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(IDC)

FOUR YEAR BACHELOR'S DEGREE COURSE

(CBCS in Accordance with NEP 2020)

SEMESTER - I

UNDERSTANDING INDIAN SOCIETY

Surya Kumar Bhuyan School of Social Sciences

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

This course meant for B.A 1st Semester programme titled **"Understanding Indian Society"** focuses on the different aspects of the Indian society especially its major social institutions. The course comprises of eleven units. **Unit1** of the course discusses about the diversities that exists in India and how unity in India is maintained irrespective of its multiple diversities. **Unit 2** explains about the different types of Societies that exists in India. **Unit 3** tries to explain the institutions of Family and Marraige in the context of Indian Society. **Unit 4** discusses about the Kinship system of India. **Unit 5 and Unit 6** discusses about Indian Caste System, Its characteristics, nature and changing dynamics. **Unit 7** focuses on the Tribes in India. **Unit 8** discusses about the status of women in Indian Society. **Unit 9** discusses about the nature and evolution of Indian Economy. **Unit 10** explains about the different aspects of Indian Polity. **Unit 11** discusses about Rural Life in India particularly focusing on Rural Class Structure and Land Reforms in India.

In order to make the text more interesting and informative, a section called LET US KNOW has been provided in all the units. This section try to provide some additional information regarding the content of the unit. Further, in order to enable the learners to continuously check their progress regarding the content, some questions has been put at the end of various sections of a unit with the heading CHECK YOUR PROGRESS. The answers to the questions of CHECK YOUR PROGRESS section has been provided at the end of each unit. In the end of each unit few Model Question of long and short type is provided in order to provide an idea of the question 'pattern' to be expected in the examinations by the learners.

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UNIT 1: INDIAN SOCIETY : UNITY IN DIVERSITY

UNIT STRUCTURE

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1.5 Unity in Diversity

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1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to -

- understand the concept of society and culture
- explain the characteristics of Indian society and culture
- discuss the concepts of Unity and Diversity
- discuss the Racial, Religious & Linguistic composition of Indian society
- explain the essence of Unity in Diversity in Indian society and culture

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit deals with the Indian society and culture, its diversities and unity. While going to discuss various characteristics of Indian society and culture, an attempt has been undertaken to define some of the basic concepts and issues we observe in day to day life.

In the very first section of this unit, the meaning and concept of society and culture have been defined briefly. How Indian society has evolved over time has also been discussed.

The second section highlights on some important characteristics of Indian society and culture. While doing so, the concept of diversity has been discussed. For a detailed treatment, focus has been given on geographical, racial, religious and linguistic diversities in India.

The third section discusses the concepts of unity and bonds of unity that bind such a heterogeneous cultural entity of Indian society.

1.3 SOCIETY & CULTURE

We often come across the words society and culture in our day to day life. However, these are not mere words, rather are concepts and carry their own precise meaning. Let us have clear understanding of these two very basic concepts in the study of sociology.

1.3.1 Meaning and definition

The term 'Society' has been derived from the Latin word *socius*, meaning thereby companionship or friendship. According to Morris Ginsberg, 'a society is a collection of individuals united by certain relations or mode of behavior which mark them off from others who do not enter into these relations or who differ from them in behavior'. Thus society is a basic need of human for his/her living, working and enjoying life. Aristotle rightly said, 'man is a social animal'. Thus society is essential for human life to survive and evolve.

Culture is a unique trait of human society. It is a broad concept which includes within it the way of life; our behavior, philosophy, ethics, morals, manners, customs, tradition, religion, language and all the activities associated with economy, politics and all other types of activities.While animals are born and live in natural environment, humans on the other hand are born, brought up, live and evolve in a cultural environment. According to Edward B. Tylore culture is ' that complete whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society'.

Society and culture are inseparable. Study of any society necessarily involves the study of the culture of that society. Thus culture and society go together.

1.3.2 The Indian Society and Culture

India is one of the most ancient, extensive, varied as well as continuously evolving society in the world. Extensive archaedogical evidences obtained from excavation at Mohenjodaro in 1922 has brought to light that there existed a highly sophisticated and urbanized culture known as Harappan civilization, also termed *Indus Valley Civilization* in the North Western part of Indian subcontinent, which dates back to around 2600-2000 BC, more than 5000 years old. It was spread over a vast area of 1600 km from east to west and 1100 km from north to south in the present day India and Pakistan. This exceeds the area occupied by other contemporary civilization like the Egyptian and Mesopotamian. Indian society has witnessed waves of new people and culture which has enriched and contributed to the pluralism in Indian culture and tradition. Throughout the ages from ancient to present day while some came into contact with it temporarily, others settled down permanently; who brought with them new traditions, culture and values only to make Indian society flourish. India has over periods witnessed waves

of migration starting from the Greeks, Aryans,Kushans,Arabs, Persian, Turkish, as well as from Burma and other South East Asian countries; until recently the British, French, Dutch, Danes and the Portuguese.

In the process of Evolution, Indian society has acquired a composite culture characterized by diversified patterns. The present day Indian culture is the result of cultural contact, cultural diffusion, cultural conflict, accommodation, assimilation, and integration that has taken place over the years.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1 : Define society and culture.

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.....

.....

Q 2 : What is the age of Indian society and cultural heritage?]

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.....

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1.4 UNITY &DIVERSITY

In this section we shall try to understand the meaning and concept of unity and diversity. A part from that we shall also learn about the different forms of diversity that exists in Indian Society.

1.4.1 Meaning and concept of Unity

According to Merriam Webster dictionary, the term unity means 'the quality or the state of not being multiple'. From a sociological perspective, it is the feeling of oneness, a state of being in full mutual agreement. Unity gives rise to integration in the society.

It is that bond which holds the members of the society together, with a feeling of we-ness.

An often related term with unity is uniformity. However, there is difference between unity and uniformity. Uniformity consider similarity as prerequisite criteria while it is not so for unity. Uniformity may give rise to unity but not necessarily vice versa. This type of unity, arising out of uniformity is termed as ***mechanical solidarity*** by Durkheim. Such a unity is often observed in case of tribal and traditional societies. Members of such society identify themselves belonging to the same race, religion, customs, traditions, so on and so forth. At the same time, unity may also form out of differences. Such a type of unity was termed as ***organic solidarity,***which we observed in the modern societies.

1.4.2 Meaning and concepts of Diversity

The dictionary meaning of diversity is differences or variety. In Sociological perspective, this diversity or difference is always in terms of people and their society and culture. This diversity however is different from mere differences between two persons; it is rather a collective difference between two or more group of people. Thus, two groups may differ from each other in terms of race, religion, language, caste, social and economic status, way of lifestyle so on and so forth. These differences thus gives rise to diversity in the society, which also is collective in nature. Thus diversity is opposite to uniformity.

1.4.3 Forms of Diversity in India

Plurality and multiplicity characterizes Indian society and culture. India witnesses endless diversity, in terms of its diverse geography, geological structure, climate, flora & fauna, races, religions, languages and dialects, music, arts, craft, customs, tradition and what not. As mentioned earlier, the cultural diversity in India owes primarily to its peculiar geographic location within the

Indian subcontinent and also to the successive waves of people and culture who came here only to enrich her. However, there is something unique about the vast diversity that exist in the Indian society and culture, which has always been challenging and at the same time very inspiring and interesting topic of study and research among different branches of humanities and social sciences. Underneath this unique diversity lies the strong foundation of the Indian society and culture, which has not only survived but prospered over the last 5000 years or more. Thus India has rightly been honored as the “mini world”, the “epitome of the world” and the “ethnological museum”.

Let us now study in detail about some of the most significant diversities that India is known for.

1.4.3.1 Geo-physical Diversity

India is a vast country covering a total geographical area 3,287,240 sq. km, including 120,849 sq. km. under illegal occupation of Pakistan and China. According to the census reports of Indian Census 2011, the population of India is 1,210,854,977 with 623, 724, 248 males and 586,469, 174 females. India is behind only to China, with an estimation of 1.35 billion persons in terms its total population, while ranks 7th in terms of its geographical area. Thus with only 2.4% of the world’s geographical area, India supports and sustains 17% of the world population. According to an estimation, by 2050, India will surpass China in total population, thus becoming the most populous country on the planet.

Geographically India is a diverse country. From North to South and East to West, India extends for 3214 km and 2933 km respectively. India is home to the world’s oldest mountain Aravali and at the same time to the youngest mountain Himalayas. Within the periphery of India lies the Great Thar desert, vast alluvial plains of Ganga-Brahmaputra and other networks of rivers, the wettest place on the earth Mawsynram and Cherrapunji, the cold desert of

Ladakh, and it is also a home to the world's 3rd highest peak Kanchanjangha. Varied geographical settings in India has given rise to varied climatic condition, which has made the country one of the richest biodiversity hotspot on the earth.

Demographically India is one of the most diverse country in the world. Owing to its unique geographical characteristics, the people and their culture has also got influenced. There are such hamlets in India, which are surprisingly cutoff from the so called mainstream India in terms of their accessibility. Most of the interior mountainous and hilly tracks of High Himalayas as well as those in the North Eastern India; the dense and inaccessible forest areas in the heartland of India owing to their remoteness has given rise to distinctly different social and cultural setup in the societies of those people living there. The geographical inaccessibility and uniqueness has thus given rise to distinctive yet diverse cultural practices among different groups of people which includes preaching of different religions, festivals, belief, dialects, customs, tradition, dress,arts & crafts, dance, music,food habit, housing etc. Hence, the geography of the country has added to the diversity in India.

1.4.3.2 Racial Diversity

As mentioned earlier, India has greatly attracted waves of migration from all over the globe since time immemorial. This is the primary reason behind absence of a uniform racial composition of its inhabitants. India has rightly been termed as 'melting pot' of races and tribes. Race can be defined as superficial physical differences that a particular society considers significant. The concept of race may be based on the place from where the members originally belongs to (Mongolia and the Caucus Mountains, for instance) or denoted skin tones (black, white, yellow, and red, for example).

Various scholars have put forwarded their own schemes of racial classification of the Indian people. Here we are going to discuss

only two such schemes of racial classification for the Indian population, put forward by Risley(1915) and Guha (1931).

Sir Herbert Risley is of the first and foremost to come up with a racial classification for Indian population on a scientific basis. He recognized three principal racial types in India, viz., the Dravidian, the Indo-Aryan and the Mongoloid. According to him, there is wide mixing of these three primary races among each other giving rise to varying racial complexion of the people. Thus Risley identified seven different 'physical types' in Indian population as follows:

- **The Indo-Aryan Type:** Predominantly living in North West Indian provinces with tall, fair complexion, dark eyes, growth of hair on body and face luxuriantly with predominantly long head and narrow & long nose.
- **The Dravidian Type:** The inhabitants of the southern plateau regions of India with short or below medium stature, very dark complexion, plentiful hair with occasional curling tendency, dark eyes, long head and a very broad nose.
- **The Mongoloid Type:** They mostly distributed along the Himalayas and North Eastern hills with broad head, short or below average stature, fine to broad nose and flat face with oblique eyelids.
- **The Aryo-Dravidian Type:** They are in fact intermixing of the Aryans and the Dravidians, residing mostly in the Ganga plain of North India with medium stature, light brown to black complexion and medium to broad nose forms.
- **The Mongola-Dravidian or Bengali Type:** They are mixture of Dravidian and Mongoloid elements, residing in Eastern Indian provinces of Bengal and Odissa characterised by medium stature, broad and round heads, dark complexion, plentiful hair on face and medium nose with the tendency towards flatness.
- **The Scytho-Dravidian Type:** They are the mixture of Scythians and the Dravidians inhabiting in the Western part of India with low to medium stature, fair complexion, broader head, fine but not long nose and rather scanty hair on face and body.

- **The Turko-Iranian Type:** They mostly belongs to the former North Western Frontier Provinces of British India.

One of the most authoritative and widely accepted racial classification of Indian population is that by B.S. Guha. Guha has identified six major racial groups in India:

- **The Negrito:** They are the people living in confined pockets in the South, the Kadar, Andamanese, AngamiNagas and the Bagadis of Rajmahal Hills in Bihar. The pople of this racial group are short in stature, with black complexion, black woolly lips and broad nose.
- **The Proto-Austroloid:** They reside in the interior of India and are short to medium in stature, long and high head with small and broad nose form. They are generally called as anas, das,dasyu and nishad by the Indo-Aryans, which are in fact, derogatory terms.
- **Mongoloid:** They are subdivided into Paleo Mongoloid, those living in the North Eastern hills and plains and the Tibeto Mongoloid, living in Bhutan and Sikkim.
- **Mediterranean:** They are the people from Dravidian group. They have further been divided into three sub catagories-
  - **Paleo Mediterranean-** People living in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala with medium height, dark skin tone and slight stature.
  - **Primarily Mediterranean-** People from Punjab, with fair skin colour.
  - **Oriental Mediterranean-** Living in the states of UP, Rajasthan and Punjab; with long nose and fair skin.
- **Western Brachycephals:** They are further classified into the following:
  - Alpinoid- North and Western India
  - Dinaric- Bengal and Odissa
  - Armenoid- the Persis
- **Nordic:** They resemble the Aryans with fair skin, medium to long head, narrow nose form and tall stature.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: What do you understand by unity and diversity?

Q 4: Define race.

Q 5: According to B. S. Guha, number of racial group in India are-

i). Theee

ii). Four

iii). Five

iv). Six

1.4.3.3 Religious Diversity

India is a country characterized by religious pluralism. The very constitution of India recognizes itself as a secular country where anyone has the fundamental right to preach any religion of his or her choice. At the same time, religious tolerance is the very basic foundation of Indian secularism. The very idea of religious pluralism in India is based on the belief that all the religions are equally good and that they all lead to the same goal of realization of god.

India is home to almost all the major religions in the world such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and so on. Migration of people with diverse faith and religion over the ages have brought with them their own religion, thus adding to religious plurality in India. There have been various religious movements and reforms in India over periods, which is manifested in such religious cults as Vaishnavite, Sufism, Bahai etc. India is also home to numerous tribes who follow animism. Diversity of religious faith, tolerance and mutual respect & coexistence is thus an important characteristic of Indian Society. Given below is the data on religion in India, as per the census of India report, 2011.

All Religion	100.00%	121 Crores
Hindu	79.80%	96.62 Crores
Muslim	14.23%	17.22 Crores
Christian	2.30%	2.78 Crores
Sikh	1.72%	2.08 Crores
Buddhist	0.70%	84.43 Lakhs
Jain	0.37%	44.52 Lakhs
Other Religion	0.66%	79.38 Lakhs
Not Stated	0.24%	28.67 Lakhs

Table 1.1 Data on Religion in India (Census of India, 2011)

Let us now have a look into the major religions in India.

- **Hinduism :** It is the dominant religion in India, which is followed by more than 80% of the population in India. It is not easy to define the basic principle of Hinduism, which is perhaps, the most diversified religion in terms of its theoretical premises and practical expressions. There is no set of defined 'Hindu religious traits'. Hinduism, unlike majority of the other religions, do not have a specific founder, nor has a particular holy book as its basic spiritual guide. While on one hand, idol of numerous god and goddesses are worshiped by many, at the same time, some only preach and follow the path of 'realization of the ultimate truth', without assigning any form whatsoever. Some also worship spirits, trees, animals, even rocks, mountains, rivers, lakes and various natural phenomenon such as the sun, moon, heavenly bodies, thunder, rain, wind etc. One of the characteristics of Hinduism is the celebration of numerous festivals and rituals. Hindu beliefs rest on such faith as the existence of a supreme creator, preserver and destroyer, existence of Soul or *aatma,* which is beyond the cycle of birth and death, concept of rebirth, *karma fal, paap and punya*etc. The Hindus consider Vedas, Purans, Sastras, Upanishadas, Mahabharat, Ramayana as well as Bhagwad Gita as some of the sacred and holy texts.

- **Islam :** Islam arrived in India along with the traders from Arab during 7th century AD. The followers of Islam are also known as *muslims*, who believe in the existence one god (monotheist) and also consider religion as the matrix and world view within which all the life activities should take place.Every muslim believes in following and performing the five rites which are; only one god (*tawheed*), canonical prayer (*namaaz*), fasting (*roja*), charity (*zakat*) and holy pilgrimage to Macca (*haj*). The Muslims believe the holy book *Koran* to be the words of god, as revealed to Prophet Mohammad through the angel Gabriel (Jibraal). They follow *Sharit*(divine law) and consider life to be governed by the *Sharia* from cradle to grave. According to Census of India, 2011, the percentage of muslims to the total population in India accounts for 14.2%
- **Christianity :** Christianity is considered to have arrived to India in different phases. According to the Syrian Christian tradition, Apostle Thomas, one of the 12 Jesus's original disciples, came to India, to the vicinity of Coachin in 52 AD. Arrival of Christian Missionaries during the early phases of colonization has brought Christianity to India in later period, wherein, the missionaries spread the messages of Christianity specially to those marginalized and peripheral tribal and other groups in the hinterlands. The Christians believe in Jesus Christ as the messenger of god, active service and love for the neighbour. They consider the Bible as the holy text. Christian accounts for 2.3% of the total population in India (Census of India, 2011).
- **Sikhism :** Sikhism emerged during the early 16th century in the Punjab region, spread both in present day India and Pakistan. The founder of Sikhism was Guru Nanak Dev, who was a social and religious reformer. Sikhism was in fact a religious movement or reform of the Hindu belief and faiths, against the ills of caste system in the latter. In Sikhism, there are Gurus, who are worshiped as the teacher or saint. The ten legendary Guru in Sikhism are mentioned below-

- Guru Nanak DevJi - Guru from 1469 to 1539
- Guru AngadDevJi - Guru from 1539 to 1552
- Guru Amar Das Sahib Ji - Guru from 1552 to 1574
- Guru Ram Das Sahib Ji - Guru from 1574 to 1581
- Guru ArjanDevJi - Guru from 1581 to 1606
- Guru HarGobind Sahib Ji - - Guru from 1606 to 1644
- Guru HarRai Sahib Ji - Guru from 1644 to 1661
- Guru HarKrishan Sahib Ji - Guru from 1661 to 1664
- Guru TeghBahadur Sahib Ji - Guru from 1665 to 1675
- Guru Gobind Singh Sahib Ji - Guru from 1675 to 1708
- Guru Granth Sahib Ji - Guru from 1708 to eternity

Sikhism advocate monotheism. Guru Granth Sahib is considered the holy book by the Sikhs, teachings of the Gurus are incorporated in it and is considered also as the last Guru till eternity. The place of worship in Sikhism is known as Gurudwara. The Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab is considered the holiest among the Sikh shrines. Guru Govind Singh created a new brotherhood of Sikhs called *Khalsa,* meaning the pure ones. The member of the new brotherhood were instructed to wear five articles of faith (the five Ks)- *Kesh* (uncut hair), *Kangha* (a wooden brush for the hair), *Kara* (a metal bracelet), *Kachera* (a type of undergarment) and *Kirpan* (a dagger); the men took the name *Singh (lion)* and the women *Kaur* (princes).

- **Jainism** :Jainism too emerged as a religious reform movement and a separate religious tradition against some of the corrupt interpretation in Hinduism around 6th century BC. The Jain religious philosophy is based on the belief that refusal of the worldly desires through self-conquest by mean of right conduct, right faith and right knowledge leads one to perfect wisdom. The Jains adhere to five-fold discipline of non-violence, truth, honesty, sexual purity and indifference to material gain. Fasting and austerity is considered essential for self-purification.

Jains worship twenty four Tirthankaras, 'crossing-makers', transcended from the material world to the spiritual realm, from bondage to freedom in life. The first Tirthankara was Rishabha and Mahavira was the twenty forth. Jainism has two sects- the *Swetambar* and the *Digambara*. The third lesser known sect is *Sthankvasi*.

- **Budhism :** Buddhism too emerged around the same time that of Jainism, during 6th century BC, with the teaching of Gautam Buddha. Followers of Buddhism believes in three doctrines, i.e., Buddha- the enlightened teacher, Dhamma- the teaching given by the teacher and Sangha- the follower of dhamma. According to Buddhist philosophy, there is suffering in life and the cause of such suffering is desire which can be removed by detachment. There is noble eight fold path, that the Buddhist follow to liberate themselves from sufferings- right view, right aspiration, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right meditation. This noble path, they believe leads to *Nirvana,* a transcend state in which there is no suffering, no desire nor sense of self; thus one is liberated from karma and also cycle of birth and death. Buddhism has two sects; *Hinayana* and *Mahayana.*
- **Zoroastrianism :** The Zoroastrians entered India in the tenth century from Iran and settled mostly in Gujrat and Bombay (Mumbai). They are popularly known as the *Parsis.* Zarathustra was the founder of this religion in Iran, some 6000 years before present. They believe in the dualistic philosophy of the existence of opposing power of good and evil. They have distinct dress and also have few houses of worship. *ZendaAvesta*is the holy book of the Parsis. They recite hymns from the religious text five times a day before fire, which they symbolizes to be the realm of truth, righteousness and order.
- **Judaism :** The followers of Judaism are known popularly as the Jewish. It is an ancient monotheistic religion with the *Torah* as its holy book. The three main Jewish communities in India are those of Bene Israel, Kerala Jews and the Baghdadi Jews.

In addition to these major religions, India is also the home to numerous religious cults, follower of which have their own set of belief and rituals, being part of a major religion, but not into the mainstream. Some of the major religious cults in India are: Bhakti, Shakti, Natha, Skanda, Yogini, Arya Samajis, Brahma Samajis, KabirPanthis, DaduPanthis, Parinami, Sufism, Vaishnavites etc.

1.4.3.4 Linguistic Diversity

India is a multilingual country. The Peoples Linguistic Survey of India in their baseline survey has identified 780 distinct languages and 66 different scripts. As per the Census of India 2011, there are 122 languages in India with a speaking population of 10000 and more in each. According to the report, 250 languages have died over the past 50 years in India. The constitution of India has recognized 22 scheduled languages. While Hindi is spoken by as many as 400 million people in India, there is a language in Tripura, known as *Chaimal,* which is spoken by only 5 people. In Arunachal Pradesh, the people speak 66 different languages while in Bengal, there are 9 different scripts with 38 languages spoken by the people living there. Thus India is a home to innumerable languages and dialects which contributes to the Linguistic diversity of India



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6 : Whenand how did Islamism came to India.

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Q 7: What are the five Ks in Sikhism?

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Q 8: What do you understand by Monotheism?

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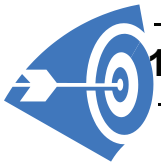
1.5 UNITY IN DIVERSITY

From the ongoing discussion, we now know that the Indian society as a whole is one of the most diverse in terms of its geography, people, religion as well as language. However, despite so much of differences, the Indian society and culture has not only survived a long history of more than 5000 years, but has also evolved to prosperity. Diversity in India is a unique phenomenon and a matter of study and research among the scholars from different branches of social sciences. There exists a rather special kind of unity within this vast diversity. Let us have an example here. People, society and culture in North East are completely different from those living in Jammu Kashmir or say in Gujrat. Their language is different, so is their tradition, customs, religion, belief etc., and differ from one another. However, if we consider the preachers of Hinduism from these regions, they feel and share a common bond of brotherhood and have age old interaction through pilgrimage to each other's places. At the same time, although 38 different languages are spoken in Bengal alone, but all the people living within its periphery identify as one; affinity towards Bengali language, shares common food habit, common literature, art and music and ethinicity. English as the official international language has also united the whole nation, especially thorough the spread of modern education system. Spirituality, secularism and religious tolerance and respect to each other's sentiment and belief has facilitated the Indian society to become a coexisting religious pluralist society. Various religious movements have also added to this cause. Akbar the Great, for example, had introduced a new cult called *Din-e-Illahi* meaning 'Divine Faith' combining teachings from Hinduism, Islam, Jainism and Zorastorianism. Sankardev in Assam propounded *Ek Saran Nam Dharma,* whose disciples were both Hindu, Muslims as well as belonging to numerous tribal and non-tribal groups all across the places. Hence it can be summarized that there are both diversity and unity in Indian society and culture however, this diversity itself lies within an inherent unity in the society. Thus, diversity in India is like different parts of one whole.



1.6 LET US SUM UP

- India is one of the oldest and most extensive society and culture existing since last 5000 years and more.
- Society is like a pack of people sharing some common traits.
- Culture is the way how a society live.
- India has a very diverse society and culture in terms of its geography, race, religion, and language.
- Unity in diversity is a significant characteristic of Indian society and culture.



1.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No. 1: According to Morris Ginsberg, 'a society is a collection of individuals united by certain relations or mode of behavior which mark them off from others who do not enter into these relations or who differ from them in behavior'.

According to Edward B. Tylore culture is ' that complete whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society'.

Ans to Q No. 2: The Indian society and culture dates back to 2600-2000 BC, more than 5000 years old from the time of Indus Valley Civilization.

Ans to Q No. 3: Unity can be defined as the feeling of one-ness or we-ness among all the members of any society.

Diversity on the other hand, is all the differences in terms of culture in a society.

Ans to Q No. 4: A race may be defined as a division or group of people from a society owing their origin to a particular place (Mongoloids from Mongolia and Caucasoids from Caucus Mountain) or physical appearance (black, white, yellow, and red, for example).

Ans to Q No. 5: Iv). Six

Ans to Q No. 6: Islamism came arrived in India to the Malabar Coast in Kerala during 7th century AD along with the Arab traders.

Ans to Q No. 7: The five Ks in Sikhism are the five articles of faith as should be worn by member of the *Khalsa*brotherhood. These five Ks are; *Kesh* (uncut hair), *Kangha* (a wooden brush for the hair), *Kara* (a metal bracelet), *Kachera* (a type of undergarment) and *Kirpan* (a dagger).

Ans to Q No 8: Monotheism is the tradition or faith of believing in the existence and worshiping of one god only.



1.8 FURTHER READING

1) Madhurima. (2016). Readings in Sociology. Jalandhar. New Academic Publishing Co.

2) Pandey, V. (2016). Indian Society and Culture. Jaipur. Rawat Publication.

3) Rao. S.C.N. (2014). Principles of Sociology with an Introduction to Sociological Thought. S. Chand & Company Pub. Co.



1.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions ((Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1: Explain the Concept of Unity.

Q2: Write a short note on Sikhism.

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q1: Write a note on important characteristics of Indian society and culture.

Q2: Explain the concept of unity in diversity in India.

Q3: Write a note on religious diversity in India.

Q4: Present a detailed classification scheme of Indian races.

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Unit 2: TYPES OF INDIAN SOCIETY

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives

2.2 Introduction

2.3 Urban Society in India

- 2.3.1 Classification of Cities
- 2.3.2 Problems of the urban society

2.4 Rural Society in India

- 2.4.1 Types of Indian villages
- 2.4.2 Local self-governance in the rural areas
- 2.4.3 Criticism of local self-governance system

2.5 Tribal society in India

- 2.5.1 Characteristics of Tribes
- 2.5.2 Approaches towards tribal society
- 2.5.3 Significance of 5th and the 6th schedule of Indian constitution

2.6 Let Us Sum Up

2.7 Further Reading

2.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

2.9 Model Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- identify urban society in India
- discuss the problems in Indian Urban Society
- discuss about the rural society in India
- define tribe
- discuss the constitutional provisions granted for the protection of tribal people

2.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit (unit1) we have learnt that India is diverse in terms of language spoken in different parts of the country, religion practised

by the people, composition of population in terms race etc. Another diversity which is evident in this country is with regards to the type of society. In India three types of society exists namely, urban society, rural society and tribal society. In this unit we will learn in detail about these three types of society in India.

2.3 URBAN SOCIETY IN INDIA

Urban societies are an outcome of the process called urbanisation. According to Oxford dictionary of sociology urbanisation indicates the process of city and town formation. Urban societies are characterised by increasing population and engagement of the population in non-agricultural occupation.In other words towns and cities are understood as the urban area. At different times of the history, Indian civilisation has witnessed formation and prosperity of urban society. Some of those siginificant cities Harappa, Mohen-jo-Daro, Indraprastha, Pataliputa, Nalanda, Taxila, Agra etc. In the course of time with advancement of science and technology, emergence of new political and economic systems the old cities has attained new form and many new cities have been formed.

2.3.1 Classification of Cities

Cities in India can be classified on the basis of the size of its population for the functions which the cities play, so on and so forth.

- **Classification on the basis of population:** On the basis of population the census of India has categorised the cities in India into 6 types. Those cities which comprise of 100,000 and above population are considered as class I city. Those cities comprise of 50,000-99,999 population are considered as class II cities. The cities which comprise of 20,000-49,009 population are considered as class III cities. Those cities which comprise of 10,000-19,009 population are considered as class IV city. Cities having a population of 5000-9999 are considered as class V cities and the cities having a population which is less than 5,000 are considered as class VI cities. All the places having a minimum population of 5000, at least 75% of the adults engaged in non-agricultural activities and having

a density of population of 400 per square km is considered as a census town. Along with all these criteria if the places contain municipality, corporation, cantonment or notified town area committee then it is called a statutory town.

- **Function:** Cities in India can also be classified on the basis of their predominant function. Some of which are discussed below :

- **Religious centres:** Certain cities are known for their religious centres which attract a large number of populations. These cities are also known as temple towns. In such cities the economy is shaped by the temples and the other associated activities like eateries, hotels, dharamshalas souvenir shops, guides etc. Two important example of temple town in India are Tirupati in South India and Nathdwara in North India.
- **Commercial centres:** In India some cities have emerged and attracted huge population due to operation of extensive commercial activities and transaction carried out after industrialisation. For example Kolkata, Mumbai, Jamshedpur, Bangalore etc.
- **Tourist spots:** Some cities have grown as tourist hubs due to its picturesque locations and other tourist attractions. In such cities the economy is shaped mainly through tourism. For example Shimla, Manali etc.
- **Extended cities:** In order to offload the excessive population from the big metropolitan cities, new towns have been formed in the areas adjacent to the big cities. For example formation of New or *Navi* Mumbai and the coming of up of the National Capital Region (NCR) in the areas adjacent to Delhi. Gandhinagar was built as a twin city of Ahmedabad.

2.3.2 Problems of the urban society

In India the urban areas are expanding because more and more people are coming into the towns and cities in search of better opportunities. Migration to the urban areas are increasing due to the uneven development between rural and urban areas. However

the sudden increase in population has led to several problems in the cities. Some of which are discussed below.

- **Overcrowded areas:** Due to over concentration of people the towns and cities have become overcrowded. This has put an immense pressure on the existing resources of the town specially land. Since there is scarcity of land people start to settle even on the restricted lands causing disturbance to nature and also making themselves vulnerable to different problems. Again since most of the cities lack proper planning, construction and maintenance of the drainage and sewage system is also non-satisfactory. For example in the recent yeas Guwahati has become very populated. In order to cater to the housing of this huge population a number of residential buildings have come up by filling up of the wetlands in city and constructing big building over it and massive deforestation has also been evident to extend the periphery of the city. etc. All these have disturbed the ecological balance of the place. Accordingly the city has been facing the problem of artificial man made floods in the recent times.
- **Formation of Slums:** Inadequate housing facility in the urban areas has created a number of slum areas. These areas are formed without proper sanitation facility, lacks potable drinking water, the houses are ill ventilated and dingy making the inhabitants vulnerable to several diseases. The slums reside the low-paying workers. Very often the slums become the den of several vices. The essence of a slum is well expressed through the words of Dr.Radhakamal Mukherji, 'In the thousand slums of India's industrial centres manhood is unquestionably brutalised, women dishonoured and childhood is poisoned at its very source" .
- **Traffic congestion:** Urban areas are well connected by public means of transportation. Even though the public transportation system exists majority of the people in the urban areas prefer to own and travel in their own vehicles either to maintain the fast pace of life in the urban areas or as a status symbol. As a result traffic congestion has become common phenomena in the urban areas and has become another cause of woe for the people.

- **Power shortage:** Use of electricity is ever increasing with coming up of different electronic devices to make the lives of the people easier. Again with increasing population this demand and consumption of electricity has increased therefore certain pockets of the urban areas like the slums remain deprived of electricity for most of the time. On the other hand the affluent areas continue to get constant electricity. It is also seen that in order to meet the heavy requirement of electricity in shopping malls, industries, hotels, residential complexes, the nearby rural areas receive no or very fluctuating supply of electricity.
- **Environmental degradation:** Increasing population leads to haphazard construction, deforestation to create more space for human habitation. This creates an imbalance in the nature which in turn costs human beings heavily. For example due to rapid population growth, the area under Guwahati city has been expanding by destroying the nearby forest covers. Again, to cater increasing population a number of residential complexes have been erected by filing up of the wetlands. The direct consequence of this development has led increasing flash floods in the city which increasing turning out to be deadly. Again increasing vehicular and other pollution has increased with the growth of population in urban areas which has led degradation of the environment.

2.4 RURAL SOCIETY IN INDIA

According to A.W Green, 'A village community or a rural community is a cluster of people living within a narrow territorial radius who share a common way of life'.

Scholars like Bogardus have argued that, human civilisation have been nurtured in the rural society. Therefore it is believed that emergence of rural society or villages dates back to time immemorial. Even today though the number of cities or urban areas has been expanding but still a significant portion of the world population reside in the villages. In India too, the majority of the population resides in the rural areas. Till the 20th century only 11 % of

Indian population comprised of India's urban population. Therefore it was rightly pointed by Mahatma Gandhi that, 'Real India lives in its villages'. Even in the ancient times villages constituted important segment of settlements in India. In the ancient scriptures like Rig veda the mention of *gram* was found. According to Yogesh Atal the Ramayana has mentioned about two types of villages- the *ghosh* and the gram. A *ghosh* was much smaller than the gram. The *ghosh* was also known as *vraja* or *brij* which indicates a cattle farm. However both the different types of villages had their officials who were known as *mahattar.* A senior official was known as *gramani* or *gramik.* Again in the Mahabharata the mention of different types of village settlement is found. The villages formed around the forts or *durgs* were known as gram, the small hutments were known as *pallis, settlements* with large number of cattle farm was known as ghosh or brij. The villages were connected to one another culturally, socially and administratively. Ten villages were administered by one administrator known as *dashi.* The administrators who administered 20 villages were known as *vinshati,* those administrators who administered upto 100 villages were known as *shati*, and those administer over 1000 villages were known as *sahasra gramadhipati.* Kautilya's Arthasastra also mentions about various aspects of Indian rural life. He argued that villages should be one or two *krosha* (3.219 km) away from one another so that during difficult times one village could help the other. Arthasastra also mentions that 10 villages were known as *Samgrahana,* 200 villages were known as *Karvatika*, 400 villages were known as *Dronamukha* and 800 villages were known as *Mahagrama* or *Sthatnuja*. Before the advent of the Britishers though the princely states collected revenue was from the villages under their jurisdiction but to a large extent the villages were self-sufficient. The villages took various decisions regarding their social life by forming panchyats.

2.4.1 Types of Indian villages

On the basis physical shape of the settlements in the villages, Shantibhushan Nandi and D.S. Tyagi has classified the villages in India into four different types which is discussed below:

- **Shapeless cluster:** These villages which are highly populated but are dispersed. It is characterised by collection of small-sized clusters.
- **Linear cluster:** The villages where the settlements forms a parallel line separated by an open space or a linear street is known as a linear cluster.
- **Square or rectangular cluster:** The villages having straight streets running parallel to one another or at right angles to one another are known as square or rectangular cluster.
- **Isolated homesteads:** Some villages are formed by a conglomeration of several isolated homesteads. They are considered as a *mauza* for the purpose of revenue collection.

2.4.2 Local self-governance in the rural areas

The Government of India introduced local-self governance in the rural areas by establishing the Panchayati Raj system in the year 1992/3 with the enactment of the 73rd amendment act. This system was introduced with the conviction that democracy exists only when the power is decentralised and reaches even at the grass root level in the rural areas. This process decentralisation was initiated to grant more confidence to the rural people to shape their destiny by planning the development of the villages with the assistance of the government. In order to ensure that people irrespective of caste, class, gender and community can equality participate in the decision making process, the act (73rd amendment act) ensures reservation of seats in the panchayats. According to the act one-third of the seats are reserved for woman and another one-third is reserved for the scheduled castes/ scheduled tribes. Every panchayat follows an institutional framework which is described below:

- **Gram Sabha:** The gram sabha is also known as village assembly. It consists of the all the adult members of a village.
- **Panchayat:** It is the village council which is elected by the gram sabha.

- **Panchayat Samiti:** It is also known as Kshetra Samiti or Regional Council which is formed at the tahsil or the block level. Its members comprises of the elected members of the different panchayat which are under the jurisdiction of one block.
- **Zilla Parishad:** It is also known as the district council. The zilla parishad comprises of the representatives of pachayat samiti, the members of state legislature and the parliament representing a part or a whole district, all the district level officers belonging to different departments like agriculture, medicine, public health, Engineering, veterinary, education etc. The zilla parishad plays the role of supervising and coordinating the activities of all the panchayat samitis within its jurisdiction.

2.4.3 Criticism of local self-governance in India

The Panchayat system was formed to strengthen the rural areas and empower the marginalised section but the ground reality has reflected a different picture in the recent times. Some of criticisms against this system is described below:

- It is found that the acitivities of the panchayats are largely interfered with by the political parties. As a result many times the leadership position is not occupied by the most able individuals. This impacts the decision making process.
- Various schemes provided by the government to help the people are distributed through the panchayats. But very often the benefits and schemes are not well distributed and thereby it does not reach the poorest of the poor in the rural areas. The benefits are often cornered by some influential people in the village.
- Reservation of seats in the panchayats was meant to empower the marginalised section by providing a platform to their representatives to make their issues and concerns visible. For example one-third of the seats were reserved in the panchayats for the woman but very often it is found that the woman who are elected are only partial members of the panchayat and the actual decisions are taken by

their nearest male kin. This defies the very objective of this reservation process.



LET US KNOW

Population of India (in Crore)

	2001	2011	Difference
India	102.9	121.0	18.1
Rural areas of India	74.3	83.3	9.0
Urban areas of India	28.6	37.7	9.1

Table: 2.3a

Source: Census of India, 2011.

Thus, we can see that the increase in population in the urban areas is more than the increase in population in the rural areas. According to the Census of India the level of urbanisation has increased from 27.81% in 2001 to 31.16% in 2011 Census.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1a: In which year was the Panchayati Raj system established ?

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Q1b: Name two ancient Indian cities.

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2.5 TRIBAL SOCIETY IN INDIA

India posses a rich tribal heritage. Throughout the length and breadth of the country several tribal societies has embarked their history. However before understanding the tribal society in India, it is imperative to understand who are tribes?

G.S Ghurey has defined tribes, as the 'backward Hindus', thereby very problematically clubbing caste and tribes together and incorporating tribes under the rubric of the hindu caste system. Thus tribes were not treated by him as distinct either culturally or socially.

According to S.C Dubey, Tribe is, 'an ethnic category, defined by real or putative descent and characterised by a corporate identity and a wide range of commonly shared traits of culture'.

Andre Beteille has defined tribe as, 'a society with political, linguistic and a somewhat vaguely defined cultural boundary; further, as a society based upon kinship, where social stratification is absent'.

According to D.N Majumdar, A tribe is, 'a collection of families bearing a common name, members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed a well assessed system of reciprocity and mutulatity of obligation'.

2.5.1 Characteristics of tribes

- Every tribe identifies themselves with a particular geographical territory.
- A particular tribe claims to have descended from one common ancestor.
- Every tribe follows certain distinctive religious practices which designs their lifestyle and beliefs.
- Every tribe possess a particular language which generates 'we-feeling'.
- Tribes prefer to live in relative isolation from others but in close proximity to nature.

But most of tribes in India today cannot be understood in this sense as they do not live a life of seclusion. However the constitution of India has provided many erstwhile tribal communities the status of Scheduled Tribe in order to protect their interests. Today scheduled tribe population can be found in both the rural and urban areas. For the preservation of tribal culture the Constitution of India has granted different provisions which are discussed in the next section.

2.5.2 Approaches towards tribal society

Before the advent of the colonial rule the tribal people in India were leading an autonomous life. However after the annexation of India by the Britishers the whole Indian society had undergone a lot of change. Tribal societies were experiencing a state of crisis in their social and cultural life. After independence though tribal territories were incorporated within the Indian state but careful deliberations were carried out to protect, uplift and resolve the problems the tribal societies were experiencing. In the process three significant approaches came forward to resolve the problems of the tribal people. The following approaches are discussed below:

- **Policy of Isolation:** This approach was advocated by Verrier Elwin. According to this approach the best way to resolve the problems faced by tribal society was to let them live away from the rest of society. In this direction he proposed for creating National Parks and reserved areas where tribal people would live with complete non-interference from the outsiders.
- **Policy of Assimilation:** This approach was advocated by G.S Ghurey. According to the advocates of this approach, since the tribal people are 'backward Hindu' their problems would resolve once they are assimilated into the mainstream Hindu lifestyle.
- **Policy of Integration:** One of the advocates of this policy towards the tribal people is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. According to this view rather than assimilating or isolating the tribal people, they must be integrated with the rest of India. It implies that they must be provided

the access to modern facilities but yet allowed to retain their distinctiveness and determine their own course of social development.

2.5.3 Significance of 5th and the 6th schedule of Indian constitution

As discussed in the previous section, before the arrival of the Britishers, the tribal settlements had independent administration looked after by the chieftains. However later with the coming of Brishers, the money economy and the non-tribal population entered the tribal areas. This had profound impact on the social and cultural aspects. Most importantly the tribal people were exploited by the non-tribal people. Since they were not used to the transaction system through the exchange of money and because they did not receive formal modern education, the moneylenders could easily deceive them. Consequently the tribal people loosed huge tracts of land at the hands of non-tribal people. This gave rise to several revolts like the revolt spearheaded by Birsa Munda in Jharkhand against the *dikus* (non-tribal).

The constitution of India makes a commitment to protect the tribal people through various provisions. One of such constitutional provision is facilitated through the 5th schedule of the Indian constitution. The 5th schedule covers the tribal areas of 9 states in India namely, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan. This schedule grants autonomy and rights to tribal people in the tribal areas over land. The governor of these states is provided with special responsibilities to administer the areas identified as Scheduled areas.

In the context of North-eastern states, during the annexation of the kingdoms of the hill tribes by the Britishers for various political and administrative purposes the British government kept the hill tribal areas excluded from the rest of India. Therefore these tribes

to a great extent preserved certain aspects of their social, cultural and political life. After independence the 6th schedule of the Indian constitutions granted the tribal people of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram the power to exercise legislative and executive power through the creation of autonomous regional council and Autonomous District councils.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q2a: Name an advocate of the policy of isolation towards the tribal people.

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Q2b: Name two states where 5th schedule is implemented.

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2.6 LET US SUM UP

- Urban societies are characterised by increasing population and engagement of the population in non-agricultural occupation.
- Towns and cities are understood as the urban area.
- Cities in India can be classified on the basis of the size of its population and for the functions which the cities play.
- Human civilisation has been nurtured in the rural society.
- Even today though the number of cities or urban areas has been expanding but still a significant portion of the world population reside in the villages.
- In India too, the majority of the population resides in the rural areas. Till the 20th century only 11 % of Indian population comprised of India's urban population.

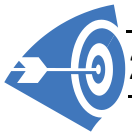
- A particular tribe claims to have descended from one common ancestor.
- Every tribe follows certain distinctive religious practices which designs their lifestyle and beliefs.
- Every tribe possess a particular language which generates we feeling.
- For the preservation of tribal culture the Constitution of India has granted different provisions.



2.7 FURTHER READING

1) Atal, Yogesh (2006). *Changing Indian Society.* Rawat Publications: Jaipur

2) Dubey, S.C. (1990). *Indian Society.* National book trust: New Delhi.



2.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No. 1a: 1992/3

Answer to Q No. 1b: Mohen-jo-daro, Harrapa

Answer to Q No. 2a: Verrier Elwin

Answer to Q No. 2b: Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat.



2.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1: Define tribe.

Q2: Describe the structure of the panchayat system

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q1: Discuss the problems of urban areas in India.

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UNIT 3 : FAMILY AND MARRIAGE

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Concept of Family and Marriage

- 3.3.1 Some Definitions
- 3.3.2 Relation between Family and Marriage
- 3.3.3 Related Concepts

3.4 Types of Family

- 3.4.1 Simple Family Group
- 3.4.2 Complex or Compound Family Groups:

3.5 Criteria of Family Formation

3.6 Family and Marriage in India

3.7 Some Important Dimensions of Family

- 3.7.1 Household
- 3.7.2 Patriarchy
- 3.7.3 Gendered Division of Labour

3.8 Let Us Sum Up

3.9 Further Reading

3.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.11 Model Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to -

- define family and marriage
- discuss the institutions and family and marriage
- outline the relation between family and marriage
- categorise family based on different aspects
- identify the various criteria of the formation of family
- discuss the institutions of marriage and family in India
- explain the dimensions of household, patriarchy and gender division of labour
- delineate the modern changes in family in India

3.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units we have discussed about the different types of society in India.. In this Unit we will discuss in details about marriage and family in India. The history of human civilization may be viewed as the history of the institution of family because it is that social group which performs economic, political, religious, health, educational and many other functions, and importantly, it provides the society with socialized members. Sociology has been defined by Anthony Giddens "as the systematic study of human societies, giving special emphasis to modern, industrialized systems". Accordingly, in this unit we will try to understand various aspects of family system as it is operating in contemporary times with special reference to the Indian situation.

Marriage may be simply defined as a socially acknowledged and approved sexual union between two adult individuals. We have already studied briefly about marriage and family as social institutions in the first Semester of B.A. Sociology course. Here, we shall have to study these institutions in details in order to understand properly the complex issues related to marriage and family in India at present.

3.3 CONCEPT OF FAMILY AND MARRIAGE

3.3.1 Some Definitions

Anthony Giddens in his definition includes the function of socialization. His definition reads, **"A family is a group of persons directly linked by kin-connections, the adult members of which assume responsibility for caring for children".** In this definition, one of the important words is **kin- connection**. We know that there are two types of relatives or kin. One, related by blood or birth, and the other related through marriage ties. In family, both these kin-connections are found. Besides parents and unmarried children (own or adopted) which constitutes the nucleus, there may be other members who are related either by birth, (consanguinal kin) or

through marriage (affinal kin) Anthony Gidden's definition may be considered as the most suitable and precise definition of family system as it operates in present day contemporary societies. This leads us to discuss another related institution called marriage.

We have learned in the first semester that Marriage is one of the universal social institutions. It is through marriage that human societies control and regulate the sex life of man; it is closely related to the institution of family. As Gillin and Gillin have said, "*Marriage is a socially approved way of establishing a family of procreation*".

Malinowski says that marriage is a *"contract for the production and maintenance of children".*

Duncan Mitchell's "A Dictionary of Sociology" defines marriage 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 birth of children."*

Marriage has different implications in different cultures. Its purposes, functions and forms may differ from society to society, but it is present everywhere as an institution.

3.3.2 Relation Between Family And Marriage

We all belong to families in our society. We cannot think of a society without family life. Family is linked up with the institution of marriage. In fact, these are two sides of the same coin. The structure of family depends upon the prevailing types of marriage in a society. For example, in our society we may simply define marriage as a socially acknowledged and approved sexual union between two adult individuals. This is because in our society monogamy is the norm. Again, in communities which practice polyandry or polygyny, the structure of the family will be quite different from that of monogamous family. A family is set up upon marriage between individuals who thereby acquire the right for sexual relation and bearing and rearing of offspring. These entitlements also are

considered as obligations in different societies. Thus, family exists in both monogamous and polygamous societies.

In short, we can say that family denotes a group of people affiliated by a consanguinity, affinity or co-residence. Now let us understand these terms

3.3.3 Related Concepts

- **Consanguinity** means blood relations. The relations between parents and children and between brothers and sisters (or sibling) are consanguineal. These are consanguineal relatives or kins**.**

Although the concept of consanguinity originally referred to relations by "blood," anthropologists have argued that one must understand the idea of "blood" metaphorically, and that many societies understand 'family' through other concepts rather than through genetic distance. A person may be conferred the status of a child even when there is no genetical relation between the "parents and the child".

- **Affinity** means related through marriage. Husband and wife are linked through marriage.
- **Co-residence** means living in the same residence.

The above three along with some other factors mainly give rise to different types of families in different social situations. But before going to the details, we must first try to distinguish between two closely related concepts as mentioned below :

- **Family and household**: The concepts of family and household should be distinguished. The household refers to a domestic residential group while the family refers to an intimate kinship unit usually consisting of a mother, a father and their children. It is true that a household is a residential group. But it may not necessarily be in the same dwelling. A household may occupy several houses. A household may include non-kin and non-family members as well.

We know that marriage and family are present in all societies. However, due to different reasons we find different types of families in different societies. Even within the same society, different family forms may be observed.

One of the primary functions of the family is to produce and reproduce persons, biologically and socially. Thus, after birth a child has to be shaped according to the norms and culture of the society.

3.4 TYPES OF FAMILY

In this section we shall discuss the major variations in the type of family organisation and see how these are formed.

3.4.1 Simple Family Group

- **Nuclear Family** (also known as simple, primary, elementary, conjugal family). It is composed of a man, his wife and their unmarried children, own or adopted children. It is most common in contemporary Western and Indian societies as well as among some tribal communities. It is equally found among the hunter-gatherers and in industrial societies. Since, it serves as the nucleus for all other types of families; it is popularly referred to as nuclear family. Nuclear families are associated with monogamy and neolocal residence. The typology of nuclear family lays emphasis on the composition of the family. It is the smallest, basic and universal social group.
- **Monogamous family** :

  This type of family is the result of monogamy (marriage between one man and one woman) and their children. It is the simplest type of family consisting of a married couple and their unmarried children, own or adopted. Here, the husband and wife do not remarry until the spouse is alive. Such types of families are quite common in urban industrial societies and different tribal groups of India.

  When a family is identified as a monogamous one, the emphasis is given on the monogamous relation between the

spouses. A monogamous family results in a nuclear family. Hence, a monogamous family is also identified as elementary family, conjugal family, primary family, immediate family and nuclear family among others.

- **Neolocal family:** Neolocal means new place and refers to a form of residence in which the married couple as a unit establishes a new household apart from the parents of either spouse.

3.4.2 Complex or Compound Family Groups

We have all seen such families in different parts of India where several married brothers live together with their wives and children along with their parents and unmarried brothers and sisters. People living together in this way are often called as a household or simply a house. Sometimes, we call it as a family. But, an analysis of its structure reveals important differences between its variants. Accordingly, the compound families are categorized into two types. These are:

- Compound or composite family
- Extended or joint family
- **Compound family** forms arise mainly because of marriage patterns (polygamy), unilineal descent, complex residence patterns and socio-economic considerations. These factors alone or in combinations give rise to different family forms**.** There are several such complex family forms. These are described below; we have already discussed the different forms of marriage like monogamy, polygyny and polyandry. These different marriages also give rise to different types of family.

  Compound family forms arise mainly due to polygamous marriages. Polygamous families are of two main types. These are polygynous family and polyandrous family. They are the results of polygyny and polyandry respectively.
- Polygamy exists in three specific forms, including polygyny (one man having multiple wives), polyandry (one woman having multiple

husbands), or group marriage (some combination of polygyny and polyandry).Group marriage is very rare and hence it is not discussed here. Historically, all three practices have been found, but polygyny is by far the most common. Thus, Polygamous families are of two main types: Polygynous and polyandrous

- **Polygynous family :**

A polygynous family is one which results when a man, his several wives, and his children by these wives live together. Hence a combination of polygyny and neolocal residence will produce a polygynous family group. Since, having several wives under the same roof can often lead to competition and jealousy, mainly in regard to children, each wife with her own children may occupy a separate dwelling. These matricentric households are not independent; they are part of the larger residential unit and are only one element in the labour force this unit constitutes.

- **Polyandrous family :**

Polyandry is a practice where a woman is married to more than one man at the same time. The best known example of polyandry is found among the Todas. Here, a woman may be married to more than one man at one time. Fraternal polyandry was traditionally practiced among the nomadic Tibetans in Nepal, parts of China and parts of northern India, in which two or more brothers share the same wife, with her having equal sexual access to them.

It is true that in polyandrous communities the biological father may not be known. In these societities paternity is socially established by legal or ceremonial observances. Thus, among the Todas, paternity is established by performing the 'bow and arrow cerenomy'. At the seventh month of pregnancy, the man who is to be regarded as the father of the child present a pair of bow and arrow to the wife at a ceremony. The child is then affiliated to his clan.

- **Reasons for polyandry**: Polyandry is believed to be more likely in societies with scarce environmental resources, as it is believed to limit human population growth and enhance child survival. A woman can only have so many children in her lifetime, no matter how many husbands she has. On the other hand, a child with many "fathers", all of whom provide resources, is more likely to survive. It is a rare form of marriage that exists not only among poor families, but also within the elite.

- **Group marriage**

  Group marriage, or *circle marriage*, may exist in a number of forms such as where more than one man and more than one woman form a single family unit, and all members of the marriage share parental responsibility for any children arising from the marriage.

  These are called compound families because, in a polygynous family the husband with each of his wives constitute an elementary family. These families are linked up because there is one husband. Likewise, in case of polyandrous families, the wife with each of her husbands constitutes an elementary family, and all these families are linked up by one wife.

- **Extended and Joint family** :

  When a family comprises of a nuclear or a part of the nuclear family along with other nuclear families or part of nuclear families, it is termed as extended family. Extended families may take the form of joint family or other kinds.

  If the family of orientation and procreation of a person live together with a common hearth (kitchen) and a common purse (income), then this type of family is known as joint family.

  Hindu joint family is the best example of such family where several brothers, each with their family of procreation and their parents live together. On the basis of residence after marriage of the young married couple, joint family may be of different types.

- **Patrilocal joint family**:

  When only the sons after their marriage continue to live with their parents along with their respective wives and children, then this type of family is known as **patrilocal joint family.** Such joint family commonly seen in the rural areas of India is of this type. Among the Hindus, it is common in rural Bengal and in other parts of the country. In this type of family, all the sons after their marriage may live with their parents. Sometimes, only one son may live and others may establish separate households. Among such tribes as Mishings and Nishis, all the married brothers with their respective families live together in long platform houses, but each family unit has a separate hearth and space for itself.

- **Matrilocal joint family**: In this type of family, the daughter after marriage, continue to live with their parents in their household. The groom after marriage goes to reside in the residence of the bride's mother. Such matrilocal joint families are seen among the Nayars of Malabar. Among the Khasi, Garos and Jaintias of Meghalaya such types of families can be observed. Among the Garos any one suitable daughter and among the Khasis only the youngest daughter is chosen to live with their parents after marriage.

  The forms of family, other than the joint family which are composed of a nuclear/part of a nuclear family which is extended along the line of either parents/spouse are also extended families

- **Patri-matrilocal extended family**: Patri-matrilocal family occurs when *both the son and daughter after their marriage* live with their parents along with their respective family of procreation. This is different from the patrilocal /matrilocal families where only the son/ daughter along with his wife/husband and children lives with his/her parents after his/her marriage. Patri-matrilocal families are seen among the Koch, Hajong Rabha communities living along the foot hills of Garo hills in Goalpara area. Among the Tiwas of Nagaon areas of Assam such families were recorded.

- **Natalocal extended family:** Natalocal means place of birth and refers to a form of duolocal residence in which neither the husband nor the wife moves upon marriage but instead both continue to reside separately with their respective mother /parents. Among the traditional non-Christian Jaintias of Meghalaya, such families were common. This may also be called a **consanguineal** family consisting of a parent and his or her children, and other consanguineal kins. No affinal relatives are part of this extended family.
- **Avunculocal family:** When a person after marriage lives in his maternal uncle's residence with his wife and children it is called avunculocal family. This is a rare form of family.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1

Q1 : State whether the following is true or false:

a) Monogamous family is a kind of compound family.

b) Nuclear family is a universal social group.

c) In patrilocal residence the wife stays at her natal residence after her marriage.

Fill in the blanks :

d) When a couple sets up their own residence after marriage it is called _____residence.

e) Polygynous family is an example of _____family

f) When a family is composed of husband and wife with their children and also their parents, and may also include the brother(s) of the husband, it is a kind of _____family.

3.5 CRITERIA OF FAMILY FORMATION

We are aware that family structure varies from society to society. Even within the same society we see different family pattern. Some families may be simple nuclear while some others may be of joint type. Again,

depending on the basis of the number of spouses or marriage types, families will be of different types. In this way different family types occur based on different criteria. We have just seen that a particular family type or structure arise because of interaction of different factors and forces. In simple terms these may be said as the criteria of family formation. We have already touched upon these factors. Here we shall simply mention them.

- **Exogamy**: family is an exogamous group. There can never be a marriage between two members of the same family, especially a nuclear family.
- **Incest taboo** is another rule of family formation. Incest means sexual relation between close blood relative and taboo means something which is forbidden.
- **Kinship pattern** also determines family formation. When the descent, property inheritance and succession to hereditary offices (such as village or tribal Chief) are traced through male line then it is called a patrilineal family. On the other hand, when these are traced through the female line the family is termed as matrilineal.
- **Marriage** type is another factor responsible for different family types. We have already discussed about polygamous and monogamous family.
- Different customs and **rules for residence** after marriage of the newly married couple give rise to patrilocal, matriloca l, neolocal families. There is another type which is common in many tribal societies where the newly married couple goes to live with the maternal uncle of the groom or the bride. This type is termed as Avuncolocal .family.
- Families may be of different types on the basis of **authority**. These are patriarchal or matriarchal. Authority means the recognized right or power to exercise control, compel or prevent behaviour of others. When the authority in a family lies with the senior male member i.e. the father then it is termed as patriarchal family, while in case of matriarchal families the authority is vested upon the mother.

3.6 FAMILY AND MARRIAGE IN INDIA

- **Aileen Ross** had intensively studied patterns of family, marriage and kinship in India. According to Aileen Ross, family is a *"group of people usually related as some particular type of kindred, who may live in one household and whose unity resides in pattering of rights and duties, sentiments and authority".* This definition highlights some of the important aspects of family structures:

  - Ecological aspect or ecological sub-structure, i.e., **spatial arrangement** of family members, members living together or living close to one another. This simply refers to the size of the household and type of the family.
  - Sub-structure of **rights and duties** i.e. division of labour within the household;
  - sub-structure of **power and authority**, i.e., control over the action of members; and
  - Sub-structure of **sentiments**, i.e. relationship between different sets of members, such as between husband and wife, parents and children and between siblings.

With her vast experience of studying Indian family life, her definition is quite useful for understanding Indian family. A great number of scholars had studied family patterns in different regions and communities of India. And these different scholars have classified family in different ways.

- **Pauline Kolendra,** on the basis of 26 family studies has proposed a number of compositional categories. A detailed enumeration of these categories is given below

  - *nuclear family*: a couple with or without children
  - *supplemented nuclear family*: a nuclear family plus one or more unmarried, separated or widowed relatives of the parents, other than their unmarried children,
  - *Sub-nuclear family*; a fragment of a family. Typical examples are the widow with unmarried children or siblings whether unmarried, or widowed, separated or divorced-living together.

- *Single person household*
- *Supplemented sub-nuclear*: A group of relatives, members of a formerly complete nuclear family plus some other unmarried, divorced or widowed relative who was not a member of the nuclear family. For example, a widow and her unmarried children plus widowed mother in law.
- *Collateral joint family*: When two or more married brothers with their wives and children live together then it is called a collateral joint family. **Collatera**l means side by side. It refers to consanguineal kin who are not related lineally (lineal kins as parents and children) but are related horizontally i.e. between brothers and sisters, cousins, etc.
- *Supplemented collateral joint family:* It is a collateral joint family plus unmarried, divorced or widowed relatives.
- *Lineal joint family*: When the parents and their married son or daughter with their spouse and children live together then is termed as lineal joint family. It is lineal because the relation ship between parents and son/daughter is lineal .i.e. consanguineal kin in a direct line of descent.
- *Supplemented lineal joint family*: Sometimes in a lineal joint family we come across some other relatives who do not belong to either of the lineally linked nuclear families such as the father's widowed brother or the daughter in laws unmarried brother h a case it is a supplemented lineal joint family.
- *Lineal-collateral joint family* consists of two or more couples linked lineally and collaterally .Typically, parents and their two or more married sons plus their wives, and unmarried children of two or more brothers.
- *Supplemented Lineal-colateral joint family*: A lineal –collateral joint family plus unmarried widowed separated relatives who belong to none of the nuclear families lineally and collaterally is a supplemented lineal-collateral joint family. Such relative usually are father's widowed sister or brother or an unmarried nephew of the father.

- *Others:* She has kept this category for any other type of family that is not covered by the above categories.
- A **Hindu Joint Family** or **Hindu undivided family** (HUF) or a **Joint Family** is an extended family arrangement prevalent among Hindus of the Indian subcontinent, consisting of many generations living under the same roof. All the male members are blood relatives and all the women are either mothers, wives, unmarried daughters, or widowed relatives, all bound by the common *sapinda* relationship. An undivided family, which is the normal condition of a Hindu society, is ordinarily joint; in whatever relates to their commensality, their religious duties and observances, all being regulated by the task of regulation.



LET US KNOW

According to the Hindu Marriage Act (1955), ***Sapinda relationship,*** with reference to any person extends to the third generation (inclusive) in the line of asecnt through the mother, and fifth (inclusive) in the line of asccent through the father, the line being traced upwards in each case from the person concerned, who is to be counted as the first generation.

The joint family status being the result of birth, the possession of a joint cord that knits the members of the family together is not property but the relationship. The family is headed by a patriarch, usually the oldest male, who makes decisions on economic and social matters on behalf of the entire family. The patriarch's wife generally exerts control over the kitchen, child rearing and minor religious practices. **All money goes to the common pool and all property is held jointly.**

A daughter cannot remain the member of her father's family after her marriage and the sisters, though they were once entitled to a share in the property, would lose their right and would be entitled to only maintenance until their marriage and their marriage expenses. A joint family may consist

of a single male member and widows of the deceased male members, and the property of the family does not cease to belong to the joint family merely because the family is represented by a single coparcener who possesses rights which an absolute owner of the property may possess.

There are several schools of Hindu Law, such Mitakshara, the Dayabhaga, the Murumakkattayam, the Aliyasanthana, etc. Broadly, Mitakshara and Dayabhaga systems of laws are very common. Family ties are given more importance than marital ties. The arrangement provides a kind of social security in a familial atmosphere.

Due to the development of the Indian Legal System, of late, the female members are also given the right of share to the property in the HUF (Hindu Undivided Family). In CIT vs Veerappa Chettiar, 76 ITR 467 (SC), Supreme Court had occasion to decide on an issue whether after the death of all the male members in a HUF, the HUF would still exist.

- **Six key aspects of Joint Family are :**

- all members live under one roof and share the same kitchen
- three generations living together (though often two or more brothers live together, or father and son live together or all the descendants of male live together)
- income and expenditure in a common pool- property held together.
- a common place of worship.
- all decisions are made by the male head of the family. The joint family consists of all persons lineally descended from a common ancestor. Hence, HUF is a group of members of the same family.
- The “father”, or the “senior member” of the family called “Karta”, ordinarily manages the property belonging to Joint Family. It is both patrilineal and patriarchal.

3.7 SOME IMPORTANT DIMENSIONS OF FAMILY

3.7.1 Household

We have already discussed the concept of household. The **household** is “*the basic residential unit in which economic*

production, consumption, inheritance, child rearing, and shelter are organized and carried out"; [the household] "may or may not be synonymous with family"

The household is the basic unit of analysis in many social, microeconomic and government models. The term refers to all individuals who live in the same dwelling.

Most economic models do not address whether the members of a household are a family in the traditional sense. Government and policy discussions often treat the terms *household* and *family* as synonymous. In reality, there is not always a one-to-one relationship between households and families.

3.7.2 Patriarchy

Patriarchy is the structuring of family units based on the man, as father figure, having primary authority over the rest of the family members. Patriarchy also refers to the role of men in society, more generally where men take primary responsibility over the welfare of the community as a whole. This authority often includes acting as the dominant figures in social, economic, and political procedures, including serving as representatives via public office. Patriarchy has been the dominant mode of social organization throughout history, in many societies. Most forms of feminism challenge patriarchy as an unjust social system that is oppressive to women. The women's rights movement of the early 20th century (also known as first-wave feminism) sought to bring political equality to women by giving them the right to vote and hold public office. In the 1960s and 70s, the second-wave feminism addressed issues of social and economic inequality. This period also saw the rise of feminist theory which brought criticism of patriarchy into academic contexts. These challenges to the patriarchal order produced far-ranging social restructuring in Western democracies.

The feminine form of *patriarchy* is *matriarchy*. A matriarchy is a social system organized around the principle of mother rule in

which mothers, or females are at the top of the power structure. However, there are no known examples of strictly matriarchal societies. Matrilineal and matrilocal social structures like that of the Khasi, Garo and Jainitia, substantially increase the social influence of women in a culture, however, given that tribal and family leaders are still typically men in matrilocal societies, matrilocality is not equivalent to matriarchy.

Most sociologists reject predominantly biological explanations of patriarchy and contend that social and cultural conditioning is primarily responsible for establishing male and female gender roles. These gendered constructions are most pronounced in societies with traditional cultures and those with less economic development. Even in modern developed societies, however, gender messages conveyed by family, mass media, and other institutions largely favor males having a dominant status.

3.7.3 Gendered Division of Labour

In the course of their daily life, family members perform various activities. These activities are essential for the continuation of the family. If we look at the different works performed by the family members we would see a certain pattern in the works performed by male and female members.

Role sharing in the family mainly depends upon the *size of the family*. Due to various reasons there has been a progressive disintegration in existing family structures, and as a result the role requirement in the family is undergoing great changes. Empirical studies show that *burden of work is increasing on women* as besides their traditional household tasks - such as the time-consuming and strenuous fetching of water and firewood – they are getting involved in the sort of work for which men were formerly responsible. The disintegration of the extended family and the transition to the nuclear family often results in a shortage of work capacity within the family, so that the woman's help in all aspects of fieldwork is needed more.

The division of labour between men and women in a family in an *agrarian structure* varies considerably from region to region and community to community. However, in most cases it is usually the men who plough the fields and drive draught animals whereas women do the major share of sowing, weeding, applying fertilizer and pesticides, harvesting and threshing. In such a society, men handles the mechanized works in large farms while women take care of household food production and small-scale cultivation of cash crops, requiring low levels of technology. This pattern is particularly pronounced in Asian countries. In some countries men and women customarily farm separate plots. Men tend to grow cash crops and keep the income, while women use their land primarily for subsistence crops to feed their families.

Despite their often-complementary roles in agriculture, studies have shown that in almost all societies, women tend to work longer hours than men**.** The difference in workloads is particularly marked for rural women, the world's principal food producers. Women are involved in every stage of food production and, although there is a gender-based division of labour, women do tend to shoulder the larger share. In addition to food production activities, women have the responsibility of preparing and processing the food while fulfilling their fundamental role of nurturing and caring for children and tending to elderly members of the household.

In *urban setting* the situation is somewhat different. Women apart from doing household activities also go to her work place. But gradually men are also sharing in the household activities in urban areas with their spouse. This has become inevitable in view of the disintegration joint or extended family structures.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2

Q 2 : Choose the correct option

a) A household is a kin based/ residential unit.

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.....

.....

b) When the authority is concentrated in the male member, it is called matriarch/patriarchy.

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.....

c) Empirical studies show that the burden of women within the family has increased/ decreased due to the breaking up of the extended family.

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3.8 LET US SUM UP

- In this Unit, we have discussed the various types of families and the criteria on which the types develop.
- Rules of marriage, exogamy, kinship pattern, residence pattern, structure of authority and such others are some of the criteria on which the characteristics of family, namely, its composition, its functions and role sharing takes shape.
- As such, India being a multi-ethnic society, we find a great variety of family types. Based on family studies in India, Kolendra has detailed eleven compositional types of families in India and kept another category for the residual types. This shows the great variety of structural patterns of family in India.

- Among the Hindus, the Joint family is a characteristics feature. There are other communities as well among whom the joint family is observed.
- The concept of household as a residential unit of members sharing responsibilities and having common economic, and child rearing responsibilities make it an important dimension of the family, although all the members of a household may not be kin.
- The family in most of the communities in India is basically organized around the principle of patriarchy. Although there are certain matriarchal societies in India, yet matriarchy is not as pronounced and imposing as patriarchy.
- We have also discussed the gender based division of role in the family. It is more pronounced in the traditional societies. In urban situations, we observe changes in the structure of family and its role relations.



3.9 FURTHER READING

1) Milton Singer *Structure and Change in Indian Society*, (Chapter 14 B.S.Cohn (edt) and 17), Rawat, Delhi, Jaipur.

2) Patricia Uberoi *Family, Kinship and Marriage in India*, Oxford,Delhi.



3.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q. No 1 : (a) False (b) true (c) False
(d) Neolocal (e) Compound (f) Joint

Answer to Q. No 2 : (a) residential (b) patriarchy (c) Increased

3.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q.1: Define family and marriage. Discuss the relation between these two social institutions.

Q.2: What are the different types of family? Discuss.

Q.3: Describe the difference between the compound and simple family types.

Q.4: Write briefly about Patriarchal Society.

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300- 500 words)

Q.1: Why is polyandrous family prevalent in some societies? Give reasons.

Q.2: Explain the various criteria of the formation of family.

Q.3: Explain the relation between the concepts of family and household.

Q.4: Discuss the dimension of gender division of labour in family in India.

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UNIT 4: KINSHIP SYSTEM

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 Kinship: Meaning and Definition

4.3.1 Types and degrees of Kinship

4.3.2 Rules and Taboos

4.3.3 Kinship structure and pattern in the different geographical zones across India

4.4 Let Us Sum Up

4.5 Further Reading

4.6 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.7 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to -

- Explain the concept of kinship
- Discuss the types and degrees of kinship
- Describe the rules or usages of kinship and the taboos associated with it
- Explain the kinship structure and pattern in the different geographical zones across India.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

An individual cannot live alone in society. From birth till death she/he is surrounded by a number of people. Some of these people are her/his relatives, some are friends, some are neighbors while all others are strangers and unknown to her/him. An individual is bound to all those people who are related to her/him either on the basis of blood or marriage. The relations based on blood or marriage may be close or distant. The bond of blood or marriage which binds people together in group is called kinship. According to the Dictionary of Anthropology, kinship system includes socially

recognized relationships based on supposed as well as actual genealogical ties. These relationships are the result of social interaction and are recognized by the society.

Kinship system represents one of the basic social institutions. Kinship is universal and in most societies plays a significant role in the socialisation of individuals and the maintenance of group solidarity. The universal nature of the system shows its functional importance in social life. It is therefore, important to understand the aspect of kinship system in studying social life of a cultural group. In the previous unit we have learned about family and marraige in India. In this unit we shall try to understand the concept of kinship system and its different types. We would understand the types, degree and rules associated with the kinship system along with the kinship structure and pattern across India.

4.3 KINSHIP: MEANING AND DEFINITION

Kinship is one of the main organizing principles of society. It is one of the basic social institutions found in every society. This institution establishes relationships between individuals and groups. People in all societies are bound together by various kinds of bonds.The most basic bonds are those based on marriage and reproduction. Kinship refers to these bonds, and all other relationships resulting from them. Thus, the institution of kinship refers to a set of relationships and relatives formed thereof, based on blood relationships (consanguineal), or marriage (affinal). **There are different definitions of kinship. A few definitions are examined here.**

- **Robin Fox***: "Kinship is simply the relations between the 'kin' that is persons related by real, putative or factitive consanguinity".*
- **A.R. Radcliffe Brown:***"Kinship is "a system of dynamic relations between person and person in a community, the behavior of any two persons in any of these relations being regulated in some way and to greater or less extent by social usage".*

4.3.1 Types and Degrees of Kinship

In any society, kin relationships are based either on birth (blood relations), or marriage. These two aspects of human life are the basis for the two main types of kinship in society.

- **Consanguineal Kinship:**

  It refers to the relationships based on blood, i.e., the relationship between parents and children, and between siblings. They are the most basic and universal kin relations. In this connection it may be pointed out that blood relation may be actual as well as supposed. Among polyandrous tribe the actual father of a child is unknown. An adopted child is treated as if it were one's own biologically produced child. Thus, blood relationship may be established not only on biological basis but also on the basis of social recognition.

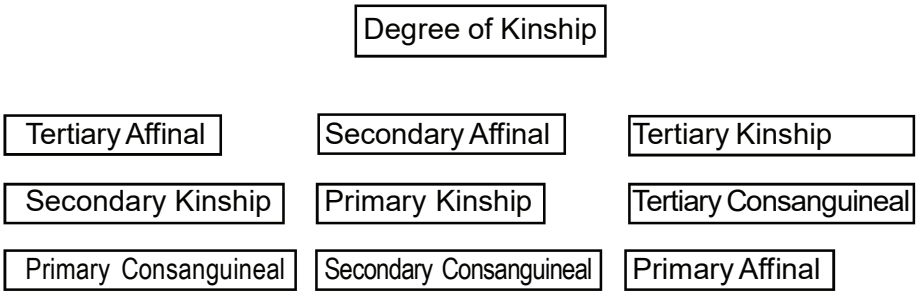
- **Affinal Kinship:**

  It refers to the relationships formed on the basis of marriage. The most basic relationship that results from marriage is that between husband and wife. When a person marries, she/he establishes relationship not only with the man/women whom she/he marries but also with a number of other people in the spouses family. Moreover, it is not only the person marrying who gets bound to the family members of the boy/girl but her/his family members also get bound to the family members of the girl/boy. For example, after marriage a boy not only becomes a husband, but he also becomes brother-in-law, son-in-law etc. and vice-versa. Thus, marriage creates a host of relationships which are called affinal kin.

- **Degree of Kinship:**

  Any relationship between two individuals is based on the degree of closeness or distance of that relationship. This closeness or distance of any relationship depends upon how individuals are related to each other.

  Kinship basically has three degrees, which can be explained in the following ways (Figure 1):



(Figure 1)

❍ **Primary Kinship :**

Primary kinship refers to direct relations. People who are directly related to each other are known as primary kin. There are basically eight primary kins—husband-wife, father son, father daughter , mother son, mother daughter; brother sister; and younger brother/sister older brother/ sister.

Primary kinship is of two kinds:

1. Primary Consanguineal Kinship:

Primary consanguineal kin are those kin, who are directly related to each other by birth. The relationships between parents and children and between siblings form primary kinship. These are the only primary consanguineal kin found in societies all over the world.

2. Primary Affinal Kinship:

Primary affinal kinship refers to the direct relationship formed as a result of marriage. The only direct affinal kinship is the relationship between husband and wife.

❍ **Secondary Kinship:**

Secondary kinship refers to the primary kin of primary kin. In other words, those who are directly related to primary kin (primary kin's primary kin) become one's secondary kin. There are 33 secondary kin.

Secondary kinship is also of two kinds:

1. Secondary Consanguineal kinship:

This type of kinship refers to the primary consanguineal kin's primary consanguineal kin. The most basic type of secondary consanguineal kinship is the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren. For Example, there is a direct consanguineal relationship between Eno and his parents.

For Eno, his parents are his primary consanguineal kin. However, for Eno's parents, their parents are their primary consanguineal kin. Therefore, for Eno, his grandparents are his primary consanguineal kin's (his parents) primary kin. For him, they become secondary consanguineal kin.

2. Secondary Affinal Kinship:

Secondary affinal kinship refers to one's primary affinal kins of primary kin. This kinship includes the relationships between an individual and all his/her sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, and parents-in-law. For an individual, his/her spouse is his/her primary affinal kin, and for the spouse, his/her parents and siblings are his/her primary kin. Therefore, for the individual, the parents or brother/sister-in-law will become his/her secondary affinal kin. Similarly, any sibling's spouse or sibling's parents-in-law will become secondary affinal kin for an individual.

❍ **Tertiary Kinship:**

Tertiary kinship refers to the primary kin of primary kin's primary kin or secondary kin of primary kin or primary kin of secondary kin. Roughly 151 tertiary kin have been identified.

Like other two degrees of kinship, tertiary kinship also has two categories:

1. Tertiary Consanguineal Kinship:

Tertiary consanguineal kinship refers to an individual's primary consanguineal kin (parents), their primary kin (parents' parents), and their primary kin (parent's parent's parents). Thus, the relationship is between great grand-children and great grandparents, and great grand aunts and uncles, and consequently the relationship between great grand uncles and aunts and great grand nieces and nephews.

For example, Eno's primary kin are his parents, their primary kin are his grandparents and his grandparent's primary kin (who are Eno's primary kin's primary kin's primary kin) are his great grandparents. Thus, tertiary kin are primary kin's primary kin's primary kin.

This relationship can be seen in different ways – Eno's tertiary kin are his primary kin's (parents) secondary kin (father's grandparents), thus showing that tertiary kin are primary kin's secondary kin. Another way of

looking at this same relationship is by showing that Eno's tertiary kin are his secondary consanguineal kin's (his grandparents) primary kin (grandfather's parents), which proves that tertiary kin can be second-ary kin's primary kin.

2. Tertiary Affinal Kinship:

Tertiary affinal kinship refers to primary affinal kin's primary kin's primary kin, or secondary affinal kin's primary kin, or primary affinal kin's secondary kin. These relationships are many, and some examples will suffice at this stage of tertiary affinal kin can be spouse's grandparents, or grand uncles and aunts, or they can be brother or sister-in-law's spouses or their children.

4.3.2 Rules and Taboos

Kinship usages or the rules of kinship are significant in understanding kinship system as such. The study of kinship system does not end with the description of various kinds of kin and the basis of their classification but it also includes the study of behaviour patterns of different kins. Every relationship involves a particular type of behaviour. The behaviour of a son towards his father is one of respect while the behaviour of husband towards wife is one of love. The behaviour of a brother towards his sister is one of affection. There are some usages which regulate the behaviour of different kin. These usages are called kinship usages. Some rules are associated with **incest taboos.** The word incest means sexual intercourse with closely related person of one's family like brother and sister, mother and son, father and daughter etc. Taboo refers to the prohibition of intercourse on religious and moral grounds. Thus incest taboo means the prohibition of sexual intercourse or marriage between the closely related persons of family.

Some of these usages are the following :

- **Avoidance:**

In all societies the usage of avoidance is observed in one form or another. It means that the two kins should remain away from each other. In

other words, they should avoid each other. They should not only avoid sexual relationship but in some cases avoid seeing the face of each other. Thus, a father-in-law should avoid daughter-in-law. The custom of putting on the veil in front of elders in Hindu family illustrates the usage of avoidance.

Different explanations have been given for the usage of avoidance. Two of them are functionalist explanations given by Radcliffe Brown and G. P. Murdock. According to them, avoidance serves to forestall further and more serious trouble between relatives. The third is the Freudian explanation according to which avoidances represent a sort of institutionalized neurotic symptom.

- **Joking Relationship:**

It is the reverse of avoidance relationship. Under it, two person in a relation is permitted to tease or make fun of the other. Such relationship prevails between a woman and her husband's brother, between a man and his wife's sister etc.

"A joking relationship involves a particular combination of friendliness and antagonism between individuals and groups in certain social situations. In these situations one individual or group is allowed to mimic or ridicule the other without offence being taken". Duncan Mitchell.

- **Teknonymy:**

The word 'teknonymy' has been taken from a Greek word and was used in anthropology for the first time by Tyler. According to this usage, a kin is not referred to directly but he is referred to through another kin. A kin becomes the medium of reference between two kins. Thus, in traditional Hindu family a wife does not utter the name of her husband. She calls him through her son or daughter. For example he is referred to by her as the father of Deepti or Varun.

- **Avunculate:**

This kinship usage is a peculiar feature of matrilineal system. It gives to the maternal uncle (mama) a prominent place in the life of his nephews and nieces. He has special obligations towards them which exceed those of father. He has a prior right over their loyalties. He comes first among all male relatives.

➢ **Amitate:**

When a special role given is to the father's sister it is known as amitate. The father's sister gets more respect than the mother. Amongst the todas the child gets its name not through the parents but through the father's sister.

➢ **Couvade:**

This is a queer usage which is found among many tribes like the Khasi and the Toda. Under this usage the husband is made to lead the life of an invalid along with his wife whenever she gives birth to a child. He refrains from active work and takes sick diet. He observes the same taboos which are observed by his wife. This kinship usage thus involves the husband and wife.

Kinship usages accomplish-two major tasks. First, they create groups: special groupings of kin. Thus marriage assigns each mother a husband, and makes her children his children, thereby creating a special group of father, mother and children, which we call "family".

The second major function of kinship usage is to govern the role relationships between kin; that is, how one kinsman should behave in a particular kinsman's presence, or what one kinsman owes to another. Kinship assigns guidelines for interactions between persons. It defines proper, acceptable role relationship between father and daughter, between brother and sister, between son-in-law and mother-in-law and between fellow lineage members and clansmen. Kinship thus acts as a regulator of social life and maintains the solidarity of social system.

It may, however, be noted that rules governing the relationship between a pair of kinsmen may be highly "patterned" in some societies to allow little leeway for spontaneity or individual differences, while in other societies, such rules may be less "patterned" so as to leave much room for individualized behaviour. The Hindu society has absolute maximum of patterned kin behaviour.

4.3.3 Kinship structure and pattern in the different geographical zones across India

Kinship in India can be analysed within family and beyond family separately as well as in terms of the nexus between the two. Kinship within family would include 'primary relatives' with the focus on intra-family relationships, which include husband and wife, father and son, mother and daughter, mother and son, father and daughter, elder and younger brother, elder and younger sisters and brother and sister. These relationships are part of the same nuclear family, which is also referred to as 'family of procreation'.

Kinship beyond family comprises of 'secondary' and 'tertiary' relatives. Murdock (1949) refers to eight 'primary' and 33 'secondary' relatives. Each secondary relative has primary relatives. The tertiary relatives number 151 possible kins, and there are also 'distant' relatives who are beyond the tertiary relatives.

In India, we have, generally speaking, 'clan exogamy' and 'caste endogamy'. A given caste has several clans, and a given clan has several lineages. The common ancestor of lineage members is usually an actual, remembered person, but the common ancestor of a clan is typically a legendary, supernatural entity. The members of a clan are spread over a given area, and hence they find themselves unable to have common interests or joint action.

A clan, however, provides generally a basis for corporate activity, common worship- On the basis of clan, eligibility for marriage within a given caste is determined. In many ways, more than clan-based primordiality, there is caste-ethnocentrism in regard to observance of rituals, performance of economic activities, mutual aid, etc.

It is to be noted that kinship is certainly a major basis for social organisation, but at the same time it is also a basis for division and dissension in regard to succession and inheritance of property. Hostility at times supersedes lineage unity. Fights between sons and grandsons, brothers and cousins have been experienced quite often. Sibling rivalry has also been observed.

➢ **Karve's Study of Kinship Organisation in India:**

Iravati Karve (1953) undertakes a comparative analysis of four cultural zones with a view to trace out something like a regional pattern of social behaviour. A region may show various local patterns. There are variations between castes because of hierarchy and caste-based isolation and separation. Karve analyses the process of acculturation and accommodation in the context of kinship. She has adopted a historical perspective covering a span of 3,000 years based on ethno-sources, observations and folk-literature along with Sanskritic texts.

Karve's comparative study takes the following points into consideration :

- Lists of kinship terms in Indian languages,
- Their linguistic contexts and corresponding behaviour and attitudes,
- Rules of descent and inheritance,
- Patterns of marriage and family, and
- Difference between the Sanskritic north and the Dravidian south.

Karve spells out the configuration of the linguistic regions, the institution of caste and family organisation as the most vital bases for understanding of the patterns of kinship in India. She divides the whole country into northern, central, southern and eastern zones keeping in view the linguistic, caste and family organisation.

The kinship organisation follows roughly the linguistic pattern, but in some respects, language and kinship do not go hand in hand. For example, Maharashtra has Dravidian impact, and the impact of northern neighbours speaking Sanskritic languages could be seen on the Dravidian kinship system.

Despite variations based on these factors, there are two common points:

- Marriage is always within a caste or tribe, and
- Marriage between parents and children and between siblings is forbidden.

➢ **Kinship in North India:**

In north India, there are (1) terms for blood relations, and (2) terms for affinal relations. There are primary terms for three generations of immediate relations and the terms for one generation are not exchangeable for those of another generation. All the other terms are derived from the primary terms.

The northern zone consists of the areas of the Sindhi, Punjabi, Hindi (and Pahari) and Bihari. In these areas, caste endogamy, clan exogamy and incest taboos regarding sexual relations between primary kins are strictly observed.

The rule of 'sasan' is key to all marriage alliances, that is, a person must not marry in his patri-family and must avoid marriage with sapinda kin. Gotras in the old Brahmanic sense of the word are exogamous units. Sometimes a caste is also divided into endogamous gotras or exogamous gotras as also gotras which do not seem to have any function in marriage regulations. There is village exogamy. Thus, there are at least four basic features of kinship in north India:

- Territoriality,
- Genealogy,
- Incest taboos, and
- Local exogamy.

Considerations of caste status tend to restrict the area of endogamy. Marriage prohibitions tend to bar marriage over a wide area in terms of kinship as well as space. Cognatic prohibitions and local exogamy are strictly adhered to in marriage alliances.

Four-gotra (sasan) rule, that is, avoidance of the gotras of father, mother, grandmother and maternal grandmother is generally practised among Brahmanas and other upper castes in north India. However, some intermediate and most of the lower castes avoid two gotras, namely, that of father and mother.

Kinship in Central India:

The central zone comprises the linguistic regions of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh (now Chhattisgarh also), Gujarat and Kathiawad, Maharashtra and Orissa with their respective languages, namely, Rajasthani, Hindi, Gujarati and Kathiawadi, Marathi and Oriya. All these languages are of Sanskritic origin, and therefore, they have affinity to the northern zone. But there are pockets of Dravidian languages in this zone. There is also some impact of the eastern zone. Tribal people have their unique and somewhat different situation compared to other people in the region.

In regard to the central zone the following points may be noted:

- Cross-cousin marriages are prevalent which are not witnessed in the north zone. Cross-cousins are children of siblings of opposite sex, parallel cousins are children of the siblings of the same sex.
- Many castes are divided into exogamous clans like the north zone.
- In some castes exogamous clans are arranged in a hypergamous hierarchy.

However, none of these features are found all over the zone. In Rajasthan, for example, Jats follow two-gotra exogamy along with village exogamy; Banias practise four-gotra rule; and Rajputs have hypergamous clans, and feudal status is an important consideration in marriage alliances. Rajputs are not a homogeneous caste. They put a lot of emphasis on purity and nobility of descent. The fact of being a hero and a ruler has been a major consideration. Symbolic marriages (marriage with sword) were quite a practice. Status of mother on either side is also a factor in marriage alliances.

In Kathiawad and Gujarat one finds a mix of peculiar local customs and northern practices. Some castes allow cross-cousin marriages, others allowed marriages once a year, and some others permitted once every four, five, nine or twelve years. When the marriage year arrives, it is announced from village to village and there is a rush to perform marriages. The practice of 'Nantra' (levirate) exists even today. Brahmanas, Banias, Kunbis and higher artisan castes follow the northern pattern of kinship organisation, but some practices of southern region are also observed.

Cross-cousin marriage among the Kathi, Ahir, GhadavaCharan and Garasia castes is quite common. Kolis and Dheds and Bhils (tribe), allow both types of cross-cousin marriages. Thus, Rajasthan and Gujarat largely follow northern pattern. The terminology is Sanskritic in origin and some kinship terms have central Asiatic derivation.

Karve observes that Maharashtra is an area where Sanskritic northern traits and the Dravidian southern traits almost hold a balance with perhaps a slight dominance of the former. Northern languages spoken are like Gujarati, Rajasthani, Himachali and Hindi. The tribals in the area speak Mundari. The Dravidian languages are mixed up with the Sanskritic languages. Maharashtra kinship structure is a little different from both southern and northern zones.

The Marathas and Kunbis together form about 40 per cent of the population; Marathas are supposed to be higher in status but a rich Kunbi can reach the status of a Maratha. The two groups call themselves Kshatriyas. Maratha-Kunbi complex has been a ruling clan. Even today headman or patil is a Maratha in a village.

Kunbis are divided into exogamous clans. Some practise levirate; other consider cross-cousin marriages as a taboo; but some others do not prohibit such marriages. In central Maharashtra hypergamy and clan exogamy exists. In southern Maharashtra there are instances of both types of marriages, namely, cross-cousin and uncle-niece. The clan organisation of the Marathas has some similarity with that of the Rajputs.

For example, mythological origin comparable with Rajputs is also claimed by the Marathas. Their names are also similar to that of Rajputs. The rule of exogamy is, however, not dependent on the clan name but on the symbol connected with the clan. The symbol is called devaka. No two people having the same devaka can marry. The clans and the devaka both play a significant role in marriage. Status of a clan is important in hypergamous marriage alliances.

Marathas have as many as 96 clans. Among these, there are concentric circles of mobility and status. Ethnically, there is no homogeneity. There are panchkula, a cluster of five clans, then there are ‘seven clans’,

and all are hypergamous divisions. No taboo is attached to bilateral kinship like north zone. No parallel-cousin marriages are allowed. There is also taboo on paternal-cousin marriages. Generally, preference for a man's marriage is with his maternal cross-cousin. Sisters can and do marry the same man. Brothers generally avoid marrying two sisters. Levirate is practised among the northern Kunbis. However, exchange marriages are avoided.

The tribal people in Orissa like Gonds, Oraons and Konds speak Dravidian languages, and their kinship system can be equated with that of the Dravidian-speaking people. The Munda, the Hondo and some of the Saora speak Mundari languages. The Oriya-speaking people have the same type of caste divisions as are found in northern regions with slightly different names.

Brahmanas in Orissa seem to be immigrants from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. AranyakaBrahmanas and Karans (Kayasthas) do not allow cross-cousin marriages. Some agricultural castes allow cousin-marriages, but others prohibit. Junior levirate is found among the poorer classes.

➢ **Kinship in South India:**

There are five regions in the southern zone consisting of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and the regions of mixed languages and people. The southern zone presents a very compli-cated pattern of kinship system and family organisation. Here, patrilineal and patrilocal systems dominate. However, some sections have matrilineal and matrilocal systems, and they possess features of both types of kinship organisation. Some castes allow polygamy, whereas some have both polygyny and polyandry. In Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and among some castes of Malabar, patrilineal and patrilocal joint family dominates as in the northern zone.

The Nayars, the Tiyans, some Moplas in Malabar region and the Bants in Kanara district have matrilineal and matrilocal family, and it is called tharawad. It consists of a woman, her brothers and sisters, her own and her sister's sons and daughters. No affinal relation lives in the tharawad. Some consanguines are excluded (children of the males). There is no husband-wife, father-children relationship in a tharawad.

In the southern zone there is the system of caste endogamy and clan exogamy similar to the northern system. It is called as 'Bedagu' or 'Bedaga' or 'Bali' in Karnataka. The Kotas of Nilgiris call it 'Keri', the KottaiVellals call it 'Kilai', the Koyas name it 'Gotta' and the Kurubas call it 'Gunpu'. Some Telugu people call it 'Inti-peru', and the Malayalis mention it 'Illom'. In Travancore, it is referred to as 'Veli'. The word 'Gotra' is also widely used. The main symbols used for clans are of silver, gold, axe, elephant, snake, jasmine, stone, etc.

In northern zone village exogamy is a widely accepted norm. But, in southern zone, there are inter-marrying clans in the same village. Gonds do not observe village exogamy. The only principle is that of exogamy or illom or veli. A given caste is divided like northern castes into exogamous clans. Inter-clan marriages do not cover all clans. Within an endogamous caste, there are smaller circles of endogamous units made up of a few families giving and receiving daughters in marriage.

The southern zone has its peculiar features which are quite different from that of the northern part of India. Preferential marriages with elder sister's daughter, father's sister's daughter, and with mother's brother's daughter are particularly prevalent in the southern zone. The main thrust of such a system of preferential marriages lies in maintaining unity and solidarity of the 'clan' and upholding of the principle of return (exchange) of daughters in the same generation.

However, there are taboos on marrying of younger sister's daughter, levirate, and mother's sister's daughter. Maternal uncle and niece marriages and cross-cousin marriages result in double relationships. A cousin is also a wife, and after marriage a cousin is more of a wife than a cousin.

Comparing the southern kinship system with the northern one we can mention that there is no distinction between the family of birth and the family of marriage in the south whereas such a distinction is clear in the northern India. In the north, terms for blood relatives and affinal ones are clear, whereas in the south many terms do not indicate this distinction clearly.

For example, Phupha-Phuphi for father's sister's husband and father's sister and Mama-Mami for mother's brother and his wife are used in the north, whereas in the south Attai is used for both Phuphi and Mami. Mama is used for both Phupha and Mama. In the north, there are the 'extended family of birth' and the 'extended family of marriage'. There is no such distinction in the south. No special terms are used for affinal relatives in the south. Same relatives appear in two successive generations in the south.

Thus, southern and northern kinship systems differ in the context of relations by marriage and relations by birth and more particularly in regard to the arrangement of kin in different genera-tions. There does not seem to be any clear-cut classification of kin on the principle of generation at all in the southern terminology. In south zone all the relatives are arranged according to whether they are older or younger than ego (self) without any reference to gener-ation.

There are no words for brothers and sisters in the Dravidian languages. However, there are words for 'younger' and 'older' brothers and sisters. A number of terms are used in common for (1) father and elder brother (Anna, Ayya), (2) mother and elder sister, (3) younger brother and son (Pirkal), and (4) younger sister and daughter (Pinnawal). These terms denote respectability to the elders and not to the actual blood relationships. The point of reference is the ego – and the persons older and younger than the ego are ranked based on their age.

Age, and not generation, is the main consideration in the southern kinship system. Marriage is outside the exogamous kin group called Balli or Begadu or Kilai. Exchange of daughters is favoured and marriage among the close kin is also preferred. The rules of marriage are: one must marry a member of one's own clan, and a girl must marry a person who belongs to the group older than self, and also to the younger than the parents.

Older cross-cousins and also younger brother of girl's mother are preferred. A person can marry any of his younger female cross-cousins and also a daughter of any of his elder sisters. Consequently, we find recip-rocal relations and kinship terms referred to this reciprocity.

➢**Louis Dumont highlights the following points about the southern kinship system:**

- Principle of immediate exchange,
- A policy of social consolidation,
- A clustering of kin group in a narrow area,
- No sharp distinction between kin by blood and kin by marriage, and
- Greater freedom for women in society.

Kinship in Eastern India:

The eastern zone is not compact and geographically it is not contiguous like other zones. Besides northern languages, Mundari and Monkhmer languages are also spoken. The main communities are Korku, Assamese, Saka, Semang and Khasi. The other languages are Mon, Khmer and Chain. The area consists of a number of Austro-Asiatic tribes.

All the people speaking Mundari languages have patrilineal and patrilocal families. The Ho and Santhal have the practice of cross-cousin marriage. But till the father's sister or the mother's brother are alive, they cannot marry their daughters. This condition makes cross-cousin marriage a rare phenomenon. The Bondo people, for example, do not have taboo on cross-cousin marriage, but one does not find an example of cross-cousin marriage among them, as reported by Elwin.

The Ho and Munda have separate dormitories for bachelors and maidens and they indulge in pre-marital sexual relationships. Sometimes these relationships result into marriages but quite often the marriage mate is different from the mate of the dormitory days. All these people are divided into exogamous totemistic clans. A person must marry outside of the clan and also outside of the circle of near relations like first cousins.

Money is given for procuring a bride. Service by the would-be-husband in girl's father's house is also considered as bride price. After marriage one establishes his separate household, but may keep his younger brother and widowed mother, etc., along with him in his newly established house. The Mundari people thus differ from the rest of India in not having joint family. People maintain patrician relations by common worship of ancestors and residence. They extend help to each other but live independent life.

The Khasis of Meghalaya speak Monkhmer language, and they are a matrilineal people like Nayars, but are quite different from them. The Nayars have a matrilineal joint family and husbands are only occasional visitors. The Khasis have joint family with common worship and common graveyard, but the husband and wife live together in a small house of their own. After death the property goes to mother or youngest daughter.

If there are no female relatives, widow gets half of the property if she opts not to remarry. A man's position is like that of a Hindu bride in the patri-family. But there is difference because the Hindu bride is incorporated as a member of her husband's family whereas a Khasi husband is considered as a stranger. A woman enjoys a great amount of freedom. After divorce children are handed over to her. The Khasis have clan exogamy. Marriages of parallel cousins are not allowed. Cross-cousin marriage is also quite rare.

Though we have drawn a sketchy view of the kinship organi-sation in India, we come to know that both rigidity and flexibility exist side by side with regard to values and norms related to the kinship systems. These are reflected with regard to divorce, widow remarriage, incest taboos, caste endogamy, clan exogamy, rule of avoidance, family structure, systems of lineage and residence, authority system, succession and inheritance of property etc.

However, kinship continues to be a basic principle of social organi-sation and mobilisation on the one hand and division and dissension on the other. It is a complex phenomenon, and its role can be sensed even in modern organisations. Migration, mobility and education have weakened the kinship systems and rules of clan organisation because members of a caste/sub-caste or of a clan do not live at the same place. Matriliny in Kerala has almost withered away. In north-east also it has become weak.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1 : What is Kinship?

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Q2 : Why is kinship a social instiution?

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Q3 : What is the difference between consanguineal and affinal kinship?

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Q4 : What is understood by Incest Taboo?

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Q5 : What is the pattern of kinship found in North India?

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4.4 LET US SUM UP

- Kinship is one of the main organizing principles of society. It is one of the basic social institutions found in every society.
- This institution establishes relationships between individuals and groups. People in all societies are bound together by various kinds of bonds.
- The most basic bonds are those based on marriage and reproduction. Kinship refers to these bonds, and all other relationships resulting from them.
- Thus, the institution of kinship refers to a set of relationships and relatives formed thereof, based on blood relationships (consanguineal), or marriage (affinal).

- There are different degrees of kinship like the primary, secondary and tertiary kinship which is further divided into primary consaguineal, primary affinal kinship, secondary consaguineal, secondary affinal kinship and tertiary cosaguineal and tertiayaffinal kinship respectively.
- The kinship system has certain usages or is guided by a set of rules.
- Avoidance means that two kins should remain away from each other. In other words, they should avoid each other.
- Joking Relationship is the reverse of avoidance relationship. Under it a relation is permitted to tease or make fun of the other.
- In Tecknonymy, a kin is not referred to directly but he is referred to through another kin.
- In Avunclate the maternal uncle (mama) is given a prominent place in the life of his nephews and nieces.
- In Amitate a special role is given to the father's sister.
- Couvade, the husband is made to lead the life of an invalid along with his wife whenever she gives birth to a child.
- The structure and pattern of kinship in India has been studied by Iravati Karve where she divides the whole country into northern, central, southern and eastern zones keeping in view the linguistic, caste and family organisation.



4.5 FURTHER READING

1) Basha.Chand.P (2016), "Sociology basic concepts"; Raj Publications

2) Bhushan.Vidya,Sachdeva.D.R, "An Introduction to Sociology"; Kitab Mahal Publishers;New Delhi.

4.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No. 1 : The institution of kinship refers to a set of relationships and relatives formed thereof, based on either blood relationships (consanguineal) or marriage (affinal).

Ans to Q No. 2 : Kinship is a social institution because in most societies it plays a significant role in the socialisation of individuals and the maintenance of group solidarity. The universal nature of the system shows its functional importance in social life.

Ans to Q No. 3 : Consanguineal kinship refers to the relationships based on blood whereas affinal kinship refers to the relationships formed on the basis of marriage.

Ans to Q No. 4 : Incest taboo means the prohibition of sexual intercourse or marriage between the closely related persons of family.

Ans to Q No. 5 : In North India, caste endogamy, clan exogamy and incest taboos regarding sexual relations between primary kins are strictly observed.The rule of sasan is key to all marriage alliances, that is, a person must not marry in his patri-family and must avoid marriage with sapinda kin(marriage between cousins in Hinduism).

4.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1 : Distinguish between the types of tertiary kinship with examples.

Q2 : Explain the difference between primary affinal and secondary affinal kinship.

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-350 words)

Q1 : Explain the various kinship usages.

Q2 : Discuss in brief the structure and pattern of kinship in India.

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UNIT 5: CASTE IN INDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Caste: Meaning and Characteristics

5.3.1 Jati and Varna

5.3.2 Difference between caste and class

5.3.3 Jajmani System and Dominant Caste

5.3.4 Scheduled Castes and their problems

5.3.5 Abolition of Untouchability

5.4 Let Us Sum Up

5.5 Further Reading

5.6 Answers to Check Your Progress

5.7 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to -

- Understand the caste system, its meaning and characteristics;
- Identify the difference between caste and varna and caste and class;
- Explain the jajmani system and the dominant caste;
- Discuss the scheduled caste and their problems;

5.2 INTRODUCTION

In India we come across a special type of social stratification in the form of castes. Although evidences of caste are to be found in many parts of the world, but the most perfect instance exists in India. The Hindu society is a caste ridden society and is divided into a number of segments called castes. The status of an individual is determined by his/her birth and not by selection or by accomplishments. No amount of power and prestige can

change the position of a person. In the previous unit we have learned about kinship as a social institution. In this unit we will try to understand one of the fundamental aspects of Indian Society i.e. its Caste System. Here we shall try to learn about meaning and chracteristics of Caste, differences between Caste and Class, concept of Jati, Varna, Jajmani System, Dominant Caste so on and so forth.

5.3 CASTE: MEANING AND CHARACTERISTICS

The word 'caste' owes its origin to the Spanish word 'casta' which means breed, race, lineage or a complex of hereditary qualities. The Portuguese applied this term to the classes of people in India known by the name of Jati.

- Risley has defined caste as 'a collection of families or groups bearing a common name; claiming a common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine: professing to follow the same hereditary calling, and regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogenous community.'
- According to Lundberg, 'A caste is merely a rigid social class into which members are born and from which they can withdraw or escape only with extreme difficulty.' It is the type of stratification system which is most rigid in matters of mobility and distinctness of status.
- According to Green, 'Caste is a system of stratification in which mobility up and down the status ladder, at least may not occur.'

➢ **Characteristics of Caste System**

From the above definitions it is clear that caste, as a form of social stratification, divides the society into various social groups in a hierarchical order on the basis of ritual purity and pollution. It is a hereditary and endogamous group. It has association with traditional occupations.

Caste system entails a number of characteristics. They are as follows:

❍ **Segmental division:**

So far as caste system is concerned, each caste is an autonomous group independent of the other. Membership in a caste is based on birth. Hence it is unchangeable.For this reason mobility from one caste to another is impossible. Each caste has its own way of life. It has its own rules and

regulations, customs, traditions, practices and rituals. It has its own governing body called the caste council to enforce the caste rules. In this way each caste is a social world by itself.

- **Hierarchy:**

The caste system is hierarchical in nature. It comprises four varnas or castes. These in descending order of ranking are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. There are many castes between the two extremes- the Brahmins and the Shudras. Their social status depends upon their distance from the Brahmins.

The untouchables exist outside the Varna scheme. This five-fold categorization is essentially a religious one, making distinctions on the basis of relative ritual purity. D.C. Bhattacharya rightly observes that "not only do the various castes form a hierarchy but the occupation practised by them, the various items of their diet and the customs they observe all form separate hierarchies."

- **Endogamy:**

Westermark regards endogamy as the essence of the caste system. Endogamy refers to marriage within the caste. The principle of endogamy forbids its members to marry outside the caste. The violation of the rule of endogamy would mean ostracism and loss of caste. Marriage within the Gotra or clan is prohibited. This rule of exogamy is observed strictly in the rural setting. Further, it is worth mentioning in this context that there are a few exceptions to the rule of endogamy in the form of anuloma and pratiloma marriage.

- **Fixed Occupation:**

Caste system is characterized by fixed of occupation. Occupations are hereditary and the members of a caste are expected to follow their traditional occupation without fail. Brahmins are engaged in performing religious ceremonies. Washermen regard it their duty to wash clothes of other caste people. Some occupations like trade, agriculture, military service are, however, regarded as anybody's callings. In some cases the name of caste is dependent upon the very occupation as for instance, Napita (barber), Dhobi, Mochi, Mali etc.

- ***Restriction on Food and Drink:***

There are rules, for example, as regards what sort of food or drink can be accepted by a person from a particular caste. Usually a caste would not accept cooked food from any other caste that stands lower than itself in the social scale. A person belonging to a higher caste believes that he gets polluted even by the shadow of a person belonging to the low caste or by accepting food or drink from him.

- ***Cultural Difference*:**

Since each caste has its own set of rules and regulations with regard to endogamy, pollution-purity, occupational specialization, each caste develops its own subculture since the behaviour of the individual is governed by the requirements of his caste. The doctrine says that it is better for a person to follow the 'dharma' (religious obligation) of his own caste, no matter how low, than the 'dharma' of another caste, no matter how illustrious. The result has been different 'style of life' for different castes. Hence castes are to quote Prof. Gharya, "small and complete social worlds in themselves, marked off definitely from one another, though subsisting within the larger society.

- ***The Concept of Purity and Pollution:***

The concept of pollution plays a crucial part in maintaining the required distance between different castes. "A high caste man may not touch a low caste man, let alone accept cooked food and water from him. Where the two castes involved belong to either extreme of the hierarchy, the lower caste man may be required to keep a minimum distance between himself and the high caste man". The pollution distance varies from caste to caste and from place to place.

- ***A Particular Name:***

Every caste has a particular name through which we can identify it. Sometimes, an occupation is also associated with a particular caste. We can know the profession or occupation of a caste with the help of the name of the caste.

❍ ***Absence of Vertical Mobility:***

In a caste system, there is no mobility movement of its members, up or down, the social status ladder. A person's status at birth is his life time status.

❍ **Ascribed Status :**

Caste determines the ascribed status of an individual in a society and before his social interaction fixes the expectation and behaviour which afterwards plays an important part in the growth of the self-concept of an individual, saving him from social adjustment and complications. If an individual is unaware of his caste, he faces serious reaction in social relation or if he adopts behaviour contrary to his caste, even then the society rebels against him by demanding to adopt an expected behaviour.

5.3.1 Jati and Varna

Jati and Varna are two words that are very important while studying Indian social system. These are classifications of the traditional Indian society that confuses many people. Jati and Varna both play an important role in the life of a Hindu. Indian society have a system of classification that was known as Varna vyavastha or system. This Varna system divided the society into 4 classes that were as follows.

- Brahmins who happened to be the priestly class
- Kshatriyas who happened to be the warrior class
- Vaishyas who happened to be the trader class
- Shudras who happened to be the servant or the labour class

➢ **Varna**

The word Varna, when translated into Hindi, literally translates into color. However, the Varna system had nothing to do with the color of the skin of an individual. In fact, the Varna system was devised to classify a person on the basis of his attributes or characteristics. However, the system got degenerated with the passage of time and developed into the much maligned caste system that is seen even today. This caste system meant that a person had no chances of upward mobility in the society, and he remained in the caste that he was born into.

The original Varna system was devised to have harmony and cooperation between people living in the society and people in different Varnas did not interfere in each other's lives to compete. It was when the Varna of a person was decided on the basis of his birth rather than his qualities that it became rotten.

- **Jati**

The ancient Varna system did not have much of significance in the social order in the society. If one was a Brahmin, it may have meant a lot to other Varnas, but inside his own Varna, he was just another individual with no identity. The need for identity within a single Varna led to the development of Jati system inside the Varna system. Jatis developed much later in India to reflect the trade or profession of a particular community. Dhobi community came from the word dhona which meant to wash, and thus Dhobis were people who washed other people's clothes. Thus, a jati is a community engaged in a particular profession or trade. This system of classification continued in modern India till recently, and a person's surname was enough to let others know all about his profession.

5.3.2 Difference between caste and class

- Castes are found in Indian sub-continent only, especially in India, while classes are found almost everywhere. Classes are especially the characteristic of industrial societies of Europe and America. According to Dumont and Leach, caste is a unique phenomenon found only in India.
- Classes depend mainly on economic differences between groupings of individuals—inequalities in possession and control of material resources—whereas in caste system non-economic factors such as influence of religion (rebirth and rituals of purity-pollution) are most important.
- Unlike castes or other types of strata, classes are not established by legal or religious provisions; membership is not based on inherited position as specified either legally or by custom. On the other hand, the membership is inherited in the caste system.

- Caste system is static whereas the class system is dynamic.
- In the class system, there are no formal restrictions on inter-dining and inter-marriage between people from different classes as is found in the caste system. Endogamy is the essence of caste system which is perpetuating it.
- Caste is a closed system as mobility is restricted here whereas class is an open system where social mobility is based on individual's achievement rather than birth.
- The feeling of class consciousness is necessary to constitute a class but there is no need for any subjective consciousness in the members of caste.
- The choice of mates in caste system is generally endogamous i.e., marrying within one's own caste. No such restrictions exist in class system.
- The caste system is believed to have been divinely ordained. Classes are secular in origin. They are not founded on religious dogmas.
- The relative prestige of the different castes is well established but in class system there is no rigidly fixed order of prestige.

5.3.3 Jajmani system and Dominant caste

Caste system is a peculiar feature of the Indian society. It is thought that Caste has a stronger hold in the rural areas than the cities. Caste provides rules of social behavior which cannot be violated. Each caste under caste system tries to maintain its hold over its members and controls their behavior. The traditions, customs and rules of behavior differ from caste to caste.Although the different castes are socially segregated, yet there arise several social occasions when one caste has to secure the service of the other castes. Such dependence among the castes have been given the name of 'Jajmani System', under which each group within a village is expected to give certain standardised services to the other castes. As for instance, the primary function of the Brahmin caste is to perform various religious and ceremonial rituals. In return for

his services, the Brahmin gets payment both in cash and in kind. Similarly, the 'Dhobi' or washerman washes the clothes of his 'jajman'. In return for his services he gets a part of the grains. On special occasions like marriage or birth he also gets clothes or utensils.

➢ **Dominant Caste**

This concept given by M.N Srinivas holds that a caste is dominant when it is numerically higher than the other castes.The chief criteria of domination of a caste are:

- ❍ Economic strength
- ❍ Political power
- ❍ Ritual purity
- ❍ Numerical strength

According to M.N. Srinivas, "a caste may be said to be dominant when it preponderates numerically over other castes and when it also wields preponderant economic and political power. A large and powerful caste group can be more easily dominant if its position in the local caste hierarchy is not too low."

➢ **Functions of Dominant Caste:**

- ❍ The dominant caste often acts as a reference model to the lower caste group. The lower caste people imitate their behaviour, ritual pattern, customs etc. In this way, they help in cultural transmission.
- ❍ The dominant castes of a particular locality act as watch dogs of pluralistic culture and system. They set norms and regulations for social life. They may determine civic and economic privileges.
- ❍ Dominant castes are the main power holders. They establish contacts with the outside government officials, elected representatives and political leaders. They influence the political process.
- ❍ The Dominant castes set values and norms for the community. Traditionally, its primary functions were Judicial, executive and legitimacy. They form the vital link between the villages and the other world.

- Due to dominant position in rural society, they control the rural economy in various ways and means.

The dominant caste also wields economic and political power over the other caste groups. The dominant caste may not be ritually high but enjoy high status because of wealth, political power and numerical strength. The presence of educated persons and high occupation rate also play an important role in deciding its dominance over other caste groupings. Sometimes a single clan of dominant caste controls a number of villages in areas. The dominant caste settle dispute between persons belonging to their own and other jati. The members of the dominant caste particularly those from the wealthy and powerful families are representative of this village in dealing with the officials

5.3.4 Scheduled castes and their problems

The Scheduled Caste (SC) occupy the bottom most level in the social ladder. They form a major part of the Backward or Depressed classes. They are generally regarded as 'Untouchables and popularly known as 'Harijans'. However, not all SC's are regarded as 'untouchables' in all the places of India. They are economically backward, socially depressed and educationally neglected section of the Indian population.

The British called the so-called 'untouchables' the 'Exterior Castes'. The term 'Untouchable Caste' was made use for the first time by the Simon Commission. Under the Government of India Act of 1935 the untouchables were designated as 'Scheduled Castes'. The Constitution of India has also referred to them as the 'Scheduled Castes'. But Mahatma Gandhi addressed them as 'Harijans'-the people of God.

- **Definition:**
  - According to D.N.Majumdar the term 'Scheduled Castes' refers to the 'Untouchable Castes'. The Untouchable Castes are those who suffer from various social and political disabilities many of which are traditionally prescribed and socially enforced by higher castes.

- The Scheduled Castes can be defined as those economically, socially, educationally and politically backward castes which are kept at a distance by the other castes as 'untouchables'.

➢ **Problems of the Scheduled Castes:**

The scheduled castes have been suffering from various social, religious, legal, economic, educational and other disabilities. Their problems can be understood under the following three sections:

- **Problem of Untouchablity:** The SCs had to perform unclean occupations such as carrying night soil and dead animals, cleaning urinals and cattle shed, washing clothes and performing certain duties at places of cremation. These occupations were treated as polluted or impure. So, people performing these occupations were treated as untouchables.
- **No physical contact:** The SCs had to maintain a distance from the higher caste people.
- **Ban on the use of common wells and tanks:** The members belonging to the lower strata were not allowed to use common village wells and tanks for fetching water.
- **Prohibited from entering temple:** The Scheduled caste persons were not allowed to enter the temple for offering worship.
- **Non acceptance of cooked food:** The food cooked by this section was not accepted by the higher castes.
- **Dependence proneness:** They were dependent on others for livelihood and survival.
- **Problem of poverty:** The SCs were deprived of their economic rights. So they remained poor and dependent upon others. The problems associated with the poverty of Scheduled castes are as follows:
- **Material deprivation:** The SC's were not allowed to have any material possessions.
- **Landlessness:** They did not own any land for the purpose of residence and agriculture.

- **Educational Backwardness:** Due to deprivation and poor socio-economic condition, the Scheduled Castes did not attend school and remained backward educationally.
- **Employment and Government services:** After independence, some of them have been employed in government jobs like sweepers, watchman, peons etc. Now, some of them have received higher education and are well placed. But majority of them survive as agricultural labourers, where they are exploited in the payment of wages.
- **Indebtedness and Bonded labour:** Due to their economic deprivation and poor economic conditions, the SC's have to take loans for their survival. They become indebted for their inability to repay the capital with interest and end up becoming bonded labourers.
- **Selection of occupation limited:** The caste system imposes restrictions on the occupational choice of the members. The occupational choice was very much limited for the Harijans.
- **Political Disabilities:** The untouchables hardly participate in the political matters. They were not given any place in the politics, administration and the general governance of India. They were not allowed to hold any public post. Political representations were denied to them. Even though they were given voting rights, it will still take a long way to become an organized force.

➢ **Measures for the welfare of the scheduled castes**

The Government of India has been trying to uplift the SCs right form its very inception. The Government attempts to promote the welfare of the SCs through different constitutional and legislative measures.

- The Preamble of the Constitution of India declares that it assures equality, promotes fraternity, guarantees liberty and ensures justice to one and all.
- Article 15, 16, 17, 38 and 46 guarantee that the state shall not discriminate between persons on account of their religion and caste or class.

- Article 15 prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, caste, race,sex or palce of birth.
- Article 17 abolishes untouchability and is a punishable offence in accordance with law.
- Article 46 promotes educational and economic interests of Scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other weaker sections.
- Article 330 reserves representation for SC's and ST's in the House of the People.
- Article 335 mentions the claims of SCs and STs to services and posts.
- Article 338 empowers the Central Government to appoint a National Commission for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.
- Article 339 empowers the President to appoint a commission to report on the administration of the Scheduled areas and the welfare of the scheduled tribes on the states.
- Article 341 empowers the President to specify the castes, races or tribes deemed as Scheduled Castes in a particular State or Union Territory.

5.3.5 Abolition of Untouchability

Article17 of the Constitution of India declares abolition of untouchability. Untouchability Offence Act 1955 was promulgated declaring untouchability as an offence. This Act has banned the practice of untouchability in the matters of employment, drinking water supply, offering worships, journey by bus or train, admission in hospitals etc. The Act has made the practice of untouchability punishable in the form of fine and punishment. The Untouchability(offences) Amendment and Miscellaneous Act 1976, has enhanced the punishment for those who practices untouchability. But in spite of all such prohibitive measures, untouchability is still being practiced. In rural areas, it is still a social reality.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1: Define caste.

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Q2: Why is caste endogamous in nature?

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Q3: How is status determined within the caste system?

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Q4: What do you understand by Dominant Caste?

.....

.....

Q5: Why does the SC's need special attention from the Government?

.....

.....



5.4 LET US SUM UP

- Caste is a special form of social stratification found in India.
- Caste is characterized by its segmental division, hierarchy, endogamy, fixity on occupation, cultural difference, concept of purity and pollution, ascribed status and absence of vertical mobility.
- Caste is religious in nature while class is economic.
- The dependence among the castes have been given the name of 'Jajmani System', under which each group within a village is expected to give certain standardised services to the other castes.
- The concept of dominant caste given by M.N. Srinivas is that caste which is not only numerically higher but also has a greater political and economic hold over other castes.

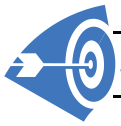
- The scheduled castes which occupy lowest level in the social hierarchy are economically backward, socially depressed and educationally neglected section of the Indian population.
- Because of their backwardness, several legislative measures have been taken up by the central and state government for the upliftment of this section.
- Untouchability which was associated with the Scheduled castes for a long time is now a punishable offence under Article 17 of the Indian constitution.



5.5 FURTHER READING

1) Sharma K.L.(1986): Essays in Social Stratification, Jaipur, Rawat Publications.

2) Tumin, M.M. (1994): Social Stratification: The Forms and Functions of Inequality, New Delhi: PHI.



5.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No. 1: Risley has defined caste as 'a collection of families or groups bearing a common name; claiming a common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine: professing to follow the same hereditary calling, and regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogenous community.'

Ans to Q No. 2: A person born in a caste remains in it for life and dies in it. Every caste is sub-divided into sub-castes, every one of which forbids its members to marry persons outside it. Thus, it is endogamous in nature.

Ans to Q No. 3: Status is ascribed in the caste system, where a person inherits its caste and the status attached with it at the time of birth itself. Status is determined by birth.

Ans to Q No. 4: According to M.N. Srinivas, "a caste may be said to be dominant when it preponderates numerically over other castes and when it also wields preponderant economic and political power. A large and powerful caste group can be more easily dominant if its position in the local caste hierarchy is not too low."

Ans to Q No. 5: The Scheduled Castes (SCs) occupy the bottom most level in the social ladder. They form a major part of the Backward or Depressed classes. As they are economically backward, socially depressed and educationally neglected section of the Indian population, they require special attention from the government to be in par with the other sections of the population.



5.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1 : What do you understand by the Jajmani System?

Q2 : What are the differences between Varna and Jati?

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q1 : What is caste? Discuss its characteristics.

Q2 : What are the various problems faced by the Scheduled Castes? What steps have been taken for the betterment of this section?

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UNIT 6: CHANGING NATURE OF CASTE

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives

6.2 Introduction

6.3 Casteism: Meaning and causes

- 6.3.1 Relationship between caste and politics
- 6.3.2 Voting behaviour
- 6.3.3 Political Elite
- 6.3.4 Caste mobilisation

6.4 Let Us Sum Up

6.5 Further Reading

6.6 Answers to Check Your Progress

6.7 Model Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to -

- understand the concept of casteism
- understand the relationship between caste and politics
- explain the elite theory and caste mobilisation.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

'Casteism' is a 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.It is considered as a social problem as it disturbs the sound governmental politics and democracy and paves the way for mutual group conflicts. It is manifested in the form of clashes between various castes for higher share in the socio-economic privileges and power. Casteism leads the members of one caste to exploit the members of other caste for their own vested interest in the name of superiority. In the previous unit we have learned in details about the Caste

System in India. In this unit we shall try to understand its changing nature in contemporary Indian Society where we shall focus especially on Casteism.

6.3 CASTEISM: MEANING AND CAUSES

Casteism is understood as a partial or one-sided loyalty in favour of any particular caste. It makes members of the caste become conscious of their membership of the caste and look at everything from the standpoint of the caste. It is an attempt made by the members of one caste to gain personal advantage to the detriment of interests of the members of other Castes.

According to R. N. Sharma, '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 seeks to realize the social, eco-nomic, political and other interests of its own group'.

According to D. N. Prasad, "casteism is loyalty to caste translated into politics. It is an overriding blind and supreme group loyalty that ignores the healthy social standards of justice, fair play, equality and universal brotherhood'.

- **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.

- **Endogamous nature of the caste:**Casteism is often the result of restrictions imposed on marriages that takes place in the Hindu society. Each caste is endogamous in nature where members have to marry within his or her caste. Because of this rule marital relations are confined to a small circle/section of the people. This practice of endogamy makes the people narrow-minded.
- **Strong desire to enhance caste prestige:** People belonging to a particular caste have the tendency of developing loyalty to their caste and to become more conscious of its relative prestige in society. Every member thus tries their best to see that their caste prestige is safeguarded and enhanced. This type of loyalty towards the caste leads the members of the caste to favour the members of their own caste wherever they get the opportunity. Excessive caste loyalty tends to keep other caste people at a distance.

- **Improvement in the means of transport and communication leading to a better organisation 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 organisation and conduct activities on caste lines.
- **Urbanisation indirectly favouring casteism:** Industrialisation and urbanization have been attracting people towards the cities in large numbers. When the rural people go to the cities they naturally search for their near and dear ones on the basis of the caste. They consider their own caste people as their potential friends and well-wishers. Thus, the city atmosphere also contributes in strengthening caste feelings and caste-mindedness.
- **Powerful hold of the caste over the members:** Caste is a strong cohesive group. It has powerful hold over its members. Members of the caste also look to the caste to obtain the needed help and assistance in times of crisis, difficulties and emergencies. Dependence of the members on the caste in this way has further added to the problem of casteism.

6.3.1 Relationship between caste and politics

The relationship between caste and politics in Indian society has been the subject of intensive study for many years. Many sociologists including Andre Beteille, Rajni Kothari, and Anil Bhatt have highlighted various aspects. According to M.N Srinivas the role played by caste in politics is in close approximation to that of the pressure group.The modernizing forces will however reduce the influence of caste over politics.

However Andre Beteille holds that while westernization is taking individual away from caste identity, the role of caste in politics is taking the people towards caste identity and thereby strengthening it. He maintains that loyalties of castes are exploited in voting.

The analysis of Dominant Caste and political process by Anil Bhatt reveals the crucial role played by castes in politics and awareness of the lower castes of their political gains. He found that the higher caste groups had lower political interest and low castes higher political interests. Political awareness was high among the higher castes and was low among the lower castes. Lower castes by organizing themselves in pursuit of collective interest were able to emerge successfully. The involvement of these castes organization in politics has changed their position in hierarchical pattern of Hindu society. Caste solidarity and political power helped them to achieve higher social, economic and political success.

Rajni Kothari studied the nature of relationship between caste and politics. He emphasised on three aspects while discussing about the interaction between caste and politics in India:

- The **first aspect** can be seen in the form of 'secularisation of caste through their political involvement. This will alter the traditionally maintained rigid features and lead to a breakup of the old (socio-political) order. This enables the process of alignment and realignment of various strata and the gradually embracing process of social mobility.
- The **second aspect** is related to the integration dimension. Caste system not only differentiates individuals on the basis of their caste/social identity but also distinguishes on the basis of occupational and economic roles. 'At the same time, it is an integral structure of a specific type, namely one that is more intense in its small group orientation and particularistic loyalties and where wider loyalties operate only when they are structured through the prevailing differentiations. This aspect is important in understanding the structural impact of democratic nation-building' (Kothari, 2010)
- The **third aspect** is related to consciousness; that is, caste enters politics through consciousness and then gets politicised. The practice of adult franchise in association with the provision of political

reservation for the Dalits has further strengthened consciousness among the concerned communities.

Political parties utilize the support of caste for their functioning and seek their support in winning elections. Grass-root political arenas as well as political parties have always remained and continue to remain dominated by elites of castes which compete with each other to form caste coalitions of supporters strong enough to maximize control over local resources and enhance opportunities to become players in political system.

6.3.2 Voting Behaviour

Elections and voting are an indispensable part of the democratic political system. One of the major tasks of the political parties is to contest elections. They select such candidates who have greater chances of winning. Candidates who have greater influence on voters and who have greater vote-catching capacity are an asset to any political party.

The term voting behaviour is not new. Voting behaviour is not confined to the examination of voting statistics, records and computation of electoral shifts and swings. It also involves an analysis of individual psychological processes (perception, emotion, and motivation) and their relation to political action as well as of institutional patterns, such as the communication process and their impact on election. In the words of Plano and Riggs, “Voting Behaviour is a field of study concerned with the ways in which people tend to vote in public election and the reasons why they vote as they do.”

Caste continues to be a determing factor of voting behaviour in India. It has deep roots in the society and constitutes an important basis of social relations at all levels. Despite the adoption of several provisions which prohibit action and discrimination on its basis, caste continues to be a determinant of political behaviour. Politicisation of caste and casteism in politics has been a well-known reality of the

Indian political system. The political parties in India, without any exception, while formulating their policies, programmes and election strategies always keep in mind the caste factor. Caste is a factor in the selection of candidates for contesting an election from a constituency. Votes are demanded in the name of caste. The role of caste as a determinant of voting behaviour has been analysed by several scholars and they have come out with the conclusion, as Morris Jones writes, "Politics is more important to caste and caste is more important to politics than before." Caste is the main language of voters belonging to rural India. Despite the adoption of democratic values which conceive of a society free from casteism, caste continues to characterise politics in India. Indeed it has become one of the chief means by which the Indian masses have been attached to the process of democratic politics. The decision to implement Mandal Commission recommendation for reservation of jobs for other Backward Classes (castes) and the reaction it generated in politics testifies to the continued presence of caste as a determinant of politics in India. However, it must be stated that the role of caste as determinant of the voting behaviour has been undergoing a change, at least in the urban areas. (Hazarika, 2015)

6.3.3 Political Elite

The concept of elite refers to the concentration of societal power—especially political power—in the hands of a few. According to Mosca, "In all societies two classes of people appear—a class that rules and a class that is ruled." One can distinguish the conception of "functional elites" in a variety of institutional contexts from that of a "ruling" or "political" elite that in some sense wields societal-level power. Elite is the highest position within a society. This stratum is composed of those persons who are recognized outstanding and are considered the leaders in a given field of competence. This class of elite (highest stratum) is further sub-divided into: (i) a governing elite; and (ii) a non-governing elite. The

'governing elite' comprises of individuals who directly play some considerable part in government. They wear labels appro-priate to the particular political offices, namely, ministers, legislators, secretaries and so on. The 'non-governing elite' are those people not connected with the governmental activities.

6.3.4 Caste Mobilisation

'Mobilisation' means the 'gearing up' of groups for collective action. Collective action can simply be defined as people acting together in pursuit of interests they share, for example, gathering to demonstrate in support of their cause. Mobilisation helps a group to acquire political support to make collective action possible. The new political leadership emerges with the structural and ideological base of the caste for mobilization to participate in the democratic politics, where political parties are the means. According to Rajni Kothari, politics is a competition and its purpose is the acquisition of power for the realization of certain goals, and its process is one of identifying and manipulating existing and emerging loyalties in order to mobilise and consolidate position. As caste forms a very strong base in the society, the political parties follow that where politics is mass-based the point is to gather support through the caste organizations. It follows that where majority of the population is found to live with the caste structure, which provides one of the principal organizational groupings, politics must strive to organize through such a structure. When the caste associations turn to the State for furthering their purposes, their initial claims are aimed at raising caste status in terms of the values and structure of the caste order. But as liberal and democratic ideas penetrated to wider sections of the population, the aims of the Caste association began to shift from sacred to secular goals. Instead of demanding entry into temples, prestigious caste names, and "honorable" occupations and histories in the census, the associations began to demand for places in the economy, new administrative and educational institutions and

political representation. Independence and the realization of political democracy intensified these new concerns. Caste associations attempted to have their members nominated for elected offices, working through existing parties or forming their own; to maximize caste representation and influence in State cabinets and other governing bodies; and use ministerial, legislative, and administrative channels to press for action relating to caste objectives in the welfare, educational, and economic realms. This is perhaps the most significant change of the caste association in the contemporary era, where it has organized and mobilized itself into a greater political mass occupying different positions of leadership.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1 : How is caste system different from casteism?

.....

.....

Q2 : What is the relationship between caste and politics according to Andre Beteille?

.....

.....

Q3 : How does caste influence the voting behaviour?

.....

.....

Q4 : Who is a political elite?

.....

.....

Q5 : What has led to caste mobilisation?

.....

.....



6.4 LET US SUM UP

- 'Casteism' is a social problem that disturbs the sound governmental politics and democracy and paves the way for mutual group conflicts.
- Caste acts both as a divisive and cohesive force in Indian politics.
- It provides a basis for the emergence of several interest groups in the Indian system each of which competes with every other group in the struggle for power. At times it leads to unhealthy struggle for power and acts as a divisive force.
- However, it is a source of unity among the members of various groups and acts as a cohesive force.
- Caste plays an important role in Indian Politics. Elections are fought and won on the basis of caste India.
- Candidates contesting elections seek support from their castes. These leaders if elected, maintain casteism even after election by showing special treatment to the members of their Caste.
- Elections and voting are an indispensable part of the democratic political system.
- Politicisation of caste and casteism in politics has been a well-known reality of the Indian political system.
- The concept of elite refers to the concentration of societal power—especially political power—in the hands of a few.
- Mobilisation helps a group to acquire political support to make collective action possible. The new political leadership emerges with the structural and ideological base of the caste for mobilisation to participate in the democratic politics, where political parties are the means.



6.5 FURTHER READING

1) Srinivas.M.N., (1962), "Caste in modern India: And other essays", Asia Publishing House.

6.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Caste system is a form of social stratification that comprises the four-fold division of society whereas casteism brings caste into politics and uses it for political gains.

Ans to Q No 2: Andre Beteille holds that while westernization is taking individuals away from caste identity, the role of caste in politics is taking the people towards caste identity and thereby strengthening it. He maintains that loyalties of castes are exploited in voting.

Ans to Q No 3: Caste continues to be a determining factor of voting behaviour in India. It is used in the selection of candidates for contesting an election from a constituency. Votes are demanded in the name of caste.

Ans to Q No 4: Elite is the highest position within a society. This stratum is composed of those persons who are recognized as outstanding and are considered the leaders in a given field of competence.It refers to the concentration of societal power—especially political power—in the hands of a few.

Ans to Q No 5: Caste mobilisation favours the various political forces which are active in democratic electoral politics. After the implementation of the Mandal Commission Report, when the lower castes and the dalits became poltically active, they understood that power lies in their caste vote banks as well as in the mobilisation of a combined bahujan-dalit identity.

6.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1: How do you think casteism is a social problem?

Q2: In your opinion, what do you think can be the consequences of casteism?

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q1: Discuss the relationship between caste and politics.

Q2: How caste influences the voting behaviour in a democracy?

*** ***** ***

UNIT 7 : TRIBES IN INDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives

7.2 Introduction

7.3 Tribe: Definition and Meaning

7.4 Characteristics

- 7.4.1 T.B. Naik's Characterisation of Tribe
- 7.4.2 Anthropological Convention
- 7.4.3 Constitution of India and Scheduled Tribes
- 7.4.4 Common Characteristics

7.5 Classification and Distribution of Tribes

7.6 British Policy towards the Tribes

7.7 Policy during the Post-Independence Period

7.8 Let Us Sum Up

7.9 Further Reading

7.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

7.11 Model Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to :

- define tribes
- indentify the characteristics of tribes
- discuss the distribution and classification of tribes in India
- describe the British policy towards the tribes
- discuss the State policy of the post-Independent India.

7.2 INTRODUCTION

Indian society is a collection of various societies of heterogeneous communities. Social norms, customs and role behaviour of these

communities are not always similar and vary from community to community. They vary according to their religion - some follow Hinduism, some Islamism some of them are Sikhs, while some others are Christian, etc. They also vary in their ways of life - in the norms and rules that they follow. While some are simple societies, others are complex ones. Caste society is a complex society, while tribal society is a simple society. Societies can also be studied depending on language they use and also depending on their location, such as rural society and urban society. In rural areas, we find both caste and tribal societies, while in urban areas various communities live in urban ways without following much of their traditional norms and customs.

In this unit, we will study the various characteristics of tribal societies in India. When we say tribal people, we indicate that stock of population which have been living in various locations since time immemorial. They are also called indigenous people.

7.3 TRIBE: DEFINITION AND MEANING

The **Oxford Dictionary** has defined tribe as a *"*group of people in a primitive or barbarious stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding themselves as having a common ancestor."

D.N Majumdar defines tribe as a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous, with no specialisation of functions, ruled by tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect, recognizing social distance with other tribes or castes.

According to **Ralph Linton**, tribe is a group of bands occupying a contiguous territory or territories and having a feeling of unity deriving from numerous similarities in a culture, frequent contacts and a certain community of interests.

L.M Lewis believes that tribal societies are small in scale, are restricted in the spatial and temporal range of their social, legal and political relations and possess a morality, a religion and world view of corresponding dimensions. Characteristically too, tribal languages are unwritten and hence the extent of communication both in time and space is inevitably narrow. At

the same time, tribal societies exhibit a remarkable economy of design and have a compactness and self-sufficiency lacking in modern society.

Prof S.C.Sinha has defined the defined tribe as "essentially pre-literate groups, living in relative isolation in hills and forests or in the plains skirting the forests, apparently outside the threshold of Brahmanic Hierarchic civilization."

7.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF TRIBE

7.4.1 T.B. Naik's Characterisation of Tribe

T.B Naik has given the following features of tribes in Indian context:-

- A tribe should have least *functional interdependence* within the community.
- It should be economically backward (i.e. *primitive means of exploiting natural resources).* Tribal economy should be at an underdeveloped stage and it should have multifarious economic pursuits.
- There should be a *comparative geographical isolation* of its people.
- They should have a *common dialect*.
- Tribes should be *politically organized and community panchayat should be influential.*
- A tribe should have *customary laws.*

Naik argues that, for a community to be a tribe it should possess all the above mentioned characteristics, and a very high level of acculturation with outside society debars it from being a tribe. This term usually denotes *a social group bound together by kin and duty and associated with a particular territory*.

It is true that some of the characteristics as mentioned by Naik are prevalent among the tribes - but not all of these factors are always present. Similar is the case with Bailey's (1957) definition, or Sahlin's (1968) segmentary definition of tribe which cannot comprehensively describe a tribe.

Andre Beteille in his essay on *'Tribe and Peasants'* analysed various definitions of "Tribe", and concluded "*There is thus no one way of defining a tribal society. Definitions may be either very broad and loose or very narrow and restricted. The former would apply not only to the tribes but in many ways also to the peasantry. The latter would exclude many societies which have been conventionally regarded as tribal."*

Ghurye (1963:19-20) is one of the earliest writers who examined the characteristics of tribes in his famous book "*The Scheduled Tribes"*. His basic contention is that, tribes cannot be called the aboriginal as we have no proof that they are the original inhabitants of India. He describes the tribal people as the imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society and can be termed backward Hindus. Ghurye's contention was not based on any intensive studies of the tribal people of India, and, herefore, has no acceptability at least not in the present case.

7.4.2 Anthropological Convention

Another closest definition of tribe could be the one as treated by the Anthropological Convention (Beteille, 1987: 78). For them, the tribe as a whole is completely an organised society. Such a society is characterised by:

- A *self perpetuating system* having within its boundaries all the *resources necessary* for the continued maintenance of a particular mode of collective existence.
- It is a *whole culture.*
- Each tribe has its *own territory* to signify that they are politically autonomous.
- It also has its *own language or dialect* to mark the *distinctiveness of its culture.*

7.4.3 Constitution of India and Scheduled Tribes

The Constitution of India which specifies certain tribes as Scheduled tribes also has not provided any *criteria* or definition for considering a community as a tribe under the list of Scheduled Tribe. However, the *criteria* adopted for specifying communities as Scheduled Tribe are as follows :

- *traditional occupation* of a definite geographical area,
- *distinctive culture* which includes whole spectrum of the tribal way of life, i.e. language, customs, traditions, religious beliefs, arts and crafts, etc.,
- *primitive traits* depicting occupational pattern, economy, etc and
- *lack of educational and economic development* (Verma, 1990: 11).

7.4. 4 Common Characteristics

From the above discussion, it would not be difficult to identify the common characteristics of tribes. Some of such characteristics are noted below:

- Each *tribe has a name* through which they identify themselves.
- Each tribe has its *own territory* to signify that they are *politically autonomous.*
- Tribes should be *politically organized* and *community panchayat* should be influential.
- It also has its *own language or dialect* to mark the *distinctiveness of its culture*.
- Each has it *prescribed pattern of behaviour and norms*.
- They have their *own rituals and festivals*.
- They are usually *endogamous.*

There are other minor characteristics such as :

- Most of the tribal languages *do not have scripts*.
- Each tribe *claims their descent from a common ancestor* which may be real or mythical.
- Tribal people *do not easily adapt to a changing situation*.

- They believe in taboos which are usually certain forbidden things or *restrictions, generally communicated verbally, but have the force of law.*



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1

Q1 : State whether the following are true or false:

a) The definition of tribe given by the Anthropological Convention characterises a tribe as a self perpetuating system.

.....

.....

b) One of the most common characteristic of tribe is its ack of own language and dialect.

.....

.....

c) Lack of education and economic development is a criterion for specifying communities as Scheduled Tribes.

.....

.....

7.5 CLASSIFICATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF TRIBES

Tribes in India have been classified variously. Among these, the classifications of Guha, Dube, Roy Burman, and Bhowmick's are popular. In his book *Tribal India* 1971, Bhowmick classified Indian tribes on the basis of –

- geographical distribution
- linguistic distribution
- physical features and racial affinities
- economy

We will discuss the geographical distribution as follows:

- **GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION**

Different anthropologists have made various geographical groupings of the tribes. **Guha's classification** shows three broad divisions, namely,

- North and North-Eastern area in the mountain valleys of eastern frontiers of India,
- Peninsular India and Indo Gangetic Plain, and
- Southern zone.

The most recent classification that we have is of **L.P. Vidyarthi's classification** who divided the tribes according to the five distinct physical zones of India, namely,

- Himalayan region
- Middle India region
- Western India Region
- South India region and
- The Island region

Let us now discuss L.P Vidyarthi's classification of India's tribes.

- **HIMALAYAN REGION:** Himalayan region has been divided into three sub-regions i.e.
  - Northeastern Himalayan region,
  - Central Himalayan region and
  - North western Himalayan region.
  - **North-Eastern Himalayan region** comprises of the seven states of the north eastern region of India and the mountainous region of North Bengal. The prominent tribes inhabiting the region are Bodo, Khasi, Garo, Mishing, Abor, Naga, Meitei, Karbi, Mizo, Chakma, etc.
  - **Central Himalayan region** comprises of the Tarai area of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The dominant tribes in this region are Santhal. Oraon, Munda, Kharia, Lohara, etc.
  - Within the **North-Western Himalayan region** fall the States like Himachal Pradesh. Uttarakhand and Jammu & Kashmir. The prominent tribes of this region are Gaddi, Gujjar, Pangwal, Kinnaur or Kinner, Lahaula, Laddakhi, Bakarwal, Brokpa, Changpa, Balti, Dogra, etc.

- **MIDDLE INDIA REGION**: This region comprises of the highest number of tribal population in the country. The region covers the states of Bihar, West Bengal, Orrisa Madhya Pradesh, and Jharkhand. The Oraon, Santhal, and Gonds are some of the important tribes of this region.
- **WESTERN INDIA REGION** : This region includes Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharastra, Goa and Dadra and Nagar Haveli having a tribal population of around 98.86 lakh. Gujjar, Bhil, Meena are some of the tribes of this region.
- **SOUTH INDIA REGION** : The remaining portion of the peninsular India i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala comprise this zone. Tribal population in this region is scanty. The Arandan, Kadar, Irula, Kota, Palliyan, Toda are some of the tribes of this region.
- **ISLAND REGION** : In this region fall the Anadaman and Nikobar Island, and the Lakswadweep Islands. Jarwa, Onges, Andamanese, etc. are some of the tribes from this region.

Population-wise, the Gonds are found to be highest in number followed by the Bhils. Given below is a list of the tribes having the highest and the lowest population in India. The population figures are approximates:

- **TRIBES WITH THE HIGHEST POPULATION**

Gonds	-	8 lakhs
Bhils	-	7.5 lakhs
Santhal	-	5 lakhs
Mina	-	2.2 lakhs
Oraon	-	2 lakhs

- **TRIBES WITH THE LEAST POPULATION**

Jarwa	-	50
Onges	-	100
Andamanese	-	150
Arandan	-	250

7.6 BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS THE TRIBES

There was no uniform British policy towards tribal people. But the common policy they adopted was to **isolate these people from the mainstream societies.** They considered them savages, and therefore, they gradually attempted to "tame" the tribal people by armed measures **and thereafter to "civilise them**" by education and widen the scope and scale of their acculturation with "civilised" people in the neighbouring tracts.

The British Government faced various tribal uprisings right from 1831. In this year the Kol mutiny in the province of Chota Nagpur occurred against the British. The British Government placed an agent to the Governor General in charge of the province. Then there was the Santhal rebellion in 1855 taking into account of the land assessment. In both the cases, the British had changed the administrative system and also the legislation dealing with land.

Through the **Government of India Act 1870**, the Parliament conferred upon the Governor General-in-Council the power to approve sanction as law and regulation made by the local and provincial governments, for the administration of certain special areas (to which earlier the Secretary of State council had applied the Act). Many measures were taken under this Act. In **1874** the Indian legislature passed the **Scheduled District Act**, whereby, the local government was empowered to declare in respect of the tracts specified in the Act what enactments were or were not in force and to notify the application with modifications or restriction if necessary.

The main purpose of the British policy was to secure peace and not necessarily to help the people to advance on the road to progress, either by integration to plains people or otherwise. The **forest policy** as followed by the British also was not fundamentally different. Gradually, in these areas, survey and settlement was carried out and land revenue imposed wherever and whenever possible. In **1876**, the government banned the sale of land in Santhal Parganas, either privately or by order of Court.

The **reforms suggested by Montague and Lord Chelmsford** in their report also admitted the existence of certain backward areas in the provinces where the people being primitive, there was no material on which to found political institution. Their suggestion that the backward tracts should be administered by the head of the province was however not carried out.

The **Government of India Act 1919**, under section 52 A (2) empowered the Governor General-in-Council to declare any territory to be backward tract with the sanction of the Secretary of the State. Accordingly, the Government declared several areas, more or less same as the scheduled areas, as backward tracts. This was not the end and administrative reforms continued. In 1936, under the **Government of India Act 1935**, these areas were re-designated as "excluded areas" and "partially excluded areas" with certain modifications.

7.7 POLICY DURING THE POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

- **Policy during the post independence period**: **Issues of Integration and autonomy:**

In the post independence period, the problems of the tribes have been analysed from various viewpoints. The British policy of isolation and the theoretical prescription for the complete assimilation have been negated by the policy makers and in its place accepted a policy of integration. This policy of integration suggests that tribes should neither be converted to zones nor should they be forced to assimilate to the wider society, rather, they should be brought to the national mainstream through a gradual process of intermingling. This approach of gradual integration and retention of tribal culture insists on care and caution in planning for the tribes.

➢ **POLITICAL AUTONOMY**

The Constitution of India has provided legal safeguards to the millions of tribes living in different parts of the country. The Fifth and Sixth schedule of the Constitution provides autonomy to the tribes for their all-round upliftment. Using these provisions, many States have constituted

Autonomous District Councils in the tribal dominated districts / areas for self-rule of the tribes in the respective regions. In Assam, the North Cachar Hills District Council, the Karbi Anglong District Council, and the Bodoland Territorial Council were created under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

➢ **PANCHSHEEL**

Nehru initiated the framing of policy guidelines under the panchsheel principle as an integrational approach. The Panchsheel guidelines are as follows :

- The tribal people should be allowed to develop along the lines of their own genius, and we should avoid imposing anything on them.
- Their rights on land and forests should be respected.
- They should be trained to build up their own people so that they can look after their own administration and development.
- They should not be over-administered, and should not impose on them multiplicity of schemes.
- We should judge results not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved.

For the development of the tribal areas, the Government of India had set up **43 sub multipurpose tribal blocks** in 1953 in thevarious States of India. Between 1960 and 1969 several committees were set up to examine the working of these blocks and the problems of the tribes.

For the economic development of the tribal areas, the **tribal sub-plan** was created giving a flow of fund from the main Five Year plans, since 1974 during the Fifth Five Year plan. It is still continuing. Various types of developmental schemes have been adopted.

Despite having taken such steps, the condition of the tribes has not improved substantially. Even, the Constitutional provisions coupled with various Central and State Acts have not been able to do justice to these people. The tribal people were faced with issues concerning the lower Human Development Index, poor infrastructure, diminishing control over the natural resource base, persistent threats of eviction from their habitat, exclusion from mainstream society and economy, poor distribution of wealth and opportunities, and non-empowerment. In order to address these issues,

and to place the Scheduled Tribes on a progressive and constructive path, and to make them active partners in nation building, the government of India has decided to frame a **National Policy for the Scheduled Tribes**. This seeks to facilitate the translation of the Constitutional safeguards into reality, with simultaneous socio-economic development. A draft Policy has already been circulated and is being adopted soon.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2

Q2 : Fill in the blanks:

a) The _____tribe have the highest population among the tribal people in India.

b) The least population among the tribes are of the _____

c) The tribes of Assam belong to the _____ region.

d) The tribal autonomous district councils in Assam have been formed in accordance to the _____ Schedule of the Constitution of India.

e) The man behind the framing of the Panchsheel has been _____



7.8 LET US SUM UP

- We have discussed the various definitions of tribe given by several anthropologists.
- Based on the analysis of the characteristic features of tribal society forwarded by Naik, the critiques by Andre Beteille and Ghurye, the list of characteristics forwarded by the Anthropological Convention, and the criteria adopted by the Constitution of India for specifying Scheduled Tribes, we have summed up the common characteristics of tribe, especially in the Indian context.

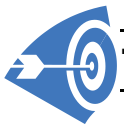
- The major characteristics include political autonomy and own territory, a politically organised community, having their own dialect, customs, norms and festivals, and the practice of endogamy, all of which make their culture distinct.
- We also focused on the geographical distribution of the various tribes of India and mentioned the several criteria on the basis of which anthropologists have classified the tribes of India.
- The policy towards the tribal people adopted and followed by the government of India, during pre-independent and post-independent India have been discussed.
- At present, the focus is to empower the tribal communities so that they can decide and work on their future. The role of the government is as a facilitator.
- The Indian Constitution is dedicated to the welfare and empowerment of the tribal people of India. Several schemes have been adopted and funds provided for the empowerment of the tribal people of India. The Government of India is working on a National Policy for the Scheduled tribes to realise the goals of the Constitution of India.



7.9 FURTHER READING

1) L.P. Vidyarthi and B.K. Rai *'The Tribal Culture of India'*, Concept, Delhi

Nadeem Hasnain *Tribal India,* Palaka Prakashan, Delhi



7.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No.1: a) True b) False c) True

Answer to Q No. 2: a) Gond b) Jarwa c) North-Eastern Himalayan

d) Sixth e) Jawaharlal Nehru.



7.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) **Short Questions** (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1 : Define tribe. What are the characteristics of a tribe?

Q2 : Discuss how the Anthropological Convention identifies a tribe.

Q3 : What are the criteria on which Scheduled Tribes are specified?

B) **Long Questions** (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q1 : Classify tribes according to their geographical distribution.

Q2 : Write a short note on the British Policy towards the tribes of India.

Q3 : Discuss the policy of the government towards the tribes in the post-independence period.

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UNIT 8: WOMEN IN INDIAN SOCIETY

UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Learning Objective
8.2 Introduction
8.3 Women in Ancient India : Vedic, Post-Vedic and Buddhist Period
8.4 Women in Medieval India
8.5 Women during struguggle for Indepencence and reform movements
8.6 Gender relation in different period
8.7 Women Empowerment
8.8 Let Us Sum Up
8.9 Further Readings
8.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
8.11 Model Questions

8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to -

- learn about the condition and status of Indian women during various periods.
- understand how women had to build their existence with limited focus.
- discuss about various activities in which they had engaged themselves in the process of reformation.
- learn and understand about Sati, Jauhar, Child marriage etc.
- know about famous and popular women leaders who were actively engaged in the process of struggle for independence.

8.2 INTRODUCTION

The position of woman in Indian society has always been always considered lower to that of the man. But man and woman both are equally important elements for a society to sustain itself. A man and a woman are like the two sides of the same coin. Jawaharlal Nehru once said that if a boy is provided education, than it is education for only one person, but if a girl is

provided education, it is education for the entire family. The condition of women in Indian society cannot be described in one single sentence. A lot of things should be taken into consideration while understanding the condition of women in the past as well as in the present. With the passage of time society is also changing in order to adjust itself with the ongoing situations during the time period. Changes in society and its environment with time is its basic requirement to grow.

Similarly the condition and the status of women has witnessed various changes from the ancient time till the modern period. During the times of kings and queens there are very less evidences which talks about the issues of women. Indian society is a patriarchal society which means the male is always the head of the family and in Indian society the unit family is considered very strong with regard to social order. So from ancient till modern times the male is the dominant one for which women are given very less importance. While there were lots of learned and famous women like Gargi, Matreyi, Sultan Raziya, Nur Jahan, Gulbadan Begum, Rani Lakhsmi Bai etc. whose contributions are still remembered in the history of India, all this personalities either belonged to elite families or were part of royal households. So it could not be concluded that Indian women enjoyed good social status from the past. Woman are not even considered equal to men till now for which women are still fighting for equality.

The books of history claim that during the Vedic period 1500-1500BCE the condition of Indian women was good but there is not a single reference where one can find that women were given inheritance rights or widow remarriage was allowed. For this the claim itself becomes very doubtful. The struggle for independence had witnessed the active participation of women in many social activities for which it can be accepted that by then women had grown more conscious. Their voice was still suppressed but a little was done by some liberal minded men in order to reform some aspects of Indian society. For instance Sati was abolished in 1829 with the help of Raja Ram Mohan Rai by Lord William Bentinck.

These were some major reformation that was carried out in order to improve the condition of women in India but the question of equal status to women is still a myth.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: What is patriarchy?

.....

.....

Q.2: What does books of Vedic period claims about women?

.....

.....

Q.3: When was Sati abolished?

.....

.....

8.3 WOMEN IN ANCIENT INDIA: VEDIC, POST-VEDIC AND BUDDHIST PERIODS

Male dominance and subordination of women is a feature of all known historical societies and India is not an exception. Indian society is highly patriarchal where the society is not of equal rank but divided upon rank, gender and caste. Before the begining of the Vedic period very less reference to women was made. As the society was primarily dependent upon survival so there was very less reference found about the status of common women. One important aspect which was found from the earliest period till now was the worship of Mother Goddess which was very popular among people but none of them was considered important than the male gods or believed to be superior. The worship of the female deity maybe popular but it doesn't necessarily mean that real women enjoyed power and privilege. There were terracotta figurines of female deities found in various sites of the Harappan which was widely prevalent among those

people as their main occupation was agriculture and the cult of Mother Goddess was related to fertility.

In the older writings a great part of the discussion was focused on the elite class of women and it ignored the ones those were privileged. The proportion of hymns attributed to women in the Rig Veda is miniscule (just 12-15 out of 1000) as in the number of women sages which suggests that women had limited access to sacred learning. There was no any women priest, while if any women perform or participates in any sacrifices it was on behalf of their husbands. The Vedic Household was clearly patriarchal where women enjoyed very less control over material resources.

There were various kinds of marriage performed during the Vedic period such as the monogamy, polygyny and polyandry. The Grihyasutras gives a list of six or eight type of marriage from marriage by capture to a woman choosing her spouse. Polygyny was more prevalent that polyandry where a man may have number of wives and concubines but the women can have only one man. The early Dharmasutras do not approve widow remarriage. However it was specified that after a definite period of time while waiting for her husband, in case she was abandoned, if he doesn't return, she could remarry. There were also customs where the widow cohabits with brother-in-law only to produce sons. Women were mainly seen as a docile character whose only duty was to bear a male child while they don't have a voice of their own. Women didn't have inheritance rights. The only rights they had over property was the stri-dhana which means the gifts she received during her marriage from her father and other family members, which may include jewellery, clothes, household articles etc.

References to women's work in later Vedic texts include tending cattle, milking cows, and fetching water. There were also vayitri and siri (female weaver), peshakari(female embroiderer), bidalakari (female splitter of bamboo), rajayitri(female dyer) and upalaprakshini(women corn grinder). Apala a women warrior mentioned in the Rig Veda lost her leg in battle and also there are references of women warrior such as Mudgalini and Vadhrimati. A few women, Gargi and Maitreyi participated in philosophical debate with Upanishadic sages.

BUDDHISM AND WOMEN

The highest goal of Buddhism was nibana which became possible for women with the opening of bhikkhuni sangha. On the other hand the Buddhist text reflects stereotyped ideals of the submissive and obedient woman, whose life was supposed to revolve around her husband and sons. Women were also compared to poisonous snakes and fire which means that monks should stay away from women to sustain their vow towards celibacy. While nuns were warned against men but men were never compared to any creatures. Buddhist texts claims that Buddha never wanted to establish bhikkhuni sangha but ultimately gave in to persistent pressure of his disciple Ananda and his aunt and foster-mother Mahapajapati Gotami. The Buddhist sangha was not open to pregnant women, mothers of unweaned children, rebellious women who associated with young men, and those who did not have their parents' and husbands permission to join. There were more rules laid for the nuns than the monks. While there were several nuns who were very learned such as Khema, whose discourse to king Pasendi (c. 6th century BCE king of Kosala) so impressed him that he stood up and bowed before her once she had finished. Other learned and wise nuns were Dhammadinna, Visakha etc. The Therigatha (Verses of Elder Nuns) is a collection of 72 poems consisting of 522 verses, supposed to have composed by 72 nuns who had attained a high level of spirituality. Women, either bhikkhunis or upasikas, were visible and important donors to the Buddhist monasteries. Even after this exceptionally high involvement of women in Buddhism the bhikkhuni sangha seems to be a shadowy entity in the available sources. Even though the engagement of women in the sphere of Buddhism was quite high, women were not able to break free of those stereotypes the society used to follow and they were never given the independence they deserved.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.4: What are the different elements that divide the Indian society?

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Q.5: What was the popular cult of worship in the early period which is related to fertility?

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Q.6: What is Therigatha?

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8.4 WOMEN IN MEDIEVAL INDIA

Indian history is divided into three periods, ancient, medieval and modern to explain the progress of the society in political, social as well as economic spheres. Generally the period from the coming of the Turks till the establishment of the British rule in India is considered as the medieval period. While from 1206A.D to 1526 A.D is called Sultanate and from 1526 A.D till the foundation of British rule in India is considered as Mughal Era.

There were two principal religions found in that period which were Islam and Hinduism. But as during the medieval period the ruling people were dominantly the followers of Islam, so the Indian society had to undergo a tremendous change in its structure, shape and culture.

Like the Hindu families, the Muslim families were also highly patriarchal for which the condition of women never changed; it remained the same. In fact the condition rather deteriorated as the Purdah system was very common among the Muslims. They were not allowed to mingle with people outside their family and were confined to inside the household. In some places girls were allowed to have preliminary education but higher studies was not allowed.

Sultan Raziya, who was the daughter of Itutmish succeeded her father when he died. She was the only female to ascend the throne of Delhi and was very learned and equally capable of riding horse and handling swords.

Mughal Emperor Babar's daughter Gulbadan Begum was a very good poet and a very keen learner and she even wrote the book Humayunnamah. Humayunnamah is the biography of Sultan Humayun and a very important source to know about the period of his reign. Some other prominent women were Mira Bai, Dewal Rani, Nur Jahan, Rupmati. All of them were good poets.

Nur Jahan was very influencial and she was the only lady in the entire history of medieval India who had a tremendous influence on the affairs of the state and also over her husband Jahangir. She was a cultured, educated, intelligent as well as dominant lady with a strong view of the affairs of the state.

In South India Tara Bai played a very prominent role in the state affairs who after the death of her husband Rajaram (Shivaji's son and Chatrapati of Marathas) ruled the Maratha state with great valour in the name of her infant son and was even able to keep the Mughals at bay and also defeat them.

Child marriage was prevalent in the medieval society, where it was believed that a girl should be married before attaining puberty. It was generally believed that if the menstruation cycle of a girl starts before her marriage, she is not considered pure. Akbar, during his reign gave an order where he stated the age of a boy and a girl of getting married which was determined to be 16 and 14 respectively. On the other hand polygamy was widely prevalent in the society where a man can marry several wives. In Muslim societies it was even considered legal. Dowry system was also widely practised where the brides' parents had to give lots of gifts and money to the grooms' family for which the poor families had to face lots of difficulties in marrying off their daughters. While Sati was also in practise, it was not obligatory. It was practised in the kingdoms of Rajputana and Vijaynagara. Akbar tried to stop the system of Sati where he ordered that no women

should be forced to burn herself in the funeral pyre of her husband unless and until she is willing. According to the European traveller Peisaert, “the permission of the governor was essential before a widow could be allowed to be burnt. This governor tried to dissuade her from the act and even offered her monthly subsistence. Sometimes permission was refused to willing widows if they had children to rear. The permission was usually obtained after giving a suitable present to the kotwals.” Emperor Aurangzed tried to ban the practise of Sati in 1664 A.D but he was not successful.

Prostitution was widely prevalent where it was essential for the women to get permission from the government before adopting the profession. The Mughal kings even maintained very large harems. The practise of Devadasi system was also found where young girls were donated to the temples as singers and dancers in the name of God. The king himself maintained the institutions of Devadasis as it generated large amount of revenues.

Women had no right of inheritance while divorce was also not easy. Purdah was very widely practised for which even Akbar stated that, if a young woman was found running in the streets and bazaars without a veil, she should go to the quarters of the prostitutes and take up the profession. While in the Rajput states although the girls were allowed to have education as well as to handle swords and fight but the practise of Jauhar (i.e. mass suicide where all the rajputs women either jump into a fire or well in order to preserve their chastity when a war is lost) and female infanticide were deep rooted for which the condition of those women cannot be considered good. During the Bhakti movement a little amount of change was witnessed where the females were active participators where many of them criticised those brutal crimes done against the females. They even opposed the practise of Sati, Purdah, female infanticide, child marriage, dowry etc.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.7: What is the time period of Sultanate Period?

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Q.8: Who was Sultan Raziya?

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Q.9: What is Polygamy?

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Q.10: What is Jauhar?

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8.5 WOMEN DURING STRGUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE AND REFORM MOVEMENTS

India's struggle for independence was an important event in the history of India which influenced each and every section of the society equally. Women also actively participated in the freedom movement. The struggle of 1857, which is also known as the first war of impendence or Sepoy mutiny, witnessed the active participation of women. Rani Lakhsmi Bai of Jhanshi gave a perfect example of courage and bravery while fighting the British. Indian National Congress was formed in the year 1885 which was also an inclusive organisation which had many female members. The Partition of Bengal in 1905 witnessed the biggest participation of women in the freedom struggle where they donated their ornaments for national trust, actively engaged in weaving clothes, giving education to other women folks and wrote many poems, songs essays etc. Annie Beasant and Sarojini Naidu were politically active ladies who were continuously working for the rights of women and they were considered as the role models by many women. With the initiative of Annie Beasant two newspapers such as the Commonwealth

and New India were founded and the active participation of women in the freedom movement, movement of trade Union etc. was felt tremendously.

Mahatma Gandhi also worked for the well being of women, lower caste people, poor and the needy. He criticised the system of Purdah and inspired women for becoming independent. During the second non-cooperation movement the response of women was unprecedented. Over three thousand women were actively participating in long and tedious processions, picketing, destroying liquor and foreign clothes shops, suffering lathi charge, serving long term imprisonment etc. Women participated in every single movement led by Mahatma Gandhi. Sarojini Naidu even became the president of Indian National Congress in 1925 at Kanpur.

During the 19th century there emerged a group of learned Indian men who were against the atrocities of Indian women and desperately wanted to stop those heinous crimes with their liberal thoughts and behaviour. The reform movement was initially started with the view to reform the religious discrimination faced by the lower-caste people while later it on got extended to various other issues. Raja Ram Mohan Rai was the most important figure in the process of reformation. Some other prominent figures were Govinda Ranadae, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar etc. The British Missionaries were also indirectly responsible for the increasing momentum of the reform movements. As the missionaries started to criticise Hinduism for its very old customs and traditions, so the learned people became conscious for which they themselves tried to reform the religious customs and traditions. Ram Mohan Rai took great initiative in abolishing Sati, while with the initiative of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar the widow-remarriage act was passed by Lord Dalhousie on 20th July, 1856. Ranadae and D.K Karve were also actively associated for the well being of widows. Karve even got married to a widow after the death of his first wife. In 1795, British Governor-General, John Shore declared female infanticide as illegal. Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Prarthana Samaj played a major role in banning those previously glorified customs for which these organisation were considered great epitome of reformation process in India.

Jyotiba Phule and Shabitri Bai Phule are also two very important names in the history of India who worked a lot for upgrading the status of women, lower-caste people and the marginalised. They even opened one school for girls in 1848 and Shabitri Bai was given the responsibility of teaching those girls. In 1854 an orphanage was also opened by Jyotiba Phule for the widows and children. The contribution of Jyotiba and Shabitri Bai is tremendous for the changes in Indian society and also in the status of woman.

Another important leader was Pandita Ramabai, an eminent scholar in Sanskrit, who got titles like Pandita, Saraswati etc.She was actively associated with the process of giving education to women and children, helped widows abandoned by their families to rehabilitate and dedicated her entire life to the improvement of women's life and condition.

The first women college was established in Kolkata with the great initiative taken by the workers of Brahmo Samaj in 1862 which was a milestone in the women's movement in India. In 1878, Bethune College was established, which contributed a lot towards the empowerment of women by providing education. In 1883, Kadambini Basu and Chandramukhi Basu were the first women to graduate from this college. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar established more than 50 schools for girls with the help of Christian missionaries. The wives of the missionaries were also actively engaged in rendering education to women in India. The Hunter Commission which came in the year 1882, played an important role in propagating education to women where it stated that,

- Equal amount of money should be granted to boys as well as girls school.
- Owing to the necessity of rendering education to girls, education was made free.
- Establishment of hostels were proposed for girls who stayed in distant areas and also scholarship for the poor.
- Moreover the syllabus should be same for the boys school as well as in the girls school.

On 28th September, 1929 the Sarada Act was passed with the initiative of Raibahadur Haribilash Sarada which increased the marriageable age for girls and boys to 14 and 18 respectively. This act is considered a milestone in strengthening the position of women in India. Also the Hindu Women's Right to Property Act XI was passed in the year 1938.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.11: Who was the brave Indian lady who fought against the British in the battle of 1857?

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Q.12: What were the two newspapers founded by Annie Beasant?

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Q.13: When and by whom was the widow remarriage act passed?

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8.6 GENDER RELATION IN DIFFERENT PERIOD

In order to know about the gender relation it is very essential to know the meaning of the term gender. The term gender originates from French word 'Genese' and Greek word 'Gene' which means a range of characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between, masculinity and femininity.

Sex and Gender have a little difference where Sex is biological but Gender is Psychological or Cultural. It was found that the root cause of discrimination towards women is because of gender as it relates to the count of masculinity and femininity. In Indian societies a woman is considered weak compared to men. While the birth of a boy is celebrated; in many places mourning takes place when a girl is born. There is separate kind of clothes for both boys and girls. Less emphasis is given for providing

education to girls compared to boys, while parents often keep surveillance over the girl child and put restrictions in her day to day life. A girl is never given equal importance or freedom compared to the boy. These are some social discrimination towards women which differs from society to society for which gender is a socio-cultural term but not biological. It is a man-made concept to signify the weak according to their term over the strong.

Gender relation has been very weak in India in every period. If you observe the situation during the time of kings and queens it could be argued that the prevalence of Purdah is itself the proof. Women had to follow various rules which were set by males, they were not allowed to roam around freely like man, were considered weak for which male asserted that it was the responsibility of the males to protect them. These were followed through the ages in order to trap the women and suppress them and their voices. History also talks very less about women. Whatever references were there were either of some very outstanding ladies or of those who belonged to the royal household or elite class. The condition of the poor or the general women was still the same and they had to face all kinds of social discrimination and atrocities.

Till now women are fighting for their rights and for their freedom. Since the past the voice of the women has been suppressed for which now the conscious and learned women have raised voice against the oppressors. A lot of changes had happened compared to the previous period but a lot is yet to be achieved. It was a long and continuous struggle for women for which many social crimes such as Sati, Child-marriage etc were overcome but gender inequality is still in practise. Societies in India still prefer a boy child over a girl child. The system of dowry is still prevalent in many different parts of India for which parents don't allow their girl child to go for higher studies and try to marry them off soon. Moreover human trafficking, rape, molestation etc. are rising which is a great concern. The Indian societies are never equal. For thousands of years women were dominated, humiliated, suppressed and violated. Although a lot is achieved but there are a lot to achieve in future for which a continuous struggle is very necessary.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.14: What is Gender?

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Q.15: What is the reason for which gender could be considered as the root cause of discrimination of women?

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8.7 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Women empowerment is nowadays considered very important,to redefine the society, according to an understanding of the state with drawing from its welfare role and acting asa facilitation. Thereby, the neoliberal citizen and within it women are articulated as efficient and will change their situation of poverty without the state taking the ones. Women empowerment basically means to empower the women by providing education and financial security. When a women is learned enough she could earn her own bread which will make her financially strong. Many projects are coming up with the notion of women empowerment. Many small projects such as the SHG or the Self-Help Group are doing tremendous work in empowering women financially. In this kind of projects a group of women, preferably composed of local women make small regular savings for a few months until there is enough capital in the group to begin lending. After that the saved funds could be lent to the members of the group or someone in need in the villages on a small interest. In India many SHGs are linked with the banks for micro-credit.

SHGs are started by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) which was generally started to remove poverty but now it is seen as an instrument for empowering women and leadership abilities among the poor, increasing consciousness among people to enrol their children's in schools, nutrition, birth control etc. SHG groups are generally linked with NABARD

which offers loans to different SHGs for undertaking micro projects and to earn profit. NABARD has estimated that there are 2.2 million SHGs in India representing 33 million members. SHG is a small example of empowering the poor and women. There are various other projects run by both government and NGOs for the development of women in the present situation.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 16:What is women empowerment?

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Q.17: What is SHG?

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8.8 LET US SUM UP

- Indian Society is a patriarchal society.
- Females are never considered equal to males.
- Women had no right to inherit property.
- Sati and Child marriage were prevalent from ages.
- During Vedic period women were not allowed to study Vedas.
- Gargi and Matreyi were learned scholars during ancient period.
- Buddhism allowed women monks into its fold very late.
- Bhikkuni Sanghas were opened for women.
- Islam was the dominant religion during the medieval period. Like the Hindu society the Muslim society was also patriarchal. They practised Purdah very strictly.
- Sultan Raziya was the first lady to ascend the throne of Delhi
- Gulbadan Banu Begum and Nur Jahan were very learned and intelligent ladies from the medieval period

- Tara Bai who was a Maratha lady was an able ruler who was successful in defeating the Mughals
- Prostitution was very widely prevalent in medieval India and the Mughal rulers maintained very large harems.
- The revolt of 1857 is also known as the first war of independence and also as Sepoy Mutiny.
- Rani Lakshmi Bai, the queen of Jhanshi took part in the war of independence in 1857.
- Indian National congress was founded in 1885.
- Partition of Bengal took place in 1905.
- Women took active participation in the freedom struggle. Sarojini Naidu and Annie Beasnat were prominent women leaders during the freedom movement.
- William Bentinck declared Sati illegal with the help of Raja Ram Mohan Rai in 1829.
- In 1795, British Governor-General, John Shore declared female infanticide as illegal. Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Prarthana Samaj played a major role in banning those previously glorified customs for which these organisation were considered great epitome of reformation process in India.
- Jyotiba Phule, Sabitri Bai Phule, Pandita Ramabai were great personalities engaged in the well-being of the poor, lower-caste, women and the needy.
- Mahatma Gandhi also worked for empowering the women.
- Sex is biological but gender is psychological or cultural. Gender could be called the root cause of discrimination against women because it is related to the count of masculinity and femininity.
- Women empowerment is nowadays considered very important to redefine the society. Women empowerment basically means to empower the women by providing education and financial security.
- SHGs or the self-help-groups are doing great work in empowering women and providing them leadership quality.

8.9 FURTHER READING

1) Chandra Satish: (1997) *Medieval India: From Sultanate to the Mughals,* Har-Anand Publications, New-Delhi.

2) Chandra, Bipan: *(1989) India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947*, New Delhi.

3) Chopra,P.N, B.N Puri and M.N Das: *(1995) A Social, Cultural and Economic History of India,* Macmillan Publishers, New Delhi, Voll 3.

4) Desai Neera & Krishnaraj Maithreyi : *(1987) Women in Society in India,* Ajanta Publications, Delhi.

5) Singh, Upinder: *(2008) A History of Ancient and Early India: from Stone age to the 12th century*, Pearson Longman, New Delhi.

8.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No.1: Patriarchy means male is the head of the family who holds the primary power in every sort of decision making or political leadership.

Ans to Q No.2: The books on the Vedic period claims about women that the position of women during the Vedic age was good.

Ans to Q No.3: Sati was abolished in 1829.

Ans to Q No.4: The different elements that divide the Indian society are rank, gender and caste.

Ans to Q No.5: The popular cult of worship in the early period which is related to fertility is the cult of Mother Goddess.

Ans to Q No.6: Therigatha are collection of 72 poems written by Buddhist nuns.

Ans to Q No.7: The time period of Sultanate Period is from 1206 A.D to 1526 A.D.

Ans to Q No.8: Sultan Raziya was the first female to ascend the throne of Delhi.

Ans to Q No.9: Polygamy is a system where a man can marry several wives.

Ans to Q No.10: Jauhar is a kind of mass suicide specially practised by Rajput ladies in Medival Rajputana.

Ans to Q No.11: The brave Indian lady who fought against the British in the battle of 1857 is Rani Lakshmi Bai.

Ans to Q No.12: The two newspapers founded by Annie Beasant were Commonwealth and New India

Ans to Q No.13: The widow remarriage act has passed was passed by Lord Dalhouise in 1856.

Ans to Q No.14: Gender is a psychological or cultural term which is related to the count of masculinity or femininity.

Ans to Q No.15: The reason for which gender could be considered as the root cause of discrimination of women is related to the count of masculinity and femininity.

Ans to Q No.16: Women empowerment basically means to empower the women by providing them education and financial security.

Ans to Q No.17: SHGs or Self-help-groups are non-government organisation associated with the empowerment of women and the poor.



8.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Answer in one or two words

Q.1: What is the proportion of hymns attributed to women in Rig Veda?

Q.2: When did the Hunter Commission came to India and what was its principal objective?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q.1: Write a short note about Buddhism and women.

Q.2: What is women empowerment?

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q.1: Discuss the status of women in medieval period.

Q.2: Define patriarchy and gender. Discuss about the situation of gender relation in different period.

Q.3: Discuss about the participation of women in the freedom struggle, their role, popular personalities and reform movements.

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UNIT 9: ECONOMY OF INDIAN SOCIETY

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1. Learning Objectives

9.2. Introduction

9.3. Economy and Its Types

- 9.3.1. Traditional Economic system and its characteristics
- 9.3.2. Command Economic system and its characteristics
- 9.3.3. Market Economic system and its characteristics
- 9.3.4. Mixed Economic system and its characteristics

9.4. Indian Economy before Independence

9.5. Indian Economy Post Independence

9.6 New Economic Policies

- 9.6.1. Liberalization,
- 9.6.1.1. Liberalization in India
- 9.6.2. Globalization
- 9.6.3. Privatization

9.7. Let Us Sum Up

9.8 Further Reading

9.9. Answers to Check Your Progress

9.10. Model Questions

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will able to -

- understand about various forms of economies
- discuss about the Indian Economic system
- Know about New Economic Policies - Liberalization, Globalization and Privatization concepts.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

When we observe the world around us on a daily basis, we can see that there is always some kind of transaction going on. For example, if you visit a market place, you will witness goods being bought by seller and

people buying it in exchange for money. This kind of transaction has been going on since the beginning, when humans beings started forming societies and travelling from one place to another in search of food, water and suitable place for living. This gave birth to the first form of economic formation. To understand the nature of economy of Indian Society, we will discuse in this unit the different types of economy and its characteristies, economy in the pre-independence and Post-independence period and the new economic policies of India.

9.3. ECONOMY AND ITS TYPES

In formal terms, an economy is a system of organization and institutions that either facilitates or play a role in the production and distribution of goods and services in a society. There are primarily four types of economic systems in the world. They are (i) Traditional Economic System; (ii) Command Economic System; (iii) Market Economic System and (iv) Mixed Economic System.

Let us now study in brief all the four forms of economies.

9.3.1 Traditional Economy

A traditional economy is a system which relies on customs, history and time honored beliefs. The economic decisions for production and distribution are based on traditions. Some of the main characteristics under traditional economy are as follows:

- Traditional economy is centered around family and tribes. Elder's experiences are taken as means of guide to day-to-day activity and economic decisions.
- This economy existed in hunter-gatherer and nomadic societies.
- Most traditional economies produced only what they needed, so surplus was rarely there.
- In traditional economies, trading was done among different groups and they rely on barter where competition rarely existed. Rather than competition it was a system that complemented each others trade. For example, a tribe who hunts will exchange food with the tribe that does fishing.

- The traditional economies started to evolve once nomads started settling down and farming was taken as a major activity. To utilize the surplus produce they started to facilitate trading which led to creation of money.

9.3.2 Command Economy

Over the years as the society evolved and led to formation of state and nation state which were controlled by a government (monarchy or empire) the economy also started to evolve. When government was formed all economic decisions were taken by the central government. In formal terms, the economy where all economic decisions were taken by the central government is called command economy.

Within Command economy, the government owns land and the means of production. This kind of economy developed in countries where government owns very large amount of valuable resources and regulates its resources. For example: In the current scenario, China still follows this form of economy. India used to follow the command economic system till 1991 until New Economic liberalization came into being. Some of the major characteristics under command Economy are as follows:

- The government creates a central economic plan. They create time bound plans i.e. five-year plan for every sector and region of the country.
- The government allocates all resources according to central plan. It tries to use the nation's capital, labour and natural resources in the most efficient way possible.
- The central plan sets the priorities for the production of all goods and services that includes quotas and price controls.
- Under this economy major focus is placed on defence sector development.
- The government creates laws, regulations and directives to enforce the central plan.

9.3.3 Market Economy

Market economy can also be called as free enterprise economy. Market economy is driven by consumers need and demand, solely based on interaction between individuals and businesses. This form of economy can be witnessed in developed countries of the world especially in the United States of America. Some the main characteristics under market economy are stated below :

- Within market economy most of the goods and services are privately-owned. The owners can make legally-binding contracts to buy, sell or lease their property.
- Owners have freedom to produce, sell and purchase goods and services in a competitive market.
- The producer can sell their product to highest bidder even while negotiating lowest price for their product.
- The force of competition keeps prices low and ensures that society gets goods and services at desirable rates.
- The economy relies on an efficient market to sell their goods and service. The economy makes sure that all buyers and sellers have access to same information.

9.3.4 Mixed Economy

Mixed economy is a combination of market, command and traditional economies because it protects private property and allows free market and the laws of supply and demand to determine market prices. At the same time the government safeguards its people and market. Mixed Economy is also known as Dual Economy. Some of the unique characteristics of mixed economy are stated below:

- Within mixed economy both public and private sectors function. The private sector motive will be profit making and the public sector will focus on both profit motive and promotion of social welfare.
- Both the government and private enterprises work jointly.
- Under mixed economy, government exercises strict control and regulation over private sector enterprises and industries.

- Mixed Economy is also known as planned economy because the whole economy is subject to the planning of the government.
- Government takes additional steps to provide social security and takes steps to reduce inequalities of income and wealth.

India follows mixed economy and to understand how the whole economic structure of India has evolved over times let us go back in time to understand it. Let us divide the following discussion in two parts

- Indian Economy before Independence and
- Indian Economy in the Post Independence Period

9.4 INDIAN ECONOMY BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

Before the British came to India, the nation was a prosperous one. The village communities were self-sustained. India exported Cotton, Silk and Wooden fabrics, Artistic wares, spices, Opium and Indigo to name a few. In the 17th and 18th centuries Europe was a major customer of Indian's manufacturing goods. India was rarely an importer from other nations, infact the villages of India were self-sufficient and had to rarely venture out of village in search of goods or opportunities. The occupations carried on by village communities were hereditary and passed from one generation to the next. In a way village formed a network of interdependence within the communities.

Since India was a rich country with natural resources and industries, she was conquered over centuries by various nations. India was conquered by Mughals, Dutch, Portuguese and British. The only difference between British conquest and the others was that the British conquest had led to emergence of a new political and economic system whose sole aim was the exploitation of India's natural resources to fulfill their own interest.

Before the beginning of Industrial Revolution in England the East India Company concentrated on exporting Indian manufactured goods, textiles, spices etc to other European nations where Indian goods were in high demands. The Industrial Revolution changed the whole dynamics of Indian trade. As industries were being created in England, demand for raw

materials increased for British industries. They made severe attempts to restrict and crush Indian manufacturers. Emphasis was given to promote commercial agriculture in India to meet the demands for raw materials for England. This made the Indian traditional handicraft industry suffer. The unemployment of artisans and craftsmen's were increasing in large numbers. They were shifting to agriculture which resulted in increased dependence on land. The increasing pressure of population on land was responsible for progressive sub-division and fragmentation of land holdings. As the land holding reduced, tenants started increasing the rent of land holdings which in return increased the number of landless labourers because they could not effort to pay high rents.

To bring stability in agriculture the British introduced land settlement in 1793. In Bengal and in few Eastern parts **'permanent settlement'** was introduced. Under this settlement, the landlords were recognized as the full proprietors of the land. In return of the honour, the landlords were entrusted to collect rent from the farmers for the use of land. Another different form of land system was evolving in the western part of the country. It was the **'Ryotwari System'**. Under this system, each peasant was responsible for paying the land revenue to the government. The peasant holding the land was recognized as landlord and had full rights on land regarding sale, transfer, sub-let or lease as long as he paid land revenue to the government. Even though both the systems were different their ultimate objective was collection of taxes. Daniel and Alice Thorner write, "Whereas the zamindari system made the landlords masters of the village communities, the ryotwari system cut through the heart of the village communities by making separate arrangements between each peasant cultivator and the state".

The revenues collected from India were never utilized within the economy which would benefit the Indians rather it was diverted to set up industrial concerns of British nationals in India. The then British government protected their interests making them the monopoly of trade and industries. Further Indian wealth was drained out of India in the form of remittances of profits and interest. This continued since the inception of the British rule to 1947 when India became Independent.

9.5 INDIAN ECONOMY IN THE POST INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

At the time of independence India was a country with shattered economy widespread illiteracy and poverty. The entire economic structure had to be reconstructed for genuine development of the country. The post Independence economy can be divided into three phases. The first phase was from Independence to 1990's; Second phase started with the introduction of New Economic Policy and currently we are in the third phase where existing measures are scaled up and new delivery mechanism are being created.

- **First Phase:**

After Independence, the policymakers in India launched the project of economic development with a heavy involvement of the state and a democratic polity. The economic development in India followed socialist-inspired policies. This included state-ownership of many sectors. As a result, in the first three decades after independence, India's per capita income increased at a rate of around 2.5 % annualy. This modest economic success led to the foundation of a complex industrial economy and fairly reasonable rate of agricultural growth, with subsidized irrigation and chemical fertilizers.

- **Second Phase:**

The political elite in India launched a process of economic reform with the launching of a policy of liberalization and privatization since the1990s. This was launched with a view to unleashing the entrepreneurial forces from the shackles of controls and regulations that would ensure economic growth.

The major elements of changes in policy were the de-licensing and deregulation of investment and production, discontinuation of exclusive reservation of many key industries, gradual abolition of quantitative restrictions on imports, movement towards a market-determined exchange rate, reduction of average levels of direct and indirect taxes and some streamlining and rationalization of the tax structure etc.

The flexible industrial licensing policy and a relaxed FDI policy started getting positive responses from international investors. Among the major

factors that drove India's economic growth following the economic reforms were increased FDI, adoption of information technology and an increased domestic consumption.

- **Third Phase:**

The economic transformation of the country continues to push forward with third generation reforms. Third generation reforms deal with administrative and judicial reforms, labour market and FDI reforms. The center and state governments are working closely to make further progress. In this phase reform is taken with bottom-up approach and not the trickle-down approach that was pursued in the first and second phases of reforms. The emphasis is put on Panchayati Raj that is made to play an interventionist kind of role to bring the fruits of growth to the door steps of the common man. The introduction of the Kisan Credit Card, micro-credit and encouragement of the Self Help Group movement has shown good results. Moving further, cottage industry, small entrepreneurs, artisans, etc., are encouraged for skill development. They are being financially educated to develop the banking habit. Greater employment opportunities are created through institutional mechanism.

9.6 NEW ECONOMIC POLICIES

As we have seen in the second phase talks about the introduction of New Economic Policies which redefined the Indian economic system post 1990 makes it important to understand it in details. The discussion below aims for that.

9.6.1. Liberalisation

Economic Liberalisation increased the responsibility and role of private sector and at the same time reduced the control of the government on economic affairs with the hope of creating an environment for rapid economic development.

The long term reforms that were brought with the introduction of Liberalisation are as follows:

- **Deregulation of Industrial Sector:** Industrial licensing was introduced under which entrepreneurs had the permission from

government to start a firm, decide of mode of operation and its production.

- **Financial Sector Reforms:** You will be aware that the financial sector of India is regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and it decides and controls the money flow into the economy. This policy reduced the role of RBI and allowed financial sector to take decisions on their own without consulting the RBI. This led to the establishment of private sector banking of both Indian and foreign origins.
- **Tax Reform:** Direct taxes such as corporation tax, which was higher earlier were gradually reduced. Tax systems were simplified and rates lowered substantially for taxpayers.
- **Foreign Exchange Reforms:** The Indian currency was devalued against foreign currencies which led to inflow of foreign exchange.
- **Trade and Investment Policy Reforms:** The aim was to develop local industries and increase use of modern technologies. Imports were kept check by putting quantitative restrictions and export duties removed to increase the competitive position of India in International market.

9.6.1.1 Liberalisation in India

During the 1980's the expenditure of the Indian government gradually increased more than the income generated because the economy was inefficiently managed. As the expenditure of the government began to exceed its revenues by larger margins over the years, the government started to borrow money from banks, people within the country and from International Financial institutions to pay import bills like petroleum. The borrowings after a point became unsustainable leading to rise in the price of essential goods within the country. Towards the later half of 1980's the difference between import and export grew so high that the country did not have sufficient foreign exchange to pay international lenders.

To overcome the financial crisis India approached the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) and received a loan of

7 billion US dollars. The loan was based on the condition that India will open her economy and liberalize restrictions on the private sector and remove trade restrictions for other countries of the world. India agreed to the conditions of World Bank and IMF and announced the New Economic Policy (NEP). The main objective of the Policy was to create a more competitive environment in the economy and removing the barriers for private firms.

The New Economic Policy was categorized into two parts: namely i) Stabilization measures which were short term measures to maintain sufficient foreign exchange reserve and price rise under control and ii) Structural Reforms which were long term measures to revive the Indian economy. These measures can be categorized as Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization.

9.6.2 Globalization

In simple terms, Globalization is the free movement of goods, services and people across the world in a seamless and integrated manner.

According to IMF, "The growing economic inter-dependence of countries worldwide through increasing volume and variety of cross border transaction in goods and services and of international capital cash flows, and through the more rapid and widespread diffusion of technology".

Although globalization means integration of the economies of the nations but its real aim is to build greater interdependence and integration. The interdependence and integration leads to creation of networks and activities transcending economic, social and geographical boundaries.

- **Major Milestone of Globalization:**
  - **Outsourcing:** One of the important outcomes of globalization is Outsourcing. Outsourcing means hiring of services like legal advice, computer service, tele-marketing, advertisement, security etc. by companies in developed countries from developing countries where

the cost of expenditure for hiring people is lower. One of the most common example is voice-based business processes popularly known as BPO or call centres in India.

- **Business Expansion:** Due to globalization many Indian companies have expanded their wings to other countries. For example: ONGC Videsh offices are currently located in 17 countries namely, Vietnam, Russia, Colombia, Venezuela, New Zealand to name a few. Tata Steels have their operations in 26 countries which in return have generated huge foreign return to the economy.

9.6.3 Privatization

Privatization refers to induction of private sector participation in the management and ownership of Public Sector Enterprises. It is the process of transferring ownership of business, enterprise, agency, public property and service from the public sector to the private.

In India the public sector was affected by inefficiencies and incompetence in the 1980s. The New Economic Policies that were introduced in 1991 led to the initiation of several reform measures and one of them was selling of loss making industrial units to private sectors to revive the loss making industries. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of privatization are stated below:

- **Major advantages of Privatization:**
  - **Lack of Political Interference**: A state enterprise may employ surplus workers who are inefficient and never removed because of negative publicity. Such situation does not happen in private sector as they look for efficient workers and do not hesitate to let go inefficient employees.
  - **Improved efficiency**: The main motive of private companies is to make profit. Such companies provide various target incentives to boost its employee's effort which increase the overall output of the company.

- **Shareholders:** Private firms always have the pressure from shareholders to perform efficiently as there is always the fear of the firm being taken over due to inefficient functioning.
- **Increased Competition:** When state owned monopolies are privatized and de-regulation happens, policies allow more firms to enter the industry and increase the competitiveness of the market. This increases competition within private firms and becomes a scope for improvement and efficiency.

➢ **Major Disadvantages of Privatization:**

- Private companies' main motive is to earn profit, which is in contrast with government companies which focus on social capital. If privatization happens it will result in lesser funds for society because they do not have obligations to contribute back to society.
- Privatization affects the employees because in private sector enterprises there is emphasis on performance which indirectly results in work pressure and meeting deadlines and targets. Individuals who were working in public undertaking for years without much pressure find it difficult to adjust to new setting under private enterprises.
- Privatization creates private monopolies which can abuse its monopolistic power. Therefore, government regulation is needed to keep in checks and balances.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q1 : What are the major types of economic systems of the world?

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Q2 : What was the main objective of East India Company before the beginning of the Industrial Revolution?

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Q3 : Which was the first policy that Nehru introduced after becoming Prime Minister of Independent India?

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Q4 : When did Liberalization start in India?

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Q5. Give example of Globalization.

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9.7 LET US SUM UP

- An economy is a system of organizations and institutions that either facilitatesor plays a role in the production and distribution of goods and services in a society.

  There are primarily four types of economic systems in the world. They are (i) Traditional Economic System; (ii) Command Economic System; (iii) Market Economic System and (iv) Mixed Economic System.
- A traditional economy is a system which relies on customs, history and time honored beliefs.
- The economy where all economic decisions are taken by the central government is called command economy.
- Market economy is driven by consumers' need and demand solely based on interaction between individuals and businesses.
- Mixed economy is a combination of market, command and traditional economies because it protects private property and at the same time allows free market and the laws of supply and demand to determine market prices.
- Before the British came to India, India was major exporter of Cotton, Silk fabrics, Artisanal and craft based wares, spices, Opium and Indigo.

- The Industrial Revolution changed the whole dynamism of Indian trade.
- Emphasis was made to promote commercial agriculture in India to meet the demands for raw materials in England. This made the Indian traditional handicraft industry to suffer.
- To bring stability in agriculture the British introduced land settlement in 1793 and also Introduced Zamindari and Ryotwari systems.
- The economy post Independent India can be divided into three phase. The first phase was from Independence to 1990's; Second phase started with the introduction of New Economic Policy and currently we are in the third phase where existing measures are scaled up and new delivery mechanism are being created.
- First phase followed socialist-inspired policies that included state-ownership of many sectors.
- Second phase was the launch of New Economic Policy of Liberalization and Privatization.
- Third phase is taken with bottom-up approach with focus on Panchayati Raj.
- Liberalization unleashed the entrepreneurial forces from the shackles of controls and regulations that would ensure economic growth.
- Globalization is the free movement of goods, services and people across the world in a seamless and integrated manner.
- Privatization is the induction of private sector participation in the management and ownership of Public Sector Enterprises.



9.8 FURTHER READINGS

1) Datt & Sundharam, (2008) "Indian Economy"; S. Chand & Company Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

2) Rao, C. N. Shankar, (2008) " Sociology, Principles of Sociology with an Introduction to Social Thought"; S. Chand & Company Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

9.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No. 1 : There are four major types of economic system in the world. They are Traditional Economic System; ii) Command Economic System; iii) Market Economic System and iv) Mixed Economic System.

Answer to Q No. 2 : The main objective of the East India Company was to export Indian manufactured goods, textiles and spices to other European nations.

Answer to Q No. 3 : Nehru introduced the First Five Year Plan in 1951 to revive the economy.

Answer to Q No. 4: Liberalization started in India in 1991 when New Economic Policy was announced.

Answer to Q No. 5: Example of Globalization: BPOs

9.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1 : Write a short note on India's Economic Liberalisation.

Q 2 : What are the main advantages and disadvantages of Privatization?

Q 3 : What is Ryotwari System

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1 : Write an essay on Indian Economy Post Independence.

Q 2 : Discuss in details the various types of Economy and its characteristics.

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UNIT 10: POLITY IN INDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1. Learning Objectives

10.2. Introduction

10.3. Evolution of Indian Political Structure

10.4. Indian Political Structure Post Independence

10.4.1. Colonialism

10.4.2. Tradition of Panchayat

10.4.3. Electoral Practice

10.4.4. Written Constitution

10.4.5. Independence of the Supreme Court

10.5. Decentralization of Power

10.6. Political Elite

10.7. Political Parties

10.8. Emergence of Electoral System

10.9. Let Us Sum Up

10.10 Further Reading

10.11. Answers to Check your Progress

10.12. Model Questions

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to -

- understand how the Indian political structure evolved over the years.
- explain about Panchayat Raj system under decentralization of power.
- discuss evolution of Indian Electoral system.

10.2 INTRODUCTION

In the conventional narrative, Indian history begins with the birth of the Indus Valley Civilization in sites such as Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa, and Lothal, followed by the coming of the Aryans. These two phases are usually described as the pre-Vedic and Vedic periods. In the fourth century BC, large parts of India were united under the emperor Ashoka. It is during the

time of the Maurya's that Hinduism first began to take the shape that fundamentally formed the present day religion. Islam first came to India in the eighth century, and by the eleventh century had firmly established itself in India as a political force. Finally under Mughal Empire India achieved a large measure of political unity.

The European presence in India dates back to the sixteenth century. In the very early part of the eighteenth century the Mughal empire began to disintegrate and paved way for regional states. In the contest for supremacy, the English fought the battles of Plassey and Buxar and emerged victors and ruled the country for over two centuries. By the early part of the twentieth century, a nationalist movement had emerged; and by 1919-20, Mohandas Karamchand ('Mahatma') Gandhi had emerged. Successive campaigns had the effect of driving the British out of India in 1947, but not before they had partitioned it, and carved out the Muslim-majority state of Pakistan — later dismembered into Pakistan and Bangladesh. In the previous unit we have tried to understand the nature of economy of India and how it has evolved over the years. In this unit we shall discuss the nature of Indian Polity, evolution of Indian Political Structure, and some other important aspects of Indian Polity such as - Decentralization of power, Political Elites, Political Parties, emagence of electoral system so on and so forth.

10.3 EVOLUTION OF INDIAN POLITICAL STRUCTURE

In the beginning of the Vedic age, people were nomads but with development in agriculture people started to settle down in groups. The organization was mainly tribal and the head of the tribe was supposed to be the chieftain, though the concept of King had yet not developed. With the passage of time large kingdoms started to grow and by the 6th century BC there were 16 Mahajanapadas (Kingdoms) in the region.

There were many small republics also in ancient India. These republics had some elements of democracy in their administration. The king (raja) was the supreme head of the legislative, executive and judiciary branches. He was assisted in administration by a number of officials. The members of the council of minister could give advice to the king, but final

decisions were left to the king. The ministers and other officials were directly appointed by the king.

Administrative structure during the Gupta period was exceptionally good in spite of large empire. During the Gupta period also the administrations was more or less like the Mauryas. The most important difference between the Gupta and Mauryan administrations was centralization and decentralization of administration. In the Gupta administration, the governors of the provinces were more independent as compared to the Mauryans, where the administration was highly centralized.

10.4 INDIAN POLITICAL STRUCTURE POST INDEPENDENCE

Independent India came into being in 1947 from the British rule after a long struggle for Independence. After independence like many other new born states India also began with a parliamentary democracy. The well developed and fully evolved form of democracy that we witness today in India has taken a long span of time to mature. Here we are going to find out those factors which contributed a lot for the success of India s democracy. These factors are described below :

10.4.1 Colonialism

The British ruled India undemocratically long after they had deepened and broadened the institutions of democracy at home (England); but consciously or unconsciously the British trained thousands of Indians in the art of government and administration. The British rule taught the Indians about political party, legislature, legislative acts (1773 acts to 1947 acts), election, civil service and so forth which increased political awareness and knowledge of the people of India. These things assisted the leaders of new India to run their state after getting independence from the British rule.

The British government introduced electoral practice in India in 1882 by passing a resolution on Local Self – Government and 1892 Indian Councils Acts. According to the Indian Council Acts 1892, “the government agreed to allow elections to be held in India under

the rule, though the members so elected could take their seats only after being nominated by the Government." This practice of election facilitated the Indians to adopt them with basic principles of democracy afterward. In various times the British rule had enacted various acts to govern the Indians which later assisted the Indian independent government to form their constitution of 1950 within a short period and understand the procedures of legislature.

In the early period of the British rule there was no organization to speak for the mass of India. Thus, the British rule encouraged the Indian to form a formal organization to promote the voice of the rank and file of India. As a result, the Indian National Congress (INC) was set up in 1885 by Sir Alan Octavian Hume, a retired British Civil Servant, with a view to present the interests to the British regime in an organized manner.

10.4.2 Tradition of Panchayat

The Panchayat system of ancient India helped the people of India to cope with the culture of democracy. "The word panchayat describes– a technique of seeking agreement through consultation, hallowed, according to tradition by divine sanction: panch-men-parameswar. This technique was mainly employed in social or economic organisms." It was also extensively used for the arbitration of both caste and village disputes. "Panchayat means a council of five and it usually refers to a village council – which may or may not have five members – which has a great deal to say about the life of the people of the village, in social and religious as well as in economic and political matters. Officially speaking, the panchayat is today the most basic – unit of self-government in India".

10.4.3 Electoral Practice

According to Sir Stafford Cripps, in democracy the people must have a free and unfettered choice of their representatives with a right of recall at stated period. In the same way, Mr. E. F. M. Durbin points out that for the successful working of democracy the first

essential is the ability of the people to choose a government. Therefore, India ensured the voting right of people of India by the Constitution of India which is supreme law of the country. In this approach people always get chance to exercise their power or to choose their favorite candidate. The Indian government or leaders also always showed due respect toward the verdict of the election. This increases the political awareness of the people and they realize that they have an important role to play in the politics. So, it helps to boost the political participation of the people of India. Thus, since independence, the participation of the people is always growing.

10.4.4 Written Constitution

The leaders of the Congress Party chose the written constitution as the organic law of the Indian republic which went into effect on January 26, 1950. This constitution clearly describes about the nature of the Republic, the organization and powers and mutual relations of the Centre and the States, the Fundamental rights of the citizens (Articles: 13 to 35), the directive principles of State policy (Articles: 36 to 51), and so on. This constitution spells out almost all pros and cons of functions of the country. It is in-fact, the longest constitution of the world. This written constitution assists in maintaining the relation between the centre and the states and the stability of the country. It clearly discusses the functions of the centre and the states which helps the growth of democracy in India. In this mode, the written constitution plays a great role in the success of democracy in India.

10.4.5 Independence of the Supreme Court

At present, the independence of Judiciary is considered to be a crucial feature of the democratic country. That is why in democratic countries, the Judiciary is considered the guardian of the constitution and the country. Bryce has rightly said, “There are no better test of excellence of a Government than the efficiency of its judicial system, for nothing more nearly touches the welfare and

security of the average citizen than his knowledge that he can rely on the certain and prompt administration of justice". Garner also observes, "A society without legislative organs is conceivable and indeed, fully developed legislative organs did not make their appearance in the life of the state until modern times, but a civilized state without judicial organs is hardly conceivable". The Supreme Court of India has gained a respectable position in the Indian political system. Many of its decisions and interpretation have been played a great role in maintaining the stability of democracy in India.

10.5 DECENTRALISATION OF POWER

Decentralisation is the process of redistribution of powers, functions, and administrative responsibilities from a central authority to the lowest level of the organization. In the context of India, we can say that power was transferred from the Union Government (Central) and the State Governments to the village level units or Panchayats.

According to Louis A. Allen, "Decentralisation refers to tire systematic effort to delegate to the lowest levels all except that which can only be exercised at central points."

During India's struggle for Independence, Mahatma Gandhi advocated and supported self-governing village communities and believed India's real development can only take place through Gram Swaraj. Immediately after independence government launched development projects focusing on Community Development and various committees were set up to study how government powers could be decentralized to village level units. This led to the 73rd amendment of the Constitution, 1992. The 73rd amendment declared the Panchayats as units of self government. The whole of Panchayati Raj system is divided into three-tier levels, namely i) Village Panchayat or Gram Panchayat (village level) ii) Panchayat Samiti (block level) and iii) Zilla Parishad (district level). The Constitutional (73rd Amendment) Act 1992 came into force on 24th April 1993.

Let's now discuss in details the Three-tier System of Panchayati Raj in India.

- **Village Panchayat:** The Village Panchayat is the lowest unit. The Panchayat chiefly consists of elected representatives elected by the people of the village. Registered voters (above 18 years) who do not hold any office of profit under the government are eligible for election to the Panchayat. The Panchayat as a body is accountable to the general body of the village known as Gram Sabha which meets at least twice a year. The Village Panchayat must present its budget, accounts and annual administrative report before the Gram Sabha. The Panchayat requires the approval of the Gram Sabha regarding village plan, proposals for taxation and development programmes before they are enforced by the Panchayat.

  Each Panchayat elects a President or Sarpanch and Vice-President or Upsarpanch. The Sarpanch is the executive head of the Village Panchayat and coordinates its activities and looks after local institutions like cooperatives.

  The principal functions performed by the Village Panchayat includes maintenance of roads, wells, schools, burning and burial grounds, sanitation, public health, libraries, reading rooms, community centre etc. The Panchayat keeps birth and death records at village level and also acts as the agent of the Panchayat Samiti in executing schemes development at the village level.

- **Panchayat Samiti:** The Panchayat Samiti is the second tier of the Panchayat Raj. The Panchayat Samiti consists of 20 to 60 villages depending on area and population. The president of the Panchayat Samiti is the Pradhan, who is elected by an electoral committee consisting of all members of the Panchayat Samiti and all the Sarpanch of Village Panchayat falling within the areas. The Pradhan convenes and presides over the Panchayat Samiti meetings. He ensures the implementation of the decisions and resolutions of the Samiti and its Standing Committees. He exercises administrative control over the Block Development Officer and his/her staff. By the virtue of the office, the Pradhan is the member of the Zilla Parishad. With the Pradhan and Up-Pradhan, 20 other members are elected from all the Panchayats falling in the block area.

The principal function of the Panchayat Samiti is to coordinate the activities of the various Panchayats within its jurisdiction. The Panchayat Samiti supervises the work of the Panchayats and scrutinizes their budgets. The Samiti carries out the directives of the State Government pertaining to specific projects.

- **Zilla Parishad:** The Zilla Parishad stands at the apex of the three-tier structure of the Panchayati Raj system. Zilla Parishad consists of all the representatives of the Panchayat Samiti, all the members of the state Legislature and the Parliament representing the district and all the district level officers of the Medical, Public Health, Public Works, Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary, Education and other development departments. There is provision for special representatives of women, members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes provided they are not adequately represented in the Zilla Parishad. The Deputy Commissioner or District Collector is also a member of the Zilla Parishad. The Chairman of the Zilla Parishad is elected among its members.

  Its primary responsibility is to maintain the primary and secondary schools, hospitals, dispensaries, minor irrigation works. The Zilla Parishad renders necessary advice to the government with regards to implementation of the various development schemes.

10.6 POLITICAL ELITE

This group of people belongs to the most influential and prestigious stratum in a society who have major influence in shaping the values and attitudes of the majority of the people. Wright Mills (1956) described them as, “those who make decisions having major consequences, who are able to realize their will even if others resist, and who have the most of what there is to have- money, power and prestige.” And Marx referred them as ‘ruling class’.

Generally speaking, ‘Political Elite’ maybe be defined as a group of high stratum decision-makers in political culture or political structure which

monopolizes political power, influences major political policies and occupies all important post of political command. One of the most famous examples of Political elite is Jawaharlal Nehru. After Nehru, his daughter Indira Gandhi joined politics and the legacy still continues where her Daughter in law and Grandson are active president and member of Indian National Congress. The elite's are those who have a stable economic background (through Royal or ancestral lineage), highly educated, mostly belonging to the upper castes/class and committed to societal interests. Their socio-political ideology based on nationalism, liberalism and religious-cultural reforms and at times family alliance and commitment to certain political ideology.

10.7 POLITICAL PARTIES

A political party is defined as an organized group of people with similar political aims and objectives, that seeks to influence public policy by getting elected through General or State Legislative Election to public office. In true sense, Political parties are indispensible to any democratic system. They act as the best link between the government and the common men. Political parties generally operate based on defined objectives, activities on public issues but the ultimate objective of any political party is to attain government power.

Based on the characteristics of a nation, political parties exist within single party system, bi-party system or multi-party system. And based on their area of activity, objectives and interest political parties are divided into National and State party. The political parties in India have been greatly influenced by cultural diversity, social, ethnic, caste, community and religious pluralism.

In India even though we have a multi party system, at national level various political parties join hands together under two major coalition. At present we have National Democratic Alliance (NDA) spearheaded by Bharatiya Janata Party that runs the government and United Progressive Alliance (UPA) headed by Indian National Congress who sits in the opposition.

10.8 EMERGENCE OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM IN INDIA

After India attained Independence on 15th of August 1947 there was a need to elect a truly representative government on the basis of universal adult suffrage. The Election Commission was set up as Independent constitutional authority and was brought to force from 26th of November, 1949. The Election Commission was formally constituted on January 25th, 1950 the day before India became Sovereign Democratic Republic. The first Chief Election Commissioner was Sukumar Sen.

The Commission initially functioned as single member body. However since 1993 the Election Commission is regularly functioning as a three member body. It constitutes a Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners. The term of office is six years or till the age of 65 years whichever is earlier. All the three members have equal power in decision making. If in any case there is difference of opinion on any issue then the commission goes by the decision taken by the majority.

After the constitution of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha of the Parliament and the State Legislative assemblies, the first General Election was conducted in 1951-52. The Election Commission recognized 14 political parties at national level and 39 parties at state level.

The Election Commission adopted the '**Balloting System**' of voting for the years 1951-52 and 1957. Under Balloting system, each candidate was allotted a separate ballot box and voters were just required to drop their ballot paper into the ballot box of the candidate of their choice. From the 3rd General Election in 1962, Election Commission switched to '**marking system**' of voting. In marking system there is one ballot list where the names of all the candidates are listed and voters mark the candidate of his/her choice with a marked rubber stamp and all the ballot papers are put in a single ballot box.

For the first time in Indian Election history the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) were used on experimental basis in parts of Parur Assembly in Kerala in 1982. From 1998 onwards EVMs were extensively used and in 14th General Elections 2004 each and every polling station used EVMs across the country.

Along with EVMs, the Election Commission of India introduced Voter ID Card for the first time in 1993. The main objective of introducing photo Identity Voter Card is to remove dummy voters from the system and improve the electoral rolls and prevent electoral fraud.

The biggest revolution in the Indian Electoral system was the introduction of 'NOTA' or 'None of the above' option. In 2009 the Election Commission asked the Supreme Court to offer NOTA option to voters the freedom of not selecting an undeserving candidate. Supreme Court of India finally ordered on 27th September 2013 the Election Commission to provide all voting machines with a NOTA button to give voters the option to choose 'none of the above'.



CHECK YOU PROGRESS

Q1: What was the most important difference between Gupta and Mauryan dynasty's administrations?

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Q2: What does the word 'Panchayat' mean?

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Q3: What does the constitution of the India specify?

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Q4: Who supported 'decentralization of Power?

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Q5: What did Karl Marx refer to 'political Elite' as?

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Q6: What do Political parties do?

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Q7: Why Voter ID cards were introduced?

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10.9 LET US SUM UP

- When small republics were formed in ancient India the King (raja) was the supreme head of legislative, executive and judiciary branches.
- After Independence India followed Parliamentary form of government.
- Indian Councils Act 1892, "the government agreed to allow elections to be held in India under the rule, though the members so elected could take their seats only after being nominated by the Government."
- The panchayat is today the most basic – unit of self-government in India
- In democracy the people must have a free and unfettered choice of their representatives with a right of recall at stated period.
- The constitution of India plays a great role in the success of democracy in India.
- In India transfer of powers happens from Union Government to State Government to the village level units or Panchayats.
- The whole of Panchayati Raj system is divided into three-tier, namely i) Village Panchayat or Gram Panchayat (village level) ii) Panchayat Samiti (block level) and iii) Zilla Parishad (district level).
- The Panchayat keeps birth and death records at village level and also acts as the agent of the Panchayat Samiti in executing schemes of development at the village level.
- The principal function of the Panchayat Samiti is to coordinate the activities of the various Panchayats within its jurisdiction.
- Zilla Parishad is the top most tire of the Panchayat Raj System and here both public and government officials from various departments are part of it. The Zilla Parishad renders necessary advice to the

government with regards to implementation of the various development schemes.

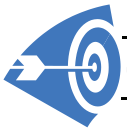
- 'Political Elite' maybe be defined as a group of high stratum decision-makers in political culture or political structure which monopolizes political power, influences major political policies and occupies all important posts of political command.
- Political parties act as a link between government and common men.
- The Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) were used on experimental basis in parts of Parur Assembly in Kerala in 1982.
- NOTA stands for 'None of the above' option.



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10.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No.1: The Gupta administration followed decentralized administration and Maurya's followed centralized administration.

Ans to Q No.2: Panchayat means a council of five and it usually refers to a village council.

Ans to Q No.3: This constitution clearly describes about the nature of the Republic, the organization and powers and mutual relations of the Centre and the States, the Fundamental rights of the citizens (Articles: 13 to 35), the directive principles of State policy (Articles: 36 to 51).

Ans to Q No.4: Mahatma Gandhi advocated and supported Decentralization of Power.

Ans to Q No.5: Marx referred to 'Political Elite' group as 'Ruling Class'.

Ans to Q No.6: Political parties generally operate based on defined objectives, activities on public issues but the ultimate objective of any political party is to attain government power.

Ans to Q No.7: Voter ID cards were introduced to remove dummy voters from the system.



10.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words):

Q 1: Write a short note on Political parties.

Q 2: Who are political Elite? Write in brief what defines a person as political elite.

Q 3: Write a short note on Balloting system and Marking system under Electoral System in India.

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss in details about Panchayat Raj System in details?

Q 2: How did the Electoral System in India emerge? Explain.

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UNIT 11: RURAL LIFE IN INDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

11.1 Learning Objectives

11.2 Introduction

11.3 Evolution of Indian Villages

11.3.1 Characteristics of Indian Villages

11.4 Agrarian Societies

11.4.1 Agrarian Class Structure

11.5 Land Reforms and Changes

11.5.1 Land Reforms in post independence period

11.5.2 Current scenario of Land reforms in India

11.6 Let Us Sum Up

11.7 Further Reading

11.8 Answer to Check your Progress

11.9 Model Questions

11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to -

- know about Indian villages and its characteristics
- explain Agrarian society and its structure
- learn about the land reforms and its changes today

11.2 INTRODUCTION

The places where humans live can be divided into two sections—rural and urban. This has been the fundamental division to study Indian society. Indian village is considered to be the entry point to study any traditional society in India. In India, in spite of the growth of cities, a huge population of the country lives in the villages and are engaged in agricultural activities. The Indian village symbolises tradition, a native life that is far away from the complex urban city. They are the earliest of the communities that are less organised with very few families dependent on each other. They carry out inter dependent activities in gathering food and agriculture.

In the previous units we have learned about the nature and evolution of Indian Economy and Polity. In this unit we shall discuss in details about Rural Life in India.

11.3 EVOLUTION OF INDIAN VILLAGES

The emergence of village and its settled community signified that human beings have transformed from nomadic life to a settled one. Generally the term 'village' is defined as a small area with a small number of population that follows mostly agriculture. Here, agriculture is not only an occupation but also a way of life. Every member of the village is engaged with agriculture in their own small farms.

The village community has passed through various stages:

- **Primitive village community**—— the primitive village community consists of fifteen to twenty families. Owing to small number of families, they were bound to know each other. In primitive village community, the land was commonly used by the community. The village was organised on the collective basis. Everyone trusted each other and depended on one another. There was a high level of 'we-feeling' and a bond of commonness.
- **Medieval village community**— the primitive village community changed during the medieval period. The feudal system came into existence. Members of families increased thus leading to increase in population in the community. Land was divided among different groups of people. With feudalism, came the relation of the kings or the lords and serfs. Occupation was divided and whatever was tilled in the fields had to be given to the lords.
- **Modern village community**— With the rise of industrialisation, the rural group lost its importance. The modern village community stands in sharp contrast to the primitive one. With the emergence of technology and development of communication facilities, these villages are no more far away from the urban centres. Agricultural goods are brought and sold in the cities and nearby towns. Moreover, with the increase in population in the village communities, the kinship bond has become weak as compared to the earlier stages.

11.3.1 Characteristics of an Indian village

- **Self Sufficient—** Indian villages are described as self sufficient communities. Since they were initially not connected with other parts of the society, all the essential needs were produced by the villagers themselves.
- **Homogeneity**— The village community is mostly homogeneous. They live a simple life with common interests. There are various similarities in their life style, eating habits, behavour etc.
- **Primary group**— Indian villages are known for their primary relations. As these villages are small in number of communities, people know each other. Thus, they are dependent on each other and also work for the welfare of the people. One can find a sense of belongingner in a village community, which is not possible in urban cities.
- **Caste system**— Indian villages are known for its caste system. This is a rigid social institution that decides the fate of the villagers. Through this institution, the status and the occupational role of the people are decided in the villages. This caste system stratifies the society based on the customs and traditions.
- **The internal organisation**— Every village have their own internal organisation that controls the activities of the village. Every village has a head man or panchayat who is elected from among the adult members of the village. The governing body has its responsibility to keep the order of the village. They also help in solving various social, political or economic issues of the villagers.
- **Joint family**—— It is one of the important characteristics of an Indian village. Families in Indian villages are known for their cohesiveness. They stand together for their family. Even after marriage, sons are likely to live with their parents. Thus two or three generations live together as a part of a family in villages. According to various sociologists, family is the smallest unit and not the individual. Thus, individual choices are not taken for consideration.

- **Faiths in religion**—— People in villages are religious in nature. They have faith in religion and God. Even to begin a new occupation, they pray to God for the success. Their faith in God, however, sometimes makes them believe in various superstitions.
- **Marriages**— In villages, marriages are mostly exogamous (in terms of community) and endogamous (in terms of caste). No one is allowed to marry within their same village. However, they cannot marry outside their caste system. All villagers are strict in endogamous marriage rules.

Now, rural societies are mostly agrarian in nature. People belonging to the village are mostly engaged in agricultural activities. Thus, they are also known as agrarian societies.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1: What are the three stages of evolution of an Indian village?

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Q2: What does an Indian village symbolise?

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11.4 AGRARIAN SOCIETIES

During the later Vedic Phase, with the invention of plough, agriculture became one of the sources of livelihood for the people. The wooden plough was used to cultivate crops along with the cattle. Thus, agrarian societies are those societies whose primary means of livelihood is the cultivation of crops using a mixture of human and non-human means (i.e., animals and/or machinery). Here, agriculture is the process of producing food, feed, fiber, and other desired products by the cultivation of plants and the raising of domesticated animals. Some of the characteristics of agrarian society are:

- Agrarian societies are mostly involved in cultivation of land through plough. They also use animals to help them in cultivating the field.
- There is an increase in the size of the society as compared to pastoral communities. It relieves the burden of working in the field for a fairly large number of people who can engage themselves in other activities.
- In agrarian communities, there is an emergence of elaborate political institutions. Here power is concentrated in a single individual. Thus, a hereditary monarchy tends to emerge.
- Evolution of distinct social classes is also seen in these communities. As land, which is the major source of wealth, is divided unequally among all the villagers, there is also emergence of division of class and power. This indicates the beginning of social stratification.
- There is also emergence of clearly defined economic institutions. Here, trade becomes more adequate and money becomes the medium of exchange. Different rules and regulations are maintained to carry on with the trade and to make profit.
- Religion becomes a separate institution in agrarian societies. As the societies are becoming more complex, religion is more attached together with the state. Instead, it has become a different institution with different religious body to look after it.

11.4.1 Agrarian Class structure

Unlike simple societies, which use their simple tools to hunt and gather food, agrarian societies are different. Agrarian societies emerged with the invention of new tools like plough and other efficient technology that helped them in making surplus in agriculture. Now, this surplus created a class structure in an agrarian society. The surplus that is created in agricultural process is appropriated by those who acquire property rights and land and also the right to employ others.

According to sociologists like Andre Beteille in his book “Agrarian Social Relations”, agrarian economy can be understood

only by understanding the social framework of an agricultural society because the economy is not independent of society but is part of it. Now, agricultural activities involve a social organisation of rights and obligations, e.g., those of landlord and tenants or landlord and labourers. These are basically class relationships between the one who owns the land and the other who works for the land holder. Although there are caste relations in agricultural society, but one can see that the class structure is an important part of an agricultural society. However, both the caste and class overlap each other. For Beteille, the agrarian society in India can be understood both in terms of class as well as caste and there is a two fold link between caste and class.

- Firstly, class relations are legitimised and sanctioned by the caste system. People who belong to upper caste resist themselves from working in their own lands. Instead they use labours or people from lower caste to do that job.
- Secondly there is a direct link between caste and class as the upper castes such as Brahmins and Rajputs were traditionally land owners, the middle castes were traditionally tenants and the lower castes or untouchables were labourers.

Now, in India since agriculture is an important economic activity, the understanding of land and property becomes important. As India was colonised, the colonialists started to plunder the agricultural structure in the society through monopoly of trade and land revenue system. In traditional Indian method, land revenue was collected as a fixed part of the produce of the land either directly by the officials of the state or indirectly through tax farmers, who kept part of the produce for themselves and deposited the rest with the state. Land was owned by the community and they could not be driven out of the land even if they failed to pay the tax. Moreover, the land revenue was not paid in cash instead it was the part of the produce that was paid to the state. However, the British land revenue system was far different from the traditional one. They brought

various changes in the Indian agricultural system which created havoc and disturbances in the peasant society. The British introduced two main land revenue systems:

- Zamindari system —— this land revenue system was for the Zamindars or the owners of the land. They were considered as commodities and were asked to pay fix tax which was higher than the traditional Indian system. The British even refused to make allowances during drought, flood or other natural disaster. This was introduced by the Permanent Settlement of 1793 by Lord Cornwallis who declared that land was transferable from the cultivator if he fails to pay the tax. Thus land became a property that can be sold, bought and mortgaged in the market.
- Ryotwari System—— This system that was introduced in some parts of British India by 1820 and was used to collect revenues from the cultivators directly. However, the amount of revenues included undifferentiated land taxes and rents, collected simultaneously. Thus, the system in places where land revenue was imposed directly on the cultivators or the one who tilted the lands was called ryotwari system. The *Ryotwari* system is associated with the name of Sir Thomas Munro, who was appointed Governor of Madras in May 1820. Subsequently, the *ryotwari* system was extended to the Mumbai area under the supervision of Thomas Reid.

In this way the British introduced the agrarian class structure in India. Thus the following classes existed in the agrarian structure prior to the introduction of land reform in 1950. T.K Oommen lists the following five categories:

- **Landlords** who own the land but do not cultivate land. They employ intermediaries or lease out the land.
- **Rich farmers** who look upon agriculture as a business product. They produce for the market and think about the profit they can incur from it. However, they do not cultivate themselves and are more involved in supervising the cultivators.

- **Middle peasants** who cultivate their own land and employ workers only for particular purposes.
- **Poor peasants** who own small amount of land, and have to work on their own as labourers or tenants.
- **Landless agricultural workers** who sell their labour and are fully depended on the previous categories for their livelihood.

However, in majority of rural areas, classes consist primarily of the following categories:

- **Landlords**— the British administration made various types of land settlements such as Zamindari settlement, Ryotwari settlement with the natives. Under the Zamindari settlement, a new class of land lords emerged in the Indian society. After the settlement took place, land was permanently owned by the Zamindars and was inherited hereditarily by the family members.
- **Peasant Proprietors**— with the introduction of Ryotwari system, the ownership of land was vested in the peasants. The actual cultivators had to pay the revenue. Here, the cultivators came in direct contact with the State and hence reduced the oppression of the landlords. These thus gave rise to the class of peasant proprietors. In this process, a few mobilised themselves to rise up the hierarchy.
- **Tenants**— The creation of the Zamindari system transformed the owner cultivators of Pre British India into a class of tenants. The Zamindars resorted to the practice of extracting land as well as rent from these tenants. Those who failed to pay had to give away their land to the zamindars.
- **Agricultural labourers**— Along with the rent paying tenants, there was rise of another category of agricultural labourers. With the growing indebtedness among peasant population, land alienation and displacement of the villagers, resulted in the growth of agricultural labourers. While some of the labourers held a small amount of land, others had to depend on their productivity of their labour. There was also the category of bonded labour.

- **Artisans**— In rural areas the class of artisans form an integral part of the village community. These categories of people existed since the simple society was in formation and contributed to the self sufficiency of the village.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q3 : What is the primary means of livelihood for the agricultural society?

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.....

Q4 : Name the land revenue system that the British introduced?

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11.5 LAND REFORMS IN INDIA AND ITS CHANGES

Land reform was a part of the pre-independence nationalist movement which consisted in providing certain securities to land tenants, providing them the right to ownership and implement policies towards ceilings on landholdings. It is basically defined as the distribution of land in equal terms legally. It includes how operation, ownership and inheritance of land can be regulated. In an agrarian country like India where land is divided unequally, where the rich has more land than the poor, land reforms are important. This reform process continued after independence with the gradual development of land reform legislations in the states.

After India got its independence from the British rule, the question of land reform or freedom from taxpaying system was important. That became the major agenda during the period of independence. Years after independence, different land reform legislations were passed. Here, the most common argument in favour of land reform was distribution of equal land to all. In a country like India, where majority of people live in rural areas and are involved in agriculture, a minimum amount of land is required by all.

Hence, the question of land reform became important. Thus various acts and legislations were enacted in order to provide certain rights to the tenants and give them ownership of land.

11.5.1 Land Reforms in post independence period

Various land reform initiatives were taken by the Union Government and the State Governments since independence. The first Five Year Plan (1951-56) has developed a broad approach towards land reforms in India. This was a step by step approach to deal with the problems of land and tax collection. Some of the features of the approach were :

- Abolition of intermediaries who were rent collectors under the pre-Independence land revenue system—— The Five Year plan suggested some of the developing mechanism that can help in abolishing the intermediaries. At the time of Independence there were various categories of the land which was under direct control of land intermediaries: (a) Village land, forest land; (b) Land on which the intermediaries had right to either cultivate or let it out to others, (c) Land other than home-farms under the control of intermediaries for personal cultivation; (d) Land held by the tenants directly from the intermediaries, and (e) Land held by sub-tenants. Thus, in order to free the tenants from these intermediaries, various steps were taken by the Government.
- Tenancy regulation that attempts to improve the contractual terms faced by tenants, including crop shares and security of tenure—— Because of the Zamindari and Ryotwari systems, there were various factors that created problem for the tenants in cultivating in their own fields. These were: a) Land intermediary's took very little interest in cultivation of land marked for personal cultivation and they preferred leasing these lands to tenants. b) Landholdings to tenants were leased to sub-tenants. c) In the ryotwari areas and areas of peasant proprietorship, land was actually cultivated by the tenants. Thus to overcome these kinds of problems, the following set of actions were suggested:

- **Rent Regulation of the Land:** The Plan recommended that rent of the land should not exceed 1/4th or l/5th of the total produce from the land under consideration. However, rent variation was between 1/4th and 1/3rd in different states.
- **Security of Land Tenure:** The security of the tenure of the land for tenants was linked with the owner's right to resume the land for personal cultivation. To overcome this, the Plan suggested that permanent and heritage rights be given to the tenants. The land lord can own a limited amount of land. However, the rest was left for the tenants to share.

11.5.2 Current scenario of Land reforms in India

In the earlier section, we saw how the first Five Year plan started the initiative of land reforms. This was one of the most appreciated steps towards the development of an agricultural society. However, the failure of the first round of land reforms to remove the unequal power structure in the villages caused a lot of discontent among the poor. Besides, the green revolution in the late 1960s further widened the income gap between the have's and the have not's. In fact, the growing discontent led to land conflicts, including naxalite movement in West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and other parts of the country. These developments forced the government to revise the ceiling laws in the early 1970s. In addition there were also other improvements taken in land reforms legislation. They were Tenants, Rights over Landholdings, Ceiling on the Excessive Land, and Consolidation of Landholdings, and Computerization of Land Records.

- Ownership rights to the tenants— The tenants are given the ownership rights. They cannot be evicted from their land and has full right to cultivate in their own lands.
- Ceiling Surplus Land— According to Government records, there is surplus amount of land in each state. Hence, the process of ceiling those lands by the government has been initiated.

- Consolidation of land holding—— Every Five Year plan put emphasis on consolidating different fragmented agricultural landholdings as its integral part. This is done to develop agricultural economy of the villages.
- Computerization of land records— Computerization of land records (CLR) was started in 1988-89 as a central scheme. This project was taken to solve the problem of maintaining records manually.
- Land rights for Women— Earlier, land reforms did not include the rights of women. In some states, women were not allowed to buy any land. Thus, in 1992, it was recommended that women should be given equal opportunities in terms of land holding. The land can be jointly shared by husband and wife.



11.6 LET US SUM UP

- The Indian village symbolises tradition, a native life that is far away from the complex urban city. They are the earliest of the communities that are less organised with very few families dependent on each other.
- Generally the term 'village' is defined as a small area with a small number of populations that follows mostly agriculture.
- The village community has passed through various stages: Primitive, medieval and modern village community.
- Indian villages have various characteristics— Self Sufficient, homogeneity, primary group, caste system, internal organisation, joint family, faith in religion, marriages, conservatism.
- During the later Vedic Phase, with the invention of plough, agriculture became one of the processes of livelihood for the people. The wooden plough was used to cultivate crops along with the cattle.
- According to sociologist like Andre Beteille in his book "Agrarian Social Relations", agrarian economy can be understood only by understanding the social framework of an agricultural society because the economy is not independent of society but is part of it.

- For Beteille, the agrarian society in India can be understood both in terms of class as well as caste and there is twofold link between caste and class. Firstly, class relations are legitimised and sanctioned by the caste system. Secondly there is a direct link between caste and class as the upper castes such as Brahmins and Rajputs were traditionally land owners, the middle castes were traditionally tenants and the lower castes or untouchables are labourers.
- Now, in India since agriculture is an important economic activity, the understanding of land property becomes important. As India was colonised, the colonialists started to plunder the agricultural structure in the society through monopoly of trade and land revenue system.
- The British land revenue system was far different from the traditional one. They brought various changes in the Indian agricultural system which created havoc and disturbances in the peasant society. The British introduced two main land revenue systems: Zamindari system and Ryotwari System.
- Land reform was a part of the pre-independence nationalist movement which consisted of providing certain securities to land tenants, providing them the right to ownership and implement policies towards ceilings on landholdings.
- The failure of the first round of land reforms to remove the unequal power structure in the villages caused a lot of discontent among the poor. These developments forced the government to revise the ceiling laws as well as tenant laws in the early 1970s.



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11.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No.1: Primitive village community, Medieval village community and Modern village community

Ans to Q No.2: The Indian village symbolises tradition, a native life that is far away from the complex urban city.

Ans to Q No.3: The primary means of livelihood for an agricultural society is the cultivation of crops using man and cattle.

Ans to Q No.4: Zamindari system and Ryotwari system.

11.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Answer in one or two words:

Q1 : In which year was first five year plan introduced ?

Q2 : Name any book written by Andre Beteille?

Q3 : Write two characteristics of an Indian village?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words):

Q1 : Describe Zamindari system and Ryotwari system.

Q2 : Explain the land reforms taken after 1970s in India?

Q3 : What are the characteristics of agrarian societies?

C) Long answer type questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q1 : Write in detail the characteristics of an Indian village?

Q2 : Explain the agrarian class structure in detail.

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