sociologists and others evidently working on the commission on tension from the UNESCO, have recognized nine distinct group of tensions in the society. They are:

1. Tensions in family life
2. Tensions within communities
3. Tensions between countries
4. Tensions around the problem of the Eta
5. Racial tensions
6. Tensions in religious life
7. Tensions in economic life
8. Ideological tensions
9. Tensions among young people

In this way tensions constitute a serious threat to human existence. The word "Tension" is an adaptation of Latin word "Tensionem" (noun us). The term tension is used in various senses. In physics, it denotes a constrained condition of the particles of body when subjected to force acting in opposite directions, away from each other, thereby tending to draw them apart, and balanced by forces of cohesion holding them together. Here, it does not imply readiness to act but only to break nor does it suggest the difficulty in restraining its actions towards an object. In Botany, it is applied to a strain of pressure in the cells or tissues of plants in the course of growth. In Zoology, it means the contraction of muscles and a further meaning is added to the physical sense, since a taut muscle suggests difficulty in checking itself from action and thus involves a readiness to act. Similarly in Physiology and Pathology, it means the condition, in any part of the body, of being stretched and strained and a sensation indicating this feeling of tightness. When used figuratively, it means a straining of strained condition of mind, feeling or nerves. **Bernard.**

## Causes of Intergroup Tension to External Circumstances

There are some views which deal the causes of intergroup tension to external circumstances. Some explain that the lack of coordination and prevalence of contradictions among various groups in society causes tension, both in individuals as well as in group life. Robin M. Williams explains that the possibility of intergroup tension and mass violence is greatest in

1. Prolonged frustration leading to a high tension level
2. Presence of population elements with a propensity of violence
3. A highly visible and rapid change in intergroup relations
4. A precipitating incident of intergroup conflict

R.M. Williams profiting by the discussion of Coser and Korchin and the sociologist T. Parsons as in the approaches to national unity by L Bryson and others has defined some of the basic concepts involved in the topic of, tension. Leaving out „group“ prejudice, „Discrimination“ and competition and „aggression“ Williams noted substance of the definition of group hostility reserving that of „conflict“ for the next section where it properly belongs. Group hostility is shared and common attitude, shown of seen in

verbal and or non-verbal acts, which discharge, insult, ostracize, threaten and or injure members of social group towards which hostility is entertained. Intergroup hostility is conditioned to a large extent by the level of tension in a society. The tension level of any social grouping is in part a function of the relative emphasis in the group's culture upon participation in common values as over against individual or group acquisition of scarce goods. **(Williams)** for further discussion in tension or social tension it is important to know the concept of frustration and conflict, or which is precondition of tension or social tension.

It is universally accepted that frustrations have always been inevitable in human life. Talking about the significant role of frustration Rosenzweig says, "Frustration is such a universal aspect of experience that some philosophers have even woven an entire metaphysical system around it. **(Rosenzweig)**

**Barker** points to the subjectivity of frustration, as he says "by a frustrating situation will be meant any situation in which an obstacle physical, social, or conceptual, personal or environmental –prevent the satisfaction of a desire, it includes only those situations where the subject himself accepts the obstacle as impassable, the solution as impossible.

**Mowrer** frustration is an antithesis to happiness to quote his own words, "Frustration is a state of affairs against which the affected individual's energies are more or less strongly mobilized which he seeks to eliminate or if possible entirely to avoid if happiness may fairly be said to represent the ultimate goal of all human endeavor, frustration is its antithesis. According to Krech and Crutchfield Frustration is the motivational and emotional state which results from persistent blockage of goal directed behavior. It may lead the individual change in cognition to maladaptive behavior.

It is universally accepted that frustrations have always been inevitable in human life and are more or less in the present age. The human being in spite of being the crown of creation remains a small frail organism with limited capacities, physical as well as mental. He constantly strives towards goals which gratify his complicated biological and physiological needs. Sometime these are achieved with relative ease, but a large number of needs and motives inevitably remain unsatisfied or only partly satisfied due to some obstacle lying between need and its goal. When the obstacle becomes difficult to overcome, it creates frustration.

Research on frustration, aggression and tension comes it clear that which is frustrating depends upon the goals and intention of the persons supposedly being frustrated. Those goals may not be evident to the observer. All this still does not deny that a person or a group of persons, feeling frustrated, may attack another group that is a safe and exciting target but is unrelated to the frustration. Freud was one of the first to emphasize and analyze in detail the points of frustration that when a person is prevented from satisfying his needs. He is likely to engage in aggression behavior. Early experimental work on this hypothesis provided some support for it. Often the frustrating agent is not a suitable target for hostility because of his great power. In such instances the hostility may be directed against a scapegoat. On innocent party. There is such evidence to indicate that the blocking of goal directed behavior frequently creates hostile impulses in the individual as well as in group.

The growing agrarians tension and violence in different parts of the country has thus received the attention of social scientists and administrators alike. The prime concern of social scientists has been with the patterns of inequality and conflict as they occur due to the changing land relations whereas administrators have studied the law and order problem involved in such conflicts.

It has been observed that the discrepancy between the egalitarian social norms and conservative distribution norms upheld by the prosperous and dominant sections of society is the primary cause of agrarian unrest. It has also been observed in the rural scenario that the perception of prevalence of disparities in income by the rural poor, a viable numeral strength of the agricultural labour forces and their consciousness of their right, the existence of adequate support structure provided by political parties. These are the conditions which indicate that India is in Tension.

### **The concept of Resilience**

Development practitioners and theorists use varying competing definitions of resilience—originally a term applied to ecological systems—that bring together lessons from vulnerability studies, climate change adaptation, social protection, disaster-risk reduction, and development. As a concept, scholars now apply resilience thinking to a number of theories that move far beyond the original ecological foundation (**Barrett and Constas**)

While a thorough review of the concept of resilience is beyond the scope of this lesson, we do highlight what have been suggested as characteristics of resilient systems in order to guide the later discussion of the role of social capital in resilience. Resilient systems are diverse and redundant, with built-in overlap to ensure that they can continue to function in the face of shocks and to allow for reserve resources upon which to draw in times of stress and need (Mazur). In addition, scholars highlight the importance of governance arrangements that encourage local-level participation and control in decision-making, and empirical studies indicate that good leadership, broad-based collective action, and community cohesion are important in being able to deal with uncertainty and change. While assets and capital are important as indicators of resilience, resilience also necessarily involves process-oriented changes, including changes to the ways in which individuals and communities learn, take advantage of new opportunities, and respond to events. Resilience is a continual process of adjustments and change, both incremental and transformative, rather than something that is achieved through the building up of assets and stocks of capital alone. Moreover, diverging from its original ecological application, resilience for development seeks a general improvement in welfare over time, not just a constant level of chronic poverty. Conceptualizing resilience as a process that goes beyond buffering against shocks and ultimately has development aim necessitates recognizing power and agency relationships that reproduce inequalities and contribute to vulnerability. Ultimately, resilience recognizes that both change and stability are important in the future and that systems need capacities that can contribute to both.

We define resilience as the capacity of an individual, household, community, or system to respond over time to shocks and to proactively reduce the risk of future shocks; these actions contribute to growth and development rather than merely maintain stability. Resilience requires a diverse set of capacities to meet the reactive and proactive challenges posed by economic, political, environmental, and social shocks.

Persistence, or coping capacity, refers to the ability of resilient systems to cope with shocks, ex-post and to restore well-being to current levels after the events. Adaptation, or adaptive capacities, are preventive action that individuals or communities employ to learn from experience or to reduce the impact of predicted shocks. The skills and resources required for adaptation are different from those required for coping and may necessitate mobilizing additional outside resources or knowledge. Transformative capacities refer to the abilities of people to change the larger structures and systems in which they live, implying adaptation at larger scales and thus a more radical shift. Systems can possess these elements at varying degrees, yet scholars argue that a balance of all of them is needed to move towards resilience. Each implies certain temporal, scope, scale, and resource requirements that may have trade-offs. Some empirical work suggests that an emphasis on maintaining coping strategies has limited the capacity of certain agricultural societies to innovate and respond to change in beneficial ways. As with all development interventions, improving resilience can create winners and losers in the household, in the community, or at the national level, which reinforces the need to focus attention on the disparate impacts that such interventions and capacities have.

### Summary

Tension is the act or process of stretching something tight. It is the condition of being stretched. The UNESCO, have recognized nine distinct group of tensions in the society. Tensions in family life, Tensions within communities, Tensions between countries, Tensions around the problem of the Eta, Racial tensions, Tensions in religious life, Tensions in economic life, Ideological tensions and Tensions among young people. The word Resilience originally a term applied to ecological systems –that bring together lessons from vulnerability studies, climate change adaptation, social protection, disaster-risk reduction, and development.

### Technical Terms

DISEQUILIBRIUM	PERSISTENT	UNEASINESS
CONCOMITANT	DISCREPANCIES	PREJUDICE

### Self Assessment Questions

1. Write about the different Tension in the society.
2. Explain the concept of Tension
3. Discuss elaborately the concept of Resilience

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1. Anil Kant Mishra: Rural Tension in India
2. David Dressing: Social Tensions in Early Seventeenth-Century Potosi
3. Quinn Bernier & Ruth Melnzen-Dick: Resilience and social capital



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## Lesson No. 9

### Aspects of Social Change

#### Objective:

The main objective of the lesson is to discuss the concept, theories of social change.

#### Structure:

- Objective
- Introduction
- Meaning of Social Change
- Definition of Social Change
- Nature and Characteristics of Social Change
- Causes of Social Change
- Theories of Social Change
- Evolutionary Theories
- Cyclical Theories
- Functionalists Or Dynamic Theories
- Conflict Theories
- Summary
- Key Words
- Self Assessment Questions
- Reference Books

#### Introduction

Change is an ever present phenomenon everywhere. An ancient Greek Philosopher Heraclitus in an emphatic way hinted at this fact when he said that it is impossible for a man to step into the same river twice. It is impossible, because in the interval of time between the first and the second stepping both the river and the man have changed. Neither remains the same. "This is the central theme of the Heraclitean philosophy - the reality of change, the impermanence of being, the inconstancy of everything but change itself". The order that is society, is after all the changing order. Ever since Comte, sociologists have faced two large social questions—the questions of social statics and the question of social dynamics, what is and how it changes. The sociologist is not satisfied when he has outlined the structure of society. He seeks to know its causes also. Thus, the Roman poet Lucretius remarks, "Happy is he who can know the causes of things". The casual curiosity of a sociologist never rests; nothing stills his desire to know and to understand. He is engaged in an endless endeavor to unravel the mystery of social change. Social change is indeed a perplexing problem. Nothing social remains the same, nothing social abides.

#### Meaning of Social Change

Any alteration, difference or modification that takes place in a situation or in an object through time can be called change. The term „social change“ is used to indicate the changes that take place in human interactions and interrelations. Society is a „web of social relationships“ and hence „social change“ obviously means a change in the system of social relationships. Social relationships are understood in terms of social processes and social interactions and social organization. Thus the term „social change“ is used to describe variations in social

interaction, social processes and social organization. It includes alterations in the structure and functions of the society.

### **Definition of Social Change**

(A) M.E. Jones: "Social change is a term used to describe variations in, or modifications of, any aspect of social processes, social patterns, social interaction or social organization".

(B) Kingsley Davis: "By social is meant only such alterations as occur in social organization, that is, structure and functions of society".

© Majumdar, H.T. "Social change may be defined as a new fashion or mode, either modifying or replacing the old, in the life of a people -or in the operation of society".

(D) Maciver and Page: "Social change refers to „a process" responsive to many types of changes; to changes in the manmade conditions of life; to changes in the attitudes and beliefs of men, and to the changes that go beyond the human control to the biological and the physical nature of things".

(E) Maciver (in some other context) also refers to social change as simply a change in the human relationships.

### **Nature and Characteristics of Social Change**

**a. Social Change is Continuous:** Society is undergoing endless changes. These changes cannot be stopped. Society cannot be preserved in a museum to save it from the ravages of time. From the dawn of history, down to this day society has been in continuous flux.

**b. Social Change is Temporal:** Change happens through time. Social change is temporal in the sense it denotes the time-sequence. In fact, society exists only as a time-sequence. As Machiver says, "it is becoming, not a being; a process, not a product". Innovation of new things, modification and renovation of the existing behaviour and the discarding of the old behaviour pattern take time. But the mere passage of time does not cause change as in the biological process of ageing.

**c. Social Change is Environmental:** It must take place within a geographic or physical and cultural context. Both these contexts have impact on human behaviour and in turn man changes them. Social changes never take place in vacuum.

**d. Social Change is Human Change:** The sociological significance of the change consists in the fact that it involves the human aspect. The composition of society is not constant, but changing the fact that people effect change and are themselves affected by it makes change extremely important.

**e. Social Change Results from Interaction of a Number of Factors:** A single factor may trigger a particular change, but it is always associated with other factors. The physical, biological, technological, cultural and other factors may, together bring about social change. This is due to the mutual interdependence of social phenomenon.

**f. Social Change maybe Planned or Unplanned:** The direction and tempo of social change are often conditioned by human engineering. Plans, programmes and projects maybe launched by man in order to determine and control the rate and direction of social change. Unplanned change refers to change resulting from natural calamities such as famines and floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, etc.

**g. Social Change is an Objective Term:** The term social change describes one of the categorical processes. It has no value-judgments attached to it. To the sociologist social change as a phenomenon is neither moral nor immoral, it is amoral. It means the study of social change system without being for or against the change.

## **Causes of Social Change**

Social change is a complex phenomenon in which the cause and effect relationship is not always clear. No single cause produces a single effect in the social world. There is always the plurality of causation. Several factors or causes operate together to produce the same results.

According to Harry M. Johnson the causes of social change are of three types: Firstly, the causes of social change are inherent either in social system in general or in particular kinds of social system. Secondly, the change may be due to some impact from the social environment of the social system of reference. Finally, change may also be due to some impact from the non-social environment. He is of the opinion that these are combined in various ways. One change may lead to a series of changes. The component parts of the social system are so interrelated that any change in one causes adjustive changes in the others.

## **Theories of Social Change**

Socialization, historians and social anthropologists have proposed a number of general theories of social change. These theories may conveniently be grouped into four main categories: evolutionary, cyclical, conflict theories and functional theories. The following explanation provides a glimpse of these theories

### **Evolutionary Theories**

Evolutionary theories are based on the assumption that societies gradually change from simple beginnings into even more complex forms. Early sociologists, beginning with Auguste Comte believed that human societies evolve in unilinear way—that is, in one line of development. According to them, social change meant “progress” towards something better. They saw change as positive and beneficial. To them, the evolutionary process implied that societies would necessarily reach new and higher levels of civilization.

During the 19th century due to colonial expansion soldiers, missionaries, merchants and adventurers came in touch with distant lands whose peoples had been almost unknown in Europe. Most of these peoples happened to be “primitives”. Early anthropologists made some attempts to study such primitives and their societies. Based on their limited observations, inaccurate and unconfirmed information and unqualified imagination they argued that there was a universal evolutionary process. They claimed that all societies passed through a number of stages beginning in primitive origins and culminating in civilization of the Western type. L.H. Morgan, for example, believed that there were three basic stages in the process; savagery, barbarism and civilization. Even Auguste Comte’s ideas relating to the three stages in the development of human thought and also of society namely—the theological, the metaphysical and the positive—in a way, represent the three basic stages of social change.

This evolutionary view of social change was highly influenced by Charles Darwin’s theory of “organic Evolution”. Those who were fascinated by this theory applied it to the human society and argued that societies must have evolved from the too simple and primitive to that of too complex and advanced such as the western society. Herbert Spencer, a British sociologist, carries this analogy to its extremity. He argued that society itself is an organism. He even applied Darwin’s principle of “the survival of the fittest” to human societies. He said that society has been gradually progressing towards a better state. He argued that it has evolved from military society to the industrial society. He claimed that Western races, classes or societies had survived and evolved because they were better adapted to face the conditions of life. This view, known as Social Darwinism, got widespread popularity in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It survived even during the first phase of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Emile Durkheim identified the cause of societal evolution as a society’s increasing “moral density”. Durkheim viewed societies as changing in the direction of greater differentiation,

interdependence and formal control under the pressure of increasing moral density". He advocated that societies have evolved from a relatively undifferentiated social structure with minimum division of labour and with a kind of solidarity called "mechanical solidarity" to a more differentiated social structure with maximum division of labour giving rise to a kind of solidarity called "Organic Solidarity".

#### **Evaluation of the Evolutionary Theory**

The early evolutionary doctrines were readily accepted because they served the colonial interests of Europeans. This theory provided a convenient justification for colonial rule over primitive peoples. "The enforced spread of western culture was conveniently thought of as „the white man's burden" –the thankless but noble task of bringing "higher" forms of civilization to "inferior" peoples". Those who supported this theory has no concept of cultural relativity and hence judged other cultures purely in terms of their own cultures' standards.

The unilinear evolutionary theories described but did not explain social change. They have not given any convincing explanation of how or why societies should evolve toward the western pattern.

The theories were based on the faulty interpretations of the data. "Different theorists grouped vastly different cultures into misleading categories so that they would fit into the various stages of evolutions.

The theorists in an ethnocentric way treated the trends in western civilization as "progress" they largely stressed the importance of economic and technological changes in development and neglected other aspects. Thus, the non-westerners may regard western cultures as technologically more advanced, yet morally backwards.

Further, the recent ethnographic data from primitive societies have proved that the societies need not follow the same step by step evolutionary sequence. In fact, societies have developed in different ways, often by borrowing ideas and innovations from other societies. Ex: The Bushmen of the Kalahari and the aborigines of Australia are being introduced directly to industrial society. Hence they are skipping the „stage" which the theorists have spoken of.

The modern anthropologists have tended to support the theory of multilinear evolution rather than the unilinear one. It can take place in many different ways and change need not necessarily follow the same pattern everywhere. They do not press the analogy between societies and living organisms.

#### **Cyclical Theories**

"Cyclical theories of social change focus on the rise and fall of civilizations attempting to discover and account for these patterns of growth and decay" –(Ian Robertson). Spengler and Toynbee can be regarded as the Champions of this theory. Their ideas may be briefed here.

**Spengler:** „The Destiny of Civilisations" Oswald Spengler, a German school teacher, in his book "the Decline of the West" –1978, pointed out that the fate of civilizations was a matter of "destiny". Each civilisation is like a biological organism and has a similar life-cycle; birth, maturity, old age and death. After making a study of eight major civilizations, including the West, he said that the modern Western Society is in the last stage. i.e. old age. He concluded that the Western societies were entering a period of decay –as evidenced by wars, conflicts, and social breakdown that heralded their doom. This theory is almost out of fashion today. His idea of „destiny" is hardly an adequate explanation of social change. His biological analogy is also too unrealistic and his work is too mystical and speculative.

**Toynbee:** „Challenge and Response" Arnold Toynbee, a British historian with enough sociological insight has offered a somewhat more promising a theory of social change. His famous book "A Study of History" –1946, a multivolume work, draws on materials from 24 civilisations. The key-concepts in Toynbee's theory are those of "challenge and response".

"Every society faces challenges – at first, challenges posed by the environment; later challenges from internal and external enemies. The nature of the responses determines the society's fate. The achievements of a civilization consists of its successful responses to challenges; if it cannot mount an effective response, it dies".

Toynbee's views are more optimistic than those of Spengler's, for he does not believe that all civilizations will inevitably decay. He has pointed out that history is a series of cycles of decay and growth. But each new civilization is able to learn from the mistakes and to borrow from cultures of other. It is, therefore, possible for each new cycle to offer higher levels of achievement. Still he has not explained why some societies are able to offer effective responses to their challenges while other do not, or why a society should overcome one change but become a victim of another.

#### **Functionalists or Dynamic Theories**

In the middle decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a number of American sociologists shifted their attention from social dynamics to social statics or from social change to social stability. Talcott Parsons and his followers have been the main advocates of this theory. Parsons stressed the importance of cultural patterns in controlling the stability of a society. According to him, society has the ability to absorb disruptive forces while maintaining overall stability. Because it is "constantly straining for equilibrium or balance". The conservative forces of society such as shared norms and values resist radical changes and serve to hold the society together.

Between 1940-50s Parsons' Theory of social order or stability, gained wide acceptance especially in America. But critics began to doubt Parsons' assumptions during 1960s. Critics like C. Wright Mills and Lockwood questioned whether a theory of equilibrium and stability was relevant to societies that were in a state of conflict and constant change. Hence, Parsons, tried to include social change (1961-1966) in his functionalist model.

#### **Conflict Theory**

Whereas the equilibrium theories emphasise the stabilizing processes at work in social systems, the so-called conflict theories highlight the forces producing instability, struggle, and social disorganization. Ralf Dahrendorf a German sociologist, says that the conflict theories assume that (1) every society is subjected at every moment to change, hence social change is ubiquitous. (2) Every society experiences at every moment social conflict, hence social conflict is ubiquitous. (3) Every element in society contributes to change. (4) Every society rests on constraint of some of its members by others.

#### **Karl Marx: Change through Class Conflict**

The most famous and influential of the conflict theories is the one put forward by Karl Marx a famous German social thinker and philosopher. "All history is the history of class conflict" – wrote Marx and Engels in the "Communist Manifesto" (1848). "Violence is the midwife of history" – Marx declared. Individuals and groups with opposing interests are bound to be at conflict – Marx asserted. Since the two major social classes, that is, the rich and poor, or capitalists and labourers have mutually hostile interests they are at conflict. History is actually the story of conflict between the exploiting (the rich) and the exploited (the poor) classes. This conflict repeats itself off and on until capitalism is overthrown by the workers and a socialist state is created. What is to be stressed here is that Marx and other conflict theorists deem society as basically dynamic and not static. They consider conflict as a normal, not an abnormal process. They also believe that "the existing conditions in any society constrain the seeds of future social changes".

Conflict theory is quite impressive and influential, no doubt. But it does not account for all forms of social change. It only gives us a means of analyzing some of the most significant changes in history and present-day society. Still it is not a comprehensive theory of social change.

It cannot tell as much about the direction of social change. Even the predictions of Marx have gone wrong.

### **Summary**

Society is undergoing endless changes. These changes cannot be stopped. The main characteristic of social change is that it is a continuous process. Social change is a complex phenomenon in which the cause and effect relationship is not always clear. Social change is a term used to describe variations in, or modifications of, any aspect of social processes, social patterns, social interaction or social organization.

### **Technical Terms**

SOCIETY	PROCESS	SOCIAL INTERACTION
ADJUST	SOCIAL ORGANIZATION	

### **Self Assessment Questions:**

- (1) Explain the meaning and concept of social change
- (2) Write about different kinds of theories of social change
- (3) Elaborately discuss different factors influencing social change
- (4) Write the nature and characteristics of social change

### **Reference Books**

1. Robert Bierstedt: The Social Order
2. R.M. Maclver & C.H. Page: Society
3. Lan Robertson: Sociology
4. Neil J. Smelser (ed): Sociology: An Introduction
5. T.B. Bottomore: Sociology: A Guide to Problems, Processes and Literature

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## Lessonno.10

## Changing Aspects of Caste

### Objective:

The objectives of this lesson is to explain Caste system, Changing Trends and Future of the Caste System

### Structure:

- Objectives
- Introduction
- OriginofCaste
- DefinitionofCaste
- CharacteristicsofCaste
- ChangingintheCasteSystem
- ChangesinCastesystemduringtheBritishRule
- CasteinIndependentIndia(After1947)
  - FactorsContributingtoCasteChange
  - NewTrendsinCasteSystem
  - Futureof CasteSystem
- Summary
- TechnicalTerms
- SelfAssessmentQuestions
- ReferenceBooks

### Introduction

The caste system, the joint family system and the village system of life-are often regarded as the three basic pillars of the Indian social system. The caste system as a form of social stratification is peculiar to India. The caste is an inseparable aspect of the Indian society. It is peculiarly Indian in origin and development. There is no comparable institution elsewhere in the world for the caste system. The caste system which is an integral part of the Indian system, has a long standing history of its own. To understand how the system has come to be what it is today, one has to go back through the pages of history to trace its origin, evolution and growth. It is not easy to say precisely when, how and under what circumstances and pressure the system took its birth and develop the task of tracing the evolution and growth of this system is precise and unambiguous terms is equally problematic.

### OriginofCaste System

The caste stratification of the Indian Society has had its origin in the 'Chaturvama' system. According to the Chaturvarna doctrine, the Hindu society was divided in four main varnas namely: the *Brahmins*, the *Kashtriyas*, the *Vaishyas*, and the *Shudras*. The Varnasystem which was prevalent during the Vedic period was mainly based on the division of labour and occupation. TheCastesystemowesitsorigintotheVarnasystem. Thepresentcaste



system can be said to be degenerated from of the original Varna system. Varnas which were four in number and castes which are found in hundreds and thousands are not one and the same.

### Definition of Caste

'Caste' is so complex a phenomenon which is difficult to define. Writers and thinkers are not unanimous in their opinion regarding caste, its definition and characteristics. Hence caste has been defined variously.

- i. **Sir Herbert Risely:** Caste is a "collection of families, bearing a common name, claiming accomodescend, from a mythical ancestor, human and divine, professing to follow the same hereditary calling and regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogeneous community".
- ii. **MacIver and Page:** "When status is wholly predetermined so that men are born to their lot without any hope of changing it, then the class takes the extreme form of caste."
- iii. **C.H. Cooley:** "When a class is somewhat strictly hereditary, we may call it a caste."
- iv. **A.W. Green:** "Caste is a system of stratification in which mobility up and down the status ladder, at least ideally may not occur".
- v. **Ketkar:** "A caste is a group having two characteristics; (i) membership is confined to those who are born of members and includes all persons so born, (ii) the members are forbidden by an inexorable social law to marry outside the group".
- vi. **D.N. Majumdar and T.N. Madan** have said that caste is a 'closed group'.

### Characteristics of Caste

The caste system is highly complex in nature. As Dr. G.S. Ghurye says, any attempt to define caste is 'bound to fail because of the complexity of the phenomenon'. He describes the characteristics of caste in his 'Caste and Class in India' - 1950-56 (also in his Caste, Class and Occupation - 1961 and Caste and Race in India - 1970). The following have been the main traditional features of the caste system.

- a) **Caste - As a Hierarchical Division of Society.** The Hindu society is gradational one. It is divided into several small groups called castes and sub castes. A sense of 'highness' and 'lowness' or 'superiority' and 'inferiority' is associated with this gradation or ranking. The Brahmins are placed at the top of the hierarchy and are regarded as 'pure' supreme or superior. The degraded caste or the so called 'untouchables' (Harijans) have occupied the other end of the hierarchy. All over India neither the supremacy of the Brahmins nor the degraded position of the Harijans or 'outcastes' has been questioned. It is taken for granted, but regarding the exact position of the intermediary castes there are disputes on the part of the members.
- b) **Caste - As a Segmental Division of Society.** The Hindu society is a caste-ridden society. It is divided into a number of segments called 'castes'. It is not a homogeneous society. Castes are groups with defined boundary of their own. The status of an individual is determined by his birth and not by selection nor by accomplishments. No amount of power, prestige and pelf can change the position of man. The membership of the caste is hence unchangeable, unacquirable, inalienable, unattainable and nontransferable. Further, each caste in a way, has its own way of life. Each caste has its own customs, traditions, practices and rituals. It has its own informal rules, regulations and procedures. There were caste councils or 'caste panchayats' to regulate the conduct of members also. The caste used to help its members when they were found in distress. Indeed, 'the caste was its own ruler'.

## Changing in the Caste System

The caste system which is an integral part of the Indian system, has a long standing history of its own. To understand how the system has come to be what it is today, one has to go back through the pages of history to trace its origin, evolution and growth. It is not easy to say precisely when, how and under what circumstances and pressures the system took its birth and developed. The task of tracing the evolution and growth of this system in precise and unambiguous terms is equally problematic. For the purpose of study three main stages in the evolution of caste may be identified.

- (i) **Caste in Ancient Age** (The period up to 1100 A.D. which is inclusive of Vedic Age, Post Vedic Age and Puranic Age).
- (ii) **Caste in Medieval Age** (The period between 1100 A.D. and 1757 A.D. which includes mainly the age of Muslim Rule in India).
- (iii) **Caste in Modern Age** (The period after 1757 A.D. which includes the Pre-Independent British period and the period after Independence). It is not within the framework of this book to discuss in detail the developments which took place in the caste system during the first two major periods. Hence the description is confined to the third stage, that is, caste in Modern Age.

### Caste in Modern Age (After 1757 A.D.)

The modern period in which some major developments took place in caste system can be divided into two stages namely: (A) Caste during British rule, and (B) Caste in Independent India.

#### Changes in Caste System during the British Rule

The British brought with them their own traditional form of government which was quite different from that of the Indian monarchical system. But as Christians the British "...could not have much sympathy with the institutions of the Hindus" – (Ghurye). As prudent foreigners they were more interested in consolidating their power over a strange land and people rather than initiating reformative changes in its peculiar institutions such as "Caste". They introduced a system of education which did not demand of the learners any change of caste or religion. The policy of comparative non-interference followed by the British made the lower castes revolt against the Brahmin supremacy. Growth of modern industrial organization and the rapid spread of urbanization further altered the social situation.

##### 1. Declining Hold of the Caste Panchayats

After consolidating their power the British introduced throughout India uniform legal, legislative and judicial system. The British transferred the judicial powers of the caste council to the civil and criminal courts which affected the authority which the Panchayat had held over the members. Questions of assault, adultery, rape and the like were taken before the British Courts for decision. In civil matters such as marriage, divorce, caste-based occupational disputes, disputes between husband and wife, parents and children etc., the intention of the British was to be guided by the caste customs. But in actual practice various decisions of the High Court's virtually set aside the authority of the caste.

##### 2. Influence of Social Legislation on Caste

Some of the legislations which the British introduced shook the integrity of the caste system. Specific mention can be made of a few of the legislations such as the following:

- (i) *The Caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850* (Which served to remove some of the disabilities associated with caste including the practice of untouchability).
- (ii) *The Special Marriage Act of 1872* (which legalized inter caste and inter-religious marriages).

- (iii) *The Hindu Widows Remarriage Act of 1856* (which gave legal permission for widows to remarry).

### 3. Impact of Social Reform Movements

Some of the social reforms movements launched by social reformers during the British rule also attacked the caste system and its inequalities.

- (i) **The Brahma Samaj** founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1820 and developed by Devendranath Tagore and Keshav Chandra Sen condemned the barriers of caste divisions, idol worship, human and animal sacrifices.
- (ii) **The Prarthana Samaj** launched by Justice Ranade devoted its attention to social reforms such as inter dining, inter caste marriage, remarriage of widows, etc.
- (iii) **The Arya Samaj** founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswathi in 1875 repudiated the caste restrictions, protested against prohibition of sea-voyages and insisted that even the shudras could study the Veda. It tries to remodel the Hindu society on the basis of the Vedic ideals. It functioned as a militant force to protect the Hindu society from the "onslaught of Western reformation". It started the "Shuddhi" (Purification) movement to re-Hinduise the converts, the fallen the outcastes and other externals.
- (iv) **The Ramakrishna Mission** started by Swami Vivekananda, a great disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, in 1897 represents the synthesis of the ancient or oriental and the modern western culture. Vivekananda who had imbibed in himself Raja Ram's rationalism and Dayananda Saraswathi's spirituality, was pragmatic in his approach. He condemned caste inequalities, exploitation of lower castes and women. He stressed on education, self-reliance and freedom of women. He even predicted that the Shudras ("Shramiks" or "Labourers") would dominate in the years to come.
- (v) **Other reform Movements:** other social movements such as – (i) Jyotirao Phule's (1873) "Satyashodak Samaj"; (ii) Annie Besant's "Theosophical Society"; (iii) Maharishi Arvind Ghosh's "Divine Life Society" – also served to loosen the hold of caste restrictions.

### 4. Spread of English Education and Influence of the Western Ideas

Spread of English education exposed Indians for the first time to the Western World. The popular Western ideas and values such as – "liberty, equality and fraternity", democracy, rationalism, individualism, women's liberations, secularism, humanitarianism etc. made their inroads into India. These ideas had deeply influenced the Western educated Indians. People who had hitherto been the targets of atrocities, deprivation, exploitation and humiliation could now voice their protest by asserting their rights. Increasing influence of science and technology added greater strength to the growing awareness of the masses.

#### 11.5.2 Caste in Independent India (After 1947)

The political independence of the country, besides the process of industrialization, urbanization, secularization etc. brought in a series of changes in the caste system. These changes can be classified into two categories. (i) Changes in the traditional feature of caste (ii) Changes in the role for functioning of the Caste.

#### Changes in the Traditional Feature of Caste

Caste has assumed a different form in the modern times. Some of the traditional features have been radically altered. Here is a brief survey of the changes that have taken place in caste system after independence.

1. **The religious basis of the caste has been attacked.** Caste is no more believed to be divinely ordained. It is being given more a social and secular meaning than a religious interpretation.
2. **Restrictions on food habits have been relaxed.** Distinction between 'pakka' food and 'kachcha' food has almost vanished. Food habits have become more a matter of personal choice than a caste rule. Still commensal taboos are not completely ignored especially in the rural areas. Inter dining has not become the order of the day.
3. **Caste is not very much associated with hereditary occupations.** Caste no longer determines the occupational career of an individual. Occupations are becoming more and more "caste-free". Even Brahmins are found driving taxis, dealing with foot-wear and running non-vegetarian hotels and bars and so on.
4. **Endogamy. Which is often called the very essence of the caste system, still prevails.** Inter caste marriages though legally permitted, have not become the order of the day. As K.M. Kapadia says, "there is an indifference to the inter caste marriages if not tacit acceptance by the society".
5. **The special civil and religious privileges which the Brahmins enjoyed are no more being enjoyed by them.** The Constitution of India has removed all such privileges and made all castes equal.
6. **Caste continues to be a segmental division of Hindu society.** Caste with its hierarchical system continues to ascribe statuses to the individuals. But the twin processes of Sanskritisation and Westernisation have made possible mobility both within and outside the framework of caste.
7. **Caste panchayats.** Which used to control the behaviors of caste-members, have either become very weak or disappeared. Though they are often found here and there in the village areas, they are almost non-existent in the urban areas.
8. **Restrictions imposed by the caste on social intercourse are very much relaxed.** Distinction between 'touchable' and 'untouchable' is not much felt especially in the community of literate people. However, instances of untouchability are heard in the rural areas.

#### **Changes in the Role of Caste**

The caste system in its attempts to adjust itself to the changed conditions of life has assumed new roles. Besides industrialization and urbanization, other factors such as Westernisation, Sanskritisation, reorganization of Indian states, spread of education, socio-religious reforms, spatial and occupational mobility and growth of market economy have greatly affected the caste system. Changes in the role of caste must also be understood in the light of the influence of these factors.

##### **1. Increase in the Organisational Power of Caste**

Education makes people liberal, broad-minded, rational and democratic. Educated people are believed to be less conservative and superstitious. Hence it was expected that with the growth of literacy in India, caste-mindedness and casteism would come down. On the contrary, caste-consciousness of the members has been increasing. Every caste wants to safeguard its interests. For fulfilling this purpose castes are getting themselves organised on the model of labour unions.

##### **2. Political Role of Caste**

Caste and politics have come to affect each other now. Caste has become an inseparable aspect of our politics. In fact, it is tightening its hold on politics. Elections are fought more often on the basis of caste. Selection of candidate, voting analysis, selection of legislative party leaders, distribution of ministerial portfolios etc., are very much based on caste. Even the communist parties which project the ideal of a casteless and classless society are also not an

exception to this. Politics of each state, as M.N. Sriniva says, is virtually the politics of confrontation of its "dominant castes". Thus, unless one knows the political confrontation between the dominant castes such as Ligayats and Vokkaligas in Karnataka and Reddys and Kammas in Andhra Pradesh, one cannot understand the politics of these two states. M.N. Srinivas also makes a distinction between caste at the ritual level and caste at the political level.

### **3. Sanskritisation and Westernisation**

As M.N. Sriniva has pointed out, two important trends are witnessed in caste – the process of Sanskritisation and that of Westernisation. The former refers to a process in which the lower castes tend to imitate the values, practices and other life-styles of some dominant upper castes. The latter denotes a process in which the upper-caste people tend to mould their life-styles on the model of Westerners.

### **4. Backward Classes Movement**

The non-Brahmin caste today are getting themselves more and more organized to challenge the supremacy of the Brahmins and to assert their rights. The establishment of "Satyashodhak Samaj" by Jyothirao Phule in Poona in 1873 marked the beginning of such a non-Brahmin movement. This movement against the Brahmin supremacy by the lower castes came to be known as Backward Classes Movement. In the beginning, the main aim of this movement was to limit the Brahmin monopoly in the two fields such as education and appointment to government posts.

The backward classes movement has become a vital political force today. Its influence has changed the political scenario of the country. This movement has made the Brahmins politically weak and insignificant especially in Kerala and Tamilnadu. This movement has also brought pressure on different political parties to create special opportunities for the lowest caste people enabling them to come up to the level of other higher castes. Due to this pressure, Backward Classes Commissions were established at Central and State levels which recommended "reservation" for backward castes.

### **5. Competitive Role of Castes**

Mutual interdependence of caste which existed for centuries and was reinforced by the institutional system of "jajmani", is not found today. As M.N. Srinivas points out, the "vertical solidarity" of castes has been replaced by "horizontal Solidarity". "Live and let live" policy which was once associated with the caste makes no sense today. On the contrary, each caste looks at the other with suspicion, contempt, and jealousy and finds in it a challenger, a competitor. Excessive caste-mindedness and caste-patriotism have added to this competition. The economic base of a caste and its hold over the political power virtually determine the intensity of this competitiveness. This competitive spirit further strengthens caste-mindedness.

## **Factor Contributing to Caste Change**

The main factors responsible for the changes of castes system are:

### **Modern education:**

Modern education is one of the major factors for weakening of the caste. It has gone to make negative impacts upon casteism. As modern education is deeply ingrained into the values such as liberty, equality and fraternity, it gives no place for hoary social evils and practices like casteism. Education also encouraged inter-caste marriage. The feeling of untouchability and prejudices are being gradually eliminated from the mind of the children of all caste.

### **Industrialization:**

With the advent of industrialization people of all castes were forced to find out employment in factories in big cities. In the industrial centers members of different castes came into mutual contact, made harmonious relationship with other and forgot the caste barriers.

### **Urbanization:**

Industrialization, transportation and widened communication are the main factors responsible to decrease the sentiment of the caste from the people to a greater extent. Higher caste members who moved to urban areas for pursuing employment found it difficult to retain their caste ideas and practice.

**Significance of wealth:**

In the past power of money was not much dominating factor in the society. Today wealth is replacing caste as the basis of social prestige. In other words money has become a deciding factor for influencing human life at present.

**Rise of Nationalism:**

Nationalism bound up with the concept of 'universal brotherhood' has opened up new volumes in inter-caste relations. It seems to have helped to a considerable extent in shortening the prejudices of casteism from the mind of people in rural areas.

**Effect of social reforms:**

Social reform movement had also gone to a wider extent in diminishing caste prejudices from the upper caste minds. Social reformer like Babasaheb, Ambedkar, Balgangadhar Tilak, Ranade had done a lot for removing caste distinction and prejudice from the mind of Indians.

## **New Trends in Caste System**

The disorganisation of the Caste System has led some to infer that in the future the Caste System will cease to exist. According to G.S.Ghurye there is no fear of the injunction of the Caste System in the near future due to the following following conditions.

**1) Elections based on casteism**

On the establishment of a democracy in India the government machinery is operated by representatives elected by the people. The method of election has done much to encourage the Caste System because of casteism among the voters. In this way people are asked to vote for their caste candidate and this casteism is maintained by the elected leaders after the elections are over. Some political parties sponsor only that candidate for elections in a particular area whose caste is the most numerous among the voters.

**2) Special constitutional provision for backward classes**

The constitution provides for the protection of the backward and Scheduled Castes. Some posts have been reserved for them in Government services. They are given all types of facilities and special scholarships for education. All this is most welcome and even necessary and yet more special rights have encouraged casteism in the backward classes since the caste is proving beneficial to them because of these prerogatives.

In India, on the one hand, the caste is becoming weaker due to the influence of such factors as industrialisation, urbanisation, increase in the means of transportation, populating of English education, political and social awakening, democratic Government and laws abolishing untouchability etc and on the other such new organisations as labour union, etc, on the basis of occupation, post, capacity etc., are being established.

Due to an increase in the desire for money caused by the influences of western education the sense of superiority or inferiority is now based on wealth and social power of rather than on caste. The class consciousness, based on occupations, etc, is replacing the caste consciousness.

All the changes led people to believe that the Caste System will generally take on the form of a class system. But while, on the one hand, class consciousness seems to be progressing, on the other one can see progress in casteism as well. For people who are specially gifted in a particular occupation, other occupations are very limited in India and the paths to those that are available are difficult.

Children of those parents who have a small income or who have no wealth look out only for service. In some big business institutions and sometimes even in educational institutions what happens is that the proprietors, organisations and senior officials. Casteism of a similar type prevails also in Government services and political elections. Hence it cannot be asserted that at the caste is disappearing and classism is increasing. Actually, in India casteism is being transformed into classism.

### **Future of Caste System**

It is difficult to make an unqualified statement concerning the future of the Caste System in India. It is certainly true the restrictions of marriage, diet, mode of life, behavior, etc., based on the Caste System are breaking down. But as has been described previously, casteism is increasing and Caste System is being encouraged by caste practices in election. Actually it seems more or less definite that there is no possibility of the Caste System being eliminated from the Indian society in the near future.

The root of the Caste System goes deep in Hindu society and at its basis are the important and beneficial principles of division of labour, specialisation etc, foreign invaders made their best efforts to wipe out the Hindu caste. But in spite of all efforts of the Muslims and Christians not much change was wrought in Caste System. It has definitely been affected somewhat by the influences of western education and western culture. And its form has undergone a vast change.

There is no room for doubting that this form of the Caste System will change further in future, it may even change, beyond recognition. It will also be influenced by the development of the sense of democracy and nationalism, industrial progress and by new political and economic movement.

### **Summary**

The caste system which is an integral part of the Indian system, has a long standing history of its own. To understand how the system has come to be what it is today. One has to go back through the pages of history to trace its origin, evolution and growth. It is not easy to say precisely when, how and under what circumstances and pressures the system took its birth and developed. The task of tracing the evolution and growth of this system in precise and unambiguous terms is equally problematic. The political independence of the country, besides the process of such as Westernisation, Sanskritisation, reorganization of Indian states, spread of education, socio-religious reforms, spatial and occupational mobility and growth of market economy have greatly affected the caste system.

## Technical Terms

Monarchical  
Barriers  
Unacquirable  
Inalienable  
Unattainable

## Self Assessment Questions

1. Discuss elaborately the changes in the caste system.
2. Explain the factors contributing to caste change
3. Elaborate and discuss on new trends in caste systems and future of caste system.

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## LESSON 11

# Social Religious Movements

### Objectives:

The main objective of this lesson is to explain different social religious movements and their importance.

### Introduction

#### Definition of social movement

#### Characteristics of Social Movements

#### Causes of Social Movements

#### Religious Movements in the 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries

#### Causes of New Movements

#### Bhakti Movement

#### Anti-Brahmin Movements

#### Jyotiba Phule's Movement:

#### Dalit Movements

#### Summary

#### Key Words

#### Reference books

#### Questions

## **Introduction**

Social movements are organized attempts on the part of a section of society to bring about either total or partial change in society through collective mobilization based on ideology. Social movements originate as unorganized, unplanned, undirected grouping of persons who are dissatisfied with things. Chances of a movement are always present as some are formed discontented. It may be due to the social movements emerge due to the shared dissatisfaction; and the conviction that the collective mobilization would lead to the goal.

According to M.S.A. Rao, ideology is an essential element of a social movement as it distinguished it from a general category of movements involving collective action and is oriented towards change. In the absence of an ideology, a strike becomes as isolated and individual event and not a movement, on the contrary, if a strike is planned and directed by a student union with a defined ideology it becomes an event in that student movement. Social movements cover various forms of collective action aimed at social reorganization. In general, social movements are not highly institutionalized, but arise from spontaneous social protest directed at widespread or specific grievances.

### **Concept of Social Movement:**

“Social Movement” represents a social phenomenon that assumes great importance in the study of not only collective behavior but also of social change. Sociologists have started evincing great interest in studying its role not only in bringing about changes in society but also in resisting them. A social movement is a type of collective behavior that could be a lasting one and at the same time, an influential one. It is, indeed, “a generator of social change.”

Social movements of various types have been taking place in most of the societies of the modern world. In fact, they have become a part and parcel of the modern democratic societies. We to demand more and more reservation for the SCs and STs and other backward classes and there are counter movements demanding its cancellation or at least the status quo. There are movements to “save environment”, to “save wild life” and to “save world peace”. There are movements for and against the construction of Sri Ram Temple at the disputed place of Ayodhya. There are Fascist Movements, Communist Movements, Naxalite Movements, Tribal Movements, Peasants Movements, Women’s Movements, Youth Movements, Labour Movements, Civil Rights Movements, Human Rights Movements, Afforestation Movements and so on. What then do we mean by social movements?

### **Definition of social movement**

There is no single definition of the term social movement accepted by scholars of all disciplines. Like many other terms such as equality, masses, etc., the term ‘movement’ is often used differently by various political leaders, scholars and social activists who have written on ‘movements’. Some use it to mean a tendency or historical trend. Some scholars use the term ‘movement’ interchangeably with organization or union. Like many other words, the term ‘movement’ is still recognized as a ‘hurrah’ word, to use T.D. Weldon’s memorable classification. The term ‘social movement’ gained currency in European Languages in the early nineteenth century.

In view of the wide scope and varied nature it is difficult to arrive at a single, or a precise definition of the term 'social movement'. Different sociologists give their definitions in various ways. The following are the some important definitions.

According to Paul Wilkinson – “a social movement is a deliberate collective endeavor to promote change in any direction and by any means, not excluding violence, illegality, revolution or withdraw into 'utopian' community.’

Lundberg and others define social movement as “a voluntary association of people engaged in a concerted effort to change attitudes, behavior, and social relationship in a large society.

In the words of Anderson and Parker, social movement is “a form of dynamic pluralistic behavior which progressively develops structure through time and aims at partial or complete modification of the social order’.

According to Horton and Hunt – “A social movement is a collective effort to promote or resist change’.

In the words of Herbert Blumer (1971), social movements as collective enterprises to establish a new order of life.’

According to Gusfield, social movements are “socially shared demands for change in some aspect of social order’.

No single or precise definition might be given on account of diversity of social movements, occurring in different societies, which range from religious to secular, from revolutionary to the reactionary from co-operative to the schismatic.

#### **Characteristics of Social Movements.**

The following are the important characteristic features of social movements:

- (a) Its aim is to resist or bring a change in society.
- (b) It is a collective effort by society or a group.
- (c) It may be violent or peaceful.
- (d) It may be organized or unorganized.
- (e) Its life is uncertain.

#### **Function of Social Movements:**

According to Touraine (1968) social movements have three important functions. These are as follows:

- a. Mediation: They help to relate to persons to the larger society. They give each individual an opportunity to participate, to express his views and to play a role in the process of social change.
- b. Pressure: Social movements encourage the formation of organized groups that work systematically to observe that their policies and plans are implemented.
- c. Clarification of Collective Consciousness: Social movements generate and establish ideas which spread throughout society. As a result collective consciousness arise and develops.

### **Causes of Social Movements.**

The following are some of the important causes of social movements:

- (a) Industrialization tends to produce social disorganization in a society. This is because formerly accepted values and norms are being questioned. When values and norms are unstable people are subject to feeling of alienation and anomie. Where a high degree of alienation and anomie are present, the soil is fertile for social movements.
- (b) The feeling of social injustice is not limited to the underprivileged classes. Any section, at any status level may come to feel itself the victim of social injustice. A wealthy person who suddenly finds himself relieved of the fortune may also feel that an injustice has been done him. In any case, the vital factor is not the actual presence or absence of social injustice. It is people's feeling that they are victims of social injustice that makes them apt to respond to social movements.
- (c) Social movements may also emerge when there is general dissatisfaction with the status quo. One source of dissatisfaction is relative deprivation.
- (d) Social mobility also makes people receptive to social movements.

### **Types of Social Movements**

There are many kinds of social movements. It is not possible to give a classification of social movements because sometimes a movement is of a mixed nature or is of various types at different stages of its career. Social movements are divided in view of their goals and values.

According to Herbert Blumer (1951) there are three types of social movements. They are general, specific and expressive movements. General movements lack organization, structure and leadership. It is carried by a vague collectivity of persons, in other words, by a public or a mass. Generally specific movements develop out of a general movement. Their objects and goals are very clear. These movements might be of a revolutionary or reformatory. Expressive movements primarily include those concerned with fashions and religions.

Shah (1977) classifies movements as revolt, rebellion, reform and revolution to bring about change in the political system. According to M.S.A. Rao (1978) social movements are divided into three categories. These are reformist, transformatory and revolutionary.

Social movements are also divided on the basis of issues around which participants get mobilized. Some of them are called as "civil rights". Nationalist, linguistic, anti-dowry and other such movements. Some others classify movements on the basis of the participants, such as tribals, dalits, peasants, women, students etc. In majority of the cases the issues and participants go together.

Sociologists classified social movements into different types on the basis of their organization, aims, value strength etc. Some of the types are mentioned below:

- (a) **Revolutionary movements:** These movements aim to eliminate the existing social system and reconstruct it with a different one. Revolutionary movements are not satisfied with the social order and work for radical change. Russian and French revolutions are the best examples of revolutionary movements.
- (b) **Reform movements:** These movements are primarily taken place only in democratic societies where people tolerate criticism. The main object of these movements is to modify some parts of a

society without completely transforming it. Arya Samaj movement, Brahmo Samaj movement are the examples.

(c) **Reactionary or Regressive movements:**

These movements arise among the people who are not satisfied with some items of change. The movements highlight the significance of old values, ideology and institutional arrangements. Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (R.S.S.), Islamic fundamentalist movement are the examples of reactionary movement.

(d) **Migratory movement:**

These movements take place when many people migrate due to discontent and or due to the shared hope for a bright future in some other place. Their migration of people does not mean migratory movement. The mass exodus of men to Gulf countries from the State of Kerala, is an example of a migratory movement. The mass migration of people from Afghanistan to Pakistan during American war on Afghanistan is another example of a migratory movement.

(e) **Resistance Movements:**

These movements are formed to resist a change that is already taking place in society. The many social and cultural changes of recent decades have been profoundly disturbing to many of the Indians who feel that our national virtues, traditional values, and cultural greatness, are being eroded by secularism, minority appeasement, sexual permissiveness, moral degradation, political corruption and sell-out of national interests for the partial political interests, and so on. Good number of contemporary resistance movements express their dismay at the direction in which our nation has been moving. Examples: Anti-Abortion Movement, Anti Hindu Movement, Anti-Reservation Movement, the Swadeshi Movement against the movement towards Economic Liberalization, the Movement towards Indian style Indian Education, etc. This type of movement is not very much revolutionary in character but more resistant in nature.

(f) **Utopian Movement:**

These are attempts to take the society or at least a section of it towards a state of perfection. "These are loosely structured collectivities that envision a radically changed and blissful state, either on a large scale at some time in the future, or on a smaller scale in the present. The utopian ideal and the means of it are often vague, but many utopian movements have quite specific programmes for social change." [Ian Robertson]. Example; the "Hare Krishna Movement" of the seventies, the movement towards the establishment of "Rama Rajya" – as envisioned by the B.J.P. and the "Sangh Parivar" [the community of the supporters of the R.S.S. School of Thought]. The Communists' and socialists pronouncement of a movement towards the classless, casteless society free from all kinds of exploitation etc.

**Religious movements:**

The sixth century B.C. was a period of great religious ferment in the history of the world. This period was a turning point in the spiritual and intellectual development of the whole world. When various religious reformers like Pythagoras (Greece), Heraclitus, Lao Tze and Confucius (China) and Zoroaster in Persia tried to rouse the people and tried to teach and preach nobler and higher duties of life. In India this crucial period in the history of world was marked on the one hand by the preaching of the Upanishad sages, who admitted the respiration and inspiration

of the Vedas, and on the other hand by the emerge of preachers who were less orthodox than they and who rejected the Vedas. It was at this time that Jainism and Buddhism developed. The religious movements was initiated by two Kshatriya prince, Vardhamana Mahavira and Gautama Buddha. Their philosophy and teachings subsequently gained popularity under the name of Jainism and Buddhism respectively.

### **Religious Movements in the 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries**

In the early medieval period two paralleled movements, in Hinduism and Islam, respectively representing the Bhakti and Sufi movements emerged in India. The importance of both these parallel religious movements is that they freed the Indian society from the dogmatic beliefs, caste and communal hatred, ritualism and so on. Bhakti and Sufi movements are democratic movements, which preached simple religion in the language of the common people. Liberalism and love were keynotes of the Bhakti and Sufi movements. Mystic discipline in Bhakti and Sufi movements was canalized towards the moral and spiritual advancement of the individual and society making them rise above the barriers of creed, caste, colour, power, position, and wealth.

#### **Causes of Movements:**

The conditions of the then society favoured the rise and development of Jainism and Buddhism. The following are some of the important causes;

- (i) The Vedic philosophy had lost its original purity and in the Sixth Century B.C it was reduced to a bundle of rituals. The ceremonies man developed a great dislike for these ceremonies and rituals.
- (ii) The caste system had become brutal and rigid. Interchange of caste was not possible. There were too many restrictions on eating food, drinking and marriage. Low caste person had a miserable life. Jainism and Buddhism offered them an honored place.
- (iii) The supremacy of Brahmins created unrest. These people dominated in every aspect of life.
- (iv) The sacrifices prescribed by the Vedas were very complicated and a source of wastage of time, money and energy.
- (v) The Vedic religion had become very complex and degenerated into blind beliefs, rituals and dogmas.
- (vi) All the religious scriptures were written in Sanskrit which was the language of the elite and not the common people.

These ills and evils led to grow discontent among the masses who aspired for a change in society. Several leading teachers raised their voice against these problems. Jainism and Buddhism play a vital role for removing social evils and religious dogmas.

#### **Jainism**

The Jain tradition speaks of 24 Tirthankaras, the last and the real founder being Vardhamana Mahavira who was born in village Kundagrama in a district Muzaffarpur (Bihar) in 540 B.C. Mahavira married Yasoda and had a daughter. At the age of 30, after the death of his parents, he renounced his family became a monk and proceeded in search of truth. He got enlightenment after 12 years and henceforth started preaching his philosophy.

Jainsim did not believe in the existence of god man's salvation does not based on the mercy of god but on his own acts. It rejected the authority of the Vedas Jainism advocated highly disciplined and simple life with the ultimate goal to attain nirvana or moksha. It gives importance to equality. The nirvana of a person depends on right belief, right knowledge and right action. These are called the three jewels of Jainism. According to Jainism, the world consists of two elements: Jiva (conscious being) and atma (the unconscious). Jiva feels, acts and wills. It suffered and dies. Atma is eternal and is born and reborn. The ultimate goal of Jiva should be to get rid of cycle of birth and rebirth and attain nirvana Buddhism.

Gautama Buddha also known as Siddhartha, Sakyamuni or Thattagata, the founder of Buddhism was born in 563 B.C at Lumbivana near the border of Nepal. He was married at the age of 16 to Yasodhara and enjoyed household life for thirteen years and had a son. He left his family at the age of 29 and became a monk. At the age of 35, he attained enlightenment at Buddha Gaya in Bihar.

Buddhism was the movement that gave the shock to Brahmanism. Buddhism stands on three pillars. The Buddha, its founder; the Dharma, his teaching; and the Sangh; the order of Buddhist monk and nuns. This basic principles of Buddha's teachings are the four noble truths i.e., (a) worldly existence is full of misery, (b) desire, thirst, attachment, ignorance etc., are the causes of worldly existence, (c) worldly existence can be ended by the destruction of desire, thirst etc. (d) in order to do it one must know the right path. And the right path is the eight-fold path i.e., right understanding, right thoughts, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. Like Jainism, Buddhism also did not believe in the existence of god.

Jainism and Buddhism plays an important role in removing the defects of Hinduism particularly the practice of sacrifices and ritualism. Both resemble in many respects. Both have been protestant religious movements against the evil practices of Hinduism.

#### **Sufi Movement:**

In the medieval Indian society Sufism was the most important and interesting aspect of Islamic religion. Sufism came to India before the establishment of the sultanate of Delhi, But after foundation of the Turkish rule, a number of sufis from various Islamic countries migrated to India and established themselves in many parts of India. Sufis were mystics who had risen in Islam at a very early stage. They were persons of deep devotion who were disgusted by the vulgar display of wealth and degeneration of morals following the establishment of Islamic empire.

Sufism was not organized in a single sect and its religious doctrines were also not common; instead they were organized into various 'Silsilahs' or orders or religious doctrines. They recognized the prophet hood of Mohammad and authority of the Holy Quran, but in course of time they observed a variety of practices and ideas from various sources such as neo-Platonism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism.

The sufis were organized into orders or Silsilahs named after the name or surname of the founder of the particular order, such as Chisti, Naqshbandi, Suhrawardi etc. Silsilahs were generally led by a prominent mystic who lived in a Khanqah at hospice along with his disciples. The link between the teacher (pir) and the disciples (murids) was very important for the Sufi system. The Sufi orders are broadly classified into two: Ba-shara, that is, those which were not bound by it. Both groups of orders prevailed in India, the latter being adapted more by wandering saints. These saints did not establish an order.

In the sixteenth century there were as many as fourteen Sufi orders in India. Of the different orders, largely found outside India, only two Chishti and Suharwardi. The Chishtis, largely found outside India by Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti. Chishtis were the first to succeed in establishing themselves firmly on Indian soil. The chief centers of the Chisti silsilah, the most popular order, were Ajmer, Nagaur, Narnaul, Sarwal, Hansi, Hadaun, Ayodhya and other towns of Uttar Pradesh. The famous Chisti saints like Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti, Khawaja & Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, Khanja Fariduddin, Masud Ganj-i-Shakar, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh-i-Dehliva, Shaikh Alual, Haq, Shaikh Adhi Seraj etc. The Suharwardi order's activities were confined largely to Multan and Punjab. The great well known saints of such Suharwardi order were Shaikh, Shihubuddin, Suharwarli and Hamidud-Din Nagori, Wahat-ul-Wujud or the unity of the being was their basic doctrine. It identified the unity of the half and the Khalf i.e., the creator and the created. The philosophy of Sufism believes in one God and regards every individual and everything else as part of Him.

### **Bhakti Movement:**

The Bhakti movement in Hinduism was one remarkable feature of the medieval age. It remained influential for many centuries and has left deep impact on modern Hinduism. The concept of Bhakti means single-minded devotion to one God. According to Hinduism there are three ways to attain salvation viz., Gyan (knowledge), Karma (duty), and Bhakti (devotion to God). During the medieval periods saints belonging to Hinduism emphasized on Bhakti as a way to attain Moksha or Salvation and that resulted in the Bhakti movement. Its philosophical concept had been fully evicted in the Upanishads and subsequently, the Bhagavad Gita in Mahabharata emphasized devotion and love as pathways to God.

The Bhakti movement was essentially monotheistic and the devotees offered prayers to one personal God, who could either have Suguna (form) or be Nirguna (formless). The followers of Nirguna Bhakti discarded idol worship. This movement rejected the sacrifices and rituals as modes of worship. This was an egalitarian movement. The Saints of both north and south preached in the simple language of the common people. According to Bhakti cult, knowledge could be gained through a guru or teacher.

This movement was a widespread movement that embraced the whole of the country for several centuries. It played a vital role in reforming the Hindu religious so as to enable it to withstand the onslaught of Islamic propaganda and proselytism and compromise between Islam and Hinduism. The high and less sections of Hindu society forgot many of their prejudices and differences. Majority of the people believed in the message of the saints of the Bhakti movement that all people were equal in the eyes of God and that birth was no bar to moksha or salvation.

### **Nanak (1469-1534)**

Guru Nanak, from whose teachings the Sikh religion and derived was born in a Khatri household in the village of Talumoli (Nankana) on the bank of the river Ravi in 1469. Like Kabir, he also preached a casteless, ethical, monotheistic, anti-ritualistic, universal and highly spiritual religion. He did not believe in the incarnation of God. Nanak gave much more weightage on the purity of character and conduct as the first condition of approaching God, and the need of a teacher or guru for guidance. He strongly rejected idol-worship, pilgrimages and other formal observances of the different faiths. Nanak's mission was to reform the Hinduism and aimed at bridging distinction between the Hindus and the Muslims.

After his death, his followers called themselves 'Sikhs' and a new religious sect, Sikhism was founded.



**Dadu(1544-1603):**

One of the famous followers of Kabir's ideals was Dadu, he was born of Brahmana parents in Ahmedabad in A.D.1544 and died in 1603. He practiced the teachings and preachings of Kabir. The main aim of his life was to unite all the divergent faiths in one bond of love, and he founded Brahman Samapradaya to give effect to this great ideal. Like Kabir, he was also a householder, and he believed that the natural life of a householder was best suited for self realization. Among the many disciples of Dadu, Sundaradasu (A.D.1597-1689) Rajjab and other were distinguished personalities.

**Malukdasa(1574-1682):**

He was also one of the follower of Kabir. The monasteries of his sect are found all over North India and even beyond from Bihar to Kabul. He too rejected the idol worship and other external forms of religion.

The following saints are belong to Suguna School.

**Chaitanya(1486-1533)**

His original name was Vishwanmbar and he was born at Nanadwip in 1486. He was responsible for the popularity of Vaishnavism in Bengal through his Kirtans, he preached the message that ragamarga or the path of spontaneous love was best for moksha or salvation. He was a great exponent of Krishna form of Vaishnavism. He created sensation in Bengal, Orissa and Assam. He attracted a wide following including some Muslims and low caste people in the eastern part of India. After the death of Chaitanya, his disciples and followers systematized his teachings and organized themselves into a sect called Gaudiya Vaishnavism.

**Surdas(1498-1569):**

He was a disciple of Vallabhacharya of South India. He was a staunch devotee of Lord Krishna and Radha. He popularized the Krishna cult by singing songs, glorifying Lord Krishna's leelas. He believed that salvation can be achieved only through the devotion of Lord Krishna. He was the author of three books. They are : Sur, Sarwali, Sahitya Ratna and Sursagar. All the three works of Surdas are very popular.

**Tulasidas(1532-1623):**

He was born in a Saryaparian Brahmin family in or about 1532 in Varnasi. He was a worshipper of Rama. Tulasidas was not only a poet but also a great devotee of Lord Rama. He was composed Ramacharit Manas in Hindi expounding the various aspects of Hindu dharma. Besides this, he wrote several other books, such as Gitawali, Kavitawali, Viany Patrika, etc. He was considered as a great Vaishnava devotee or bhakta.

**Mirabai(1498-1546):**

She was a great devotee of Krishna. She was born at the village of Kudvi in Merta district in or about A.D. 1498. She was a follower of the Krishna cult of Vaishnavism. Mirabai was one of the greatest saint in North India. She was written too many devotional songs. They are written in Brijehasha and partly in Rajasthani, and some of her verses are in Gujarati. Her Kirt or lyrics are full of devotion and spiritual ecstasy. She addressed all her lyrics to Lord Krishna.

**Sankaradasa(1532-1623):**

He was a contemporary of Chaitanya. He was the greatest religious reformer of medieval Assam. He was preached Vaishna bhakti. He was believed in monotheism. He did not recognize a female associate of the supreme deity (Parvathi, Sita, Radha etc.) He emphasized Niskama bhakti. He rejected caste system, idol worship and ritualism.

**Anti-Brahmin Movements:**

The Backward Castes movement in South India was an anti-Brahmin movement. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Brahmins have enjoyed educational, economic and political privileges created by British rule. Educated caste Hindus therefore challenged this supremacy through anti-Brahmin movements. The western educated elite from among the backward castes took up the leadership of the anti-Brahmin movement. The educated youth from the intermediate castes movement. The important backward classes' movements in pre-independence India are Phule's movement and self-respect movement.

**Jyotiba Phule's Movement:**

Jyotiba Phule (1827-1899) was Sudra. He belonged to the Mali caste (Gardener). In 1851, he became the first Hindu to run a school for the untouchables. Phule founded the Satya Shodak Samaj (Truth seeking Society) in 1873. The leadership of the Samaj came from the backward classes, namely, the Malis, Kunbis, Telis and Satis. The main aim of the Samaj is to redeem the Shudras and Adi-Sudras (Untouchables) from the influence of Brahmanical scriptures and to liberate them from mental and religious slavery. He thus started the first protest movement among the lower castes. He was against Brahmin domination. He aimed at the total abolition of the caste system and socio-economic inequalities in the society. His supporters were mainly the urban non-Brahmin contractors and trader. His movement remained confined, during the life time, to some urban centers of the state of Maharashtra.

After the death of Jyotiba Phule, the Maharaja of Kolhapur, Shahu Chhatrapati took the leadership of the movement. He plays a prominent role of the eradication of untouchability and upliftment of the untouchables. The main thrust of his effort was to encourage the formation of a modern elite from among the non-Brahmin peasant castes. Though sympathetic to social reform, he was personally more attached with Arya Samaj, which believed Vedas and traditions. Under Shahu Maharaja, Phule's movement spread, but lost much of its militancy.

The Anti-Brahmin movement not only confined to Maharashtra, it also spread to Mysore and Madras in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In Mysore, the Vokkaligas and Lingayats started their respective organizations in 1906 and 1909. These two castes along with Muslims established the Praja Mitra Mandal in 1917. They demanded for concessions to non-Brahmins in government employment, education and political representation. In the old Madras Presidency, some section of the Reddi's, Kammas, Vellalas etc. strongly opposed the supremacy of the Brahmin and launched the justice party in 1916. This organization only represented the interests of the mercantile bourgeoisie and feudal landlords. This elite anti-Brahmin party lack of sympathy for the untouchables. The justice party declined after 1927 and was practically extinct by the end of 1930's.

**Self-Respect Movement:**

Periyar E. V. Ramaswami Naicker (1879-1973), a Baliya Naide had begun his political life with the Indian National Congress party in the 1920's and started the self-respect movement in 1925. This movement was an anti-religious, Brahmins, pro British movement aimed at abolition of caste system. Naicker publicly, criticized the Hindu puranas as fairy tales, not only irrational and imaginary, but immoral. According to Naicker, Hinduism had been founded by the Brahmins, for their own power interests; they built on the illiteracy, ignorance and poverty of the people and exploited them. In order to propagate his ideas, he founded a Tamil Journal, Kudiarasu (people's government), which was soon followed by others of similar nature, Pakutharivu (Discernment), Puratchi (Revolt) and Vidudhalas (liberty). He led various activities of direct action like breaking of idols, forcible entry of temple, burning of Hindu sacred books, exclusion of Brahmin priests in marriages and other functions, etc.

In the 1930's and early 40's the self-respect movement collaborated with the British and worked against the nationalist movement. In 1944, under the leadership of Ramaswami Naicker, the Justice party was reconstituted as Dravida, Kazhagam. Which was induced with not only the anti-Brahmin, anti-noth, anti-Hindu philosophy, but also separatist sub-nationalism? The main aim of the Dravid Kazhagam was the achievement of a sovereign independent Dravidian Republic, which would be federal in nature. The Dravida Kazhagam in Tamil means the organization of Dravidians. The conflicting political lines developed within the K.M.K., on line, represented by Ramaswami Naicker, set itself in front against the independence movement and demanded freedom from "Brahmin Raj". The other trend, represented by C.N. Annadurai, came out for accommodation with the freedom struggle even which continuing to focus on the demand for independence from 'Aryan Congress Yoke'. In 1970, M.G. Ramachandran founded the All India Anna Dravid Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK). While Periyar continued to fight against caste system and supremacy, of Brahmins till his death in 1973. Both D.M.K. and A.I.A.D.M.K. has taken an anti-Brahmin stance in politics.

These movements spread some liberal ideas, struggle for higher status and forget for educational economic and political advantages. Some of the leaders play, a reformist or even a reactionary, however challenge the castes system as radically as the dalit liberation movements.

### **Dalit Movements**

Schedule caste or Dalit socio-political movements are very few in number. The first dalit movements took place among the Nadars of Tamilnadu and the Izhavas of Kerala. Sri Narayana Guru of Kerala led an uncompromising revolt against the caste system. The Izhavas were the first caste to give up untouchability. Many dalit liberation movements emerged in the 1920's.

The main issues around which most of the dalit movements have been centered in colonial and post colonial periods are confined to the problem of untouchability. The most important of the early dalit movements were the Adi-Dharam movement (Punjab), Adi-Dravida Movement (Tamilnadu), Adi-Andhra Movement (Andhra Pradesh) and Nama Shudra Movement (Bengal).

### **Summary:**

"Social Movement" is one of the important forms of collective behavior. Social movement is a collective effort with some continuity to promote or resist change in the society or group of which it is a part. It plays a prominent role in highlighting some of the social problems. It is a force that might possibly, save the society from destruction.

**KeyWords**

Social Movement—Collective Efforts to resist or bring about social change.

Religion – A system of communally experienced human thoughts and beliefs about the assumed nature of the assumed nature of reality involving some super natural or transcendent non-human deity or principle.

Backward classes—Communities falling into the larger category of Scheduled castes, Scheduled Tribes and the other Backward Classes.

Backwardness—Lack of economic and educational advancement.

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**Questions:**

1. Define Social Movements and Explain its characteristics?
2. Give functions of social movements?
3. Point out the causes of social movements?
4. Explain types of social movements?
5. Describe the role played by Buddhism and Jainism as protest movements?
6. Explain Sufi and Bhakti movements in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Century?

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## Lesson 12

### SOCIAL STRUCTURE AS FACILITATOR AND INITIATOR

**Objective:** The main objective of the lesson is to discuss the Values, Norms, the Ashrams, the Purusharthas and Tradition of the Indian society and Structure of Indian Society.

#### Structure:

- Objective
- Introduction
- Structure of Indian Society
- Hinduism and Hindus
- Hindu Philosophy
- Basic Tenets of Hinduism
- Impact of Post-Vedic Tradition
- The Ashrams
- The Purusharthas
- Social Structure and related concepts
- Change Initiators
- Change Implementers
- Change Facilitators
- Change Recipients
- Summary
- Technical Terms
- Self Assessment Questions
- Reference Books

#### Introduction

The study of Indian social structure and Indian society necessitates that we try to understand the basic elements which provide the blueprint for thought and action. How are relationships organized through the history and in the contemporary times? What the rules and norms for individual and social conduct and from where they derive legitimacy are some of the issues which need to be understood. Indian society is extremely diverse in terms of societies, cultures and social behavior. Sociologists, however, point to caste system as an organizing principle of Indian society. It is seen to be providing the basic frame around which relationships across groups are organized. Legitimacy for the caste divisions is derived from Hinduism the great religion of the Indian continent. Sociologists, however, also point out that earlier social science understandings were derived from great Hindu texts that these act as the guiding principles for social behavior. The contextual realities vary a great deal.

## Structure of Indian Society

Tribe is one of the earliest identifiable ethnic cum social organizations. A fairly good number of tribes such as Munda, Ho, Oraon, Bhil, Gaddi, Santhal, Kol, Kandh, Khasi, Garo, Mizo, and Naga exist in different parts of India. These have been clubbed together in a group in a schedule of the Constitution of India and are known as the Scheduled Tribes.

The pertinent question here is: Who is a tribal, and what differentiates a tribe from other groups based on caste or varna? The answer to this lies in the functioning of the institution. We can identify a tribe by the following features: (i) All members are related to each other by blood (ii) All members are equal in status (iii) All members believe that they have descended from a common ancestor (iv) All members have equal access to the resources (v) The sense of private property is least visible (vi) Social differentiation exists only on the basis of age and sex. Tribes are very often made up of more than one clan. A clan is an exogamous institution whereas a tribe is endogamous.

Such tribes existed during the Vedic period. The Bharatas, Yadus, Turvasas, Druhyus, Purus and Anus were some of the prominent Tribes. The head of the Tribe was known as Raja or King who was first among the equals. The major differentiation existed between people on the basis of 'varna' or colour. Thus, the people who did not belong to the Vedic tribes were termed as dasa varna. They are said to have had an alien language, a dark complexion and worshiped different gods.

This initial differentiation later developed into a complex 'varna system', which in place of the Tribe had divided society into Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra categories. These categories emerged principally because of frequent inter-tribal and intra-tribal wars, subjugation of the vanquished, appropriation of loot by the war-leaders, and unequal distribution of wealth.

The members of the Brahman 'varna' usually functioned as priests. The Kshatriyas were associated with the political functions, the Vaishyas were mostly agriculturists and the Shudras were the servile class. The first two 'varnas' exploited the most numerous and productive Vaishya varna, whereas the three in unison exploited the Shudras. The three higher 'varnas' were also entitled to the sacred (upanayana) thread ceremony and were known as 'dvijas' (twice-born).

Many changes took place in the economy during the post-vedic period. These changes needed new ideological support which came in the form of numerous unorthodox religious movements such as Buddhism which ridiculed the Hindu social system. But Buddhism could not negate the caste system completely. The Kshatriyas were considered the highest 'varna' in the social hierarchy as seen by the Buddhists. The Vaishyas who were exploited under Brahmanism became members of these religions in large numbers in order to gain respectability. However, there was no caste hierarchy within the Buddhist and Jain monastic communities.

'Varna/Jati' system underwent further changes when new groups such as the Shakas, Kushanas, Parthians and Indo-Greeks people arrived in India. The economy was also undergoing changes. Growth of urbanization, craft production, and trade resulted in the rise of guilds or 'shreni' which in later times became castes. The behavior of guild members was controlled through a guild court. Customarily the guild (shreni-dharma) had the power of law. These guilds could act as bankers, financiers and trustees as well. Generally, these functions

were carried out by a different category of merchants known as the 'shreshthins' (present day Seths of North India and the Chettis and Chettiyars of South India). Thus, the period between 500 BC and 500 AD saw the crystallization of the caste system. The number of castes increased manifold because of the growth of a number of crafts, arrival of new elements in the population, inter-caste marriages (anuloma and pratiloma) and inclusion of many Tribes into caste hierarchy. The Dharmashastras and the Smritis tried to fix the duties of each caste. The relations between castes were generally governed by the rules of endogamy, commensality and craft-exclusiveness.

Between the fifth and seventh centuries further changes occurred in the varna/caste organisation. A creation of landlords through land grants resulted in the transformation of Vaishyas into servile peasants. Large numbers of tribal cultivators were enrolled as Shudras. Consequently the Shudras now emerged as farmers like the Vaishyas. Now, the Vaishyas and Shudras were lumped together. However, in regions other than the Ganga basin, the caste system took a different shape. In Bengal, South India and other border areas mainly two castes emerged i.e. the Brahmanas and the Shudras. The Rajputs emerged as a significant factor in the society of Northern India from the seventh century onwards. In this period caste system became so entrenched in the psyche of the people that even the plants were divided on the basis of the varna/caste system. One text prescribes varying sizes of houses according to the varnas.

An important development during medieval times, particularly in South India, was the division of the Shudras into 'pure' (sat) and 'impure' (ASAT) categories. Also typical of the south were the so-called 'left-hand' (idangai) and 'right-hand' (velangai) castes. Manu noted 61 castes whereas a later text counted hundreds of mixed castes (varnasankara). Other than the Rajputs, another caste that developed during this period was the Kayastha. The Kayasthas were traditionally scribes who got transformed into a separate caste as all types of scribes got clubbed together to form one endogamous group. Very often a large number of these castes claim origin from highly respected ancestors and explain their current lower status in terms of economic or other factors. The Khatris, an important caste in Northern India, claim that they were of Kshatriya origin, but took to commerce, which brought them the contempt of their caste fellows and they had to accept Vaishya status. The Gurjaras, Jats and Ahirs all claim Kshatriya origin, the status they came to lose later for various reasons. This process of claiming high caste origin continued till the 1950s when the Constitution of India provided for reservations for lower castes in most government jobs.

The caste system has its regional variations. The formation of regions and regional consciousness after the eighth century AD contributed to this variation. The North Indian Brahmanas are divided not only on the basis of gotra but also on the basis of their residence. Thus we have Kanyakubja, Sarayuparier and Maithila brahmanas belonging to Kanauj, Sarayu river and Mithila respectively. A large number of Rajput sub-castes carry their earlier tribal names such as, Tomaras, Kacchavahas, Hadas and Chauhanas. These sub castes also acquired gotras for themselves. Thus the number of castes and sub-castes as well as that of the gotras kept increasing in medieval times. The Marathas also became a caste.

In modern times the caste system acquired some new features. Thus, the idea of 'surnames' was also added. One particular caste or sub-caste came to acquire one, sometimes more, 'surnames'. However, ample variation is found in this matter. Caste and anti-caste movements of the modern period resulted in the formation of further new castes. Thus the Brahma-samajas acquired status which is very similar to a caste.

The caste system, as can be seen from the above description, has a complex working method. Substantial regional variation is found and hence it has been impossible to define it in a precise manner region, sub-region, economic status, nearness to political authority, craft, vocation, following a particular deity all have come to play a role in its formation and subsequent changes.

The influence of caste system has been so great that even though the egalitarian religious reformers of the medieval period such as Basava, Ramanand and Kabir, tried to abolish caste among their followers, their sects soon took on the characteristics of new castes. The Sikhs, could not overcome caste feelings. Even the Muslims formed caste groups. Syrian Christians of Kerala, earlier divided into sections, took on a caste character. The Christian converts brought their caste prejudices with them and high caste converts consider themselves aloof from those of the lower orders.

## **Hinduism and Hindus**

The term "Hinduism" has to be understood in terms of its indigenous meaning, in its meaning of medieval period, and in its contemporary meaning. In its indigenous meaning, the view of Hinduism was derived from the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, etc. Then came a period when some Brahmin acharyas (teachers) reinterpreted the religious literature and described some practices and beliefs as significant and decisive. Some of such practices and beliefs were: sati, human sacrifice, devadasis, child marriage, worship of village goddess with the slaughter of an animal, belief in Shakti cult, and so on. Later on, specifically after the Mughal period, some educated Hindus described these beliefs and practices as crude and barbarous, and became critical of these features of Hinduism. They even talked of reform and started reformist movements like the Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission, and so forth.

### **Hindu Philosophy**

The Hindu view of life in the Vedic thought is that man is altogether and throughout composed of desires (Kama). Its other feature is that it believes in unity.

As are his desires, so is his discretion. As is his discretion, so are his deeds; as is his deed, so is his destiny. Hence, if a man has left any desires in him while he lives, he takes birth again, but if no desires are left in him, he becomes one with Brahma (God). Under the circumstances, one must eradicate discretion (Kratu) in order to destroy his desires. It is desire that binds a man to this world and makes him liable to birth and death. Karma (Deed) is, thus, only a connecting link between desires and rebirth. Hence, on getting rid of desires, the mortal becomes immortal and attains salvation (moksha).

It will be wrong to hold that this is the only view of the Vedic thought/religion or the Hindu philosophy. In fact, the Hindu literature presents varied approaches to ultimate reality. One approach was made at a later stage in Gita to the problem of dispensing with the desires. Gita is believed to be part of the Mahabharata, which depicts the great war between Pandavas and Kaurvas, fought somewhere about 1,000 B.C. Gita is supposed to have been compiled by about 400 A.D. It presents a new philosophy of life – the philosophy of karma. The Gita insisted on the sublimation rather than the eradication of desires and that was to be done by knowing the true nature of karma.



The Hindu philosophy believes in the continuity of the present with the past in which it is rooted, and its projection into the future. The Hindu respect for tradition has a purpose. It seeks to achieve homogeneity and harmony of thought. The different phases merely represent differences in emphasis at different historical periods.

### **Basic Tenets of Hinduism**

Focusing on the tenets and the normative principles of Hinduism, could it be said that Hinduism believes in equality and egalitarianism? Are Karma and rebirth ideas acceptable to all Hindus? Is Moksha the ultimate goal of all? Is toleration its character? Is non-violence its important feature? Do all Hindus believe in the merger of individual soul into the ultimate soul?

Yogendra Singh (1973:31) is of the opinion that the normative principles of Hinduism are based on beliefs, ideals and logic of permissiveness, liberalism being and becoming, creation and destruction, hedonism (belief that pleasure is the chief goal), utilitarianism, and spiritual transcendence (outside the range of human experience, reason and description, etc.)

### **Impact of Post-Vedic Tradition**

The Vedic philosophy of early Hinduism was influenced by Buddhism and Jainism. Though both developed as separate religions but they had deeper roots in the Hindu tradition. Jainism had the patronage of urban-mercantile community while Buddhism had princely patronage. Both emphasized the value of continuity and the significance of hierarchy. Both rejected the rituals of sacrifice in temples and talked of non-violence. The membership of Buddhism was open to all castes and both the sexes. Buddhism focused on soul-liberation through 'nirvan' (Salvation), while Jainism referred to soul liberation through inculcation of a spirit of moral virtues through self-restraints. In short, it may be said that Buddhism and Jainism have an atheistic world-view whereas Hinduism is based on theistic beliefs. In a way, Buddhism and Jainism protested against some important characteristics of Hinduism like its rigid formalism, tyrannical ritualism, values system based on hierarchy, supremacy of Brahmins, and religious orthodoxy.

Hindu beliefs and values were further affected by the preaching of Shankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, and Madhavacharya, who established monasteries in different corners of the country for propagating monotheism. Ramanuja founded Vaishnava sect and got followers from Jains, Shaivites and low castes. The Lingayat sect in South India converted many non-Brahmins to the exclusive worship of Shiva.

The devotional school emerged between the fifteenth and the sixteenth century which attempted to popularize some new values in the Hindu religion. Saints like Kabir, Guru Nanak, Ramananda, Chaitanya, Mira, Tulsidas, Tukaram and Ramdas, etc., emphasized on equalitarian and non-hierarchical valued system in Hinduism. They also made efforts towards liberalization of the Hindu tradition and its synthesis with Islam.

## The Ashrams

According to the Hindu philosophy, life is divided into four stages or ashrams: Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, and Sanyasa. This scheme of division has scriptural sanction, though ideally it is meant for all the males of the twice-born castes, that is, Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. Each stage has definite duties and functions. The first stage of Brahmacharya or studentship under a teacher and strict celibacy came to an end at about sixteen years of age when the boy married and entered the second stage of Grihastha or householder's life. In that situation, he had to perform sacrifices and have children for the perpetuation of his lineage. At the approach of the old age, the householder enters the stage of Vanaprastha or relative withdrawal where he was expected to detach himself from his family gradually and devotes more time to the study of religious books and meditation. Ultimately, he was to renounce the world or take Sanyasa and preach the truths in society which he had experienced in his life. In this stage, he led to wandering and mendicant life.

Today, Hindus no longer believed in the ashram system and the ideals of isolation and renouncement. Nobody detaches himself from the family life in the old age and nobody takes to sanyasa.

## The Purusharthas

Hinduism talks of four goals of life which human-beings ought to pursue. If moksha (liberation from life and death) is the ultimate goal of a person, the wish for a long span of life on this earth is his immediate desire. The harmony between the two aims is unfolded in the theory of purusharthas. There are believed to be four purusharthas or aims of life: *Artha, Kama, Dharma, and Moksha*. Artha (Wealth) refers to acquisition and enjoyment of wealth; kama (satisfaction of biological desires) refers to the satisfaction of sex drives and temporal interests and aesthetic urges; dharma (right conduct) refers to the acceptance of the prescribed discipline and obligations in social, religious and cultural realms; and moksha refers to the ideal of spiritual realization. While the first three goals are all external to man and therefore attainable (Sadhya or means), the last one is imminent in him and it has only to be given a chance for achievements (Siddha). Hinduism does not deny the pursuit of any of these goals to any individual because of his low status ascribed by birth.

The significant thing in Hinduism was that no full commitment was prescribed for the pursuit of goals of life (Purusharthas) and dividing life in four stages (Ashramas) for the achievement of these goals. People were given greater permissiveness in this regard. For example, the conformity to these values and goals was expected only from the twice-born upper castes. Most of these values were ideological-motivational phenomena and many of them were ethico-religious in nature. A great deal of flexibility was allowed in the expectation of conformity to the prescribed values and obligations. The obligations were relative to space (desha), time (kala), ability to make shrama (effort), and innate qualities (gun of the individuals.).

## Social Structure and related concepts

At the most general level, social structure as a construct is used to characterize recurrent and regularized interaction among two or more persons. In its contemporary usage in the social sciences, however, this construct can be understood only by referring to two other

set of concepts: the directional tendencies of social systems, and the resources of social systems. Let us define each briefly, and show how the concept of social structure links them.

1. **Directional tendencies:** one of the most fundamental sets of concepts employed in analyzing social systems concerns the general orientation of social life. Or, some put the questions, what exigencies must be met if the social system is to continue functioning? Analysts who attempt to identify these basic directional tendencies use such terms as "functional exigencies," "functional imperatives," "functional prerequisites," and so on. The following exigencies are typically listed: (a) the production, allocation, and consumption of scarce commodities (sometimes called the economic functions); (b) the coordination and control of the collective actions of the society as a whole or a collectivity within it (sometimes called the political functions); (c) the creation, maintenance, and implementation of norms governing interaction among members in a system (sometimes called the integrative function); (d) the creation, maintenance, and transmission of the cultural values of a system; and so on. Around these exigencies social life revolves; social resources are devoted to meeting each exigency. Some analysts maintain, moreover, that unless these exigencies are met satisfactorily, disequilibrium of the social system will result.
2. **Resources:** a second set of variables that enter propositions about social systems concerns the capacities or resources available to the system. In economics the concept of capacities has been formulated as the "factors of production," given the general objective of producing goods and services, the capacities of the economy are found in land, labor, capital, and organization. The importance of resources arises in other institutional sectors as well: the levels of information available for action, and so on, are always relevant to structure social action. It is useful to distinguish between two aspects of capacities: (a) obstacles that limit the performance of a system—example are the limited number of hours in a day, and the limited physical energy that people can expend before becoming exhausted; (b) means that facilitate the performance of a system. Example are a high level of skill of the actors, a high level of knowledge about the social situation at hand, etc.

### Change Initiators

Change initiators get things moving, take action, and stimulate the system. They are the ones constantly seeking change to make things better. They identify the need for change, see the vision of a better future, take on the change task, and champion the initiative. Change initiators may face considerable risk in the organization. To use a physical metaphor, action creates movement, movement creates friction, and friction creates heat! And creating heat may help or hurt one's career. Change agents need to take calculated actions and be prepared to undertake the work needed to create and support the powerful arguments and coalitions to effect change in organizations from the top or the middle of the organization.

Change initiators will find useful aids for change in this book. We, as authors, cannot supply the passion and powerful vision needed by initiators, but we can point out the requirements of successful change: planning, persuasion, and perseverance. And we can provide frameworks for analysis that will enhance the likelihood of successful change.

Change initiators need to be dogged in their desire and determination. Those who succeed will earn reputations for realistic, grounded optimism, for a good sense of timing, and for not giving up. If nothing else, the opposition may tire in the face of their persistence. Better

yet are those who have the uncanny ability to creatively combine with others into a coalition that turns resisters into allies and foot draggers into foot soldiers for change.

### **ChangeImplementers**

Many would-be and existing managers find themselves as change implementers. Others, including their bosses, may initiate the change, but it is left to the implementers to make it work. This role is critical. Pfeffer argues that effectiveness doesn't come from making the critical decision but rather from managing the consequences of decisions and creating the desired results. As he says, "If changes were going to be easy, it would already have happened." The change implementer's role is important and needed in organizations.

Change implementers will find much in this book to assist them. They will find guidance in creating and increasing the need for the changes that change initiators are demanding. They will find tools for organizational diagnosis and for identifying and working with key stakeholders. And they will find concepts and techniques to improve their action plans and implementation skills.

At the same time, we encourage and challenge change implementers to stay engaged, to stay active, and to initiate change themselves. Oshry identifies the dilemma of "middle powerlessness" where the middle manager feels trapped between tops and bottoms and becomes ineffective as a result. Many middle managers transform their organizations by recognizing strategic initiatives and mobilizing the power of the "middles" to move the organization in the direction needed.

### **ChangeFacilitators**

Today's complex organizational changes can fail because parties lock into positions or because perspectives get lost in personalities and egos. In such cases, an outside view can facilitate change. Change facilitators understand change processes and assist the organization to work through change issues. As such, they sometimes formally serve as consultants to change leaders and teams. However, many of those who act as change facilitators do so informally, often on the strength of their existing relationships with others involved with the change. They have high levels of self-awareness and emotional maturity and are skilled in the behavioral arts—using their interpersonal skills to work with teams or groups.

### **ChangeRecipients**

Change recipients are those who find themselves on the receiving end of change. Their responses will vary from active resistance to passivity to active support, depending upon their perceptions of the change, its rationale, and its impact. When people feel acted upon and with little or no voice or control in the process, dissatisfaction, frustration, alienation, absenteeism, and turnover are common responses to demands for change.

Regardless of your role in the organization, change recipient, change implementer, change initiator, or change facilitator, this lesson contains useful tools. Change recipients will understand what is happening to them and will learn how to respond positively. Change implementers will develop their capacity to use tools that increase their effectiveness, and

change initiators will learn to take more effective actions to leverage their change programs. Change facilitators will find themselves with new insights into easing organizational change.

## Summary

India is the seventh largest and the second most populous nation in the world. Indian culture has a long and continuous history. It extends over 5000 years. India is great for his tradition, culture, norms and values. India is also called as Hindu country, according to the Hindu philosophy, life is divided into four stages or ashrams: The first stage is Brahmacharya or studentship, the second stage is Grihastha or householder's life, the third stage is Vanaprastha, the last stage is Sanyasa. There are believed to be four purusharthas or aims of life: *Artha, Kama, Dharma, and Moksha*. Social values are cultural standards that indicate the general good deemed desirable for organized social life. These are assumptions of what is right and important for society.

## Technical Terms

Complexion  
Subjugation  
Vanquished  
Varna  
Utilitarianism

## Self Assessment Questions:

1. Discuss the concepts of social structure of Indian Society
2. Write a short note on the Ashrams and Purusharthas
3. Explain the impact of Post-Vedic Tradition
4. Briefly explain about the Hinduism and Hindu Philosophy

## Reference Books

1. **Combat Poverty Agency:** Developing Facilitation Skills - A Hand book for Group Facilitator.
2. **Heraclitus:** Changing Organizations in our Complex World
3. **Neil J. Smelser & Seymour Martin Lipset:** Social Structure and Mobility in Economic Development
4. **Module-VIII:** Social Structure-Indian Social Structure
5. **C.N. Sankar Rao:** Sociology of Indian Society

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## Lesson 13

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#### 13.0 Objectives:

The main objective of this lesson is to explain the Sustainable Development.

#### Contents:

- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Defining Sustainability
- 13.3 Goals of Sustainable Development
- 13.4 Essential Elements of Sustainable Development
- 13.5 Summary
- 13.6 Technical Terms
- 13.7 Self Assessment Questions
- 13.8 Reference Books

#### 13.1 Introduction

The concept of Sustainable Development emerged as an important theme in 1987. The Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development in its report our common future called for application of sustainability as a criterion for all development initiatives. "In order for development to be sustainable, it must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs", said the Commission.

This definition is highly generalized and hence has been subjected to a variety of interpretations. Broadly speaking, developed countries lay emphasis on economic and technological aspects. How to integrate environmental costs into economic decision-making while protecting and enhancing their industrial competitiveness and employment opportunities. The general feeling is that the current development, growth processes can continue provided the technological innovations are rapid and appropriate enough to reduce environmental side effects.

In contrast, the perspectives of developing countries are understandably different. In their view, poverty is the greatest polluter of environment and hence they must accelerate economic growth to meet the basic needs of the people. And if the industrialized rich countries are really serious about environment, they should realize that it is they who have created the present environment crisis, not the poor countries, and hence they should assist the latter with finance and latest environment friendly technological knowhow to promote economic growth.

Interestingly, both sides have a firm faith in economic growth and all that goes with it, such as industrialization, urbanization, and environmental deterioration. Both pin their hopes in science and technology to solve the emerging problems. It is simply the question of access to

resources, particularly finances and technology. One wants to maintain the status quo, i.e., its economic and technological superiority and competitiveness; the other wants to change the existing world order to make it more egalitarian. The means for achieving the goals are the same.

### 13.2 Defining Sustainability

In view of these divergent approaches, it is almost impossible to define sustainable development more sustainably than done by Brundtland Report. Each country and each region assigns different weights to different approaches to achieve a sustainable future. Each definition is interest-oriented and genuine efforts to look at the issue from the point of view of human survival and development have remained confined to a limited number of scholars and thinkers.

Sustainable development cannot be a static concept and hence cannot be defined once for all. It is a dynamic process and will be applied by different countries in tune with their own cultural, political and economic perspectives. But unless there is a broad agreement on goals, directions and means, the concept will prove sterile and the business of development will continue as usual with more tensions among the nation states and regions and localities within the nation state.

An attempt is, therefore, being made here to offer a broad outline of what constitutes sustainable development or how sustainable development differs from development. In general (i) it cannot be achieved in the short run; (ii) it is based on equity and justice; (iii) its approach is balanced and integrative; (iv) it has common goals but different routes; (v) it accepts nature not only for as a resource for development but also as the earthly womb for survival and development of humankind; and (vi) it is participatory in nature.

Sustainable development has to be a long-term process, and one may say a continuing process. The economic, political, technological and social structure and superstructure built during the last few centuries the world over, particularly in industrialized countries of the world, cannot be dismantled in a day. No structure is, however, permanent. Elemental and partial changes do take place as a part of renewal process. This renewal process can be accelerated within the tolerable birth pangs and death agonies that mark any such change. The renewal process must aim to achieve the characteristics of sustainable development listed above.

Equity and justice are the sine qua non of sustainable development. It is four-dimensional: (1) Equity among nations – rich nations, poor nations, developed nations, developing nations; (2) Equity within countries – between regions, social classes, genders, sectors of activities; (3) Equity between generations; and (4) Equity between economics and ecology and science and spirituality.

The first two equities, although obvious, yet need some explanation. Let it not be construed to mean that pollution, for example, should be equally distributed. Equity is not equality; nor does it have any negative connotations. Equity promotes variety but not disparity. It is positive in the sense that it does call for a fair distribution of harmful things. Moreover, it is



directly linked with ability and capacity to bear the burden. This means that rich countries, rich regions, rich groups and the favored sex will have to take greater responsibility for sustainability.

Equity between generations invariably raises contentious issues like: Why should the present generation bother about the future? How can we be sure that future generations would not be better off in terms of scientific knowledge and technological know-how to resolve their problems? Presuming that the dependence of the future generations on nature will not be less than our own, humanity demands that we should not defer costs of present development to our children. Is there any doubt that the future generation too would need fertile soil, scenic beauty, clean air, potable water, virgin forests, energy, and wild life?

Lastly, we must try to bring about equity between our economic and ecological interests. The last few centuries have seen economic goals being pursued in a mindless way, without regard for what is going to happen to the Earth which sustains life. We are witnessing and experiencing the consequences of this approach. Similarly, science and bounded rationality have guided our thoughts and actions. Today, its social and environmental consequences are obvious to us. Economics and science have great potentials for human welfare. In fact, they have taken humanity to a point of achievement beyond imagination. But their side-effects on man and environment are proving to be unbearable. What we need now is the integration of economics and ecology, and science and spirituality to cure the developmental disease inflicting humanity and also to carry.

### **13.3 Goals of Sustainable Development**

All religions have a common goal, i.e., realization of the self. They follow different paths to arrive at this common point. If all of them had employed right means, world would have been happier today.

Sustainable development too has a fixed set of goals. Approaches and means to achieve them can differ. These goals are: (1) Basic needs of all human beings, i.e., food, clothing, shelter, education, health, security, and self-esteem must be met adequately. Priority must go to these needs. Level of these needs will be determined by natural and technological resources available and the global socio-economic context; (2) Development processes should be so articulated that ecological balance and environmental purity is least disturbed, if at all; and (3) All nations and people must join hands to support each other and work with each other to create a world in which the above two goals are optimized. Each country should find ways and means to promote this interdependence.

Sustainable development demands a change in our attitude towards nature. Nature is not just a material resource for human consumption. Man is also a part of nature. What will happen if a baby in the mother's womb acquires the power to break open the woman's womb and come out prior to the time of her maturity? Both the mother and baby will be in trouble. There is an urgent need, therefore, to move away from the Cartesian world-view and post ourselves in the ecological world-view. The idea is not to go back to the past, but to create a new future out of the present, the present as it is. The past can help in the shaping of the new future.

And finally, sustainable development is not the business of the government and private companies alone. It is the business of the people in general. It is a process which has to be initiated at each level of human endeavor and life. It involves individuals, families, communities, corporate bodies, nations and global society. It has to be a movement, because it involves paradigmatic change which is difficult to bring about unless great many people get involved.

Democratization of decision-making and decentralization of power and authority is, therefore, a must.

Thus, we see that sustainable development is a comprehensive term. It involves far more than environment friendly technology. It involves paradigm change. It involves change in style of development; it involves change in attitude towards nature; and it involves political, social and ethical changes. No wonder then that it does not have a single definition on which all agree.

### **13.4 Essential Elements of Sustainable Development**

1. Survival of Human beings
2. Survival of all other life forms
3. Satisfaction of basic human needs
4. Maintenance of bio-physical productivity
5. Economic efficiency and growth
6. Preservation of environmental quality and ecosystem
7. Inter and intra generational equity
8. Social justice
9. Self-reliance and people's participation
10. Stabilization of human population
11. Promotion of values and ethics

There are also attempts to cover a good many of these aspects into a single framework. As a result, instead of being precise, the definition tends to be vague and subjected to misinterpretation. So great is the confusion, that, even this vagueness is justified to be its strength by some authors (Daly, 1989) and some others (Lele, 1989) opined that this lack of precision in definition leads to the faltering of Sustainable development in operational terms.

### **13.5 Summary**

The concept of Sustainable Development emerged as an important theme in 1987. The Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development in its report our common future called for application of sustainability as a criterion for all development initiatives. "In order for development to be sustainable, it must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs", Sustainable development cannot be a static concept and hence cannot be defined once for all. It is a dynamic process and will be applied by different countries in tune with their own cultural, political and economic perspectives. But unless there is a broad agreement on goals, directions and means, the concept will prove sterile and the business of development will continue as usual with more tensions among the nation states and regions and localities within the nation state.

### 13.6 Technical Terms

Initiatives	Accelerate	Deterioration
Egalitarian	Sterile	Optimize

### 13.7 Self Assessment Questions:

- (1) Define the Concept of Sustainable Development
- (2) Write about the goals of Sustainable Development
- (3) Write a short note on Essential Elements of Sustainable Development

### 13.8 Reference Books

1. H.S. Sharma, Sri kumar Chattopadhyay: Sustainable Development – Issues and CaseStudies.
2. Robin Ghosh, Rony Gabbay, Abu Siddique: Good Governance Issues and Sustainable Development.

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