

SOCIETY IN INDIA

**BA [Sociology]
Third Year
Paper - III**



RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY

Arunachal Pradesh, INDIA - 791 112

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About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.

SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE

Society of India

Syllabi	Mapping in Book
UNIT 1 Unity in Diversity: Types of Diversity-Ethnic Racial, Religious, Linguistic, Economic, Regional and Caste; Types of Unity-Cultural, Political, Geographical, Social and Religious; Unity and Diversity.	Unit 1: Unity in Diversity (Pages 3-35)
UNIT 2 The Structure and Composition of Indian Society: Villages, Towns, Cities; Rural-Urban Linkages; Tribes; Weaker Section, Dalits, Women and Minorities.	Unit 2: The Structure and Composition of Indian Society (Pages 37-63)
UNIT 3 Basic Institutions of Indian Society: Caste; Class, Kinship, Family, Marriage and Religion.	Unit 3: Basic Institutions of Indian Society (Pages 65-108)
UNIT 4 Rural Power Structure: Bases and Emerging Pattern of Rural Leadership; Panchayat Raj; and Dominant Caste.	Unit 4: Rural Power Structure (Pages 109-127)
UNIT 5 Problems of Indian Society: Poverty, Dowry, Gender Inequality, Human Trafficking and Communalism.	Unit 5: Problems of Indian Society (Pages 129-157)
UNIT 6 Developmental Concern: Regional Disparities, Development Induced Displacement, Ecological Degradation, Climatic Change, Sustainable Development.	Unit 6: Developmental Concern (Pages 159-186)
UNIT 7 Transformation of Indian Society: Process of Transformation-Globalization; Secularization; Industrialization, Urbanization and Modernization-It's Impact on Indian Society.	Unit 7: Transformation of Indian Society (Pages 187-214)

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INTRODUCTION

In India, languages, religions, dance, music, architecture, food and customs differ from place to place. However, they possess a unity in diversity. The culture of India is a mix of these varied sub-cultures. India happens to be the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Family plays an important role in the Indian culture. For generations, India has had a prevailing tradition of the joint family system. Rig-Vedic Sanskrit is one of the oldest languages of the world. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata are the oldest preserved and well known epics of India. Family, religion, caste, class and kinship constitute the basic institutions of the Indian society.

After Independence, the Indian society has undergoing gradual transformation. The rural landscape has evolved with the coming up of the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Still, Indian society is plagued by several problems such as poverty, dowry, gender inequality, human trafficking and communalism. In addition to these problems, India is also going through issues such as development induced displacement, regional disparities, climate change and sustainable development. There are a number of factors which are responsible for continuity and change in Indian society namely, globalization, industrialization, urbanization and modernization.

This book, *Society in India*, has been written in the Self-Instructional Mode (SIM) wherein each unit begins with an 'Introduction' to the topic followed by an outline of the 'Unit Objectives'. The detailed content is then presented in a simple and an organized manner, interspersed with 'Check Your Progress' questions to test the understanding of the students. A 'Summary' along with a list of 'Key Terms' and a set of 'Questions and Exercises' is also provided at the end of each unit for effective recapitulation.

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UNIT 1 UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Unit Objectives
- 1.2 Religious Diversity in India
- 1.3 Linguistic and Regional Diversity
 - 1.3.1 Ethnic and Racial Diversity
 - 1.3.2 Caste
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

India is a land of diversities. Myriad languages, religions, ethnic groups, cultures, customs, food habits and attires are its prized possessions. It is a truly plural state and absorbs all pluralities into itself. The adage 'unity in diversity' sits pretty on her. Despite the numerous diversities, the country stands as one and all its citizens are proud citizens of one glorious nation.

Despite numerous foreign invasions in its history and foreign rule at various times in the past, the country never lost its unique identity. It stood firm during such onslaughts and attained independence in 1947. The idea of a united India was kept alive by its founding fathers who gave it a written and popular Constitution that secured for its citizens fundamental rights. It also gives its people secularism and protects the religious and linguistic minorities.

1.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the concept of religious diversity in India
- Analyse the existence of linguistic and regional diversity in India
- Interpret the meaning of 'Unity in Diversity'
- Explain the types of unity existing in India

1.2 RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN INDIA

Religious pluralism is usually used as a synonym for religious tolerance, although both the concepts have distinct meanings. Religious tolerance means that each person is entitled to his own set of religious beliefs without having to conform to some societal

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standard. Religious pluralism, on the other hand, includes religious tolerance. Thus, it is a broader term that asserts that religious truths and values exist in many different doctrines.

Some theologians argue that God created all the religions of the world in order to speak to people in ways that most appeal or relate to their circumstances in life. As such, all religions have originated from the same source. As a theological argument, religious pluralism suggests that if all religions are from the same original source, then they all must be having a common truth. This argument stresses upon the similarities between religions and relies upon common stories, figures and doctrines.

People, who identify themselves as practitioners of religious pluralism, often mean that they have developed their own spiritual doctrine on a wide variety of traditional religious beliefs. Instead of subscribing to one religion, pluralists pick and choose those beliefs from various religions that are similar to their own beliefs.

The concept of religious pluralism is tricky, especially when subjected to scientific and logical analysis. Most religions contradict the position accepted in another religion and this leaves the pluralists caught in the middle of some arguments. Religious pluralism aims to unite people by rising above the differences arising from various religious beliefs. Historically, such efforts have met with varying degrees of success. Nonetheless, such efforts are praiseworthy.

Religions in India

There are a number of religions with substantial followers in India. Some of them are briefly discussed as follows:

- **Hinduism:** The Hindu religion or Hinduism is one of the oldest religions in the world. It is supposed to have developed about 5,000 years ago in India and is followed by various racial and ethnic groups. Hinduism is the third largest religion of the world after Christianity and Islam.

Hinduism is the most dominant religion in India today. More than 80 per cent of Indians are Hindus, which means that about 960 million people are followers of Hinduism in India. This figure could touch a billion if you include all the Hindus in the world. But Hinduism or Indian Hinduism should not be perceived as a threat by anyone, especially our neighbouring countries. Hinduism offers a great deal of space for every religion and is very tolerant of other faiths.

Hinduism does not have any united system of belief. It is programmed in a declaration of faith. It comprises the plurality of religious phenomena originating from and based on the Vedic traditions. Hinduism describes a religious mainstream that evolved organically and spread over a huge territory having considerable ethnic and cultural diversity. This mainstream came up both by innovation from within, and by incorporation of external traditions or cults into the Hindu fold. The result is a huge variety of religious traditions that range from different small and unsophisticated cults to major religious movements with millions of adherents.

- **Islam:** Islam originated in the Arabian Peninsula. The basic unifying agent in Islamic civilization was Prophet Mohammed (AD 570–632). Mohammed's message did not contain anything new. It had been narrated by a long line of Jewish prophets from Noah to Mohammed, who was the last of God's chosen prophets.

Islam came to India quite early. Infact, the Islamic influence was initially felt in the early AD seventh century with the advent of Arab traders. The spread of

Islam in India was basically due to Sufism, as a lot of Sufi beliefs found their parallels in Indian philosophical literature.

Some of the sufi saints who preached in India are Hazrat Khwaja Muin-ud-din Chishti, Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki, Nizam-ud-din Auliya, Shah Jalal, Amir Khusro, etc.

Islam basically spread during the reign of Muslim leaders in the medieval period. The Mughals took a lot of initiatives to spread this religion. As a result, it is the second largest religion of India.

- **Christianity:** Christianity is the largest religion in the world with more than two billion followers. It has dominated western culture for centuries and remains the most important religion of Europe. Christianity discusses the life of Jesus Christ.

Jesus's teachings focussed on the following themes:

- o Kingdom of God
- o Love of God
- o Love of neighbour

His teachings and his growing popularity with the masses was seen as a threat to Jewish religious leaders and the Roman Government. This led to his execution by crucifixion. Christians believe Jesus rose from the dead three days after his burial. The most typical belief of mainstream Christianity is the doctrine of the Trinity, which views the one God as consisting of the following three persons:

- o The Father
- o The Son
- o The Holy Spirit

Bible is the sacred text of Christianity. It consists of the Old Testament and the New Testament. Most of the Christians consider the Bible as divinely inspired and authoritative.

In India, Christianity is one of the prominent religions. At present there are about 25 million Christians in India. It is interesting to note that the Christian population in India is more than the entire population of Australia and New Zealand.

- **Sikhism:** Sikhism is the fifth largest organized religion in the world. It is based on the teachings of Guru Nanak and his nine successive Gurus. This organization of religious doctrine is known as the *Gurmat*. Guru Nanak founded Sikhism. He is generally depicted as a reconciler of the two religious traditions.

The chief belief of Sikhism is faith in *Wahe Guru*. The Sikhs call their God *Wahe Guru*, which means that God is great. Sikhism recommends the pursuit of salvation by trained, personal meditation on the name and content of God. The followers of Sikhism are bound to follow the instructions of the ten Sikh Gurus as well as the Holy scripture, which is known as the *Guru Granth Sahib*. This scripture includes selected works of devotees from different socio-economic and religious backgrounds.

The key belief of Sikhism is that God exists as a real entity and not merely as an idea or a design.

- **Buddhism:** Buddhism was found in India. Gautam Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, kept his teachings limited to *Dhamma* and *Vinaya*. Buddhism is an ethical arrangement, a way of life that leads towards a particular goal.

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The essence of Buddha's preaching is the four noble truths. These four truths are as follows:

- (i) Acceptance of sufferings
- (ii) Knowing the cause of sufferings
- (iii) Bringing the sufferings to an end
- (iv) Using the eight fold path as a mechanism for release from sufferings

Buddhism has been divided into many philosophical schools and has a vast literature. Buddha was primarily an ethical teacher and a social reformer rather than a theoretical philosopher. He referred to a number of metaphysical views prevalent during his times and condemned them as futile.

- **Jainism:** Jainism also took its birth in India. Vardhaman Mahaveer was the founder of Jainism. Like Buddhism, Jainism also had its origin in the idea of non-acceptance of the Vedic authority of Hinduism.

The Jains believe that there are twenty four great circles of time and in each circle, one great prophet comes to the world. These prophets are known as *Tirthankaras*. Vardhaman Mahaveer is recognized as the twenty fourth and last *Tirthankara*.

There are two main sects in Jainism—*Digambara* and *Svetambara*. Jainism believes that all nature is alive. It states that everything from rocks to insects have a soul known as *jiva*.

- **Judaism:** Judaism is the oldest of the three great monotheistic religions of the world along with Islam and Christianity. It is the religion and way of life of the Jewish people.

The basic tenets of Judaism have originated from the *Torah*, which are the first five books of the Bible. The most important tenet of Judaism is that there is only one eternal God who desires that all people must do what is just and merciful. It also says that each person must be respected and loved as all of them are God's creations.

Judaism was one of the first foreign religions to arrive in India. About three quarters of its followers in India today are residing in Manipur, Mizoram and Mumbai.

- **Zoroastrianism:** It is the ancient, pre-Islamic religion of Iran. It still exists there in isolated areas and in India. The descendants of the Zoroastrian Persian immigrants are known as Parsis in India. The population of Parsis is very less in India and they are mostly concentrated in Mumbai.

This religion was founded by the Iranian prophet and reformer Zoroaster in the sixth century BC. Zoroastrianism contains both monotheistic and dualistic features. Its concepts of one God, judgment, heaven and hell, etc., greatly influenced the major Western religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Equality of Religions in India

Throughout its history, India has observed the principle of equality of all religions and has treated the followers of every religion equally. Even when we were not a Republic and were ruled by hereditary rulers who belonged to a particular religion, these rulers did not impose their religion on their citizens. Rather, they allowed the followers of all religions to freely profess and practise their own respective faiths. There might have been some

aberrations in between, but generally this tradition of religious tolerance prevailed. This age-old tradition was inherited by the country at the time of its independence on 15th August, 1947 and was embedded into its Constitution (in the form of secularism), which was adopted a little over two years later.

India is the home to the largest number of Hindus, and of the second largest number of Muslims, in the entire world. It is also home to millions of Buddhists and Christians. Besides, there are sizable numbers of followers of several other religions like Jainism, Sikhism, Judaism, etc. In the pluralistic and multi-religions society of India, religious tolerance and religious values have always had, and continue to have, a strong influence.

In all other South Asian countries surrounding India, one religion has an official or an otherwise privileged status, for example, Buddhism in Bhutan and Sri Lanka, Hinduism in Nepal, and Islam in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Maldives. In this South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) group of nations, India stands out as the only secular state having no state religion and no single officially patronized religion. Religion-state relations in this country are indeed unique in every sense of the term.

Unlike other SAARC nations, where it is mandated by law or convention that the head of the State must belong to a particular religion, that position in India can be occupied by any citizen irrespective of religion or caste. Despite the overwhelming predominance of Hindus in India, in sixty-one years of the post-Constitution era, the country has had four Presidents, three Vice-Presidents and a Prime Minister belonging to minority religions.

Whenever a head of the State or Government dies while occupying a position, his or her last rites are performed under the management of the Government. It is done with full State honours. However, this is invariably done in accordance with the rites of the religion of the deceased. On all such occasions, the Government and the official media arrange and broadcast all-religion prayers.

Unity in Diversity

There have been various judicial decisions wherein religious pluralism has been emphasized as the quintessence of the Indian society.

The Apex court's description of India as a mosaic representing a synthesis of different religions and cultures only put a seal of affirmation on what indeed has always been the ground reality in this country.

The law in the secular India of our times respects religious beliefs and practices. It ensures religious liberty but keeps it within internationally recognized limits. It prohibits abuse and misuse of religion and religious sensitivities and provides laws and statutory mechanisms for controlling and managing specific religious and religion-related affairs. On the whole, modern India remains a deeply religious country and spirituality continues to be an integral part of the social order. India's secular Constitution and constitutionally sanctioned legislation are, therefore, sensitive enough to this ground reality.

Secularism

Let us try and understand the concept of secularism as it exists in India. Secularism is a basic feature of the Indian Constitution, which cannot be changed even by the Parliament. There is no state religion and the state is prohibited against discrimination on the basis of religion. Secularism ensures that religion does not determine state policy. It insulates public policy-making from the influence of religion and, thereby, eliminates any bias or

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discrimination that can creep into this process. Secularism is a very important aspect of the Indian way of life and governance. It has helped in promoting communal harmony and in keeping national integration at the forefront. Communal harmony can prevail only when you ensure equality of status among people and equal opportunity for everyone as conceived in the Constitution of India.

Notwithstanding the adoption of secularism, India has witnessed horrifying communal riots at times. In this context, it is commonly felt that secularism is the solution to such religious violence in India, especially with regard to conflicts between Hindus and Muslims. On the contrary, secularism is fiercely contested by a variety of groups.

It is important for us to know that, historically, notions of secularism and tolerance originated as solutions to problems related to the religious strife in the West. Therefore, it is important for religious studies to develop an understanding of those problems that secularism and tolerance can solve, and whether or not these are also the problems Indian society faces with regard to religious pluralism.

Religious Conversion in India

Religious conversion has become a controversial issue in contemporary India. One side of the debate on religious conversion is represented by those who claim that conversion and proselytization are basic and inalienable human rights. The other side claims that the conversion activities of Christianity and Islam violate the integrity of Hindu traditions and disturb the social peace in a plural India. The two positions on conversion are considered to be incompatible and are governed by feelings of mutual incomprehension, unease and resentment.

This problem has to be addressed in a very proactive and forceful way to protect the secular character of the country. While conversion might be an integral part of a few religions, the Government must ensure that nobody changes his/her religion under threat or inducement. At the same time, anyone wishing to change his/her religion voluntarily must get the full protection of the State. Such steps would only ensure the sanctity of our pluralism and strengthen Indian society.

1.3 LINGUISTIC AND REGIONAL DIVERSITY

India has always been a multi-lingual country. Language has also been an important source of diversity as well as unity in India. According to the Grierson (Linguistic Survey of India, 1903–28) there are 179 languages and as many as 544 dialects in the country. The Constitution of India, in its 8th Schedule recognizes 22 official languages with English as an important associate language. All the major languages have different regional variations and dialects. Some of the dialects of Hindi are Bhojpuri, Rajasthani, and Haryanvi. Originally, only 14 languages were included in the 8th Schedule. Bodo, Dogri, Konkani, Maithili, Manipuri, Nepali, Santhali and Sindhi were recognized later. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru had remarked, ‘The makers of the Constitution were wise in laying down that all the 13 or 14 languages were to be national languages.’ The languages listed in this schedule have acquired different names at different stages and are better known as the scheduled languages now. The Minorities Commission report and the official Language Resolution 3 of 1968 considered languages listed in the schedule as major languages of the country. The ‘Programme of Action’ Document, 1992 of the National Policy on Education, 1986 considered them as modern Indian languages.

Check Your Progress

1. Name the popular religions followed in India.
2. What is the most important tenet of Judaism?

The Bhasha Research and Publication Centre (BRPC), Vadodara conducted the People's Linguistic Survey of India. The survey was completed in 2013 and it identified 860 Indian languages, with Arunachal Pradesh having the maximum. At least 300 languages are no longer traceable since independence, according to the survey. As many as 40 crore people in India can communicate in Hindi. It was found that Hindi as a language has gained popularity more than English and anything communicated in the language which is popular among the masses, would have a better reception.

The highest literary awards in the country are given to 24 literary languages in India by the Sahitya Academy, and newspapers and periodicals are published in 35 languages every year.

English is recognized as an important instrument of knowledge dissemination, commerce and maintenance of international relations. A provision was made to extend the use of English language in the article 343 as 'Official language of the Union' for all official purposes of the Union even after a period of fifteen years with a provision that 'the President may, during the said period, by order authorize the use of the Hindi language in addition to the English language'.

Table 1.1 provides a list of 22 languages arranged in descending order of speakers' strength. Originally among the scheduled languages, the speakers of Hindi had the highest percentage (41.03 per cent). However, it is noticed that the linguistic regions in the country do not maintain a sharp and distinct boundary; rather they gradually merge and overlap in their respective border zones.

Table 1.1 Scheduled Languages in Descending Order of Speakers' Strength, 2001

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Population</i>
1	Hindi	41.03
2	Bengali	8.11
3	Telugu	7.19
4	Marathi	6.99
5	Tamil	5.91
6	Urdu	5.01
7	Gujarati	4.48
8	Kannada	3.69
9	Malayalam	3.21
10	Oriya	3.21
11	Punjabi	2.83
12	Assamese	1.28
13	Maithili	1.18
14	Santhali	0.63
15	Kashmiri	0.54
16	Nepali	0.28
17	Sindhi	0.25
18	Konkani	0.24
19	Dogri	0.22

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20	Manipuri	0.14
21	Bodo	0.13
22	Sanskrit	N

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Source: 2010-11, Office of The Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, New Delhi.

* Excludes figures of Paomata, Mao-Maram and Purul sub-divisions of Senapati district of Manipur for 2001.

** The percentage of speakers of each language for 2001 has been worked out on the total population of India excluding the population of Mao-Maram, Paomata and Purul sub-divisions of Senapati district of Manipur due to cancellation of census results. N - Stands for negligible.

Though all the languages spoken in India are different from each other, yet they may be grouped into four linguistic families; the Austric Family (Nishada), Dravidian family (Dravida), Sino-Tibetan Family (Kirata) and Indo-European Family (Arya). The languages of the Austric family are spoken by tribal people in Meghalaya, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and in parts of Central Indian tribal belts like Ranchi, Mayurbhanj, etc.

The languages of the Dravidian family are spoken in southern parts of India. The dialects and languages of the Sino-Tibetan family are spoken by the tribal people of the North-Eastern region and in the sub-Himalayan region in the North and North-West. People in the Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh also speak these languages. The speakers of the languages of Indo-European family are found in North India. The majority of the people in the North Indian plains speak Indo-Aryan (Indo-European family). Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh also have large population of speakers of these languages.

The degree of linguistic diversity in India is perplexing, not only for visitors but also for Indians. Each of the country's 29 states has adopted one or two of the 22 official languages. India's linguistic barriers are compounded by the fact that each language also has a unique written form, with an alphabet that is unrecognizable to people who are ignorant of that language.

The linguistic diversity found across India stems from a history that saw numerous ancient kingdoms, each with its own language. These languages remained distinct to the area even after a kingdom was dissolved or merged with another. State lines later drawn by the colonial rulers often crossed former political and linguistic boundaries.

After Independence, many of the southern states in India opposed the installation of Hindi as India's national language. Simultaneously, there was a strong lobby across different regions of the country for organization of states on a linguistic basis. This has resulted in the protection and encouragement of linguistic diversity. The formation of groups based on common linguistics, each with the political rights to administer itself within the structure of the federal system, resulted in that particular linguistic community becoming the majority in that specific region. The Telengana issue in 2009 is an important example where there was a demand for a separate linguistic province. Telangana was formed in 2014. 'Language also becomes a diversifying factor when it is used as a vote bank for politics'. (Kamraj Nadar) Slogans like 'Tamil Nadu for Tamils', 'Maharashtra for Marathis', and so on further aggravated the language problem.

Although there is a great diversity of languages and dialects in India, fundamental unity is found in the ideas and themes expressed in these languages. Sanskrit has influenced many languages in India. However, in spite of diversities, Hindi continues to be the national language and people of one State can communicate with people of another State and a national language generates national sentiment.

1.3.1 Ethnic and Racial Diversity

Racial classification is a system used to categorize humans into large and distinct groups. This research is conducted through various characteristics such as phenotypic characteristics, genetic features, heredity, geography, ethnicity and social status.

The basic characteristics or distinguishing traits used to classify people into various races are:

- Looks or phenotypic characteristics or physical features and body type
- Region or place of origin
- Ethnic as well as social status in society



Fig. 1.1 Different Physical Traits of People Belonging to Different Ethnic/Racial Backgrounds

From the following sections, it will be clear why racial classification is important and how it is used for various studies targeting humans. But the main point of emphasis here is that though racial classification was introduced to make human identification easier, in today's world racial classification has taken the form of racism itself. Certain discriminatory behavioural practices have been associated with this deeply political concept. Some political parties have been found guilty of using racial classification as a weapon to influence people for and against each other. This affects the material lives of people and in a way reinforces the negative side of 'races' into their minds. The beauty and true meaning of the classification thus gets ignored. We as citizens of India should try to ignore the use of such classifications and put them to appropriate use rather than getting politically influenced and deceived.

Benefits of Racial Classification

Racial classification was introduced way back in the early years of the twentieth century as a tool for taxonomic studies of human beings. This includes use of identifying features to ease certain researches. Benefits or utility areas of racial classification include the following:

- **Forensic studies:** Like identification of skeletons from bone structures. This is known as forensic anthropology.
- **Biomedical research:** A way of relating diseases to phenotypic and genotypic characteristics.

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- **Medicine and gene therapy research:** Finding new treatment methods, targeted towards a particular population or race.
- **Psychology and sociology studies** also use racial categories to understand and relate to human behaviour.
- In some countries, profiling of suspects is done on basis of their race.

Benefits of racial classification are tremendous and foreseeing the same our early thinkers had evolved this into a way of categorizing humans. Over time certain social and economic factors have crept in and changed the concept of racial classification. As a result, racism can be seen, observed and overheard today. At times, racial biases interfere with our thoughts and create discrimination between various races. This mindset tends to give more power, better status and better recognition to some races while marginalising others and regarding them as inferior or backward. This has even been the cause of tragic instances like slavery, genocide and discrimination. This kind of thought process must be discouraged. Only then can we fully understand the significance of racial classification.

Racial Classification

From the above discussion, the basis of forming races can be understood. But it should be made clear that while physical characteristics influence a person's belongingness to a race, there is no possibility of strict boundaries to any of the races. Hundreds of phenotypic characteristics have been identified as distinguishing features but it is not always possible to have a strict group of set of characteristics in one race. Intermixing is possible and very much noticed. Thus, while identifying and listing features, the majority rule applies. There might be groups of people with characteristics of more than one race. In earlier times when caste system was followed almost all over the country, strict rigidities pertaining to non-allowance of inter-caste marriages helped maintain purity of genes. That is the phenotypic characters in one racial group could be easily related to the generalised characters of the group. With time as more and more people are entering into inter-caste marriages, the rigidity of determining physical characteristics is fading. Racial classification is based on secondary physical features. Here, a brief difference between primary and secondary characteristics is to be understood. All human beings share some similar basic structural forms and features which include the following:

- Upright posture
- Gripping fingers
- No bony eyebrows
- Well developed and well formed feet
- Separate and prominent features like chin and forehead
- Complex brain activity

All the above contribute to primary features and are common to all human beings. Apart from these, descriptive features, like those used to describe the above or the personality and nature of a human being comprise secondary features. These include skin colour, shape of eyes, neck formation and height, broad or narrow shoulders etc. Therefore, uniformity in primary characters and variations in secondary characters is important.

The variation in secondary features is attributed to wide-ranging environmental, social and other related factors.

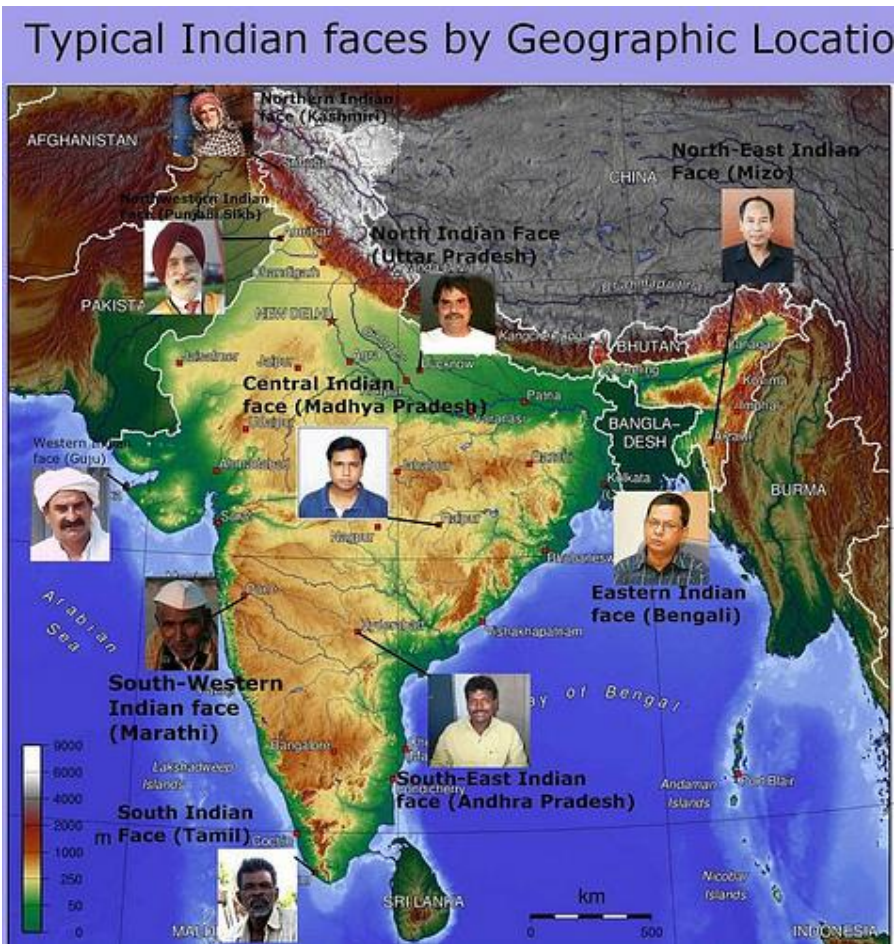


Fig. 1.2 Typical Indian Faces by Geographic Location

Polycentric Racial Classification

As per the polycentric theory of evolution (by Franz Weidenreich of USA), the development of modern man took place in separate regions, independent of the existence of others. This separate development led to varying characteristics. As per the same theory, man in these regions evolved from the influence of the oldest inhabitants of those regions. They adapted themselves in such a manner that they were able to adopt certain characteristics of their ancestors thereby making a mark for themselves as a distinct race. Different regions of development became the different centres of the origin of races. This is why the origin of race is considered to be polycentric. As per this approach of classification, four major races have been observed. Table 1.2 provides a brief study of the varied races and their identifying features.

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Table 1.2 Four Major Races as per the Polycentric Racial Classification System

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S. No	Name of the Race	Identifying features
1	Caucasoid or Eropoid Non-Indian origin	Skin: White Hair (medium to thin) of lighter shades Head – broad to long Nose- medium to long Non projecting jaw No pragnathism seen High forehead Thin to medium lips Medium to tall in height and Eye colour is usually light.
2	Negroid Non-Indian origin	Skin- dark brown to black Hair- woolly and frizzy usually black Prominent head formation with protruding features especially ear lobes; Round head; Broad to flat nose with low or broad bridge; Marked pragnathism observed; Thick and averted lips; Either very short or tall in stature; Eye colour compliments hair (dark brown to black).
3	Australoid Usually found in South and Central India	Skin- medium to dark brown in colour; Curly and wavy hair which are medium to dark brown in colour; Narrow and long head; Broad nose with marked root and thick tip; Medium to pronounced pragnathism observed; Short face and receding chin; Fuller lips and medium to dark brown eyes; Eye brow ridges are broad and prominent; Height is medium to tall.
4	Mongoloids Usually inhabitants of North-Eastern parts of India.	Skin- yellow or yellow brown; Hair-brown to brown black; Straight and coarse hair; Predominantly broad head; Medium to broad nose with low or medium nose bridge; Face is medium to very broad with broad and flat cheek bones; Lips are thin; Eyes are brown to dark brown; Eyes shape is oblique with narrow opening slit; Short to medium height;

Table 1.2 gives an account of four major races identified as per the polycentric racial classification system. Alongside the name of the races, a brief list of identifying feature has also been given.

Monocentric Racial Classification

Monocentric classification was given by Henri Victor, G Olivier (France), Francis Howell (USA), Kenneth Oakley (Britain), and V P Yakimov of USSR. The founders of this classification had a view that all human beings originated in a single region and developed into various races only after spreading out into various regions. This is how the different races came into existence, as per the anthropologists with monocentric view.

Racial Classification in India

India has witnessed immigration on a large scale. Each group entering into the country has come with the specific traits of its own racial group. This has added to the diversity of characteristics observed in our land. Several studies and attempts have tried to acknowledge the actual characteristics of the dominant racial groups in India. Several European anthropologists have made attempts to classify the same. Some important ones have been mentioned in the Table 1.3. Although no two classifications are the same, some similarities nevertheless can be seen. In terms of feasibility and application, each of the mentioned classification have considerable weight age.

Table 1.3 Varied Classifications to Identify Racial Groups Prominent in India Along with their Year of Attempt

S. No	Name of classification	Year of attempt
1	Risley's Classification	1951
2	Giufriada-Ruggari's Classification	1921
3	Haddon's Classification	1924
4	V. Eickstedt's Classification	1934, Improvised in 1952
5	Guha's Classification (most widely used)	1935, Improvised in 1937
6	Roy's classification	1938
7	Sarkar's Classification	1958, Improvised in 1961
8	Biasutti's Classification	1959
9	Roginskij and Levin Classification	1963
10	Buchi's Classification	1968
11	Bowles's Classification	1977

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Racial Groups in India

Based on Guha's classification, which is the most widely used racial classification system, racial distribution chart of the people of India has been made. This distribution has been depicted in Figure 1.3.

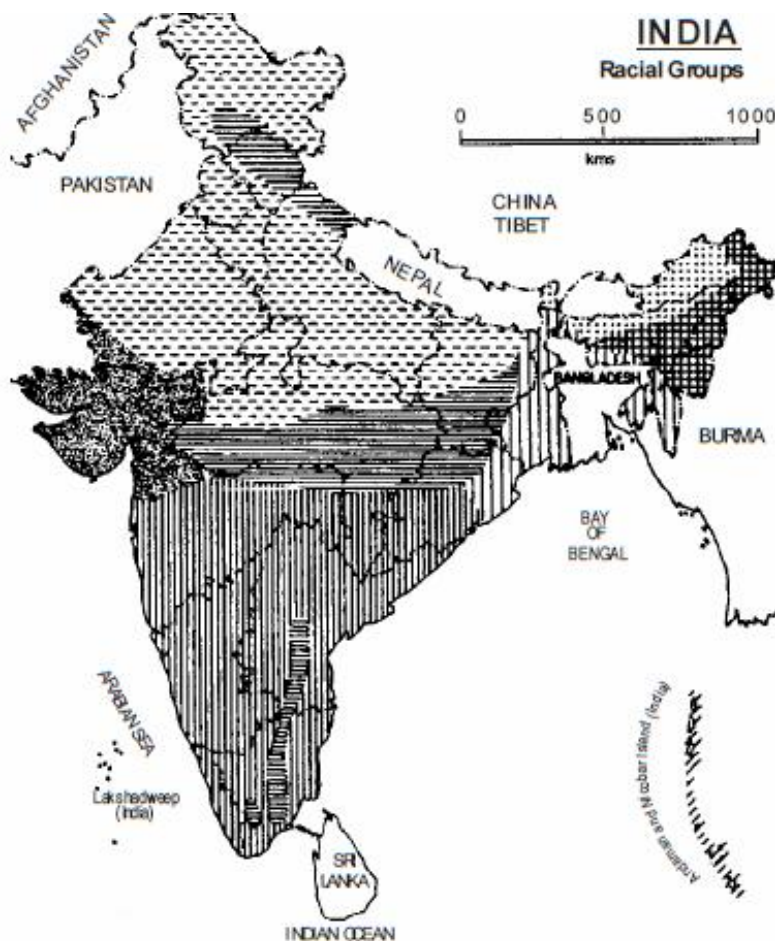


Fig. 1.3 A Pictorial Representation of Racial Domination in Different Regions

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Races depicted in figure 1.3 include the following:

- **Negritos**
- **Proto-Austroloids**
- **Paleo-mediterraneans** (long head, medium to tall in height, long and narrow face structure, vertical forehead, brow to dark brown skin colour)
- **Alpo-dinerics** (light to medium colour of skin, round head, hook nose and acrocephalic)
- **Orientos** (broad, head, broad face and medium stature)
- **Mediterraneans**
- **Proto-nordics** (pure to near blond, long head, fair skin, delicate nose, prominent chin and blue eyes)
- **Tibeto-Mongoloids**
- **Paleo-Mongoloids**

The above mentioned list describes the list of races found prominently in India. The names in the list are evident that the races have been formed upon intermixing of the major groups. Thus, giving rise to new races or ethnic groups describing features of each of the above and other minority groups or races found in India is out of the scope of this book, however, Figure 1.2 gives the reader an idea about the major races prominent in Indian society. In the following paragraphs, you will study in brief regarding the major contributing races of Indian society.

Negritos: It is the oldest race or oldest type of human beings who survived changing times. Studies prove, Negritos were the first inhabitants of South East Asian regions. Some hints or traces of the presence of Negritos can be observed in the hilly regions especially in the hills of South India, Assam, Burma and Bengal.

Proto-Austroloids are known to belong to the West. Prominent in chota Nagpur are the tribes of South India and some parts of Central India. These are sometimes referred to as the original inhabitants of the country and, thus, given the name 'Adi-Basis'.

Mongloid: Mongoloid races or Mongoloid element is prevalent in groups of people belonging to Northern as well as North Eastern parts of India especially the Himalayan range. Even Eastern Bengal has seen prevalence of racial groups with Mongoloid elements. Other than this, Mongolian features have also been observed in the tribes of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.

Other prominent racial elements visible in Indian society are:

Paleo-Mediterranean, traces from historical excavations have revealed their early arrival in India. The features or traits similar to Paleo-Mediterraneans have been seen among people of North India.

1.3.2 Caste

The Indian caste system is characterized by several unique identifying features and at the same time, each caste has specific features or characteristics that distinguish it from other castes. Though the caste system came about for functional purposes and to clearly demarcate division of labour for orderly functioning of society, through the ages it degenerated into an exploitative and discriminatory tool and became a social evil plaguing Indian society. Through its long existence since 1500 BCE, the caste system came to acquire the following characteristics:

¶ **Caste system is hereditary:** The caste of an individual is strictly determined by his heredity, i.e. the caste into which he or she is born. It is not within individual power to change one's caste status.

¶ **Caste system is endogamous:** Marriages are allowed only within the caste and inter-caste marriages are strictly prohibited. Marrying below one's caste is considered a sin.

¶ **Caste system is hierarchal:** The Indian caste system is governed by a rigid hierarchy and a system of superiority and subordination. As per this hierarchy, Brahmins enjoy the highest status followed by Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and the lowermost are the Shudras.

¶ **The caste determines the occupations:** The occupation of a person is governed by his caste, and as mentioned earlier, it is also hereditary. As defined in the Vedas and the Upanishads, each caste has a specific role and thus, members of each caste have to pursue jobs or occupations specified for their caste. Defined occupations include the following³⁴

- (i) Brahmins: Teaching, guiding, conducting religious rituals and so forth.
- (ii) Kshatriyas: Governance, warfare, management and so forth.
- (iii) Vaishyas: Trading, service category jobs and craftsmanship.
- (iv) Shudras: Menial jobs like shoemaking, cleaning, gardening and so forth.

A farmer's son will become a farmer, a warrior's son has to be a warrior and a sweeper's son can never aspire to a higher vocation.

¶ **Untouchability is practised:** The caste system is marked by extensive discrimination and exploitation. The Shudras and the untouchables were not only exploited economically and physically, but socially too, they were shunned upon. Even if the shadow of a low caste person fell on a Brahmin, the latter was said to have been polluted. Lower castes are also not allowed to use common worship places or educational institutions or even the cremation grounds of those used by the higher castes of society.

¶ **Caste System is reinforced by religious beliefs:** The Hindu religious beliefs play a significant role in reinforcing the caste system. The religious texts and scriptures assign a superior role to the Brahmins and so, reverence and awe is accorded to them. This religious support has helped in maintaining the rigidity of the caste system.

However, it needs to be clarified here that these characteristics were present in the caste system as it was traditionally practised ages ago. Through centuries of social reform, advent of modern education, era of urbanization and industrialization and improvement in literacy and awareness levels of the people, the traditional caste system has been largely marginalized. It is no longer followed rigidly and people are free to choose the occupation for which they are best suited. The hierarchical lines are also greatly blurred. A Brahmin priest still gets respect and reverence and a sweeper is still shunned but a professional, say a corporate employee may belong to any caste and his social status will be determined by his inter-personal skills, his quality of work and other factors and not by his caste.

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Regional Diversity of the Caste System

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Though caste system is mostly associated with Hindus and Hinduism but it is also a fact that it has been found to be practised in various other regions as well. Caste-based divisions have also been observed among Buddhists, Muslims and Christians. Similarly, existence of the caste system is not confined to India alone; the same is followed in other parts of the world like Yemen, some parts of Spain (in Christian colonies) and among Buddhists of Japan.

But even within India, there are wide regional variations as far as the practice of caste system is concerned. According to the well known sociologist, Babul Roy, 'The Caste system of even a small region is extraordinarily complex. For instance, a local caste-group claiming to be Kshatriya may actually be a tribal or near-tribal group or of a low caste which acquired political power in the recent past. The local trading caste might be similar in its culture to one in the 'Shudra' category and far removed from the Sanskritized Vaishya of the Varna system. Castes included in the Shudra category might not only be servants, but landowners wielding a lot of power over everyone including local Brahmins.' The text book model of the four-fold classification of Varna in some sense is found in the North – the heartland of Hindu India, whereas in Dravidian south, the castes are mainly grouped into the opposition of Brahmins and non-Brahmins. So is the case in Himalayan states and in eastern and extreme north-eastern India. In south, there are no genuine Kshatriyas and Vaishyas; these two categories only refer to the local castes that have recently claimed Kshatriya or Vaishya status by virtue of their occupation and marital tradition, and the claim is seriously disputed by others.

Roy's research found that in Bengal, the different merchant castes did not constitute a single group nor did they enjoy equivalent status. In Assam, the Kalita is an influential cultivating caste, unique to this region. The Ganak (astrologer) enjoys higher social position in Assam than in Bengal. Regional variations have also been observed in the degree of caste-based discrimination and disabilities. The rigidity with which the caste system is followed also varies across regions.

Caste and Relationships

In the ancient and medieval times when the caste system was rigidly followed, a person's caste determined the nature of his social interactions and relationships with other members of society.

The three major areas of life that were dominated by caste were marriage, meals and religious worship. Marriage outside one's caste lines was strictly forbidden. In fact, most people married within their own sub-caste. Regarding meals, offering food to a Brahmin was considered a privilege and a pious act. Anyone could accept food from a person of lower caste. If an untouchable dared to draw water from a public well, the water was considered to be polluted and nobody else could use it. For religious worship, the priestly class or Brahmins conducted religious rituals and services. This included occasions like marriages, births, festivals, as well as funerals.

The Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas had full rights to worship, but Shudras were not allowed to enter temples or offer sacrifices to the gods. The untouchables were barred entirely from worshipping. In some regions, untouchables had to hold their footwear in their hands when a Brahmin passed and in certain other regions, they had to lie face down at a distance.

Caste and Occupations

As has been mentioned in earlier sections, the caste system is essentially a functional categorization that was devised to ease division of labour. It placed people in occupational groups according to the status of their caste in the hierarchy.

India's caste system has four main classes (also called *varnas*) based on birth and profession. In descending order, the classes are as follows:

- **Brahmin:** Engaged in scriptural education and teaching, essential for the continuation of knowledge and conducting religious rituals and sacrifices. Other castes considered Brahmins to be the medium between them and the gods.
- **Kshatriya:** Engaged in all forms of public service, including administration, maintenance of law and order and defence.
- **Vaishya:** Engaged in commercial activities as traders and businessmen.
- **Shudra:** Engaged in semi-skilled, unskilled and menial jobs.

Though originally conceived to provide orderliness to society, the problem with this system was that under its rigidity, the lower castes were prevented from aspiring to climb higher, and, therefore, economic progress was restricted.

1.3.3 Economic

We will now discuss the socio-economic classification or classes existing in Indian society. The rural population forms a dominant part of Indian society and, thus, we will begin our discussion of class hierarchy with this section of society.

In rural areas or Indian villages, a clear demarcation between class and caste is not present. Caste and class categories arise from one another and overlap. Caste decides a person's occupation and based on the same his economic position and social status or rank in society are determined. 'Brahmins' constitute the highest caste and are involved in professions like performing rituals, marriages, priesthood and teaching. All this brings them a great deal of respect and high social status. Similarly 'Vaishyas' in villages are destined to be involved in jobs like those of craftsmen, traders or small scale farmers. Accordingly, their economic growth remains restricted and their status in society also remains lower than Brahmins and Kshatriyas. The latter are large landholders, zamindars and leaders of the village. The lowest caste or 'Shudras' take jobs of landless and hired labourers or perform other menial jobs and are accordingly given meagre social status and recognition. Here, the caste affects job type, which in turn decides the economic and social status of a being.

As in villages, in towns too social status is dependent on economic assets and power of the individual but occupation is not a limiting factor. In urban areas, caste system is not given as much importance as it is given in rural areas. With education and urbanization, mindsets of people have become radical, rational and less orthodox. Thus, cross-cutting of caste boundaries has become a common trend in cities. In cities, based on the economic status of an individual, he is ascribed to upper, middle or lower class.

Let us first define social class. A social class can be defined as a group of people who fall under common brackets of wealth, power or influence in society and receive similar respect or social status. For analysing a person's social class, his economic status



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is the first thing that is judged. Following aspects are ascertained when considering economic well-being of a person:

- Income group
- Economic stability
- Spending pattern
- Economic security

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In addition to these, other factors also contribute to the process of determining the social class of an individual. These include the following:

- Hard facts or practical information like income, expenditure, level and type of expenditure and other aspects are measured. This is called the objective method of evaluating the social class.
- Knowing and understanding a person’s thinking, ideologies and lifestyle values form under the subjective method of evaluating the social class.
- The indirect approach when people are asked to comment about other people’s living and expenditure habits is called the reputational method of evaluating social class.

Using the above-mentioned three processes, the following social classes have been recognized in Indian society:

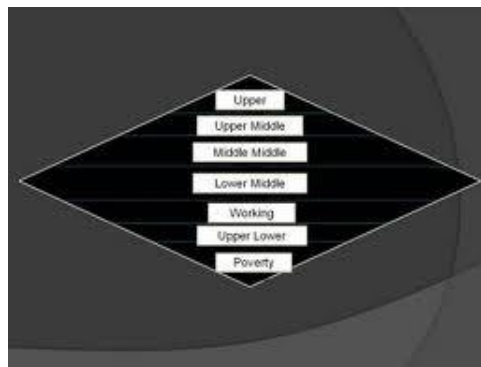


Fig. 1.4 Types of Social Classes Recognized in India Society

Upper Class

These people are owners of a major chunk of the nation’s wealth and belong to one of following professional categories:

- Owners of large lands or real estates
- Large scale industrialists
- Descendants of former royal families or ‘gharanas’
- Company CEOs or top executives
- Established and prosperous entrepreneurs



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Following are the characteristics of the Indian upper class:

- Within this group also, some stratification is noticed. The first category would include those who own inherited wealth and property and may belong to well-established business families or royal dynasties. The second category would comprise those first generation wealth-earners like top executives or industrialists who have hard-earned wealth as against inherited wealth. It must be mentioned here that the former category may have some families that belong to the upper class but may have lost the bulk of their wealth for some reason or the other. There are instances of families that struggle to maintain their erstwhile opulent lifestyle while in reality, they are deep in debt. It is, thus, clear that class is not always indicative of economic well-being.
- However, by and large, upper class people belong to the exceptionally rich group of people or those with more money and resources than their spending needs.
- In India, 10 million people belong to the category of upper class, i.e., 1 per cent of the population.
- Such people often indulge in conspicuous consumption by spending on highly expensive luxury goods and services.

Middle Class

Next in hierarchy is the middle class or what is sometimes called the sandwich class. An easy definition of people belonging to this class would be:

Members of the middle class are wealthier than the lower class and poorer than the upper class. So, being on the middle position of the social ladder, the middle class people constitute the thick central layer. Many millions of Indians fall in this category.

According to the findings of Credit Suisse, a global financial services firm based in Zurich, from its Global Wealth Report 2015, India accounts for 3 per cent of the global middle class with 23.6 million people. The Credit Suisse report has estimated the middle class on the basis of their wealth rather than their income. The report estimated that 664 million adults belonged to the global middle class in 2015, or 14 per cent of the adult population. India has 23.6 million adults who qualified as middle class in 2015. There is no clear definition of middle class in India, but the latest definition dramatically lowers the number of Indians considered to fall in that category.

The Indian middle class is characterized by the following:

- The Indian middle class people mostly occupy medium to high level jobs (white collar respectable jobs) and aspire to rise higher in their organizations.
- Here again, two groups are observed. There is the lower middle class (low income group) which has members who occupy low to medium paying jobs like secretaries, clerks, small business owners, managers and so forth. There

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is also the upper middle class that includes people with high professional status, better education and more income. They include CEOs, lawyers, businessmen, doctors and others.

- The lower and upper middle class together constitute half of the Indian population.
- Middle class people have sufficient resources to satisfy their needs and desires. Their basic needs of housing, food, good healthcare and education are looked after by their economic means. Overall, they lead decent lives.

Working Class

Another important social class is the working class. This class basically includes people in blue-collared jobs like labourers, carpenters, technicians, plumbers, factory workers and others. They are the skilled working class people.



The characteristics of the working class are:

- The skills required for blue-collared jobs are relatively easy to acquire. There is considerable lateral movement among this class as a mason may easily acquire the skills of a tile layer and upgrade his position and income.
- Non-skilled and less educated members of this class have job options of becoming care takers, drivers, maids, waiters and others.
- There is no or negligible scope of career enhancement for members of this caste and their economic and social status remains almost the same throughout their life.
- They have minimal or elementary educational background and, thus, cannot aspire to get better paying jobs. This restricts their economic growth.

Lower Class

- Poverty, unemployment, deprivation and non-fulfilment of daily needs are the identifying features of this group of people. A large chunk; almost half of the population in India belongs to this category, which is a shameful reality.
- These people have minimal or no education and, thus, take up jobs like rag picking, cleaning, sweeping, begging, becoming bonded labourers and so forth. Their income is not fixed and is rarely sufficient to even fulfil basic needs of clothing, shelter, food and medical aid.
- Given this economic condition, for members of the lower class, obtaining vocational training or education remains an unattainable dream. This further poses a barrier to their growth.

- Many belonging to this group often get frustrated and take the path of crime and illegal activities or drug abuse.



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Upper Middle Class

- In the recent past, India has seen the phenomenon of the fast growing upper middle class. Those who do not fit in the upper class but possess more resources than the middle class come under this group. By commanding more resources than the middle class, we mean that these people have sufficient economic strength to avail all basic needs, enjoy some if not all luxuries and also keep aside a good amount as their savings.



- Savings is an important activity for such people. They save to complement their income and also to secure their future.
- With good education and high ambitions, these people aspire to attain not only better salary levels but also dream of emulating the lifestyle of members of the upper class.

1.4 MEANING OF UNITY AND DIVERSITY

India is a land of diversities. It consists of varied landscapes, seasons, races, religions, languages as well as cultures. The main source behind this unity is elusive and it cannot be easily identified. The unity can only be felt, but it is beyond any kind of analysis. In his book, *Discovery of India*, Jawaharlal Nehru presents a very sensitive and fascinating account of his search for the unity at the root of India's amazing diversity.

Check Your Progress

3. List the distinguishing traits used to classify people into various races.
4. State the benefits of racial classification.

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India's cultural progress can be compared with a moving river, which originates from the Himalayas and merges in the sea. It passes through forests and wastelands, as well as orchards and farms, villages and cities. The river absorbs the waters from its tributaries as well as its streams, its environment changes; still it basically remains the same. Indian culture also shows an identical combination of unity as well as diversity, continuity as well as change. In the due course of her long history, India has witnessed many changes, faced various aggressions, accommodated numerous cultural groups and assimilated elements from diverse sources. However, despite all this, the continuity and the basic theme never broke.

In the excavation at the site of the Indus Valley Civilization (3000–1800 BC) many art forms were discovered. During these excavations at Harappa and Mohenjodaro, a statue of a man in meditation was found, this statue hinted at the fact that yoga was practiced in those days as well. Also was found a clay seal of deity, which was quite similar to Lord Shiva. The bangles, beads and other ornaments found during the excavations are similar to the ones available in our shops today. Recent research shows that the Indus Valley's influence got extended towards various regions of northern and western India. The people of the Indus Valley had close contacts with the people of the Dravidian civilization. The Dravidian civilization thrived in southern India long time before the Aryans arrived.

During 2000 to 1600 BC, a section of the Aryan family, popularly known as the Indo-Aryans, migrated to India. They brought the following customs with them when they came:

- The usage of Sanskrit language
- A religion based on sacrifice
- A ritual honouring of deities symbolizing the elemental forces of nature. These symbols were as follows:
 - o Indra, the God of rain and thunder
 - o Agni, the God of fire
 - o Varuna, the lord of the seas, rivers and seasons

Hymns addressed to the above-mentioned deities were collected in the four 'Vedas'. The oldest of the 'Vedas' is the Rig Veda (1500–1200 BC). The Rig Veda describes the quest for finding the ultimate supreme reality, which underlies all diversity. This quest was reinforced in the discussions of the 'Upanishads' (900–600 BC). The Vedic poetry is marked by lofty ideas, literary beauty and a movement from external ritual to inwards experience.

In the sixth century BC, two religions emerged in India outside the Vedic tradition. These religions were Buddhism and Jainism. The Buddha's personality and his emphasis on love, compassion and harmony, deeply influenced the Indian thought and culture. However, Buddhism as an organized religion found huge recognition even outside India. Jainism, which was founded by Mahavira, emphasized on truth and non-violence and it even made huge contributions towards Indian art as well as philosophy.

Alexander of Macedon crossed the Indus River in 326 BC, but he went back soon after. His invasion persuaded Indian culture to initiate relation with the Greco-Roman world. Six years later, Chandragupta Maurya united the scattered empires of India under one centralized empire, with their capital at Pataliputra, which is modern Patna in Bihar. Chandragupta's grandson, Ashoka, who ruled from 273 to 237 BC got hugely affected by the horrors of the Kalinga war and became an ardent Buddhist. He inscribed the message of compassion and gentleness on rocks and polished stone columns.

From 185–149 BC, kings of the Shunga dynasty ruled over India. They were orthodox Hindus. But Buddhism, got strong Buddhist revival under the rule of the Kushana king, Kanishka. He ruled in the north–western India during AD 78 to 101. A lot of Buddhist art and sculpture of the Gandhara style (strongly influenced by Greco-Roman art) developed during this period. Mathura, which is situated towards the south of Delhi, was another centre of Buddhist art in those days.

During the Gupta Empire (AD 319–540), the golden age of ancient Indian culture, Pataliputra became the centre of political as well as cultural activity. Gupta kings (Chandragupta and Skandagupta) were poets as well as musicians. Kalidasa, the greatest poet among all Sanskrit poets and dramatists, lived during Chandragupta’s reign. Popular artistic images of that period are the Buddha images at Sarnath and the frescos painted in the caves of Ajanta in western India. Political fragmentation led to the decline of the Gupta Empire. King Harsha of Kannauj tried to control this disintegration but after his death in AD 648, many independent kingdoms arose in Kashmir, Bengal, Orissa and other regions of southern as well as northern India.

The post-eighth century period was very rich culturally. The Pallavas, Rashtrakutas and Cholas of South India built wonderful temples at Mamallapuram, Ellora and Tanjore, respectively. The Sun Temple of Konark in Orissa and the Shiva Temple at Khajuraho in Central India were constructed in AD eleventh century. In all these temples, carving is an essential part of the architecture. In literature, Sanskrit was gradually being replaced by regional languages like Bengali, Marathi, Hindi and Punjabi. In the south, Tamil, Telugu and Kannada had developed their literary traditions. The Vedanta philosophies of Shankara (eighth century) and Ramanuja (twelfth century) wielded a deep influence. There was a conventional trend in social and religious life. The caste system, which was originally based on disparities of aptitude, became severe and unfair.

The establishment of Muslim rule at the end of the twelfth century was a crossroad in India’s cultural history. A preliminary period of conflict was expected due to the radical differences between Hinduism and Islam. But a progression of accommodation started soon after. One of its meeting points was Sufi mysticism, which was philosophically close to Vedanta. A lot of Muslim kings, at Delhi and in regional kingdoms, were patrons of Indian literature and music and they contributed in Hindu festivals. The trend towards integration was strengthened after the foundation of the Mughal Empire in AD 1526. The base of a national culture was firmly laid under the wise and liberal rule of Akbar (1556–1605). The Hindu and Muslim traditions, while they were keeping their individualness, influenced each other deeply.

In the beginning, the Islamic architecture in India was very sombre and simple. But soon the builders started accepting decorative elements, which included the lotus motif from the Hindu temples. Similarly, a lot of temples that were built in medieval India had Islamic features, like the dome, the arch and screens carved of stone and marble. The Indian architecture reached its peak during the reign of Shah Jahan (1627–1658), who built masterpieces such as the Taj Mahal at Agra.

Painting also had a blend of the two traditions. Motivated by Bihzad and other great Persian artists, painters at the Mughal court made a new style of miniature paintings. By combining this style with subtlety and religious and aesthetic spirit of India, painters of the Rajput School created their own distinctive contributions.

Medieval India’s greatest geniuses were Amir Khusro. He was a poet, musician as well as linguist. He invented many musical instruments, which are played in classical Indian music. Khusrao’s poetic experiments led to the emergence of Urdu, which is one

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of the major Indian languages. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were quite full of devotional poetry in local languages. During this time, Guru Nanak founded Sikhism; Tulsidas wrote the Hindi version of the Ramayana, which is recited and read by a lot of people. Saint Kabir, whose poetry rose above all sectional differences, also preached his universal religion of tolerance and love during this period.

During the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the Mughal Empire declined quit swiftly. In the mean time, the Europeans were making inroads into India. The Portuguese, the Dutch, the French, and finally the British entered India during this century. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, British authority was firmly established in India. The introduction of English education and the Christian missionaries in India had a profound impact on the cultural and religious life of people. The new capital, Calcutta, became the centre of Western thought. It was followed by Bombay and Madras. Some of the educated Indians, in their enthusiasm for European culture, turned away from their own legacy. Nevertheless, a reform movement known as Brahma Samaj, which was founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, guided in a spiritual and cultural renaissance. The leaders of the Brahma Samaj emphasized on the deeper truths of Hindu and Muslim scriptures while accepting progressive elements from Western thought. One more source of inspiration was Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836–1886), who was thought of different religions as paths leading towards the same goal. His famous disciple, Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902), is known as India's first spiritual and cultural ambassador towards the Europe and America.

Though politically subjugated during the British rule, India retained its cultural dominance and dynamism. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, political, historical and social ideas were taken up by novelists and dramatists. Ghalib, the great Urdu poet, and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the Bengali novelist, made huge inputs to the Indian literature. A lot of outstanding musicians, some of whom were Muslims, kept alive the tradition of classical Indian music. The Kathak School of dance was developed at Lucknow and Jaipur. Later, there was a period of renaissance in Indian painting, which was initiated by Rabindranath Tagore and other artists of the Bengal School. There were a lot of plays based on mythological as well as modern subjects that were staged at Calcutta and Bombay.

In the meantime, the movement for India's independence was gaining strength under the leadership of the Indian National Congress. The sense of patriotism that, thus, got stimulated got reflected in the literature of that era. When, after his gallant struggle against racism in South Africa, Mahatma Gandhi returned to India, he opened a new chapter in India's life and history. He touched every aspect of the Indian life, although his major concern was social and political issues. Some of the greatest writers of that period were Bharati in Tamil; Premchand in Hindi, Sharat Chandra in Bengali and others. They expressed Gandhian ideals in their poems and novels.

In the twentieth century, the Indian culture was dominated by the towering genius of Rabindranath Tagore. He was one of the greatest poet-philosophers in world history. Tagore left the imprint of his personality and worked on every field of creativity, i.e., poetry, music, drama, novel, short story and even painting. He was the first non-Western writer who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. He was the founder of the international university, Vishwa Bharati, at Santiniketan and he even introduced many modern concepts in education. A whole generation of Indian writers and artists was swayed by Tagore. So, Gandhi and Tagore are correctly regarded as the makers of modern India.

On 15th August 1947, India became independent. According to Jawaharlal Nehru ‘India had kept her tryst with destiny after a century of struggle. The partition of the country on the basis of religion; the bloodshed that followed; and the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi were painful shocks. But the trauma was gradually overcome and India began building her future as a sovereign country taking her rightful place in the comity of nations.’

Since, independence, India has made huge progress in many areas of culture. In almost all the major twenty three languages of India (including English), artistic literature of the utmost order has been created. Few of the outstanding artists/performers who have enriched Indian culture in recent decades are as follows:

- Filmmakers, like the late Satyajit Ray, Guru Dutt and Gulzar
- Musicians, like Pandit Ravi Shankar, Lata Mangeshkar and A.R. Rehman
- Painters, like the late M.F. Hussain
- Sports persons, like Vijay Amritraj, Prakash Padukone, Milkha Singh, Sunil Gavaskar, Kapil Dev and Sachin Tendulkar
- Writers, like R.K. Narayan, Gulzar Anita Desai and Gurcharan Das
- Academicians, like C. Ramanujan, Amartya Sen and Jagdish Bhagwati

The long and glorious history of India has been characteristic of assimilation and adjustment. It has confronted and overcome many periods of crisis and uncertainty. Today, there are new challenges, which are demanding new adjustments. Now, we are in the age of science and technology and rapid advancements in this field. A fundamental question facing us is how to preserve whatever is of enduring worth in the spiritual and aesthetic tradition that has stood the test of five thousand years? How to reinterpret that tradition in the contemporary context? These questions have to be dealt with by the thinkers, leaders, artists and writers of India. Their ability to handle this task in a balanced and imaginative manner will determine the future course of the Indian culture.

The cultural unity of India stands and has stood on the vast diversities prevalent in our cultural practices and beliefs.

1.5 TYPES OF UNITY

The Indian society is not a uniform one. It is a natural corollary to the fact that diversity is a part of the Indian way of life. From region to region, diversity in the social structure is prominently seen. The North Indian social traditions and customs are markedly different from those of eastern India. Similarly, there is a great difference between the traditions and culture of South and West India. The element of mystery associated with India essentially originates from within this diversity.

As per the provisional figures of the Census 2011, India has more than 17 per cent of the world’s population. It is a big country with a huge population and would be overtaking China in a few years time to become the most populated country in the world. With these kinds of numbers, there is bound to be a great deal of diversity amongst the people. Moreover, the population lives in various social, ecological, geographic and economic conditions that add to the diversity prevalent in the country.

As seen earlier, India has a 5000 year old history. It has a cultural heritage that has been handed down from very ancient times. But the cultural heritage has had to travel through various stages, ages and ups and downs to reach the present era. It has had to face the challenge of various diversities through its journey. Diversities can be of

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5. What customs were brought by Indo-Aryans when they migrated to India?
6. Who founded the Brahma Samaj?

numerous types and is seen in different spheres. They run through various races, religions, castes, tribes, languages, social customs, cultural beliefs, political thoughts, ideologies and so forth.

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The diversity factor notwithstanding, there is a common thread of cultural unity running through the Indians. Over centuries, various cultural traits from various parts of the country and from outside got assimilated and synthesized.

Unity in diversity is best seen in India in a maze of seemingly disparate people. Diversity in India can be observed and analysed from various perspectives. We can be dispassionately seen as communal (Hindu, Muslim, etc.), casteist (Brahmins, Kshatriya, Shudra) and regional (Odia, Telugu, Marathi, Punjabi, etc.). Our cultural orientation is also in sync with our communal, casteist or regional identity. Thus, our cultural diversity stems from our diverse identities.

Our diversities can also be analysed through the same prism of communalism, casteism and regionalism. Communalism is the ugliest of them all. It ignites such base feelings at times that people do not hesitate to resort to violence on the most irrational of issues. Hindu–Muslim riots are so irrational but they continue to raise their ugly heads at regular intervals. Religion is a private affair and when it comes out of the private domain, as it does in India, the fault lines become bolder. India’s cultural and social unity is strong yet fragile. Whenever communal passions rise to extreme heights and result in catastrophes (like the massacre of the Sikhs in 1984; the Godhra and post-Godhra violence and killings of 2002; the violent clashes between the Christians and the tribal in Kandhamal district of Odisha in 2009 and others), the idea of India suffers immensely. All the religions have contributed tremendously to Indian culture and it is in our best interest to keep all religious groups together. Their common existence is the best advertisement of the idea of India.

Though caste rigidity of earlier times has given way to flexibility to a large extent, casteism still remains a divisive force in our country. Our modern history is replete with instances of exploitation and humiliation of the lower caste people. The basic quality of humanism was and is missing in our society as a large section of our population was and is considered to be ‘untouchable’. A human being is untouchable because he was born in a particular family or caste! What could be worse than this kind of discrimination and characterization? Our unity would always be fragile because the fissures that exist between castes are still very deep and we have to do a lot more to redress the situation. However, over the last few years, caste is increasingly becoming a vehicle for identity politics. While the degree of exploitation of the lower castes has come down, they have themselves become more assertive of their low caste. Caste rigidity has definitely come down. It is not uncommon to come across families of the so-called incompatible castes entering into matrimonial alliances. Modern education and western outlook have brought about this positive change in the rigid caste system.

Regionalism implies the affinity with one’s region. While we all are Indians, we also are north Indian or south Indian. Going down further, we also are Tamils or Gujaratis. However, regionalism here does not merely refer to the geography. It includes our linguistic plurality also. Linguistic diversity is like a double-edged sword. It enriches our culture through the sheer number of languages spoken and written. It has resulted in great literature with masterpieces coming out from all the leading languages. At the same time, linguistic plurality has resulted in creating fissures amongst our people. It is not uncommon to see one linguistic group close ranks so strongly that the others get excluded. It is not uncommon to hear pejorative terms like ‘Telugu lobby’, ‘Bengali lobby’ and so

forth working for the interests of their linguistic groups. Even the most educated and the most accomplished people fall prey to such base instincts. This is not to suggest that one should not feel proud of one's mother tongue or take steps to protect one's language. The problem lies when people in power become biased towards people of their language and ignores the merits of others.

Having seen the diversity in Indian society from the perspectives of communalism, casteism and regionalism, we can briefly discuss some cultural diversities emanating from our distinct backgrounds.

India has a rich cultural and artistic heritage. The fact that India was invaded and ruled by various kings down the ages is already reflected by its impact on Indian culture.

Music exists on this land since the existence of humanity. It was probably inspired by the whistles of the wind, the splash of the waves, the chirping of the birds or may be the falling of the rain. Our musicians designed many musical instruments and innumerable ragas. They then developed different notes for different times, seasons and feelings. Different regions developed their own style of singing.

One of the powerful attractions of India and a great cultural showcase is the colourful and diversified attire of its people. The silk sarees, brightly mirrored cholis (blouses), colourful lehngas (long skirts) and the traditional salwar-kameez have fascinated the visitors to our country over the centuries. Though a majority of the Indian women wear these traditional costumes, the men in India can be found in more conventional western clothing. Men from all regions in India wear shirts and trousers. However, men in villages are still more comfortable in their traditional attire like the dhoti, lungi, cotton vest or Khadi dress. Indian dressing styles have many variations, both in the form of religion and region, and one is likely to witness a plethora of colours, textures and styles in garments.

Indian dance is a mix of *nritta* (the rhythmic elements) 'nritya' (the combination of rhythm with expression) and *natya* (the dramatic element). Most of the Indian dances take their themes from India's rich mythology and folk legends. All Hindu gods and goddesses like Vishnu and Lakshmi, Rama and Sita, Krishna and Radha are all depicted in classical Indian dances. Each dance form draws encouragement from stories that depict the life, ethics and beliefs of the Indian people. The genesis of the contemporary styles of classical Indian dances can be attributed to the period between AD 1300 and 1400 India proposes a lot of classical dance forms, each of which can be traced to different sections of the country. Each form describes the culture of a specific region or a group of people belonging to a particular place (Table 1.4).

Table 1.4 Dance Forms Describing the Culture of a Place

Dance	Place
Bharatnatyam	Tamil Nadu
Odissi	Orissa
Kathak	Uttar Pradesh
Kathakali	Kerala
Kuchipudi	Andhra Pradesh
Manipuri	Manipur
Mohiniyattam	Kerala

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There is a multiplicity of festivals in India. Most of the festivals owe their origin to legends, gods and goddesses arising out of mythology. There are as many festivals as the number of days in a year. Fun, colour, gaiety, enthusiasm, feasts and a variety of prayers and rituals characterize the festivals of our country. Some important festivals are Deepawali or Diwali, Krishna Janmashtami, Onam, Pongal, Ramzan Id, Rath Yatra, Baisakhi, Easter, Ganesha Chaturthi, Holi, Raksha Bandhan, Ram Navami, Christmas, Good Friday, Makar Sankranti, Muharram, Shivratri and Durga Puja.

Cultural Unity in India

Despite the numerous diversities in our cultural life and the extent of cultural pluralism in India, we do adhere to certain common national ethos and notions. There is definitely an 'Indian culture' that permeates our existence howsoever diverse we may be at an individual or group level. We respect the same traditions and heritage; we celebrate the same festivals; and we share similar food habits.

Some important questions that arise are what bring about the cultural unity among Indians despite the plethora of diversities existing in our society? Is the unity maintained administratively or it comes from within our society? What is the role of religion in forging this cultural unity?

The answers to these three questions are not easy to find. Firstly, the reason or reasons for the cultural unity among Indians, despite the plethora of diversities, is/are not easy to pinpoint. Thus, the first question remains unanswered even though the readers are free to do their own research and come to certain conclusive findings.

However, with regard to the second question, we can say with reasonable correctness that the unity has not been brought about administratively. Rather, it has come from within the Indian society. This is so because cultural unity in India is more than skin deep. People genuinely share a common culture that is symbolized by festivals, art, rituals, and others which are similar. These things cannot be brought about through administration or external directions. Rather, cultural unity emerges from the depths of our society. While the administrative reasons could be there, like the modern and progressive constitution; the integration of princely states with the nation; the promotion of Hindi as the national language; would only be a modern day phenomenon. This gives rise to some further queries like how can we explain the cultural unity that prevailed hundreds of years earlier? Or was there no such unity in those times and it is a recent phenomenon, i.e., something which was observed only after the beginning of the freedom movement in the nineteenth century?

In the context of these sub-queries, it would suffice to say that it would be incorrect to hold the view that cultural unity is a thing of the recent past. Centuries ago, even though there was no political state called India; the people residing in the sub-continent had certain common cultural traits. Though the various territories were often at war with each other, the people of these territories were generally a large homogeneous group with shared values and ideals. They celebrated festivals like Diwali and Rath Yatra with devotion and fanfare. With the advent of the Muslim rulers, the cultural unity amongst the Hindu population got stronger in the face of foreign aggression. However, there were many benevolent Muslim and Mughal rulers, like Akbar, who made all religious groups feel safe and secure. Such rulers promoted the cultures of different religious groups and tried to create a national culture.

The third question as to what role religion has played in forging this unity is complex and demands a careful analysis. We have earlier talked about communalism and the danger that it poses to unity in our country. People get swayed away by irrational religious issues and become violent towards people belonging to a different religion. Thus, it would appear that religion would have a negative bearing upon cultural unity. But it is not so simplistic. Admittedly, communal passions are ignited by religion and unity gets torn apart. But religion also has a tremendous contribution towards the growth of cultural unity in India. One reason for this could be the overwhelming majority of the Hindu population.

More than 80 per cent of the Indians are Hindus. This huge number covers all kinds of people belonging to different regions, castes, linguistics, classes and so forth. The Hindu religion acts as an umbrella for Marathi Brahmins, Kashmiri Pandits; Orissi farmers, Telugu entrepreneurs; Bihari zamindars, etc. They are all from diverse backgrounds and enjoy different levels of social status but they all are united by the bond of Hinduism. They celebrate Hindu festivals together, like Holi, Diwali, Durga Puja, Ganesh Chaturthi and others. They practice similar customs and rituals during times of birth and death in the family. Thus, we see that a religion is playing the role of a unifier. Hinduism is promoting cultural unity among diverse groups.

A related question that arises is that if one religion promotes unity amongst its followers, is it not promoting communalism? Is it not creating an adversarial position between different religions? Is it not true that Hindu unity might make the smaller religions feel insecure? These are all very difficult questions to answer. They may be true or at least partly true. But that does not take away from the role of religion – especially the religion followed by a vast majority of the population – in fostering cultural unity.

A peculiar thing about this issue is that Hinduism is not seen merely as a religion. It has been accepted by many as a way of life. Even many non-Hindus have accepted this view. If that is so, then we can say that Hinduism has played a very big role in bringing together the disparate groups of people in our country. Thus, on balance, we can say that religion does play a significant role in unifying people and making them share their cultural beliefs and traditions.

Another important facet about India is its caste system. We have discussed in the previous section that casteism has been generally a divisive force in our country. However, there is another school of sociological thought which believes that the caste system has also provided a common cultural ideology to Indians. This school believes that though caste has created inter-caste conflicts and the social problems emanating from untouchability, it is also true that the *jajmani* system had succeeded in maintaining harmony and cooperation among various castes in the rural areas of our country. *Jajmani* system or *vetti-chakiri* is an Indian social caste system and its interaction between upper castes and lower castes. It was an economic system in which lower castes have only obligations or duties to render free services to the upper caste community.

In recent years, the numerically large castes – who had been socially exploited for centuries – have realized their potential in the political arena and have started flexing their muscles. They have forged a caste unity among like groups and have attained political power. This is both good and bad for cultural unity. While it is good for the groups that have come together, it is bad in the overall social scenario as it puts some castes against the others.

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Like in case of caste, there is an alternate school of thought in relation to languages. This school holds the view that language also contributes towards cultural unity because a national language binds the people together and preserves and protects the culture of a nation. This is true but does not address the issue of the effects of a plethora of languages as is the case in India.

The discussions in this and the previous section can be summarized by saying that though religion, caste and language have definitely created some problems in the Indian society, they also contain the idea of the unity of India within themselves.

1.6 SUMMARY

- Religious pluralism is usually used as a synonym for religious tolerance, although both the concepts have distinct meanings. Religious tolerance means that each person is entitled to his own set of religious beliefs without having to conform to some societal standard.
- Some theologians argue that God created all the religions of the world in order to speak to people in ways that most appeal or relate to their circumstances in life.
- The concept of religious pluralism is tricky, especially when subjected to scientific and logical analysis. Most religions contradict the position accepted in another religion and this leaves the pluralists caught in the middle of some arguments.
- Buddhism was found in India. Gautam Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, kept his teachings limited to *Dhamma* and *Vinaya*. Buddhism is an ethical arrangement, a way of life that leads towards a particular goal.
- Judaism is the oldest of the three great monotheistic religions of the world along with Islam and Christianity. It is the religion and way of life of the Jewish people.
- There have been various judicial decisions wherein religious pluralism has been emphasized as the quintessence of the Indian society.
- Secularism is a very important aspect of the Indian way of life and governance. It has helped in promoting communal harmony and in keeping national integration at the forefront. Communal harmony can prevail only when you ensure equality of status among people and equal opportunity for everyone as conceived in the Constitution of India.
- Religious conversion has become a controversial issue in contemporary India. One side of the debate on religious conversion is represented by those who claim that conversion and proselytization are basic and inalienable human rights.
- India has always been a multi-lingual country. Language has also been an important source of diversity as well as unity in India. According to the Grierson (Linguistic Survey of India, 1903–28) there are 179 languages and as many as 544 dialects in the country.
- The linguistic diversity found across India stems from a history that saw numerous ancient kingdoms, each with its own language. These languages remained distinct to the area even after a kingdom was dissolved or merged with another. State lines later drawn by the colonial rulers often crossed former political and linguistic boundaries.

Check Your Progress

7. Give instances to suggest the existence of cultural unity in India.
8. How has language contributed to the cultural unity of India?

- Racial classification was introduced way back in the early years of the twentieth century as a tool for taxonomic studies of human beings.
- As per the polycentric theory of evolution (by Franz Weidenreich of USA), the development of modern man took place in separate regions, independent of the existence of others. This separate development led to varying characteristics. As per the same theory, man in these regions evolved from the influence of the oldest inhabitants of those regions.
- Monocentric classification was given by Henri Victor, G. Olivier (France), Francis Howell (USA), Kenneth Oakley (Britain), and V P Yakimov of USSR. The founders of this classification had a view that all human beings originated in a single region and developed into various races only after spreading out into various regions.
- The caste system is marked by extensive discrimination and exploitation. The Shudras and the untouchables were not only exploited economically and physically, but socially too, they were shunned upon.
- The three major areas of life that were dominated by caste were marriage, meals and religious worship. Marriage outside one's caste lines was strictly forbidden. In fact, most people married within their own sub-caste.
- The rural population forms a dominant part of Indian society and thus, we will begin our discussion of class hierarchy with this section of society.
- India is a land of diversities. It consists of varied landscapes, seasons, races, religions, languages as well as cultures. The main source behind this unity is elusive and it cannot be easily identified.
- In the excavation at the site of the Indus Valley Civilization (3000–1,800 BC) many art forms were discovered. During these excavations at Harappa and Mohenjodaro, a statue of a man in meditation was found, this statue hinted at the fact that yoga was practiced in those days as well.
- Though politically subjugated during the British rule, India retained its cultural dominance and dynamism. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, political, historical and social ideas were taken up by novelists and dramatists.
- The cultural unity of India stands and has stood on the vast diversities prevalent in our cultural practices and beliefs.
- The Indian society is not a uniform one. It is a natural corollary to the fact that diversity is a part of the Indian way of life. From region to region, diversity in the social structure is prominently seen.
- The diversity factor notwithstanding, there is a common thread of cultural unity running through the Indians. Over centuries, various cultural traits from various parts of the country and from outside got assimilated and synthesized.
- India has a rich cultural and artistic heritage. The fact that India was invaded and ruled by various kings down the ages is already reflected by its impact on Indian culture.
- Despite the numerous diversities in our cultural life and the extent of cultural pluralism in India, we do adhere to certain common national ethos and notions. There is definitely an 'Indian culture' that permeates our existence howsoever diverse we may be at an individual or group level. We respect the same traditions and heritage; we celebrate the same festivals; and we share similar food habits.

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1.7 KEY TERMS

- **Jajmani:** It is a system in which each caste group within a village is expected to give certain standardized services to the families of other castes.
- **Zamindar:** This term refers to a landowner who is also a collector of land revenue.
- **Sankranti:** It refers to the transition of the Sun into *Makara rashi* on its celestial path.
- **Secularism:** It refers to the principle of separation of the state from religious institutions.
- **Corollary:** It is a proposition that follows from (and is often appended to) one already proved.

1.8 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Sikhism are some of the popular religions followed in India.
2. The most important tenet of Judaism is that there is only one eternal God who desires that all people must do what is just and merciful.
3. The distinguishing traits used to classify people into various races are as follows:
 - Looks or phenotypic characteristics or physical features and body type
 - Region or place of origin
 - Ethnic as well as social status in society
4. The benefits of racial classification are as follows:
 - Forensic studies: Like identification of skeletons from bone structures. This is known as forensic anthropology.
 - Biomedical research: A way of relating diseases to phenotypic and genotypic characteristics.
 - Medicine and gene therapy research: Finding new treatment methods, targeted towards a particular population or race.
 - Psychology and sociology studies also use racial categories to understand and relate to human behaviour.
 - In some countries, profiling of suspects is done on basis of their race.
5. When Indo-Aryans migrated to India, they brought the following customs with them:
 - The usage of Sanskrit language
 - A religion based on sacrifice
 - A ritual honouring of deities symbolizing the elemental forces of nature.These symbols were as follows:
 - o Indra, the God of rain and thunder
 - o Agni, the God of fire
 - o Varuna, the lord of the seas, rivers and seasons
6. Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj.

7. Cultural unity lies in the depth of the Indian society. The existence of various religions, cultures and castes together is an apt example of the existence of cultural unity in India.
8. One school of thought holds the view that language has also contributed towards cultural unity of India because a national language binds the people together and preserves and protects the culture of a nation.

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1.9 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on the existence of various religions in India.
2. Mention the salient features of the Indian caste system.
3. Write short notes on the following:
(a) Regionalism (b) Casteism (c) Communalism.

Long-Answer Questions

1. 'Religious pluralism is usually used as a synonym for religious tolerance.' Explain the statement.
2. Discuss the existence of linguistic and regional diversity in India.
3. Analyse the concept of 'unity in diversity' with reference to India.
4. Discuss how religion is responsible for preserving cultural unity in India. Do you agree with this idea? Give reasons for your views.

1.10 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 THE STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION OF INDIAN SOCIETY

*The Structure and
Composition of
Indian Society*

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Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
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2.0 INTRODUCTION

The structure and composition of society is a very important concept of social science and has been discussed in great detail by numerous social scientists. While some scholars believe that it is the set of rules that bind a society together, others view it as the interplay amongst various members of the society. It all gives a definite and tangible structure to the society.

Drawing from such varied viewpoints, it would suffice to say that the structure and composition of a society is the sum total of the relationships between human beings existing in that society. These relationships are well-established and accepted. For example, the relationship between a man and a woman as husband and wife is governed by the marital practice and leadership of the family.

Thus, if the man heads the family, it is said to be a patriarchal society where the husband is bestowed with greater rights and powers by the norms of that society.

India is widely known as a land of villages and these villages cumulatively constitute the Indian rural society.

As per the provisional figures of the Census 2011, about 69 per cent of India's population stays in rural areas spread across the country. This is a huge number and very critical statistical information. The rural society of India is very much backward. Its backwardness is due to the several problems that haunt the rural society. The process of change in rural society is quite slow and so the problems are more or less age old.

The urban society is also an important aspect of Indian society. With its growing proportion, it is set to dominate sociological studies in future. The urban society consists of the towns and cities. It has a specific way of life. But, even the urban society has

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many social problems such as congestion of population and acute shortage of facilities and resources.

In this unit, you will study about the rural and urban landscape of India. The unit also deals in depth with topics such as the existence of tribes, Dalits and women and minorities in India.

2.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- List the characteristics of Indian villages and urban cities
- Differentiate between the rural-urban landscape
- Discuss the classification of tribes in India
- Analyse the position of women in the current scenario in India
- Interpret the position of Dalits, weaker sections and minorities in India

2.2 VILLAGES IN INDIA

Villages are an integral part of the Indian society. The rural landscape of India is dotted with lakhs of villages. There are around 649,481 villages in India, according to Census 2011, the most authoritative source of information about administrative boundaries in the country. Of these, 593,615 are inhabited. Thus, the expansion of the village community in India is enormous. The sociological study of the communities of India reveals the true nature of the rural society in India.

Common characteristics of Indian villages are as follows:

- **Isolation and self-sufficiency:** Villages in India were, and still are to some extent, isolated from the rest of the country. They have a self-sufficient existence wherein they grow their own food, build their own houses and carry out social relationships amongst each other within the village.

However, post-independence, things have changed quite a lot. With the growth of means of transport and communication and the laying of an extensive road and rail network, the distance or barrier between villages and towns has been removed. Political and economic factors have also contributed towards diminishing the isolation of Indian villages. Economic development has made the people of the villages more mobile and they are moving out to urban centres in search of new employment opportunities. Their dependence on agriculture has come down significantly. Political parties have also made villages the epicentre of their political activities. Many people from rural areas have actively joined politics and made frequent visits to their party headquarters in the cities.

- **Peace and simplicity:** Indian villages are generally peaceful wherein people reside together with a spirit of togetherness and have a fellow feeling. An atmosphere of calm and simplicity prevails in our villages. The hectic pace of activities prevalent in our cities is conspicuously absent from the villages. Life moves along at a slow but fulfilling pace. The villagers lead a simple life characterized by frugal eating, simple dressing, small houses and so forth.

- **Conservatism:** Indian villagers are very conservative in their thoughts and deeds. They do not accept change very easily. They prefer to hold on to their old customs and traditions.
- **Poverty and illiteracy:** The poverty and illiteracy that exists in our villages on a massive scale is one of the most depressing features of our villages and also a very shameful aspect of modern India. Despite independence and rapid economic progress, we have failed in eradicating poverty and illiteracy from our villages. The per-capita income might have increased and the literacy rate might have climbed up, but the fact remains that the levels are abysmal by global standards. The per-capita income is so low that people at the bottom of the pyramid cannot think beyond their survival. Similarly, the quality of education is so poor that the literacy rates mean nothing significant.

Economic growth of the last twenty years has not percolated down to our villages. The availability of educational and health facilities is very poor. Lack of money forces them to depend upon local facilities, which are of very poor quality. Ignorance does not enable them to take advantage of modern techniques of agriculture. Thus, they continue to remain in poverty. A vicious cycle of poverty–ignorance–poverty engulfs the life of our villagers.

- **Local self-government:** In ancient India, villages were models of self-governance and autonomy. They used to run their own administration and judiciary through the institution of Panchayat. The British altered the scenario by resorting to a highly centralized form of governance. However, post-independence, efforts were started to revive the institutions of local self-governance under Gandhiji's vision of Gram Swaraj. This culminated in the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act in 1993 by which the Panchayati Raj institutions were strengthened. Thus, a prominent feature of the Indian villages has been restored with constitutional backing.

Indian Rural Society: Changing Nature of the Village Community

Though change occurs more in urban society, it also does take place in the rural society. The village community undergoes change but at a gradual pace. The changing nature of the village community in India can be understood from the following perspectives:

- **Economic system:** The village economy in India has changed. It no longer remains an agricultural economy alone. The educated youth do not stay back in the villages anymore. Rather, they move out to cities in search of employment. Besides, the farmers have started to employ modern tools and technology in their fields to get more out of their land. Thus, the mechanization of agriculture is also taking place. Rural banking has encouraged the village community to put their savings in the bank and also to avail credit facilities. They use this credit in starting small business ventures and also in meeting some emergency expenses in the family.
- **Political system:** The revival of the Panchayati Raj system in Indian villages through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act in 1993 has truly changed the political landscape in rural India. Political consciousness and participation in electoral politics has increased tremendously. People have become very aware about local, state and national politics. However, the negative impact of this change is that people have become divided on lines of political affiliations. The fellow feeling of our village community has been adversely affected.

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- **Marriage system:** Indian villages have slowly accepted the reality of love marriages. Even though majority of marriages in our villages are arranged by family elders, a few love marriages are indeed taking place. Besides, even in arranged marriages, the boys and girls are being asked to give their views or consent. Child marriage has been almost abolished.
- **Family system:** The joint family system is no more the dominant family type in Indian villages. Nuclear families have also started coming up. Though the extended family stays in close vicinity, the nuclear families have been established through separate hearths. Girls in the family are being educated and their status in rural society has improved.
- **Caste system:** The caste system used to be followed very rigidly in Indian villages in earlier times. However, modern education, social and administrative reforms, impact of modernization and other factors have resulted in reducing its hold over the village community. The restrictions imposed by the caste system on choice of occupations, choice of spouses, mode of living and so forth have weakened.

From the above, it is clear that Indian villages are not static but undergoing changes.

2.3 TOWNS AND CITIES

Just as it was difficult to define a village or rural society, it is equally difficult to define the word 'urban' or the terms 'urban society' and 'urban community'. An urban area may be an area that has a very high density of population. But density of population alone cannot be the defining feature. While the distinction between 'rural' and 'urban' is comprehensible to everybody, it is not easy to define the terms scientifically.

Generally speaking, an urban community is large, dense and heterogeneous. It can also be said to be predominantly occupied in the industrial and service sectors. Urban growth is a recent phenomenon and till 1850, the urban population in the world was estimated to be only 2 per cent of the global population.

Ancient India did have a few cities, which were important centres of pilgrimage and governance. Ayodhya, Pataliputra, Magadha and others were some of these cities. Notwithstanding this fact, urbanization in India is also a recent phenomenon. Prior to independence, apart from the cities of ancient times, India had a few cities like Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Delhi. The first three were important cities for the British rulers as they had ports, which facilitated trade and commerce. After Independence, with the advent of planned economic development, urbanization gathered pace in India. The reason for this was the Government's thrust on industrial growth and the resultant development of industrial towns. Thus, industrialization led to urbanization in independent India. Besides industrial towns and cities, urban areas have come up in the shape of state capitals, district headquarters and educational centres. Thus, while Rourkela (Orissa) and Bokaro (Jharkhand) are industrial towns, Bhubaneswar (Orissa) and Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) are capital cities. Similarly, Pune and Kota are urban areas that are recognized as centres of educational excellence.

As per the provisional figures of Census 2011, the share of urban population in India has gone up to 31 per cent from 17 per cent in 1951. Thus, as stated earlier, urbanization has taken place in a major way after the independence of the country.

Check Your Progress

1. List any two characteristics of Indian villages.
2. State any one feature denoting change in the rural Indian villages.

The census of India defines urban area as all places with a Municipality, Corporation, Cantonment Board, Notified town area committee, etc. and all other places satisfying the following criteria:

- Having a minimum population of 5,000
- At least 75 per cent of the male main workers being engaged in non-agricultural work
- Having a density of population of at least 400 per square kms.

The characteristics of urban society in India are as follows:

- **Anonymity:** Urban areas are large and have very high population. Besides, the communities do not reside in close proximity. In such circumstances, anonymity of individuals and urban communities becomes a way of life. Unlike villages, where everyone knows each other, people in towns and cities are very impersonal and know only very few people by name. Given the high population and the hectic pace of life in Indian cities and towns, it is not possible to know each other personally.

Anonymity refers to loss of identity in a city teeming with millions. Many urbanites live in a social void or vacuum in which institutional norms are not effective in controlling or regulating their social behaviour. Although they are aware of the existence of many institutional organizations and many people around them, they do not feel a sense of belongingness to any one group or community. Socially, they are poor in the midst of plenty.

- **Social heterogeneity:** Compared to rural society, the urban society in India is far more heterogeneous. People from diverse backgrounds with great racial, cultural and educational variations live together in the cities and towns. The urban society in India is a melting pot for all cultures and traditions and people learn about each other in this setting. This society has thrived by recognizing and rewarding individual differences. The personal traits and the ideas of the members of the urban society are completely different from those of their rural counterparts.
- **Social distance:** Due to anonymity and heterogeneity, the urban dweller becomes lonely and stays removed from other persons. All social interactions are routine, mechanical and impersonal. There is no social cohesiveness between one another. Rather, there is a great deal of social distance amongst the members of the urban community.
- **Homelessness:** The housing problem in Indian cities is so acute that many people from the lower class of income do not get a roof above their heads. They spend their nights in railway stations, on footpaths or under the flyovers or bridges. This homelessness is a very disturbing feature of our urban society and is a violation of basic human rights. Even the middle class families do not get homes of their choice. They reside in small and badly located houses, which do not provide the children of such families with any space to play.
- **Class extremes:** Indian cities are characterized by inhabitants of all classes. The richest persons of the country like Mukesh Ambani, Sachin Tendulkar, Aamir Khan and other celebrities cohabit with the poorest of the poor in a city like Mumbai. Thus, urban society is replete with class extremities. Such extremities have their own problems and can create a sense of dejection in the minds of the poor people. Sometimes, this leads them to the door of crime in lure of easy money.

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- **Hectic pace of life:** Life is very fast-paced and hectic in the urban areas and is completely different from the languid pace of rural life. People are always in a hurry to do their work so that they accomplish their targets and get their rewards. This endless run eventually affects their health and creates a great deal of tension in their personal lives.
- **Materialism:** The urban community of India is greatly focused upon material acquisitions and wealth accumulation. An individual's worth is expressed in terms of his material possessions. There is a lot of conspicuous consumption and an urban Indian feels happy to lead a luxurious lifestyle.
- **Secularism:** The urban community is more secular than its rural counterparts. Religious, caste and community feelings take a back seat as people are more concerned about working and earning a good livelihood. Interactions amongst people of different castes and communities at workplaces force them to adopt a more secular outlook.

2.3.1 Rural-Urban Linkages

While studying about the rural and urban society, it is imperative for us to know about the concepts of rural–urban continuum and rural–urban contrast. Briefly put, while the first analyses the similarities between rural and urban areas, the second does so about the differences.

Rural–urban continuum

Both rural and urban societies are part of the same human society and do share a lot of features of each other. There is no clear demarcation between the two. There is no sharp demarcation to tell where the city ends and the country begins. It is very difficult to actually distinguish between the two societies in the geographical realm. While theoretically we talk about the two societies, the dichotomy between the two is not based upon scientific principles.

Since, no concrete demarcation can be drawn between the 'rural' and the 'urban', sociologists take recourse to the concept of rural–urban continuum. The bottom line of the concept is that rural and urban societies do not exist in water tight compartments but do have a lot in common. They share lifestyles, value systems, traditional festivals and customs because they, ultimately, belong to the same society. The difference between them is usually of degree rather than of kind. They are not mutually exclusive.

The differences between them are getting further blurred with the advent of modernization and industrialization. Countries where these processes have become universal are good examples of similarities between rural and urban areas. Universal modern education, modern means of transportation, access to television and computers, and others aspects have radically changed the lifestyle in rural areas and have reduced the differences that were earlier visible between rural and urban areas. Countries like India still have huge differences between these two areas because of poverty and illiteracy continuing to dominate the rural landscape (Figure 2.1).

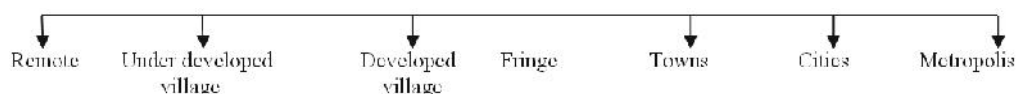


Fig. 2.1 The Rural–Urban Continuum

The extreme left depicts a remote village and the extreme right a metropolitan city. Such sharp differences do not usually exist between villages and cities and, in reality, rural and urban areas can exist at any point on the above line or continuum. Thus, there is no clear cut demarcation and the difference can be seen to be one of degree and not kind.

The fringe at the centre of the diagram is an interesting concept. It is also known as the rural–urban fringe. It is some sort of an overlapping geographical area between a city and a rural area. The cities have expanded and penetrated into rural areas. This is due to haphazard and unplanned growth of the cities. As one moves out of cities, one can see some residential colonies, a few factories, open sheds storing marble, timber or other construction material, automobile showrooms, petrol/diesel filling stations and so forth. In between these structures, one can see large tracts of agricultural fields. These areas are known as the rural–urban fringe. The fringe is defined as an area of mixed urban and rural land users between the point where city services cease to be available and the point where agricultural land users predominate.

Rural–urban contrast

There is a different school of thought among sociologists, which believes that a strong dichotomy exists between rural and urban areas. Notwithstanding the wide acceptability of the concept of rural–urban continuum, this group believes in the other concept, i.e., rural–urban contrast. This concept seeks to highlight the differences between the rural and urban areas and some of these differences are as follows:

- **Differences in social organization:** The systems of family and marriage are quite different. While joint families and arranged marriages are the order of the day in rural areas, urban areas see a lot of nuclear families and love marriages. Besides, the status of women is higher in urban areas.
- **Differences in social relationship and interaction:** Rural society exhibits greater cooperation and fellow feeling amongst individuals whereas; in urban areas people are very self-centred. While rural areas have personal relationships, urban areas have impersonal ones.
- **Homogeneity vis-à-vis heterogeneity:** Villages are small in size and, therefore, the inhabitants develop many identical characteristics due to physical proximity. Cities are much bigger in size and there is a great deal of heterogeneity.
- **A difference in economic life:** Agriculture is the predominant economic feature of the rural society. It results in low income and, consequently, low standard of living. On the other hand, there is a great deal of variety in the economic life of the urban society. Most people are engaged in industries or pursue their own business. The standard of living of the urban people is higher.
- **Differences in cultural life:** Rural culture is relatively static and is dominated by traditions and age-old customs. The urban areas have a dynamic culture and less room for superstitious beliefs.
- **Differences in social mobility:** Since hierarchy in the rural society is based upon the caste system in a country like India, social mobility in the rural society is almost impossible. In other countries, where hierarchy is based upon class, social mobility in rural areas is relatively easier. However, it is in the urban areas that social mobility does take place most easily as the people have the freedom to choose their occupation and move up in life.

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- **Differences in social change:** The process of social change in rural areas is very slow. The reasons for this are predominance of traditional thinking and conservatism, less innovation and competition and a high degree of stability. On the contrary, urban areas see rapid social changes due to the influence of modernization and westernization.
- **Differences in social control:** In rural societies, primary institutions like the family, caste, neighbourhood and others exercise a great deal of control on the behaviour of individuals. In contrast, there is hardly any control on the members of the urban society. A man in an urban society is free from all primary controls.

2.4 TRIBES

In India, tribe and caste are two important aspects of social organization. These two have many attributes in common. This similarity has led many scholars to identify these two as synonymous. As a result, many tribes have been described as castes and vice versa. After a period of prolonged controversy, it was finally recorded in the Imperial Gazetteer of India that a tribe consists of the following:

- Collection of families bearing a common name
- Speaking a common dialect
- Occupying or professing to occupy a common territory

The definition of caste gives an almost similar picture. A caste is also a collection of families bearing a common name, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and very often speaking the same dialect, though it is always endogamous.

While distinguishing a tribe from a caste in India, British social anthropologist, Bailey writes that an ideal tribe has always an organic unity, which is characterized by lack of interaction and absence of any hierarchical system. On the other hand, an ideal caste encourages interactions and always hankers after a position in the hierarchical system.

As regards tribe-caste differences, Surajit Sinha, author of *Anthropology in India*, has made a number of valuable observations. He holds that a tribe is isolated from other ethnic groups in ecology, demography, economy, politics and other social relations. This isolation generates a strong in-group sentiment. Internally, a tribe is characterized by homogeneity as there is always a lack of social stratification and role specialization other than by age, sex and kinship. On the contrary, a caste is a typically connected, stratified and heterogeneous group. Further, a caste is characterized by multi-ethnic residence in the local community, inter-ethnic participation in an economy involving occupational specialization by ethnic groups.

Classification of Tribes in India

Though tribal populations are found across the world, the largest concentration of tribal population is found in India. The tribes are the autochthonous people of the Indian peninsula and are believed to be the earliest settlers here. The tribal population in India, in absolute terms, is the highest in the world at 8.43 crore (provisional figures as given by the 2011 census). Tribal constitute about 7 per cent of India's total population and an overwhelming majority of them (about 92 per cent) reside in rural areas.

Check Your Progress

3. List two characteristics of urban Indian society.
4. What does the fringe denote in the urban-rural continuum?

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Classification on the basis of religion

The bulk of the tribal population regard themselves as Hindus. The influence of Hindu religion on the tribes is tremendous and almost 90 per cent of the tribal follow it in one form or the other. A significant number have embraced Christianity also. Buddhism, Jainism and Islam are also followed by a negligible proportion of the tribal population in India.

One important point to be noted in this context is that even those tribes that have embraced any of the above-mentioned religions, have not necessarily shed their local tribal beliefs and rituals. They continue to practice their traditional faith even while following their acquired faith.

When you view this phenomenon from the geographical perspective, it is seen that most of the tribes of southern India, western India and Central India have adopted Hinduism as their new religion. The tribes of north-eastern India, especially those residing in Nagaland and Mizoram, have adopted Christianity in a big way. In Central India, some major tribes of Chota Nagpur also follow Christianity. The tribes following Islam are few in number and are scattered all across the country. Buddhism among Indian tribes is represented mainly by some tribal groups of Arunachal Pradesh. The impact of Buddhism can also be seen in the Himalayan and Maharashtrian tribes.

Classification on the basis of location

Considering the widespread distribution of the tribes all across the country, it is necessary to group them in broad geographical regions. L.P. Vidyarthi (ICSSR, Survey of Research in Sociology and Anthropology, Volume 3) divided the tribal people into the following four major zones:

1. The Himalayan Region, comprising Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh (Bhot, Gujjar and Gaddi), Terai area of Uttar Pradesh (Tharus), Assam (Mizo, Garo, Khasi), Meghalaya, Nagaland (Nagas), Manipur (Mao) and Tripura (Tripuri) and having 11 per cent of the total tribal population of the country.
2. Middle India, comprising West Bengal, Bihar (Santhal, Munda, Oraon and Ho), Orissa (Khond and Gond) and having about 57 per cent of the Indian tribal population.
3. Western India, comprising Rajasthan (Bhil, Meena, Garasia), Madhya Pradesh (Bhil), Gujarat (Bhil, Dubla, Dhodia) and Maharashtra (Bhil, Koli, Mahadeo, Kokana) containing about 25 per cent of the Indian tribal population.
4. Southern India, comprising Andhra Pradesh (Gond, Koya, Konda, Dova), Karnataka (Naikada, Marati), Tamil Nadu (Irula, Toda), Kerala (Pulayan, Paniyan) and Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Andamanese, Nicobari) and containing about 7 per cent of the total tribal population.

Racial classification

L.P. Vidyarthi observes that the most acceptable racial classification of the Indian population is the one done by Guha in 1935. The latter had identified the following six main races with nine sub-types:

1. The Negrito
2. The Proto-Austroloid

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3. The Mongoloid
 - (i) Paleo Mongoloid
 - (a) Long-headed
 - (b) Broad-headed
 - (ii) Tibeto Mongoloid
4. The Mediterranean
 - (i) Paleo-mediterranean
 - (ii) Mediterranean
 - (iii) Oriental type
5. The Western Brachycephals
 - (i) Alpinoid
 - (ii) Dinaric
 - (iii) Armenoid
6. The Nordic

Against this backdrop of the overall racial composition of the people of India, Guha has classified the Indian tribal population into three major racial categories:

1. **The Proto-Austroloid:** This group is characterized by dark skin colour, sunken nose and lower forehead. The Munda (Chota Nagpur), the Oraon (Central India), the Ho (Bihar), the Gond (Madhya Pradesh) and the Khond (Orissa) tribes belong to this racial strain.
2. **The Mongoloid:** This group is characterized by light skin colour, broad head and face, low nose bridge and slanting eyes with a fold on the upper eye lid. These features are found amongst the Bhutiya (Central Himalayas), the Wanchu (Arunachal Pradesh), the Naga (Nagaland) and the Khasi (Meghalaya) tribes.
3. **The Negrito:** They are characterized by dark skin, wooly hair and broad lips. The Kadar (Kerala), the Onge (Little Andaman) and the Jarwa (Andaman Island) tribes have these features.

It is to be clarified that classification of the tribal or any population by racial type only means pre-dominance of certain hereditary physical traits among the concerned population. The same traits can be found in different degrees among other populations also. There is no pure race anywhere anymore and there is no correlation between racial strain and mental faculties.

Biraja Sankar Guha's (Director of Social Education Training Centre in Ranchi) classification of the Indian tribes in terms of race is not free from controversy. He questions the existence of the Negrito strain in India as a hereditary racial trait. He considers that mutation has played its role in the prevalence of Negrito features among some tribal population. There are also missing links in Guha's classification. The pastoral Todas of Nilgiri hills in the South are predominantly of Nordic type. Besides, the presence of Mediterranean features among the Indian tribes has been underplayed by Guha. Taking an overall view, it can be said that the population included in the list of Scheduled Tribes share in different proportion the same racial traits as the rest of the population of the country.

Linguistic classification

The linguistic classification of Indian tribes is very complex. According to a recent estimate, the tribal people speak 105 different languages and 225 subsidiary languages. Since, languages are highly structured and reflect the social structure and values of a society, this linguistic diversity indicates the great variety found among the Indian tribes. However, for the purpose of clarity and understanding, the languages have been classified into the following four major families:

- **Austro-Asiatic family:** There are two branches of this family, namely, Mon-Khmer branch and Munda branch. Languages of the first branch are spoken by Khasi and Nicobari tribes. Languages of the Munda branch are spoken by the Santhali, Gondi and Kharia tribes.
- **Tibeto-Chinese family:** There are two sub-families of this type, namely, Siamese-Chinese sub-family and Tibeto-Burman sub-family. In the North-Eastern frontier of India, Khamti is one specimen of the Siamese-Chinese sub-family. The Tibeto-Burman sub-family is further sub-divided into several branches. Tribal people of Nagaland and Lepcha of Darjeeling speak variants of Tibeto-Burman languages.
- **Indo-European family:** Tribal languages such as Hajong and Bhili are included in this group.
- **Dravidian family:** Languages of this family are spoken by Yeruva of Mysore and Oraon of Chota Nagpur.

This broad classification does not necessarily mean that there is a high degree of understanding of languages among the speakers of different languages within the same language family. For example, the Nagas are divided in about fifty different language groups and quite often the speaker of one language variant does not understand the language spoken by another group.

Economic classification

Various social scientists have classified tribal populations on the basis of their economic activity. Indian tribes have also been, thus, classified. The classical classification of Adam Smith and the more recent classification of anthropologists, Thurnwald and Herskovits have been applied throughout the world in classifying tribes on the basis of their economic life. Though Indian scholars like Majumdar have also classified the tribal people of India on this basis; it is the scheme presented by Thurnwald that is taken as most acceptable. His classification is as follows:

- **Homogeneous communities of men as hunters and trappers, women as collectors:** The Kadar, the Chenchu, the Kharia and the Korwa are some of the tribes that fall under this economic activity.
- **Homogeneous communities of hunters, trappers and agriculturists:** The Kamar, the Baiga and the Birhor tribes fall under this category.
- **Graded societies of hunters, trappers, agriculturists and artisans:** Most of the Indian tribes fall under this category. The Chero and the Agariya, amongst so many others are famous artisans.
- **The herdsmen:** The Toda and some sections of the great Bhil tribe are the best examples of this category.
- **Homogeneous hunters and herdsmen:** This category is not represented among Indian tribes.

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- **Ethnically stratified cattle breeders and traders:** The Bhotiyas of the sub-Himalayan region breed yaks and are also traders.
- **Socially graded herdsmen** with hunting, agriculture and artisan population.

Thurnwald's classification has been criticized by Majumdar on the ground that though it is useful, it does not indicate the nature of economic difficulties experienced by the tribal communities.

Nadeem Hasnain, Professor of Social Anthropology at University of Lucknow, has classified the Indian tribes on the basis of the conditions of their economic life in the following categories:

- **Tribes hunting in forests:** This class of tribes is mainly found in southern India. The Chenchu and the Chandi of Andhra Pradesh, Kadar, Malapatram and Kurumba of Kerala, Paliyan of Tamil Nadu, and Onge, Jarawa, Sentenelese and Nicobarese of Andaman and Nicobar islands are some of these tribes.
- **Tribes engaged in hilly cultivation (shifting or slash and burn cultivation):** Almost all the tribes of Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur and Tripura and some tribes of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh produce their crops through this mode of cultivation.
- **Tribes engaged in cultivation on levelled (plain) land:** The Oraon, Munda, Ho and Santhal tribes have taken to settled agriculture on plain land as means of their livelihood.
- **Simple artisan tribes:** Some Indian tribes earn their livelihood through basket-making, rope-making, weaving, iron smelting, woodwork and so forth. The main examples are the Gujar of Kashmir, the Kinnauri of Himachal Pradesh, Asur of Bihar, Munda of Orissa, Agariya of Madhya Pradesh and Irula of Tamil Nadu.
- **Pastoral tribes:** These tribes earn their living by selling milk of cattle reared by them or by trading the cattle itself. The Toda of Nilgiri hills, Gaddi and Bakriwal of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir, Nageshia of Madhya Pradesh, Maldhan of Gujarat and some other tribes of northern and southern India are notable examples.
- **Tribes living as folk artists:** Some tribal groups are very good exponents of art forms and earn their livelihood by performing the same. The Mundupptu of Orissa are expert acrobats, the Kota of Tamil Nadu are snake charmers and the Gonds of Madhya Pradesh are dancers.
- **Agricultural and non-agricultural labour oriented tribes:** Among the tribes engaged in agricultural labour are those which are traditionally agriculturists but work as farm labourers on others' lands owing to their landlessness. Non-agricultural tribal labour force includes those tribes who are working in local factories and mines.
- **Tribes engaged in service and trade:** A small proportion of the tribal communities are engaged in Government and semi-Government jobs, mainly due to the Constitutional provisions of reservations for Scheduled Tribes. The tribes of north-eastern India and the Meena tribe of Rajasthan have been the major beneficiaries of this policy.

Classification on the basis of culture

Indian tribes are also classified according to their cultural distance from the rural–urban groups. Scholars believe that the indigenous tribes of India lose their originality, individuality and distinct identity on account of the cultural influence from non-tribals. This intermingling of tribal people with non-tribal is known as culture contact.

Majumdar (1976) opines that classification of Indian tribes in accordance with the degree and influence of culture contact is very useful in formulating rehabilitation plans for the tribal as it focuses upon the problems of tribal India. He believes that these problems arise due to the tribal people's contact with, or isolation from, the rural–urban groups. According to him, the tribal cultures fall into the following groups:

- Tribes that are culturally most distant from the rural–urban groups and, hence, more or less out of contact.
- Tribes that are under the influence of the culture of rural–urban groups and have developed discomforts and problems consequently.
- Tribes that are in contact with rural–urban groups but have not suffered due to such contact or have turned the corner and do not suffer any more because they have now got acculturated into rural or urban culture.

Majumdar never agreed with the view of Verrier Elwin that every contact with the civilized world brings misery to the tribal people. Rather, he believed that all the three types of tribal communities mentioned above should be encouraged to establish healthy and creative contacts with the rural–urban groups.

The Indian Conference of Social Work (1952) appointed a Tribal Welfare Committee that suggested the following classification of the Indian tribes on the basis of their culture contact:

- Tribal communities
- Semi-tribal communities
- Acculturated tribal communities
- Totally assimilated tribes

2.5 WOMEN

It is very important to study the status of women in India through a historical perspective. Finding answers to questions like when did women start losing their status is not easy. The place that women occupied in the medieval and in the colonial period is of paramount significance to comprehend why obstacles still remain in trying to bring about the upliftment of women.

Pre Colonial India

Ancient Period

Historians or scholars of Indian civilizations cannot clearly state whether men and women were given equal rights during the Vedic age. But available sources show that women in India reached one of their glorious stages during this time. Although the father held supreme sway in the affairs of the family, the mother also enjoyed a high position, and she exercised considerable authority in the household affairs (Apte, 1964). The Aryans

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Check Your Progress

5. Mention the linguistic classification of Indian tribes.
6. Define a tribe.

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sought cooperation of their women in almost every walk of life and they were given full freedom for their development. Their women enjoyed the property rights and had access to the property of their fathers and husbands. They discussed political and social problems freely with men. They composed and chanted Vedic hymns during holy sacrifices. Women enthusiastically involved themselves in matters of religious and social significance. Moreover, by and large, women were free to choose their partner in marriage. Widow re-marriage was in existence. They also had the privilege of adoption (Kapadia, 1968). The law did not discriminate between men and women. In the economic field, women enjoyed the freedom to earn. The home was the centre of production, where women took active part in spinning, weaving, agricultural production as well as in teaching.

The status and condition of women in the later Vedic period significantly declined from what it was in the early Vedic period. Ancestry began to be sketched through the male heir with sons becoming solitary heirs to family property. Women became entirely dependent on men, and were subjected to the authority of their fathers, husbands, and sons in the different periods of their life as daughters, wives and mothers. Their education, religious rights and privileges were curbed. Due to social, economic and political changes, women lost their position in the society. Subsequently, unnecessary and unwarranted customs such as purdah, sati, child marriage, polygamy and enforced widowhood crept in. As the economic and social status of sons began to go up, the status of women saw a sharp decline. Women subjugation was predominant in the patriarchal society. All the decisions were taken by men and they did not bother to share their decisions with their wives. Rather they did everything according to their own will and pleasure.

The status of women in the ancient period reached its lowest ebb during the period of the Dharmasastras. It is during this time period that codes of conduct setting down the behaviour norms were established. This age also saw the segregation of women from religious and economic spheres. During the period of Dharmasastra, child marriage was encouraged and widow remarriage was prohibited. During this period, many anti-women traditions and superstitions also came into being. The birth of a girl child started being considered an ill-omen with parents going to the extent of killing their infants and sati also became quite widespread.

Medieval Period

The system of purdah which was prevalent among royal families, nobles and merchant prince classes, prior to the advent of Muslims, spread to other classes also. During the medieval period, practices such as polygamy, sati, child marriage, ill treatment of widows, Devadasi system, already prevalent during the Dharmasastra age gained further momentum. The priestly class misinterpreted the sacred texts and created an impression that all these evil practices had religious sanction.

Colonial Period

At the time of the advent of the British rule in India, the status and position of Indian women was very low. The spread of Christianity among the Indians with the British conquest of India and the network of educational institutions in India established by the British created a far-reaching transformation. As a result, a new class of educated Indians came into existence. It was a section of this class that became the vanguard of all progressive movements in India. Many of the social reformers were the products of this British educational system. The social reformers in the 19th century included Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Swami

Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and many others, who were in the forefront of the struggle for women emancipation. These reformers brought about many social reforms in the 19th and early 20th century. Let us study some of them:

Abolition of Sati: The first serious challenge for the reformers was the problem of 'widow immolation' or sati, where Hindu widows climbed the funeral pyres of their husbands; an ancient tradition, prevalent in Bengal, Rajasthan, and the South Indian kingdom of Vijayanagar. Sati was never a religious obligation, but it was believed that by burning herself on the funeral pyre, a widow sanctified her ancestors and removed the sins of her husband. She was believed to ascend to the heaven on committing such an action. Strong social pressures on the widow and the status of widows among the Hindus were also factors that promoted the growth of this custom. Sati was first abolished in Calcutta in 1798; a territory that fell under the British jurisdiction. Raja Ram Mohan Roy fought bravely for the abolition of sati with assistance from Lord William Bentinck, and a ban on sati was imposed in 1829 in the British territories in India.

Widow Remarriage: The status of widows in India was deplorable in that they were not allowed to participate in any religious and social functions. Their lives were worse than death, one of the reasons as to why many widows opted for sati. The upper-caste widows were most affected by the customs prevailing at that time. Prohibition against remarriage of widows was strictly observed only among upper-caste Hindus. Attempts to make laws to facilitate remarriage of widows by the British were vehemently opposed by the conservative Hindus, who held that remarriage of widows 'involved guilt and disgrace on earth and exclusion from heaven.' Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, who wrote *Marriage of Hindu Widows* relying heavily on the *Shastras*, fought for widow remarriage. Reformers like Mahadev Govind Ranade and Dayananda Saraswati also actively participated in the reform movement, resulting in the enactment of the Hindu Widows Remarriage Act XV of 1856. The major drawback of the Act was that it was only applicable to the Hindus. Also, people showed little enthusiasm to implement the provisions of the Act. In Maharashtra, social reformers like Pandit Vishnu Shastri, Sir R.G. Bhandarkar, Agarkar, D.K. Karve have made significant contributions in this regard.

Right to Property: There was a lot of ambiguity on the question of the rights of a widow to property which made it difficult for a widow to remarry. Before the 'Hindu Women's Right to Property Act XVIII of 1937' and the 'Hindu Succession Act XXX of 1956' came into effect, the *Dayabhaga* and *Mitakshara* Laws laid down that a widow could become a successor to her husband's estate in the absence of the nearest male heir and the estate which she took by succession to her husband was an estate which she held only during her lifetime. At her death, the estate reverted to the nearest living heir of her dead husband.

Child marriage: Another serious problem that women faced was that of child marriage. Small kids and in some cases even infants in the cradle were married off. Early marriage affected the growth and development of the children. Fixing the minimum age of marriage of men and women by law was voiced as early as the mid-19th century by Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Keshab Chandra Sen. Vidyasagar argued that early marriage was detrimental to the health of women. Their efforts, coupled with those of Mahatma Gandhi, resulted in passing of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929.

Female infanticide: The practice of female infanticide was common among certain castes and tribes in India, especially in the north and north-western states. The custom of infanticide was particularly prominent among communities which found it difficult to

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find suitable husbands for their daughters and an unmarried daughter was considered a disgrace to the family. The difficulty was exacerbated by the extravagant expenditure which conventions demanded on the occasion of a daughter's marriage. The earliest efforts to stop female infanticide were made in Kathiawar and Kutch. In 1795, infanticide was declared to be murder by Bengal Regulation XXI. The evil of female infanticide was ended by propaganda and the forceful action on the part of the British Government. Through the efforts of Keshab Chandra Sen, the Native Marriage Act of 1872 was passed, which abolished early marriages, made polygamy an offence, sanctioned widow remarriages and inter-caste marriages. In 1901, the Government of Baroda passed the Infant Marriage Prevention Act. This Act fixed the minimum age for marriage for girls at 12 and for boys at 16. In 1930, the Sarda Act was passed to prevent the solemnization of marriages between boys under the age of 18 years and girls under the age 14 years. However, even today, the Act remains merely on paper on account of several factors.

The movement for the liberation of women received a great stimulus in the rise of the nationalist movement in the 20th century. Gandhi's efforts led to the elevation of the women's status, involving them in the struggle for social progress and political independence. Prominent among them were Sarojini Naidu, Kasturba Gandhi, Kamala Nehru and Aruna Asaf Ali, who participated in the political arena. After initial hesitation, even Muslims took to modern western education in large number, thanks to the efforts of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and others. The Muslim student population in modern high schools was generally proportionate to their numerical strength.

The early 20th century witnessed a nascent women's movement which campaigned for furthering female education, raising the age of marriage for woman, and the abolition of purdah. In 1929, the All India Women's Conference passed a resolution against purdah. The All India Women's Conference passed a resolution favouring girl's education at its Lucknow session in 1932. Resolutions were also passed against communal electorates for women untouchability, abolition of the unilateral right to divorce and communal unity. More than any other factor, participation of women in the national movement contributed to their awakening and emancipation. Women's struggle for equality took a big step forward with the coming of independence. Thus, the colonial period witnessed profound changes in the history of women in India.

Post-Colonial Period

Independence of India heralded the introduction of laws relating to women. The framers of the Indian Constitution rightly felt that it was not sufficient to confer some minor benefits on women, but it was necessary to declare in unequivocal terms, their right to equality with men and various other rights which would help them in attaining an equal status or an equal footing with men. These include Articles 14, 15, 23 and 39, among others, in the Constitution. Article 14 of Indian Constitution says that the state shall not deny to any person equality before or equal protection of the law. Article 15 says that no women can be discriminated against on the ground of sex. Article 15(3) emphasizes that the state shall make special provisions for women and children and Article 16 provides equality of opportunity in matters relating to employment by the state. Article 39(a) emphasizes that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood. Article 39(d) says that the state should secure equal pay for equal work for both men and women and in Article 34 it provides that the state shall make provision for securing just and humane conditions for work and maternity relief.

Besides the provisions in the Constitution, the following legislations were passed since 1950:

- The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955: It prohibits polygyny, polyandry and child marriage and concedes equal rights to women to divorce and remarry.
- The Hindu Succession Act, 1956: It provides for women the right to their parental property.
- The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956: It Gives a childless woman the right to adopt a child and to claim maintenance from the husband if she is divorced by him.
- The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961: It declares the taking and giving of dowry an unlawful activity and thereby prevents the exploitation of women.

Along with these, special laws have been enacted to prevent indecent representation of women in the media, sexual harassment in workplaces, equal wage laws, maternity benefit laws, and so on. The Hindu Code Bill gave the women the right to share the property of their parents. Many other social evils were removed. Widow remarriage was encouraged and child marriages were prohibited. The right of divorce was also given to women. The law also gives women equal rights in the matter of adoption, maternity benefits, equal pay, good working conditions and so forth. Along with these, legislations were also passed that mandated political representation of women right from the grassroots. The 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution passed in 1993 paved the way for women's entry into local governance by reserving 33 per cent of seats for them in the panchayats at all the levels, including that of the chairperson's seat. In most states, reservation of seats has met with success, with female representation exceeding the 33 per cent quota in states such as Karnataka, Kerala and Manipur.

However, many of these rights were more on papers than in actual practice. The traditional customs were so strongly rooted in the minds of people that they did not easily take these new reforms. When we start drawing a comparison between their role and status of women in modern India and in the other countries of the world, particularly in the matter of emancipation of women, we cannot but be stuck with certain unexpected contrasts. Although the status of Indian women has changed, it does not prove satisfactory. Indian society has all along been a maledominated society, where women's roles are confined to their homes. Their role was limited to procreation and upbringing of children and catering to the needs of men folk. In fact, in all the ages, women did not have an independent existence of their own. They existed for men and always played a second fiddle to them.

Some of the recent legislations pertaining to women include the following:

- The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1983: It seeks to stop various types of crimes against women.
- The Family Court Act, 1984: It seeks to provide justice to women who get involved in family disputes.
- The Indecent Representation of Women Prohibition Act, 1986: It prohibits the vulgar representation of women in the media such as newspaper, cinema, Television and so on.
- The 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendment Acts, 1993: It empowers women and seek to secure greater participation of women at all levels of the Panchayat System.

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2.5.1 Population Enumeration by Gender Composition

Sex Composition

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Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenges of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance.

— Kofi Annan

Population enumeration by gender composition is one of the basic demographic characteristics and provides meaningful demographic analysis. Indian census has the tradition of bringing out information by gender composition on various aspects of the population. Changes in gender composition largely reflect the underlying social, economic and cultural patterns of the society in different ways.

Sex ratio is defined as the number of females per 1,000 males in the population and is an important social indicator to measure the extent of prevailing equity between males and females in a society at a given point of time. It may be noted that the sex ratio is expected to be almost at parity in nature. According to experts, sex differential in mortality, sex selective outmigration and skewed sex ratio at birth are the major contributory factors that influence changes in sex ratio.

In India, sex ratio is skewed in favour of males and has continued to rise and expand in various forms. This has drawn wide attention of policy makers and planners to reverse the trend to bring it back to parity.

As per the provisional results of Census 2011, total population of India is 1, 21, 08, 59, 977 which comprises of 62,37,24,248 males and 58,64,69,174 females with the sex ratio of 940 females per 1000 males. The sex ratio in India from the year 1901 to 2011 is given in Table 2.1. States/Union Territories which account for the highest and lowest sex ratios in the country are mentioned in Tables 13.3 and 13.4. As per Census 2011, top five states/union territories which have the highest sex ratio are Kerala (1,084) followed by Puducherry (1,038), Tamil Nadu (995), Andhra Pradesh (992) and Chhattisgarh (991). Five states which have the lowest sex ratio are Daman and Diu (618), Dadra and Nagar Haveli (775), Chandigarh (818), NCT of Delhi (866) and Andaman and Nicobar Islands (878).

Table 2.1 Sex Ratio in India

Year	Females per 1000 males
1901	972
1911	964
1921	955
1931	950
1941	945
1951	946
1961	941
1971	930
1981	934
1991	927
2001	933
2011	940

Table 2.2 Top Five States/Union Territories having the Highest Sex Ratio

S.No.	States/Union Territories	Sex Ratio (Females per 1000 Males)
1	Kerala	1,084
2	Puducherry	1,038
3	Tamil Nadu	995
4	Andhra Pradesh	992
5	Chhattisgarh	991

Source: Census 2011

Table 2.3 Five States having the Lowest Sex Ratio

S.No.	States/Union Territories	Sex Ratio (Females per 1000 Males)
1	Daman & Diu	618
2	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	775
3	Chandigarh	818
4	NCT of Delhi	866
5	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	878

Source: Census 2011

2.6 DALITS AND WEAKER SECTIONS

Dalit is a designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as untouchable. Dalits are a mixed population, consisting of numerous social groups from all over India; they speak a variety of languages and practice a multitude of religions. There are many different names proposed for defining this group of people, including Panchamas ('fifth varna'), and *Asprushya* ('untouchables'). The word 'Dalit' may be derived from Sanskrit, and means 'ground', 'suppressed', 'crushed', or 'broken to pieces'. It was perhaps first used by Jyotirao Phule in the nineteenth century, in the context of the oppression faced by the erstwhile 'untouchable' castes of the twice-born Hindus.

According to Victor Premasagar, the term expresses their 'weakness, poverty and humiliation at the hands of the upper castes in the Indian society.'

The contemporary use of Dalit is centred on the idea that as a people they may have been broken by oppression but they survive and even thrive by finding meaning in the struggle of their existence towards human dignity.

Mohandas Gandhi adopted the word Harijan, translated roughly as 'Children of God', to identify the former untouchables. But this term is now considered derogatory when used to describe Dalits. In addition, the terms 'Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes' (SC/ST) are the official terms used in Indian Government documents to identify former 'untouchables' and tribes. However, in 2008 the National Commission for Scheduled Castes, noticing that 'Dalit' was used interchangeably with the official term 'scheduled castes', called the term 'unconstitutional' and asked state governments to end its use.

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Check Your Progress

7. What was the status and condition of women in the later Vedic period?
8. List certain legislations pertaining to women formulated in Independent India.

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History of Dalits

In the context of traditional Hindu society, Dalit status has often been historically associated with occupations regarded as ritually impure, such as any involving leatherwork, butchering, or removal of rubbish, animal carcasses and waste. Dalits worked as manual labourers cleaning streets, latrines, and sewers. As a result, Dalits were commonly segregated, and banned from full participation in Hindu social life. For example, they could not enter a temple or a school, and were required to stay outside the village. Elaborate precautions were sometimes observed to prevent incidental contact between Dalits and other castes. Discrimination against Dalits still exists in rural areas in the private sphere, in everyday matters such as access to eating places, schools, temples and water sources. It has largely disappeared in urban areas and in the public sphere. Some Dalits have successfully integrated into urban Indian society, where caste origins are less obvious and less important in public life. In rural India, however, caste origins are more readily apparent and Dalits often remain excluded from local religious life, though some qualitative evidence suggests that its severity is fast diminishing.

Modern India: Since 1950, India has enacted and implemented many laws and social initiatives to protect and improve the socio-economic conditions of its Dalit population. By 1995, of all jobs in India, 17.2 per cent of the jobs were held by Dalits, greater than their proportion in Indian population. Of the highest paying, senior most jobs in government agencies and government controlled enterprises, over 10 per cent of all highest paying jobs were held by members of the Dalit community, a tenfold increase in 40 years. In 1997, India democratically elected K. R. Narayanan, a Dalit, as the nation's President. In the last 15 years, Indians born in historically discriminated minority castes have been elected to its highest judicial and political offices. The quality of life of Dalit population in India, in 2001, in terms of metrics such as access to health care, life expectancy, education attainability, access to drinking water, housing, etc. was statistically similar to overall population of modern India. In 2010, international attention was drawn to the Dalits by an exhibition featuring portraits depicting the lives of Dalits by Marcus Perkins. Babu Jagjivan Ram became the first Dalit to hold the post of Deputy Prime Minister of India from 1977 to 1979.

Problems Faced by Dalits in India

The varna system which existed during the vedic period, in due course of time has degenerated into the caste system. Since then, the Scheduled Castes/Dalits also known as 'untouchables' have been suffering from various social, legal, economic, educational and other disabilities. For centuries they were denied political representation, legal rights, civic facilities, educational privileges and economic opportunities. Even today, the Scheduled Castes are not free from problems.

The social restrictions and inabilities of the Scheduled Castes

The Scheduled Castes or the Harijans suffered for centuries from a number of social disabilities among which the following may be noted:

- **Lowest status in history:** They were considered to be unholy, inferior, and low and were looked down upon by the other castes. They bear the stigma of untouchability. They have been treated as the servants of the other castes. They were not allowed to interact with people of other castes.

- **Education disabilities:** The Harijans were forbidden from taking up to education during the early days. Sanskrit education was denied to them. Even today majority of them are illiterate and ignorant.
- **Civic disability:** For a long time, untouchables castes were not allowed to use public places and avail civic facilities such as- village wells, ponds, temples, hotels, schools, hospitals and so forth. They were forced to live on the outskirts of the towns and villages during the early days. Even today, they are segregated from others spatially. Some lower caste people were not allowed to carry umbrellas, to wear shoes or golden ornaments and to milk cows.
- **Religious disabilities:** The Dalits also suffer from religious disabilities even today. They are not allowed to enter temples in many places. The Brahmins, who offer their priestly services to some lower castes, are not prepared to officiate in the ceremonies of the 'untouchable' castes.
- **Economic disabilities:** Due to social and religious disabilities, people of Scheduled Caste have to face many types of economic disabilities. They have to face many problems in life due to these economic disabilities. Majority of them depend on agriculture but only a few own land. For Harijan, the selection of occupation is limited. They are not allowed to do work allotted to the upper castes. Majority of them are landless labourers. More than 90% of the agricultural labourers in India belong to the lower classes.
- **Political disabilities:** The untouchables hardly participate in political matters. They were not allowed to take part in political and administrative functions of the state. Under the British rule, they were given the right to vote for the first time. After independence, equal political opportunities and rights have been provided for Harijans also. Politically, the Harijans are yet to become an organized force.

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Measures for the Welfare of Scheduled Castes

The government of independent India has been trying to uplift the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes right from its very inception. The government attempts to promote the welfare of the SCs and STs. The initiatives of the government have been classified into two groups. (a) Constitutional and legislative measures and (b) other welfare measures and programmes.

Constitutional and legislative measures

The Government of India has taken many steps to uplift the status of scheduled caste people. The Constitution ensures the protection and assures the promotion of interest of SCs and STs and other weaker sections of the population in the fields such as (a) political representation, (b) representation in services, (c) economic development, (d) socio-cultural safeguards and (e) legal support.

- The preamble of the Constitution of India declares that it assures equality, promotes fraternity, guarantees liberty and ensures justice to one and all.
- Articles 15, 16, 17, 38 and 46 guarantee that the state shall not discriminate between person on account of their religion and caste or class.
- Article 46 promotes educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections of the society.

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- Article 330 reserves representation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People.
- Article 334 relates to reservation of seats and special representation to cease after fifty years [Originally reservation was made for ten years and it was extended four times, the present period of expiry being AD 2000)
- Article 335 mentions the claims of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to services and posts.
- Article 338 empowers the Central Govt. 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 Scheduled Tribes in 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.
- Article 342 empowers the President to specify the tribes or tribal communities deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in a particular State or Union territory.

Legislative measures for the removal of untouchability

The government has been taking up the required legislative measures for the removal of untouchability. In pursuance of the provision of the Article 17 of the Constitution practice of untouchability a punishable offence, the Parliament passed the Untouchability Offences Act, 1955. It was later substituted by the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1976. The offences of Untouchability as per the 'Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1976' are the following:

- (i) Committing any kind of social injustice, such as denying access to any shop, restaurant, public hospital, educational institution or any place of public entertainment.
- (ii) Preventing a person, on the grounds of untouchability, from entering a place of worship and offering prayers, or from drinking water from a public well or spring.
- (iii) Refusal to sell goods or render services to a person on the grounds of untouchability is an offence punishable with imprisonment for six months or a fine upto ' 500 or both.
- (iv) Enforcing occupational, professional, trade disabilities in the matter of enjoyment of any benefit under a charitable trust and so forth.

2.6.1 Minorities

Minorities in a community refer to a sect of people who are lesser in number in comparison to the total population of the country, with the different religions in it. The Indian society has a long history of external aggression. But it is adept in accommodating and assimilating the alien cultures in spite of resentment to the outside forces. In a plural society like India, such co-operative activities sometimes have been responsible for insecurity. The period of the Mughal dynasty that preceded colonial rule was a turbulent period witnessing numerous wars and upheavals. Moreover, the Divide and Rule policy of the British sowed the seeds of communalism in India.

The most drastic effects of communalism was felt by the minorities. Minorities in India, being in lesser number face these atrocities and indifferent ideology.

Check Your Progress

9. What does the term 'Dalit' denote?
10. List the offences of untouchability as per the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1976.

2.7 SUMMARY

- The structure and composition of society is a very important concept of social science and has been discussed in great detail by numerous social scientists.
- India is widely known as a land of villages and these villages cumulatively constitute the Indian rural society.
- Villages in India were, and still are to some extent, isolated from the rest of the country.
- Indian villages are generally peaceful wherein people reside together with a spirit of togetherness and have a fellow feeling. An atmosphere of calm and simplicity prevails in our villages.
- The revival of the 'Panchayati Raj' system in Indian villages through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act in 1993 has truly changed the political landscape in rural India.
- The joint family system is no more the dominant family type in Indian villages. Nuclear families have also started coming up.
- Generally speaking, an urban community is large, dense and heterogeneous. It can also be said to be predominantly occupied in the industrial and service sectors. Urban growth is a recent phenomenon and till 1850, the urban population in the world was estimated to be only 2 per cent of the global population.
- Urban areas are large and have very high population. Besides, the communities do not reside in close proximity. In such circumstances, anonymity of individuals and urban communities becomes a way of life.
- Life is very fast-paced and hectic in the urban areas and is completely different from the languid pace of rural life.
- Both rural and urban societies are part of the same human society and do share a lot of features of each other.
- There is a different school of thought among sociologists, which believes that a strong dichotomy exists between rural and urban areas. Notwithstanding the wide acceptability of the concept of rural–urban continuum, this group believes in the other concept, i.e., rural–urban contrast.
- After a period of prolonged controversy, it was finally recorded in the Imperial Gazetteer of India that a tribe consists of the following:
 - o Collection of families bearing a common name
 - o Speaking a common dialect
 - o Occupying or professing to occupy a common territory
- Though tribal populations are found across the world, the largest concentration of tribal population is found in India. The tribes are the autochthonous people of the Indian peninsula and are believed to be the earliest settlers here.
- Various social scientists have classified tribal populations on the basis of their economic activity. Indian tribes have also been thus classified. The classical classification of Adam Smith and the more recent classification of Thurnwald and

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Herskovits have been applied throughout the world in classifying tribes on the basis of their economic life.

- It is very important to study the status of women in India through a historical perspective. Finding answers to questions like when did women start losing their status is not easy. The place that women occupied in the medieval and in the colonial period is of paramount significance to comprehend why obstacles still remain in trying to bring about the upliftment of women.
- The status and condition of women in the later Vedic period significantly declined from what it was in the early Vedic period.
- At the time of the advent of the British rule in India, the status and position of Indian women was very low.
- The social reformers in the 19th century included Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and many others, who were in the forefront of the struggle for women emancipation. These reformers brought about many social reforms in the 19th and early 20th century.
- The movement for the liberation of women received a great stimulus in the rise of the nationalist movement in the 20th century. Gandhi's efforts led to the elevation of the women's status, involving them in the struggle for social progress and political independence.
- Independence of India heralded the introduction of laws relating to women. The framers of the Indian Constitution rightly felt that it was not sufficient to confer some minor benefits on women, but it was necessary to declare in unequivocal terms, their right to equality with men and various other rights which would help them in attaining an equal status or an equal footing with men.
- Sex ratio is defined as the number of females per 1,000 males in the population and is an important social indicator to measure the extent of prevailing equity between males and females in a society at a given point of time.
- Dalit is a designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as untouchable. Dalits are a mixed population, consisting of numerous social groups from all over India; they speak a variety of languages and practice a multitude of religions.
- The contemporary use of Dalit is centered on the idea that as a people they may have been broken by oppression but they survive and even thrive by finding meaning in the struggle of their existence towards human dignity.
- In the context of traditional Hindu society, Dalit status has often been historically associated with occupations regarded as ritually impure, such as any involving leatherwork, butchering, or removal of rubbish, animal carcasses and waste.
- The government has been taking up the required legislative measures for the removal of untouchability. In pursuance of the provision of the Article 17 of the constitution practice of untouchability a punishable offence, the Parliament passed the Untouchability Offences Act, 1955.

2.8 KEY TERMS

- **Heterogeneity:** It is the quality of being diverse and not comparable in kind.
- **Panchayati Raj:** It is a system of governance in which 'gram' (village) panchayats are the basic units of administration.
- **Autochthonous:** It refers to indigenous rather than descended from migrants or colonists.
- **Gram Swaraj:** This refers to independent self-rule by villages.
- **Sati:** It was a former practice in India whereby a widow threw herself on to her husband's funeral pyre.

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2.9 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Two characteristics of Indian villages are as follows:
 - Isolation and self-sufficiency
 - Peace and simplicity
2. The revival of the Panchayati Raj system in Indian villages through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act in 1993 has truly changed the political landscape in rural India. Political consciousness and participation in electoral politics has increased tremendously. People have become aware about local, state and national politics.
3. Two characteristics of urban Indian society are as follows:
 - Anonymity
 - Social heterogeneity
4. The fringe in the urban-rural continuum is defined as an area of mixed urban and rural land users between the point where city services cease to be available and the point where agricultural land users predominate.
5. The linguistic classification of Indian tribes has been divided into the following four major families:
 - Austro-Asiatic family
 - Tibeto-Chinese family
 - Indo-European family
 - Dravidian family
6. As per the British social anthropologist, Bailey, a tribe possesses organic unity, which is characterized by lack of interaction and absence of any hierarchical system.
7. The status and condition of women in the later Vedic period significantly declined from what it was in the early Vedic period. Ancestry began to be sketched through the male heir with sons becoming solitary heirs to family property. Women became entirely dependent on men, and were subjected to the authority of their male counterparts. Their education, religious rights and privileges were curbed. Customs such as purdah, sati, child marriage, polygamy and enforced widowhood crept in.

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8. Certain legislations pertaining to women passed in Independent India are as follows:
 - The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1983 – seeks to stop various types of crimes against women.
 - The Family Court Act, 1984 – seeks to provide justice to women who get involved in family disputes.
 - The Indecent Representation of Women prohibition Act, 1986 – prohibits the vulgar representation of women in the media such as newspaper, cinema, television and so on.
 - The 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendment Acts, 1993 – empowers women and seek to secure greater participation of women at all levels of the Panchayat System.
9. Dalit is a designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as untouchable.
10. The offences of untouchability as per the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1976 are the following:
 - Committing any kind of social injustice, such as denying access to any shop, restaurant, public hospital, educational institution or any place of public entertainment.
 - Preventing a person, on the grounds of untouchability, from entering a place of worship and offering prayers, or from drinking water from a public well or spring.
 - Refusal to sell goods or render services to a person on the grounds of untouchability is an offence punishable with imprisonment for six months or a fine upto ₹ 500 or both.
 - Enforcing occupational, professional, trade disabilities in the matter of enjoyment of any benefit under a charitable trust and so forth.

2.10 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Mention the common characteristics of Indian villages.
2. Write a short note on rural-urban continuum.
3. Prepare a short note on the classification of Indian tribes on the basis of culture.
4. Write a short note on the measures taken for improving in the position of women in Independent India.
5. What are the problems faced by the Dalits in India?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the changing nature of the Indian rural society.
2. Explain the differentiating features of rural-urban landscape.
3. 'In India, tribe and caste are two important aspects of social organization.' Explain the statement.
4. Describe the classification of tribes in India on the basis of location and economic life.

5. Evaluate the position of women in the pre-colonial and post-colonial period in India.
6. Discuss the measures taken by the Indian government for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

2.11 FURTHER READING

- Atal, Y. 2006. *Changing Indian Society*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications.
- Dube, S.C. 1990. *Indian Society*. New Delhi: National Book Trust.
- Hasnain, N. 2004. *Indian Society and Culture: Continuity and Change*. New Delhi: Jawahar Publishers and Distributors.
- Naidu, A. and Murty, K. 1989. *Indian Society: Structure and Change*. Cuttack: Kitab Mahal.

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UNIT 3 BASIC INSTITUTIONS OF INDIAN SOCIETY

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Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Unit Objectives
- 3.2 Caste
- 3.3 Class
- 3.4 Family
- 3.5 Marriage
 - 3.5.1 Kinship
- 3.6 Religion
- 3.7 Summary
- 3.8 Key Terms
- 3.9 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 3.10 Questions and Exercises
- 3.11 Further Reading

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit will introduce you to the various institutions of Indian society. The family is the smallest unit in a society and is the tiniest form of social organization. Indian society is no different and the family is a very important part of it. It is one of the basic institutions of Indian society and contributes immensely to the social fabric of India. Family is a very important component of our social structure and occupies a central position.

Like elsewhere, the two major types of family in the Indian society are the nuclear family and the joint family. In nuclear families, the members comprise the husband, wife and their children. This type of family has become more common with the advent of industrialization and urbanization. It has forced people to move out to new urban centres and seek employment. The Hindu joint family system found in the Indian society is a unique institution. It consists of members spanning horizontally (siblings) and vertically (generations) and living together with common goals and common assets.

The family is no doubt the basic establishment of Indian society and contributes immensely to the social fabric of India. Moving ahead, in this unit, you will also study about castes and classes, which are also important elements of the Indian society. Across human societies, one finds systems that divide a society into different categories. Rarely are societies a united whole. Divisions are generally seen to be on the basis of race, religion, caste and class. While race is the most rigid division, being biologically determined, class is the most mobile division and people can move across classes with minimum hurdles.

Class is a system that rewards achievements and status. Indian society has traces of racial and religious discrimination and quite a bit of class distinction. However, the unique characteristic of Indian society is the overbearing and all pervasive nature of the caste system. The caste system has compartmentalized Indian society in such a manner that there is great distrust across castes and a very strong caste endogamy.

In this unit, you will study about the basic institutions of the Indian society such as family, caste, class, marriage and kinship.

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3.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the various theories of caste
- Analyse the changing nature of the caste system
- List the characteristics of social class
- Differentiate between caste and class
- Discuss the functions of family
- Describe the types of family
- Explain the rules of mate selection as per the Hindu law
- State the recent changes in the institution of marriage
- Analyse the importance of kinship
- Explain the origin and evolution of religion

3.2 CASTE

The word caste has been defined from the Portuguese word *Casta*, which means race, breed or kind. British anthropologist and linguist, Risley defines caste as 'a collection of families or groups of families bearing a common name, claiming a common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine, professing to follow the same hereditary calling and is regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogenous community'.

The caste system in India has been studied from the following three different perspectives:

- **Indological:** The Indologists have viewed caste from the scriptural point of view and believe that the ancient Hindu scriptures have given birth to the concept of caste. They maintain that the varnas have originated from Brahma—the *Virat Purusha* (the Great Man)—and castes are units within the varna system, which have developed as a result of hypergamy and hypogamy. The rituals to be performed by the four varnas are status bound and laid down in the Brahmanas (800 BC), while the customs and laws to be followed by each caste are laid down in the Smritis (100–200 BC).

The Brahmins were given the pre-eminent position in the society as it was believed that they had the divine right to interpret law and religion. The Indologists believe that the caste system would continue to exist as it was divinely ordained and cannot be dismantled by human beings.

- **Social-anthropological:** The social anthropologists have studied caste from the cultural point of view. The organizational and structural approaches of Hutton consider caste as a unique system found in India alone. The institutional approach of Kroeber and Risley does not view the caste system as relevant only to India. They find it in ancient Egypt, medieval Europe and present southern United States. The relational approach finds caste situations in army, business, factory and so forth. It states that the presence/absence of caste in a society depends upon the absence/presence of mobility in groups. If mobility is normal, there is no caste system and vice versa.

- **Sociological:** Sociologists have viewed caste from the stratificational point of view. They study caste in terms of social stratification in a society. They study it as a phenomenon of social inequality. According to them, society has certain structural aspects and it distributes its members in social positions. The interaction is the basis of social structures and types of interactions along with associated norms categorize social structures.

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Theories of Caste

Though a number of theories explaining the origin of caste in India have been propounded, not one of them has managed to explain it properly. While Herbert Risley, a British ethnographer, explains the origin of caste with reference to racial differences, Abbe Dubois, author of *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, traces the origin of caste to the role played by the Brahmins. Some such theories are as follows:

- **Traditional theory:** Various scholars have described Hindu society as a supernatural-centred society. In it, people are attracted to abstract truths and try to find its reality through mysticism. There is no effort to analyse these things scientifically. These scholars have observed, and rightly so, that the Hindus try to explain every phenomenon in terms of God and religion. Even the origin of the institution of caste is sought to be explained in terms of religion by relating it to the body of Brahma.

The traditional theory believes that the Indian caste system has been divinely ordained. While the sociological theory views caste system as an artificially created system of stratification in which the role and status of an individual is determined by birth (ascriptive status), the traditional theory views it as a natural system of stratification. The traditional theory has two versions— mythical and metaphysical.

The mythical version treats the four varnas as the four castes and it believes that the four emerged from different parts of Brahma's body. This theory finds the caste system to be a completely normal and natural institution of social functions. It believes that membership of an individual in a caste is determined by the doctrines of karma and dharma. According to the doctrine of karma (actions), a man is born in a particular caste due to his actions in his previous incarnation. Srinivas (1952) summarizes the doctrine of karma as the birth of a man in a particular caste. It is certainly not an accident. He was born in that caste because he deserved to be born there.

The doctrine of dharma (religious duty) propounds that a person who accepts the caste system and regulates his life according to the norms of his particular caste, is living by his dharma. On the other hand, one who questions a norm governing his caste is violating dharma. While the former is rewarded, the latter invites punishment. This reward and punishment would befall both in this life and in the next incarnation. Thus, a person who lives according to his dharma will be born in a high caste in his next life whereas somebody who violates his dharma would be born in a low caste.

The metaphysical version explains the function, hierarchy and other characteristics of caste. Each caste has a separate function, which is determined by the nature and qualities of the members of that caste. The Hindus believe that an individual's nature consists of two sets of qualities—*gotrika* and *namika*. The *gotrika* (lineage) qualities are the hereditary qualities, which an individual inherits from his *gotra* and shares with the members of his family. The *namika* (individual) qualities, on

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the other hand, are specific individual qualities that one does not share with any other member of his family. Thus, while the *namika* qualities differentiate an individual from others, the *gotrika* qualities identify him with a particular group. The *gotrika* qualities explain the characteristic of hereditary membership of the caste system.

Another characteristic of the caste system is fixed occupation. It is explained by the close connection between nature (*swabhav*) and occupation. The nature of a man determines his occupation and since people of a particular group have the same *gotrika* qualities, they tend to do the same kind of occupation. Thus, a particular caste gets limited to a particular occupation.

The traditional theory identifies two kinds of functions—ordinary and extraordinary. While ordinary functions require no specialized skills, extraordinary functions do. It further divides extraordinary functions into three types – techno-economic, politico-legal and cultural-religious. The traditional theory accords the highest status to cultural-religious functions. Politico-legal and techno-economic functions are placed after it. The lowest status is accorded to the ordinary functions. The Brahmins get the highest status in caste society because they discharge the cultural-religious functions. Kshatriyas follow them by performing politico-legal functions. Vaishyas are placed at the third place as they are engaged in techno-economic functions. The Shudras are placed at the bottom of the four-fold system because they perform the ordinary functions.

The traditional theory of the origin of caste has been rejected by many scholars because it considers caste as a natural phenomenon and it considers the four varnas as the four castes. If we accept this view, then it would mean that the varna and not the caste is the unit of the caste system. Refuting this view, M.N. Srinivas has stated that the idea of caste as the four-fold division of society is a gross oversimplification of facts. He says that the real unit of the caste system is not the varna but the jati, which is a very small endogamous group, practicing a traditional occupation and enjoying cultural and ritual autonomy.

- **Brahmanical theory:** Abbe Dubois feels that that the caste system originated and developed in India due to the Brahmins. His view is that the caste system was designed by the Brahmins for the Brahmins. They devised this system to place various restrictions (food, marriage and others) on non-Brahmins so that they can protect their purity, which is necessary to perpetuate their monopoly in matters of religious and sacred functions.

G.S. Ghurye also believed the view professed by Abbe Dubois. He supports the Brahmanical theory. He maintains that the various factors that characterize caste society were the result of the efforts of the Brahmins to exclude the Shudras from religious and social communion with them. He concludes that caste in India is a Brahmanic child of the Indo-Aryan culture of North India and was thereafter transferred to other parts of the country.

- **Racial theory:** Herbert Risley is the main proponent of this theory and finds support from scholars like Ghurye, Majumdar and Westermarck. According to this theory, the clash of cultures and the contact of races crystallized castes in India. This theory believes that the perceived superiority of the Aryans vis-à-vis the aboriginals and the social intercourse between the two groups laid the foundation for the caste system. Marriages between the Aryans and the aboriginals resulted in the birth of half-breeds and they were called the *chandals* who had to be

confined to the lowest position in society. Risley has referred to six processes in the formation of castes:

- o **Change in traditional occupation:** Adoption of a new occupation often resulted in the creation of a distinct caste.
- o **Migration:** Migration of a caste group to a new place often resulted in development of a distinct caste.
- o **Change in customs:** Adoption of new customs and practices led to the growth of a new caste.
- o **Preservation of old traditions:** Preservation of traditional customs by a group led to their moving away from those who had adopted new customs and resulted in growth of a new caste.
- o **Hinduization:** Sometimes a tribe enters the fold of Hinduism by adopting Hindu customs and beliefs and this results in the creation of a new caste that is distinct from the other caste Hindus.
- o **Role of religious enthusiasts:** Preaching of his own doctrines by a religious leader often resulted in the formation of a new religious sect, which gradually became a new caste.

Risley's racial theory is supported by other scholars. According to Ghurye, the Aryans tried to show off their superiority because they were fairer in colour in comparison to the natives. Westermarck observes that India was inhabited by the dark people before the Aryans came and took control. The Aryans had bitter contempt for the original inhabitants of India and drew sharp distinctions between themselves and the latter. These distinctions gave rise to the caste system.

Acceptance of Risley's racial theory would give rise to the question as to why then the caste system should be confined to India. Risley himself believes that the caste system exists in other countries too. The discrimination on the basis of skin colour in countries like South Africa, South America, Canada and others has been put forward as a kind of caste discrimination.

- **Occupational theory:** Nesfield is the proponent of this theory and is ably supported by Ibbetson. This theory holds that caste has nothing to do with race or religion and its origin is due to occupations. Nesfield maintains that occupations were passed on hereditarily across generations and practising the same occupation resulted in the creation of occupational guilds. These guilds gradually came to be known as castes. The hierarchy in the caste system was due to the feeling of superiority or inferiority of occupations. Answering a question as to how the Brahmins got the highest status in this hierarchy, Nesfield explained that Brahmins had specialization in the occupation of sacrifices, hymns and rituals, which were of the greatest importance for the people of the society. Thus, the Brahmins acquired the highest position in the caste system.

Ibbetson, supporting Nesfield, says that tribes developed as occupational guilds and came to function on religious lines. Eventually, these tribes developed as castes in the process of social evolution.

Many scholars have criticized the occupational theory of Nesfield and Ibbetson. D.N. Majumdar has rejected the idea of hierarchy of castes in terms of the superiority or inferiority of occupations. He maintains that the status of castes does not depend upon the occupation but upon the degree of purity of blood and the extent of isolation maintained by the groups. Hutton too believes that the

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occupational theory does not explain the social status of various agricultural castes. The same agricultural caste has a higher status in North India than in South India. The occupational theory fails to explain this.

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Characteristics of the Indian Caste System

According to Dr. G.S. Ghurye, any attempt to define caste 'is bound to fail because of the complexity of the phenomenon.' He has outlined the following characteristics of the Indian caste society:

- Segmental division of society
- Hierarchy of castes
- Restrictions on commensality and social intercourse
- Differential civil and religious privileges and disabilities
- Restrictions on occupational choice
- Restrictions on marriage

Changing Nature of Caste

Caste has never been static. The caste system has been changing continuously and has always undergone adaptive changes. Though the pace of change might have been slow earlier, in the post-independence period the changes have occurred rapidly. The changes can be mainly categorized as follows:

- **Structural changes:** The following are some of the major structural changes in the caste system:
 - o **Decline in the supremacy of the Brahmins:** Due to the forces of modernization and rapid economic development, Brahmins have lost their dominance of yore.
 - o **Dilution of caste hierarchy:** Factors like migration to urban areas, diversification of jobs and others have reduced the gaps between different castes and there is greater intercourse amongst members of various castes.
 - o **Socio-economic empowerment of Dalits and Harijans:** The Government's policy of affirmative action in case of the oppressed castes has led to an upwards movement of their social status.
- **Functional changes:** The functional changes in the caste system are as follows:
 - o **Birth no longer the sole determinant of status:** Unlike earlier, birth is no longer the sole factor determining social status. Wealth, education, occupation and others aspects have become the determinants of status and caste as an ascriber of status has been relegated to the background.
 - o **Change due to occupational diversity:** Occupation is no longer hereditarily determined. The so-called high status occupations are accessible to members of all castes. On the other hand, members of high castes have also taken to manual work to earn a decent and dignified living.
 - o **Dilution of restrictions on marriage:** The Special Marriages Act, 1954 and the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 have removed the restrictions on inter-caste marriages by legalizing them. Caste endogamy is no more the basis of choosing a mate.
 - o **Change in commensality:** Restrictions on food intake by members of various castes have been virtually removed.

- o **Lifestyle changes:** Due to westernization and modernization, the sharp differences in lifestyle of various caste members have come down. A common lifestyle is emerging, which breaks the caste barriers.
- o **Educational restrictions removed:** Education is no more the preserve of the high caste people. Government policies have resulted in providing access to education to all citizens. The amendment of the Constitution to make the right to education a fundamental right is going to improve the situation further.
- o **Changes in political system:** Democracy and universal adult franchise have ensured that every citizen of this country exercises political power through the ballot. Reservation of seats for members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to contest elections has also empowered them politically.
- **Attitudinal changes:** The attitudinal changes in the caste system are as follows:
 - o **Decline of the concept of ascriptive status:** The processes of modernization, westernization, industrialization and so forths have seriously eroded the hold of the caste system. People do not accept the notion of ascriptive status any more as it is determined only by birth. Status is now achieved through ability, efficiency, wealth, political power and other factors.
 - o **Philosophical basis of caste system has become unacceptable:** The belief of people that caste system is divinely ordained has undergone change. They have no faith on the philosophical basis of the caste system because they have stopped accepting the doctrine of karma.

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Factors Responsible for the Changes in the Caste System

The main factors responsible for the changes in the caste system are enumerated as follows:

- **Industrialization:** The process of industrialization has affected the caste structure to a remarkable extent. Caste system functions well in an agrarian economy because in such an economy there is interdependence among the various castes for economic reasons. For example, the cultivator has to avail the services of the carpenter and the weaver and the latter are dependent on the cultivator for food grains. Thus, the village economy functions as a self-sufficient unit.
The growth of industrial economy has weakened this bond of interdependence among the castes. Industrialization has provided new sources of livelihood to people and made occupational mobility possible. Due to this mobility, different castes come together to work at one place. For example, in a factory a Brahmin works alongside a Shudra and cannot avoid the latter's touch or shadow.
- **Urbanization:** Industrialization has resulted in the process of urbanization. New townships have emerged around factories and the rural people migrate to these townships to avail better employment opportunities. Development of modern towns and cities has eroded the hold of caste taboos and restrictions by forcing people to intermingle in their daily lives. Eating out in restaurants where the caste of the cook or the person sitting on the next table is not known, has eroded all notions of purity and pollution.
- **Modern means of transport and communication:** Modern means of transportation have increased mobility of the people and thereby put an end to the

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geographical isolation, which was a favourable condition for the creation and continuation of the caste system in India. Moreover, while travelling in the modern modes of transport like buses, trains and airplanes, it is impossible to observe caste rules regarding food, drink and social intercourse.

- **Growth of materialism:** The caste system gets its strength from divine and religious sanctions. People believe in the doctrine of karma and the theory of reincarnation, which make them obey caste rules. But the modern age is dominated by scientific and technological knowledge and this has changed the consciousness of human beings to a great extent. Traditional beliefs, faiths and philosophies are no more the powerful moulders of human behaviour. Material considerations like wealth, power and prestige are given importance. A Shudra having wealth and political power would have a higher status today than a poor Brahmin who follows all the traditional customs rigidly. Such a change from spiritualism to materialism has gone against the caste system.
- **Modern education:** Modern liberal education introduced by the British has played a crucial role in undermining the importance of caste in Indian society. Modern education is accessible to all irrespective of one's caste or community. It popularized the idea of freedom of association, equality before law, equal rights of all citizens and equal freedom to follow any vocation. It also acts as a powerful force towards the removal of untouchability.
- **New legal system:** The new legal system established by the British has also played a vital role in weakening the influence of caste in India. This system has firmly established the concept of equality before law in India and has given a blow to the age-old legal discrimination against the lower castes, which is a main characteristic of a caste society. Further, with the establishment of modern judicial courts, the caste panchayats have lost their power and effectiveness. Besides, modern legislations like the Untouchability Offences Act, 1955 and Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 have proved to be disastrous for the caste system.
- **Social and religious reform movements:** Several religious and social reform movements also played their role. The Bhakti Movement and the Sufi Movement laid emphasis on oneness of mankind and exposed the idea of inequality as man made rather than being divinely ordained. Though they could not eliminate the caste system, they definitely facilitated relaxation of caste rigidities.

Several social reform movements like the Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj movements made direct attacks on the caste system, especially targeting its ritual aspect of purity and pollution.

- **Influence of Indian Constitution:** Last but not the least, the influence of the Indian Constitution in weakening the caste system has been universally recognized. Our Constitution confers fundamental rights to all our citizens irrespective of their caste, creed or colour. Article 15(2) of the Constitution directly attacks the caste system by declaring all citizens as equal.

Check Your Progress

1. List the essential characteristics of the Indian caste system.
2. What is the view of the sociologists regarding the Indian caste system?

3.3 CLASS

Class is one of the most important bases of social stratification. Classes are groups of people into which a society is divided. These groups are ranked on the basis of specific criteria. Thus, classes are social groups that occupy specific high and low positions in a

given society. Each class is a sub-culture with a set of attitudes, beliefs, values and behavioural norms, which differ from those of other classes. Class lines are not clearly drawn but represent points along a continuum of social status. The exact size and membership of a given class is difficult to establish.

Karl Marx defined a social class as 'all those people who share their relation to the means of economic production.' According to him, a class is determined by its possession of economic criteria like wealth, occupation and income.

Max Weber has defined social class as 'an aggregate of individuals who have the same opportunities of acquiring goods and the same exhibited standard of living.'

Maciver and Page define a social class as any portion of a community marked off from the rest by social status. Similarly, Ogburn and Nimkoff define social class as an aggregate of persons having essentially the same social status in a given society.

Class consciousness emerged in India during the British Rule as they introduced modern education, civil services, legal system and means of transportation in India. These new instrumentalities changed the mindset of the people and they started looking beyond caste. Post-independence, the Government's developmental initiatives accelerated the process of decline of the caste system. With industrialization around the country, intermingling among people grew and they aspired to achieve a higher social status. The class system of social stratification allowed people to have vertical mobility and the lower caste people, by sheer dint of their hard work and competence, could manage to climb up the class ladder. In today's era, though caste is still a strong factor in our society, class has been accepted as an alternative system of social stratification in India.

In the rural areas of the country, agrarian class structure has strong roots. It has been studied in detail by sociologists like Andre Beteille. The agrarian class structure was the creation of the British period but there was an agrarian hierarchy in the pre-British period. In this hierarchy, the high caste people were the large land owners while the lower caste people were landless labourers. In between were the members of certain castes who did the actual cultivation on these lands. Thus, it was a three-tier structure. Andre Beteille has observed that wherever the agrarian hierarchy is elaborate, the caste hierarchy is also elaborate.

The agrarian class structure in post-independent India is seen to possess the following four classes:

- (i) Landowners
- (ii) Tenants
- (iii) Labourers
- (iv) Non-agriculturists

Professor D.N.Dhanagre has suggested an alternative agrarian class structure, which has the following five classes:

- (i) Landlords
- (ii) Rich peasants
- (iii) Middle peasants
- (iv) Poor peasants
- (v) Landless labourers

Apart from the traditional agrarian class structure, modern rural India also has a non-agrarian class structure. It can broadly be classified as follows:

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- Political functionaries and government officials
- Civil work contractors
- Village teachers and doctors
- Priests and astrologers
- NGO workers

Though pre-independent India had trade centres and port cities like Calcutta (Kolkata), Bombay (Mumbai) and Madras (Chennai), urban India is mainly a post-independence phenomenon. In the last sixty four years, large numbers of people from rural India have migrated to old and new urban centres in search of better education, employment and living standards. This has weakened the hold of the caste system and has given rise to a class system in urban India which is different from the agrarian class structure.

The modern urban class structure can be classified as follows:

- Political personalities like Ministers, MPs and civil servants
- Technocrats (software engineers, CEOs and others), Professionals (doctors, lawyers, sportsmen and media persons and others) and industrialists/entrepreneurs
- Educationists and academicians
- People in the organized sector other than the above categories (service men, traders)
- People in the unorganized sector (hawkers, daily labourers and so forth)

Characteristics of Social Class

The following are some of the important characteristics of a social class:

- **Class—a status group:** A social class is essentially a social group. Class is related to status. Different statuses arise in a society as people do different things, engage in different activities and pursue different vocations.
- **Achieved status and not ascribed status:** Status in the class system is achieved and not ascribed. Birth is not the criterion of status. Achievements of an individual mostly decide his status. Class system provides scope for changing or improving one's status. Factors like income, occupation, wealth, education, lifestyle and other factors decide the status of an individual.
- **Universal:** Class is almost a universal phenomenon. The class system appears in all the modern complex societies of the world.
- **Mode of feeling:** In a class system, you may observe three modes of feeling. Firstly, there is a feeling of equality in relation to the members of one's own class. Secondly, there is a feeling of inferiority in relation to those who occupy the higher status in the socio-economic hierarchy. Thirdly, there is a feeling of superiority in relation to those who occupy the lower status in the hierarchy. These kinds of feelings develop into class consciousness and finally result in class solidarity.
- **Element of prestige:** Each social class has its own status in society. Status is associated with prestige. Thus, the status and prestige enjoyed by the ruling or rich classes in every society is superior to that of the poorer classes. The prestige that a class enjoys depends upon our evaluations. In many societies knowledge, purity of race or descent, religion, wealth, heroism, bravery and similar other traits confer a high degree of prestige on the persons possessing them.

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- **Element of stability:** A social class is relatively a stable group. It is not unstable like a crowd or mob. Though status of a class might change, it rarely does so in a radical manner. Radical changes occur in extraordinary situations like war, economic depression and others arenas and such changes can alter the social position of the class suddenly.
- **A way of life:** Every social class tends to have a lifestyle of its own, which distinguishes it from other classes. Lifestyle includes the type of dress one wears, the quality and location of residence in which one resides, the means of recreation one resorts to, the relationship one enjoys with close relatives, the books, magazines and so forth one reads, the cultural products one is able to enjoy, political affiliations and others. Lifestyles reflect the preferences, tastes and values of a class.
- **An open group:** Social classes are open groups and represent an open social system in which vertical social mobility is possible. This means there are either no restrictions or very mild restrictions imposed upon the upwards and downwards movement of individuals in the social hierarchy.
- **Social class—more than an economic group:** Social classes are mostly economic but not merely economic groups or divisions. Subjective criteria such as class-consciousness, class solidarity and class identification on the one hand, and objective criteria such as wealth, property, income, education and occupation on the other, are equally important in the class system.

Classification of Social Classes

Traditionally, sociologists have classified class into following types:

- Upper class
- Middle class
- Lower class

Warner and Lunt, in their study of a New England town, have divided each of the three traditional classes into two sub-classes. Thus, they have given the following six-fold classification of class:

- The upper-upper class
- The lower-upper class
- The upper-middle class
- The lower-middle class
- The upper-lower class
- The lower-lower class

Karl Marx, the champion of the theory of social class and class conflict, has spoken of only two major social classes – the haves and the have nots, or the rich and the poor, or the capitalists and the workers, or the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat.

Sorokin, sociologist and social critic, has spoken of three major types of class stratification. They are economic, political and occupational classes.

Differences between Caste and Class

The caste system is based on the principle of inherited inequalities. On the other hand, the class system is based on the principle of equal opportunities. Both are important systems of social stratification but represent two opposite poles.

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The following are the major differences between caste and class:

- While stratification in a caste society is based on birth, it is based primarily on wealth in a class society. Therefore, caste provides an individual with a status that is ascribed whereas class status is an achieved one.
- While the structure of the caste system is closed, the class system has an open structure. Mobility is virtually impossible in the caste system but is very much possible in the class system.
- The caste system insists upon the observance of certain rules regarding eating, drinking and social intercourse among the members of different castes. However, such rules are conspicuous by their absence in a class society.
- The caste system is unique to India whereas, the class system is found all over the world.
- The caste system is believed to have had a divine origin. It is based on religious dogmas like karma, rebirth and so forth. Class system, on the other hand, is purely secular and has got nothing to do with religion.
- The idea of purity and pollution is associated with the caste system. However, it does not find place in the class system and there is no concept of untouchability as it is found in the caste system.
- Caste societies have strong caste panchayats, which maintain the caste structure by punishing those who violate the customs and traditions of their respective castes. No such organization exists in a class society.
- The caste system is conservative and orthodox whereas, the class system is liberal and progressive.
 - o Caste is an endogamous social unit whereas, a class is not so. Members of a class are free to select their life partners from any other class. Unlike the caste system, a class system never imposes restrictions on marriage.
 - o The caste system is a complex system. There are more than 800 castes and sub-castes in India and each one of them are complex categories. The class system is much simpler with only three broad categories, i.e., upper class, middle class and lower class.

3.4 FAMILY

The family is the most important primary group in society. It is often called the basic social institution because of its important functions of procreation and socialization. Robert Bierstedt is of the opinion that ‘the family, almost without question, is the most important of any of the groups that human experience offers. Other groups we join for longer or shorter periods of time for the satisfaction of this interest or that. The family, on the contrary, is with us always or rather more precisely, we are with it.’

Sociologists have defined the family in a number of ways. MacIver and Page hold that the family is a definite and long-term group defined by sexual relationships that reproduce and bring up children. It may include other blood relations also but it is mainly formed by living together of man, woman and their children. The unit formed by their living together is called family. Ogburn and Nimkoff held that the family is an association formed by the sex relations of husband and wife with or without children. They believe that husband and wife or only the woman and her children or only the man and his

Check Your Progress

3. Mention the four classes of the agrarian class structure in post-independent India.
4. List any two essential features of a social class.

children by living together can form a family. But the family is not limited to these individuals alone. Its size can be large also. People of many generations and various relatives can also live together in a family.

Characteristics of family

The basic characteristics of family are as follows:

- **Mating relationship:** A family is based on mating relationship, that is to say that family comes into existence when a man and a woman establish mating relations between them.
- **A form of marriage:** The mating relationship is established through the institution of marriage. It is an institutional arrangement made by the society according to which the individuals establish marital relationships among themselves. Marriages may be of the following types:
 - o Monogamy
 - o Polygamy
 - o Group marriage
- **A system of nomenclature:** Every family is known by a name and has its own system of recognizing descent. Descent may be traced through the male line, i.e., patrilineal or through the female line, i.e., matrilineal or through both the lines, i.e., bilateral.
- **Economic provisions:** Every family has certain economic needs and the head of the family looks into ways and means to satisfy these needs. He has to ensure the comfort of the family members.
- **Common habitation:** Each family has a common habitation that implies that the members of a family must reside together under one roof.

Distinctive Features of Family

Family is a very important component of our social structure and occupies a central position. Its distinctive features are discussed as follows:

- **Universality:** The family is universal. There is no society in which some form or the other of family does not exist. A typical family consists of mother, father and their progeny. It is found in all communities.
- **Emotional basis:** The family is grounded in emotions and sentiments. It is based upon our impulses of mating, procreation, maternal devotion, fraternal love and parental care. It is built upon sentiments of love, affection, sympathy, cooperation and friendship.
- **Limited size:** A family usually means a small-sized organization. As a primary group its size is necessarily limited. Biological conditions are primarily responsible for the small size.
- **Formative influence:** Family helps in the formulation of the characters of its members and in shaping their personalities. Freud and other psychologists have proved that a child exhibits the same character and mental tendencies in adulthood, which he has acquired in the family.
- **Nuclear position in the social structure:** The family is the nucleus of all other social organizations and controls the social life of the individual. It influences the whole life of the society.

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- **Responsibility of the members:** Every member of the family has certain responsibilities, duties and obligations. The smooth running of the family depends on how best the members discharge their responsibilities in coordination with the other members of the family.
- **Social regulations:** The family is guarded by social taboos and legal regulations. The society takes steps to safeguard this organization from any possible breakdown due to divorce, desertion or separation.
- **Permanent and temporary:** The family is a permanent institution. Since, it is based on the organic and emotional nature of man, it continues to exist. But family as an association may be temporary in character.

Functions of Family

The family fulfills a number of functions. According to American sociologist, Goode, a family has the following functions:

- Procreation
- Socio-economic security to family members
- Determination of status of family members
- Socialization and emotional support
- Social control

Kingsley Davis, American Sociologist and demographer, talks about the following four functions of the family:

- Reproduction
- Maintenance
- Placement
- Socialization

Sociologists, Ogburn and Nimkoff have outlined the following six functions of the family:

- (i) Affection
- (ii) Economic
- (iii) Recreational
- (iv) Protective
- (v) Religious
- (vi) Educational

The functions of a family mentioned above can be divided into four broad categories:

- (i) Biological
- (ii) Social
- (iii) Psychological
- (iv) Economic

The biological needs of an individual are satisfied in the family. Thus, it is a very important function of the family. Firstly, the family institutionalizes the need of sex satisfaction through marriage. Social sanction is accorded to this need by the family. Secondly, the family also fulfills the biological need of procreation. The existence of the human race is

dependent upon procreation and, therefore, this is a very crucial function discharged by the family.

The family discharges the various social functions also. According to Goode, it brings up children and helps in their socialization. Children learn their language, customs and traditions while growing up in the family. The family also discharges the functions of imparting socialization to its members, regulation of their behaviour and ensuring social control. The family transmits the familial values to its members and they do not deviate from the path of proper social behaviour.

In addition to biological and social functions, the family also satisfies psychological and emotional needs of its members. The members get love, adulation, sympathy and emotional support from within the family.

Another important function of the family is economic. In pre-industrial economies, the family is the unit of production. All members of a family contribute to the family occupation like agriculture, cattle-rearing, hunting and so forth. The family provides economic security to its members. It takes care of their basic needs like food, shelter, clothing, education, health and other aspects.

Types of Family

Though family is a universal institution, its structure or forms vary not only from one society to another but also from one class to another within the same society. Sociologists have spoken of different forms or types of families and they have taken into consideration different factors for the purposes of making such classifications. A few types of family classifications are discussed as follows:

- On the basis of marriage, family has been classified into two major types:
 - o Monogamous
 - o Polygamous
 - (i) Polyandrous
 - (ii) Polygynous

Monogamy is a system of marriage in which one man marries one woman. In almost all the modern societies, marriages are monogamous and such families are known as monogamous families.

- Polygamy is a system of marriage that permits the marriage of one man with more than one woman or the marriage of one woman with more than one man. Polygamous marriages or families are rarely seen in the modern societies.
- On the basis of nature of residence, family can be classified into three major types:
 - o Family of matriarchal residence
 - o Family of patriarchal residence
 - o Family of changing residence

When the wife goes to stay with her husband in his house after marriage, the residence is known as patriarchal residence. Such families are known as patriarchal families. Most of the families in all modern societies are of this type.

In cases where the husband stays in the wife's house after marriage, the residence type is known as matriarchal residence. Such families are known as matriarchal families and are predominantly found in tribal societies. In India, such families can be seen amongst the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo tribes of Meghalaya.

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A third type of residence system is the one where both the husband and wife stay in a new house after marriage and start a family. This kind of family is known as a family of changing residence.

- On the basis of ancestry or descent, family can be classified into two main types:
 - o **Matrilineal family:** When descent is traced through the mother, we have the system known as the matrilineal system. Families that trace their descent through this system are known as matrilineal families. In such families, lineage and succession are determined by the female line.
 - o **Patrilineal family:** When descent is traced through the father or the male line, we have the patrilineal system. Families that follow this system are known as patrilineal families. Most of the families in the world belong to the patrilineal system and the lineage and succession in such families are determined through the father.
- On the basis of the nature of authority, family can be classified into two main types:
 - o **Matriarchal family:** The matriarchal family is also known as the mother-centred or mother-dominated family. In such families, the mother or the woman is the family head and she exercises authority. She is the owner of the family property and controls the household. The Khasis of North-East India may be called mother-right people. Amongst them, descent is traced through the mother, not the father. Inheritance passes from mother to the daughter.
 - o **Patriarchal family:** A patriarchal family is also known as father-centred or father-dominated family. The head of the family is the father or the eldest male member and he exercises authority. He is the owner and administrator of the family property. His voice is final in all family matters.
- On the basis of nature of relationship amongst its members, a family can be classified into two types:
 - o **Conjugal:** Ralph Linton has given this classification. He is of the view that a family based on blood relationship is known as **consanguine** family. For example, the relationship between a father and a son.
 - o **Consanguine:** On the other hand, a family in which there exists sex relationship between the members on the strength of marriage is known as a conjugal family. The sexual relationship between the husband and wife is a basic ingredient of the conjugal family.
- On the basis of the in-group and out-group affiliation, family can be classified into two types:
 - o **Endogamous:** It is one where the social norms make it compulsory for members of the family to marry within the larger social group to which it belongs. For example, a Brahmin family in India would be in the nature of an endogamous family because the rigid caste system does not allow inter-caste marriages. Therefore, an Indian family is usually endogamous.
 - o **Exogamous:** In societies where there is no such restriction of marrying within one's own group, families are usually exogamous. For example, members of a family belonging to one class can marry members belonging to another class in an open society.

- On the basis of size, family can be classified into three types:
 - o Nuclear or individualistic family
 - o Extended family
 - o Joint family

Nuclear or individualistic family

In nuclear families, the members comprise the husband, wife and their children. This type of family has become more common with the advent of industrialization and urbanization, which has forced people to move out to new urban centres and seek employment. Further, factors like individualistic ideology, economic aspirations and housing problems in urban areas have strengthened the nuclear family.

Murdock has further sub-divided the nuclear family into the following two types:

- The family of orientation
- The family of procreation

The family of orientation is the family in which an individual is born and in which his parents and siblings reside. He grows up in this family of orientation and stays in it till his marriage.

Extended family

The extended family comprises members belonging to three or more generations. For example, a man living with his parents, his wife and their children is said to be living in an extended family. According to Murdock, an extended family 'consists of two or more nuclear families affiliated through an extension of the parent-child relationship, i.e., by joining the nuclear family of a married adult to that of his parents.' Thus, the nuclear family of an individual and the nuclear family of his parents can combine together to form an extended family. This type of extended family can be seen in India, China and other countries. The joint family of India is also a type of extended family.

An extended family can also be formed when an individual and his several wives live together with the families of his several sons. This kind of extended family is seen in some African and Arab societies.

Joint family

A joint family, though a type of extended family, is an important social unit of Indian society. Smt. Iravati Karve says that 'a joint family is a group of people who generally live under one roof, who eat food cooked at one hearth, who hold property in common and who participate in common worship and are related to each other as some particular kind of kindred.'

In brief, a joint family consists of members spanning horizontally (siblings) and vertically (generations) and living together with common goals and common assets.

You will read about the joint family system in detail in the next section.

The Joint Family System

The joint family system can be seen across societies in various forms of extended families. However, it is more prevalent in India and has certain peculiar Indian characteristics.

The joint family has been defined as a mode of combining smaller families into larger units through the extension of three or more generations. It has also been defined

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as one which consists of members related through blood and spread over several generations living together under one roof and working under a common head.

C.B. Memoria has observed that the fundamental principle of the Hindu joint family is the tie of *sapindaship* without which such a family cannot be formed. He defines a joint family as a kin group consisting of all the male descendants from a common ancestor, their wives and their unmarried daughters. Daughters, on their marriage, become members of their husbands' families. Normally, a joint family is composed of members of three generations. However, at times it may include members of four or more generations. All the members of a joint family are related to one another as *sapindas*.

In the Hindu society in India, the joint family, the caste system and the village system are considered as the three pillars on which the social edifice is built. It is a very old system and is regarded by the Hindus as a sacred institution having been derived from religion.

There are two types of joint family:

- (i) Patriarchal joint family
- (ii) Matriarchal joint family

Both types are found in India. The patriarchal joint family is father-dominated and matriarchal joint family is mother-dominated. The patriarchal joint families are found among the Nambudaris of Malabar, the Mundas of Chotanagpur and the Angami Nagas of Assam. The matriarchal joint families are found among the Nairs of Malabar and the Khasis and Garos living on the Garo hills of Assam.

Characteristics of the Joint Family System

Following are the important characteristics of the joint family system in India:

- **Collection of generations:** The joint family consists of people belonging to at least three generations. Besides, it also has people related to each other and belonging to a particular generation.
- **Common roof:** Normally, the members of a joint family reside together under one roof. Due to housing problem, educational problem and employment problem, people are sometimes unable to continue with the joint family under a common roof. However, they still continue to maintain contact and relationships with each other.
- **Joint kitchen:** Merely living together under one roof does not constitute a joint family. There has to be a common kitchen for the family and all the members must eat food cooked at one hearth. Separation of kitchen implies breaking up of the joint family. Normally, in patriarchal families, the eldest female member is in charge of this joint kitchen. The womenfolk of the family serve the food to the male members first and eat only after the male members have finished eating.
- **Common property:** The members of a joint family hold property in common. Melley observes, 'a joint family is a co-operative institution similar to a joint stock company in which there is a joint property.' The earnings of the family are pooled together and household expenses are met out of the pool. The joint property is managed by the head of the family who is known as the *karta*.
- **Joint worship:** The Hindu joint family derives its strength from religion and is associated with various religious practices and rituals. Members of the family pray together and have a common family deity.

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- **Exercise of authority:** In patriarchal joint families, the eldest male member is the head of the family and his directions are obeyed by all other members. He exercises complete authority in family matters. Similarly, in joint matriarchal families, this role is played by the eldest female member in the family. This exercise of supreme authority by one member is a key feature of the joint family.
- **Arranged marriages:** In the Hindu joint family, the head of the family arranges the marriages of the younger members by choosing the prospective bride or bridegroom, as the case may be. The individual members of a joint family in India do not have the freedom to choose their life partners. They rarely challenge the decisions made by the elders and the family head. However, this trend is slowly changing.
- **Procreation:** In a joint family, procreation is regarded as a religious duty. As a result, the rate of production in such families is higher. As no birth control measures are adopted by the married couples, the size of joint families is usually big. However, with modernization, this is changing and family sizes are getting smaller.
- **Self-sufficiency:** In the past, joint families used to be fully self-reliant. The members of the families derived their economic, emotional, educational, recreational and other needs from the family itself. However, things have changed today and no family can remain self-reliant in that manner as inter-dependence has increased in society.
- **Family obligations:** Members of a joint family identify themselves strongly with their family obligations. They discharge their duties towards the family diligently and the family, in turn, protects their interests.

Advantages of the Joint Family System

The joint family system has a number of advantages. Some of them are as follows:

- **Stable and long-lasting:** The joint family is more stable than a nuclear family and, therefore, it lasts for a long time. Even if a couple of members leave the family, it has no impact upon its stability and the family stands as a unit. Due to its durability, it is helpful in carrying forward the cultural traditions.
- **Ensures economic growth:** The joint family contributes to welfare and economic progress of the family members by providing the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter of its members. Further, it helps in productivity by contributing more hands to the labour force. Besides, in agricultural communities, the joint family prevents fragmentation of the family's land holdings.
- **Economizes expenditure:** Since, no member has an individual control over the family property, the family head ensures that they remain spendthrift. Joint purchases of household needs also result in savings.
- **Division of labour:** The joint family raises efficiency through division of labour. Due to the presence of a large number of members, a joint family divides various tasks amongst them. This is especially beneficial for a joint family in an agricultural community.
- **Provides social insurance:** The basic needs of family members like orphans, widows, deserted, diseased, divorced and so forth are taken care of very well in a joint family. Thus, such a family provides social security.

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- **Provides leisure:** Due to the advantage of numbers, work within a joint family is shared among the members and gets completed quickly. This allows the members to have more time for leisure and relaxation.
- **Provides recreation:** Due to the presence of a large number of persons of different age groups, a joint family is an ideal place for enjoyment and entertainment. The interaction between the young and the old, the games played by the children, the combined celebration of festivals and other aspects all add up to provide valuable recreation to the members.
- **Provides social security:** A joint family, apart from acting like an insurance company for its relatively disadvantaged members, also provides social security to the aged, infirm and sick members of the family. In times of crises like accidents, the joint family takes care of the affected members. It is often said that a joint family takes care of an individual from his cradle to his grave.
- **Provides psychological security:** A joint family provides psychological security to its members by giving them a feeling of staying with one's own. It does not allow any member to develop strong individualistic mindset, thereby preventing him from becoming aloof and lonely.
- **Promotes cooperative virtues:** A joint family instills many virtues into the minds and characters of its members. Qualities like cooperation, discipline, sympathy, tolerance, sacrifice, loyalty and other qualities are learnt and imbibed in such families. All the members get tied in a bond of love and sacrifice and promote the welfare of their family through their positive traits.
- **Ensures social control:** The joint family acts as an agency of social control by controlling the behaviour of its members. It teaches each member to think about the common interests of the family and sacrifice individual interests.
- **Develops a sense of tolerance:** The presence of a large number of members results in expression of divergent views on a variety of issues. The members learn to respect each other's views and this helps them in developing a sense of tolerance while dealing with the views of other members of the society. Such a sense of tolerance is good for any society as it leaves room for discussion and debate.

Disadvantages of the Joint Family System

It is not that the joint family system only has positive things to offer. It also suffers from many demerits. Some of such demerits or disadvantages are as follows:

- **Retards personality development:** Due to the overbearing nature of the family head in a joint family, the younger members fail to develop any leadership quality. They remain protected and become weak and shaky in life. They never get a chance to show their talents or develop strong personalities.
- **Kills individual initiative:** The joint family does not allow its members to develop their talents. Individual enterprise gets killed in such an environment. The young members do not get a chance to show their originality or creativity.
- **Promotes lethargy:** The joint family does not provide much incentive for hard work because everybody is assured of his food, shelter and clothing. This results in promoting a dependency syndrome, which is bad for the economy and society.

- **Disincentive savings:** Since basic needs of every member are assured, there is no incentive to save money and invest the same in quality assets. Besides, savings is not easy for the earning members as there are a large number of non-earning members who have to be taken care of.
- **Hampers privacy:** Personal privacy is badly affected in the joint family system due to the presence of large number of family members in the house. This is especially true in case of newly married couples who do not get the desired privacy to know each other intimately and share their feelings of love. This affects them both emotionally and psychologically.
- **Promotes quarrels:** In a joint family, chances of frequent quarrels among the family members are more due to the presence of a number of persons. This is true in case of married women of the family as they come into this large family from different families with different upbringing. They usually do not get along well with each other and end up spoiling their relationships.
- **Adversely affects children's socialization:** Since, the parents are not able to devote exclusive time to their children in a joint family set-up, the socialization of the children does not take place in a proper way. Children remain aloof to their parents and get more attached to their grandparents. The values instilled by the grandparents may sometimes be not in tune with the modern times.
- **Promotes higher reproduction:** A joint family system promotes higher reproduction as there is no disincentive of giving birth to more children. Irrespective of the number of children that they have parents are assured that the basic needs of their children – food, health, education and clothes would be automatically taken care of by the family.
- **Adversely affects status of women:** A joint family system is unfavourable for women. They are treated badly in the patriarchal joint families and are made to work like servants of the household. They do not get any respect for the work they do and have no financial or social autonomy. Sometimes, they do not even have a say in matters personal to them like their health, higher education, visits to their parental homes and so forth.
- **Promotes litigation:** Due to the presence of common property in a joint family system, there is bound to be a lot of litigation and it does happen. A plethora of cases are filed by family members against each other to gain control over the family assets.
- **Limits social mobility:** Joint families restrict the social mobility of their members. They are not encouraged to adapt to the modern world and are forced to remain bound by traditions. This prevents them from accepting changes and moving ahead in life.
- **Delays decision-making:** Due to the presence of a large number of family members, decision-making is very slow in a joint family set-up. There are discussions and deliberations before taking any major decisions. While such discussions are good and help in taking the right decisions, its slow pace frustrates the younger members.

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Changing Nature of the Joint Family System and the Causes of Change

The institution of joint family has started undergoing change and is moving towards disintegration. This is primarily the result of the forces of modernization, which is transforming Indian society.

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Industrialization and urbanization have resulted in the breakdown of the joint family because the latter is better placed to handle agricultural societies. With industrialization, family has ceased to be the unit of production as it used to be in an agrarian set-up. People leave their villages in search of employment in new industries coming up in urban areas and break their link with their joint family. Thus, the new industry-based economy has shaken the foundations of the joint family system.

Industrialization has been helped further by the modern means of transportation and communication. Bus and train services from rural areas to the towns and cities have enabled people to travel to urban areas in search of employment opportunities. This has quickened the pace of the decline of the joint family. With the spread of telecom facilities, especially with the easy availability of mobile telephony, people can stay connected with their families without staying together under a common roof. Due to this, the dependence of people on their traditional family occupation, which was a major factor for the survival and importance of the joint family, has reduced. They are migrating to urban areas for better employment opportunities.

The influence of the western countries on our thinking and way of life is also an important factor that has changed the joint family system in India. The family structure of the western world is characterized by the nuclear family. This is so because they base their family on the ideas of freedom, equality, love between husband and wife and communication. The Indian joint family has very little scope for all of these. Therefore, the younger generation in India prefers the nuclear family. The joint family is trying to adapt to this situation and the family heads are trying to provide more space to all the members by decentralizing power. Notwithstanding this, westernization has resulted in greatly reducing the importance of the joint family system.

Indian women have managed to break the shackles of male-domination upon them to a significant extent. This has happened due to the empowerment of women through the forces of education and employment. For women to come of age, it was important for them to get out of the conservative and oppressive environment prevalent in joint families. The status of women was very low in joint families and an enhancement in their status is directly linked to the decline of such families. Thus, higher status of women can be said to have adversely affected the joint family system in India.

The joint family system has faced serious challenges from progressive social legislations enacted during the British Rule and after independence. Legislations like The Civil Marriage Act, 1872; The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 and The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 have eroded the pre-dominant position of the joint family system in the Indian society. These acts resulted in empowering women by giving them various rights relating to marriage, divorce and inheritance of property. This empowerment of women shook the joint family system in which women used to be treated with scant respect. As a result, joint families in India are reinventing themselves and women are being given the respect that they deserve. But the trend is towards more individualistic or nuclear families as they provide greater freedom and privacy to the young couples.

Another reason for the decline of the joint family is the shortage of residential space in urban areas. Since, houses are small; it is not possible for a large number of

family members to cohabit. In villages, even if the houses were small, there were vast open spaces in and around the house, which is not the case in towns and cities. Therefore, the family size had to be necessarily small in urban areas. This aspect goes against the joint family system.

The quarrels among the members of the joint family are yet another reason for its decline. The presence of many members, especially the women members hailing from different families, often resulted in such quarrels. Nuclear families became the preferred option for people as they wanted to avoid such frequent quarrels.

The changes and the causes of those changes discussed above would indicate that the joint family system in India is disintegrating. However, scholars have pointed out, it would be wrong to say that joint family has been or would be completely replaced by nuclear families. Empirical studies by eminent sociologists like I.P. Desai, K.M. Kapadia, Aileen Ross, M.S. Gore, A.M. Shah and Sachchidananda have shown that the jointness in the joint family is decreasing whereas the nuclearity is increasing. They have pointed out that joint families would continue to exist in their evolved forms and would never fade away.

These scholars have found out from their studies that the joint family continues to exist but their sizes have come down. They are no longer the huge families with large number of members spread vertically and horizontally. The joint family has evolved to give way to a trimmer joint family wherein a maximum of three generations reside. It is now a compact and functional unit. It now includes only the siblings and the father's brothers.

Therefore, it can be concluded that so long as the old cultural values persist among the people, the functional type of joint family would continue to thrive in the Indian society. The residential type of joint family would be under strain as people tend to move out in search of employment, freedom and privacy.

3.5 MARRIAGE

Hindu marriage is considered a sacrament, or a sacred bond. Its aim is not only to secure sexual gratification but also to advance spiritual development. According to K.M. Kapadia, 'Hindu marriage is a socially approved union of men and women aiming at dharma, procreation, sexual pleasure and observance of certain obligations.' Ancient Hindu texts point out three main aims of marriage. These are *Dharma*, (fulfillment of religious duties, which was the highest aim of marriage), *Praja* (progeny) and *Rati* (sexual pleasure). Several reasons are given for considering a Hindu marriage as sacred:

- (i) *Dharma*.
- (ii) Performance of the religious ceremony includes certain rites like *havan*, *kanyadan*, *panigrahan* and *saptapadi*.
- (iii) The rites are performed before *agni* by reciting mantras from the Vedas by a Brahmin.
- (iv) The union is considered inviolable and irrevocable and husband and wife are bound to each other not only until death but even after death.
- (v) Though a man performs several sacraments during the course of his life, a woman performs only one sacrament of marriage in her life, hence, it carries great importance for her.

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Check Your Progress

5. Mention the distinctive features of family.
6. What is a matrilineal family?
7. What is a joint family?

- (vi) Marriage is considered to be a social duty towards the family and the community and there is little scope for individual interest and aspiration.

Forms of Hindu Marriage

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Hindu scriptures described eight forms of Hindu marriage. These are:

1. **Brahma vivah:** This is the ideal form of Hindu marriage. It is settled by parents, a Brahmin is called to preside over the marriage rites and the daughter is given by her father to the groom (this is called *kanyadan*), along with some dowry of ornaments and clothes.
2. **Daiva vivah:** The father of the bride offers his daughter in the hand of the priest as *dakshina*. It was considered as an ideal form of marriage in ancient times but has become irrelevant today.
3. **Arsha vivah:** In this form of marriage the bride's father gets something from the groom, like a pair of cattle, in exchange for his daughter.
4. **Parjapatya vivah:** In this form of marriage, the consent of the parents is essential but no ceremony is performed.
5. **Asura vivah:** The bride price is given by the groom to the bride's father. This is a sort of an economic contract and there is no limit or stipulation on the amount given.
6. **Gandharva vivah:** This was the traditional form of love marriage. Here neither is the consent of parents necessary nor are the rites or dowry essential.
7. **Rakshasa vivah:** This type of marriage is by capture or abduction without obtaining the consent of the girl or her parents. This was practised in times when group conflicts and tribal wars were very common. The victorious groups used to carry away the girls of the conquered group.
8. **Paisacha vivah:** This is the least acceptable form of marriage. A woman who is seduced when asleep or unconscious or when incapable of protecting herself is given the status of the wife.

Of these eight forms of marriage, Brahma vivaha is considered to be the best marriage where a girl is given to a boy of merit in the same caste or in a caste of equal status. Both bride and groom are competent enough to give consent.

Rules of Mate Selection

In order to ensure the purity and maintain the distinctive identity of different groups in society, Hindu law-makers have stipulated detailed rules and regulations governing the choice of a partner for the union of marriage. These laws are based on two rules:

- (i) **Endogamic rule:** Endogamy is a social rule that requires a person to select a spouse from within certain groups. These endogamous groups specifically refer to varna, caste and sub-caste. Thus, a Brahmin boy has not only to marry a Brahmin girl but a *kanyakubja* boy has to marry a *kunyakubja* girl, a *saryupari* boy has to marry a *saryupari* girl and a *gaur* boy has to marry a *gaur* girl. Although endogamy is restricted to a tribe or a caste, there are exceptions in some cases. The Anuloma, or hypergamy, allows the alliance of lower caste women to higher caste men. This practice occurs mainly among different sub-sections of a caste or sub-caste rather than between castes. In Pratiloma marriage based on the rule of hypogamy, an upper caste woman can enter into an alliance with a man of a lower caste.

(ii) **Exogamic rule:** Exogamy is a social rule which forbids selection of a spouse from certain groups. The two types of exogamy practiced by Hindus are gotra exogamy and sapinda exogamy. In a few cases, besides *gotra* and *sapinda*, the village is also treated as an exogamous group. McLennan in his book *Studies in Indian History* writes that the custom of exogamy arose owing to the paucity of women in early times.

(a) **Sagotra exogamy:** A *gotra* is a group whose members are believed to have descended from a common mythical ancestor of a rishi. Initially, there were only eight gotras but gradually their number increased to thousands. The *gotra* exogamy prohibits marriage between members of the same *gotra*. The four-clan rule or four *gotra* exogamous rule prevails among Hindu castes in North India. In accordance with this four-clan rule, a man cannot marry a girl from: (i) his father's *gotra* or clan (ii) his mother's *gotra* or clan (iii) his father's mother's *gotra* and (iv) mother's mother's *gotra*. In almost all castes in the northern zone, according to Karve (1953) the marriage between cousins is prohibited. It was Manu who imposed restrictions on *gotra* marriage. However the restrictions on *gotra* marriage were removed in 1946 by the Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Act.

(b) **Sapinda exogamy:** The word *sapinda* has two meanings: those who can offer rice balls to the deceased, and those who share the particles of the same body. *Sapinda* are those who are related to one another in ascending or descending order, by five generations through the mother's side and seven generations through father's side. Marriage with such a person is prohibited. Gautam has recommended avoiding seven generations from the father's side and five from the mother's side. The Hindu Marriage Act 1955 prohibits *sapinda* marriage in general, but allows this in the form of cross cousin marriages as a peculiar custom of South India. Among Christians and Muslims, the elementary nuclear family is the exogamous unit. Today, even though this rule is followed by and large by all Hindus, some cases of cousin marriages are known to happen.

Tribal Marriage in India

The institution of marriage is another issue on which tribal people throughout the world have been much maligned. Indian tribes, like their counterparts in other parts of the world, practice several forms of marriage as a matter of convenience and social acclimatization in their respective cultural and ecological settings. Most tribes are monogamous with few exceptions, such as on some festive occasions. Even among the most primitive tribes like the Toda, the Andamanese, the Kadar, and the Chenchu, where sexual morals are lax, there still exist strict marriage rules. Marital fidelity is practiced and enforced in most tribes. Proscriptions, prescriptions and preferences that determine the choice of spouses or partners in tribal societies, are based on very strict rules.

Preference in Mate Selection

The tribes of India differ from each other in the manner in which mate selection is carried out. On one hand, society prohibits sexual liaisons or matrimonial alliances between particular kin or in the same clan or *gotra*, but on the other hand, it encourages matrimonial alliances between certain other kins. The following are some of the popular types of preferential marriages prevalent among the Indian tribes:

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Cousin marriage: Both types of cousin marriages, i.e., cross cousin and parallel cousin, are quite popular among the Indian tribes. The Gond, Kharia, Khasi and Kadar are some of the important Indian tribes practicing cousin marriage. When the children of a brother and a sister marry it is a cross cousin marriage. On the other hand, it is parallel cousin marriage when the children of two sisters or two brothers get married. The Gonds of Madhya Pradesh call this form of marriage 'doodh lautawa' (return of milk). Levirate and sororate are two other types of preferential marriages which are also said to promote 'inter-familial cordiality' by making certain linkages imperative.

Marriage among Different Ethnic Groups

Ways of acquiring mates: There are nine important ways of acquiring mates among tribes:

- (i) **Marriage by capture:** When a man snatches a woman away from her village and marries her, it is called marriage by capture. Many tribal societies give social sanction to this type of marriage which symbolizes valour and chivalry. It is popular among the Naga tribes of the north eastern region, where Naga tribals of one village used to invade the enemy's village and capture grown up girls. Among the Ho it is called *oportipi* and among the Gond it is called *posiothur*. It is of two types: physical capture and ceremonial capture. In the case of physical capture, the man carries away the woman forcefully, and marries her. However, in ceremonial capture, the man adopts a procedure wherein he surprises the woman by smearing vermilion on her forehead.
- (ii) **Marriage by exchange:** This method has evolved primarily to avoid the payment of a high bride price. According to such a marriage, two households exchange women with each other and, thus, avoid the payment of bride price. The Uralis of Kerala, the Muria Gonds and Baiga of Bastar and the Koya and the Saora of Andhra Pradesh practice this trend.
- (iii) **Marriage by purchase:** It is a common mode of matrimony throughout India. In this form of tribal marriage the parents of the bridegroom pay in cash or kind to the bride's parents. This money or material goods is the bride price. It is prevalent among Munda, Oraon, the Santhal, Rengma Naga and others. The worst financial consequence is seen among the Ho tribals of Chota Nagpur, Bihar. Their poor economic condition has been made worse by the increasing amount of bride price.
- (iv) **Marriage by elopement:** This takes place when a couple love each other and want to marry against the wishes of their parents who are against this marriage. In this situation, both of them run away from the village for a certain period of time after which they come back and are then acknowledged as husband and wife. This is called *raji khusi* marriage among the Ho tribes of Jharkhand. The tribes of Chotanagpur also practice this.
- (v) **Marriage by service:** This is another way of avoiding the payment of bride price altogether (or minimizing it considerably) through services rendered by the prospective groom at the bride's residence for a particular period. If the girl's father is satisfied with the work done, then he gives his daughter's hand to him at the end of the period. If he is dissatisfied, then the man is asked to leave the house and never come back. This is practised among the Gonds, Baigas, Birhor and others.

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- (vi) **Marriage by intrusion:** In this kind of marriage, the girl is desirous of getting married to the young man, but he is unwilling. The girl thrusts herself on the unwilling groom and his parents. She does this in order to serve the would-be man in her life but is humiliated and tortured in return. If she persists in her efforts and endures her torment for a considerable period of time, she is finally accepted as the daughter-in-law. Among the Oraons it is known as *nirbolok* and among the Ho as *anader*.
- (vii) **Marriage by trial:** This is the recognition of personal courage and bravery as highly desirable traits in a young man. It is most popular among the Bhils during the Holi festival. Young men and women perform a folk dance around a pole or a tree, to the top of which coconut or gur are tied. The women make an inner ring of dancers around the tree. When a young man attempts to break through the cordon to climb the tree to eat the gur and break open the coconut, the girls resist his attempt. If, in spite of this, the man succeeds then he has the right to demand any of the surrounding girls as his wife.
- (viii) **Marriage by mutual consent:** This is a result of the contact that the tribals have had with Hindus over a period of time. This practice is similar and prevalent among Muslims, Hindus, Christians and so forth in which all the formalities of marriage are arranged by the parties concerned through the process of mutual consultation and consent.
- (ix) **Probationary marriage:** As per this practice, the husband and wife are permitted to live together for some time in the bride's house. If they like each other and decide to marry, the elders arrange their early marriage. In case the couple do not find each other's temperament to be suitable and compatible, they separate, and the man has to pay cash compensation to the girl's parents. It is prevalent among the Kuki of Arunachal Pradesh.

Divorce among Hindus

Marriage in the traditional Hindu society, regarded essentially as *dharmic*, is gradually becoming secularized in the modern era. Desertion, separation and divorce, though not clearly sanctified by Hindu law except in very unusual circumstances, have received significant attention in the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955. This code also eliminated the discriminatory status of previous customs by which a man exerted more power, enjoyed a superior position, and had the right to seek a divorce or abandon a wife on his own. The Marriage Law Amendment Act, 1976 widened the basis for seeking divorce by providing divorce through mutual consent and on the grounds of desertion and cruelty.

Marriage among Muslims

In marriage among Muslims, a man and woman enter into a solemn pact for life. There is a popular conception that in Islamic law, marriage is not considered to be sacrament but rests entirely on a contractual basis. Muslim marriage is called *Nikah* and is both an act of *ibadat* (devotion to God) and *maumalat* (dealings among men). Witnesses are a necessary condition for a valid marriage. There are two main sects of the Muslim community in India, Shias and Sunnis. Inter marriages among these groups are discouraged. There are two types of Muslim marriages, regular (*shahi*) and irregular (*fasid*).

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Muta marriage

Muslims also have a system of temporary marriage called *muta* marriage. This is a marriage settled by a man and a woman by mutual consent and without the intervention of kin. A man is permitted to contract *muta* marriage with a Muslim, a Jew or a Christian girl but a woman cannot contract such a marriage with a non-Muslim. A wife secured through *muta* marriage is known as *sigha*. In this form of marriage, the period of cohabitation must be stipulated and the amount of dowry should be predetermined. Where the duration of the marriage has not been fixed, the marriage remains illegitimate.

Dower (*Mehr*)

Dower comprises of money or property which the wife gets from her husband when she marries him. As per Muslim law, dower is the obligation which is imposed on the husband as a mark of respect to his wife. The amount of the *mehr* is determined either before, or after, or at the time of the marriage. Though it cannot then be reduced, it may be increased at the husband's will. It can either be prompt (*muajjal*) or deferred (*muwajjal*).

Divorce among Muslims

Under Muslim law, the contract of marriage can be dissolved either with or without the intervention of the court. The divorce can be obtained either on the basis of Muslim law by judicial decree, or the marriage can be broken without the court's intervention, by the husband at his will (called *talaq*) or by the mutual consent of husband and wife called (*khula* or *kohl* and *mubarat*). The difference between *khula* and *mubarat* is that, in the former the divorce is initiated at the instance of wife, whereas in the latter, since both the parties desire separation, the initiative can be taken by either wife or husband. Divorce or *talaq*, can be carried out in any one of the following three ways:

- (i) **Talaq-e-ahasan:** This consists of a single pronouncement made during a *tuhr* (period of maturation) and followed by abstinence from sexual relations throughout the period of *iddat*.
- (ii) **Talq-e-hasan:** This consists of three pronouncements made during three successive *tuhrs* and no intercourse taking place during any of these three *tuhrs*.
- (iii) **Talaq-ul-bidat:** This is a disapproved form of divorce which includes two types of triple declaration and a single irrevocable declaration. The triple declaration comprises three pronouncements made in a single *tuhr*, either in one sentence or in three sentences. This form of *talaq* is irrevocable. It is the most common mode of *talaq* in the country.

In addition to these three types of *talaq*, the Shariat Act of 1937 makes a mention of three other kinds of divorce as well:

- (i) **Illa:** In this, the husband swears by god promising not to enter into sexual relationships with his wife for four months or more. If the husband follows his promise, the marriage is considered dissolved.
- (ii) **Lian:** If the husband imposes a false charge of adultery on the wife, the wife prays to the court that the husband be ordered to take back his charge.
- (iii) **Zihar:** In this, the husband compares his wife with some near relative whom he cannot marry. For instance, if the husband compares his wife with his mother, he cannot enter into sexual relationship with her unless he repents for this comparison. If he fails to do so, the wife can divorce him.

Marriage among Christians

The Christian society is stratified into Protestants and Catholics. The Catholics are further divided into Latin Catholics and Syrian Catholics. These groups are generally endogamous and do not marry intra-group. In Christianity, religion plays a predominant role in marital unions. Christians believe that marriages are made in heaven and decided by God. The Christians usually practice monogamy and there are strict restrictions on polygamy. Divorce is not appreciated by the Church. The Christian marriage system is quite different from the Hindu marriage system. The Indian Christians follow the Western marriage system of the British.

The Christian Marriage Act 1872 is the law that regulates solemnization of marriages among Christians. It extends throughout India except the territories, which immediately after 1 Nov. 1956 comprised of the states of Travancore, Cochin, Manipur, and Jammu and Kashmir. Christian marriage focuses on certain important aspects like procreation, prohibition of sexual relations without marriage and mutual help and comfort. Hence, it is correct to state that Christian marriage is a bond between man and woman, normally intended to be binding for life, for sexual union, mutual respect and companionship, and establishment of a family. In a true marriage, each partner seeks the fulfilment of the other. By complementing each other, the union between husband and wife is enhanced. In their love for one another, through their faithfulness to one another and in their fruitfulness, husband and wife reflect God's image in a mysterious and wonderful way. Their union is the fruit of more than companionship or partnership; it is the deepest intimacy. (Arnold, 2007). As Friedrich Nietzsche writes, 'It is brought about by the resolve of two to create a unity which is more than those who created it. It is reverence for one another and for the fulfilment of such a resolve.' (Arnold, 2007).

Marital unions

The Syrian Christians remained as endogamous groups and marriage between Latin and Syrian Christians were rare. In the Kerala Church, denominational divisions grew. The Syrian Christians are ethnic groups who differ from others in terms of their doctrinal beliefs and religious principles. Marriages between different denominations are possible only if they belong to a single origin of Syrian Christians, rather than being converts. While selecting a marriage partner, it is ensured that the partners are not related by blood. The Christian wedding takes place in a church in the presence of a priest. However, Christian marriage takes place with the consent of both the bride and the groom. The Christians practice divorce as well, and grounds like adultery and cruelty can lead to the dissolution of marriage. Among the Christians, widow remarriage is accepted and also encouraged.

Recent Changes in the Institution of Marriage

The onset of globalization has brought about innumerable changes in the institution of marriage. For instance, in the case of India, the majority of citizens, even those who have formal education, practice arranged marriage. However, commitment towards the union of marriage is disappearing as a result of modernization in India these days (*India Today*, Aug. 1, 1998). In urban India, youngsters are more inclined to choose their own partners, though arranged marriages still continue to dominate. The cultural values of upper and middle class Indians, as well as urban Indians have changed considerably due to the influence of media and the evolving trends of a cosmopolitan, Western culture.

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Even though the traditional nature of marriage has changed considerably, the belief in marriage remains intact and marriage continues to be an important institution in Indian society. At this point in time, India is undergoing rapid changes on the basis of strong economic growth, which is leading to high consumption patterns, new professional and economic opportunities and upward mobility. Marriage and family are pre-eminent institutions that govern and impact the lives of people on a personal level. These connect very closely with economic growth and its related benefits. Demographic trends, intra and inter-country migration, economic shifts and political and gender struggles are rapidly changing the marriage scenario in societies across the globe. The questions then arise, are these fundamental shifts in the importance, types and nature of marriage actually challenging the sanctity of marriage per se? Are the younger generations ignoring parental matchmaking criteria and basing marriages on romance and love (or choosing their own partners)? Which sections of youth (class, caste, occupation, location, and region) are embodying these changes the most? Where and how do meetings, matchmaking and courtship take place? How are marital preferences being discussed and negotiated within the wider circles of the family, community and caste nexus? These are some of the important questions which should be addressed.

In a far-reaching recommendation to the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the National Commission for Women has sought a change in the definition of 'wife' — as described in Section 125 of CRPC, which deals with maintenance — and suggested that it include women involved in live-in relationships as well. The move aims to harmonize other sections of the law with the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act that treats a live-in couple's relationship at par with that of a legally married husband and wife.

Despite the changing rules of marriage, divorce and live-in relationships, the institution of marriage still occupies an important place in the hearts and minds of people in India.

3.5.1 Kinship

In every society, a male at some time in his life, plays the roles of a husband, a father and a son and a brother in some family; and a female plays the roles of a wife, a mother and a daughter and a sister. But due to the incest taboo, a man cannot play the roles of a father and a husband in the same nuclear family in which he is a son and a brother. Similarly, a woman cannot play the roles of a mother and a wife in the same nuclear family in which she is a daughter and a sister. Hence, every adult individual belongs to two nuclear families—the *family of orientation* in which he was born and reared, and the *family of procreation* which he establishes by marriage. This fact of individual membership in two nuclear families gives rise to kinship system.

Due to the fact that individuals belong to two nuclear families, every person forms a link between the members of his family of orientation and those of his family of procreation. Such links bind individuals to one another through kinship ties.

According to Theodorson and Theodorson, 'kinship is a social relationship based upon family relatedness'. The nature of relationship which may be consanguineal or affinal determines the rights and obligations of related persons. **Akin group** is group united by ties of blood or marriage. Most kin groups, other than the family, are consanguineal. According to Theodorson, 'kinship system is the customary system of statuses and roles that governs the behaviour of people who are related to each other through marriage or descent from a common ancestor'. According to Mudrock, 'kinship

is a structured system of relationship in which kin are bound to one another by complex inter-locking ties’.

Categories of Kinship

There are mainly four kinship categories: primary kin, secondary kin, tertiary kin, and distant kin. The *primary kin* are those kin who belong to the Ego’s nuclear families of orientation and procreation. Thus, father (Fa), mother (Mo), sister (Si), and brother (Br) in one’s family of orientation, and husband (Hu), wife (Wi), son (So), and daughter (Da) in one’s family of procreation, are one’s primary kin. Each of Ego’s primary kin will have his/her own primary kin, who will not be primary kin of Ego. These will be called Ego’s *secondary kin*. For example, FaFa, FaMo, MoFa, MoBr, etc. There are 33 types of secondary kin. The primary kin of the secondary kin are called *tertiary kin*. There are 151 types of tertiary kin. Lastly, the primary kin of tertiary kin are called *distant kin*. Their number is very large. Kinship relationship characterizes every relationship between kin and it determines reciprocal behaviour.

Part of the reciprocal behaviour characterizing every relationship between kin, consists of a verbal element, i.e., the terms by which each addresses the other. In some cases, people use personal names, in others they use kinship terms, and in a few cases they employ what Tylor has called ‘teknonymy’, i.e., combination of personal and kinship terms; for example, Suresh’s father, Pinki’s mother, and so forth. Murdock has classified kinship terms on three bases:

- (i) **Mode of use of kinship terms:** This refers to the kinship term employed either in direct address (*term of address*) or in indirect reference (*term of reference*). Some people have distinct set of terms for address and reference, for example, *pita* (*term of reference*) and *baba* (*term of address*) for father, or *mata* and *amba* for mother, but others make only grammatical distinctions or none at all. Terms of address tend to reveal more duplication and overlapping; for example just as in English language the term ‘uncle’ is used for a number of people (like FaFa, MoBr, father’s elderly cousin, and for all elderly persons). Similarly in Indian languages, the term *bhai* is used not only for one’s own brother but also for cousin and many other persons.
- (ii) **Linguistic structure of kinship terms:** On this basis, kinship terms are distinguished as elementary, derivative and descriptive. *Elementary* term is one which cannot be reduced to any other term, for example, English terms ‘father’, ‘nephew’, etc. or Hindi terms *sali*, *jeth*, *mata*, *pita*, *bhai*, *kaka*, *chacha*, *taoo*, *bahen*, etc. *Derivative* term is compounded from an elementary term, for example, grandfather, sister-in-law, step-son, or Hindi terms *pitamaha* (FaFa), *prapitamaha* (FaFaFa), *duhitri* (daughter), *mausa* (MoSi Hu), *bahnoi* (SiHu) and others. The *descriptive* term is one which combines two or more elementary terms to denote a specific relative, for example, wife’s sister, brother’s wife, sister’s husband, or Hindi terms *bhratra-jaya* (BrWi), *arya-putra* (father-in-law), *mauseri-bahen*, (MoSiDa), *phuphera-bhai* (FaSiSo).
- (iii) **Range of application of kinship terms:** On this basis, kinship terms are differentiated as denotative and classificatory. *Denotative* or isolative term applies only to one kin as defined by generation, sex and geneological connection, for example, father, mother, brother, sister, or Hindi terms *spati*, *patni*, *bhai*, *bahen*, and so forth. The *classificatory* term applies to persons of two or more kinship categories, for example, grandfather (used both for father’s father and mother’s

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father), cousin (used for father's brother's son and mother's sister's son), brother-in-law (used for sister's husband and wife's brother). It is through the liberal use of classificatory terms that all societies reduce the number of kinship categories from the thousands to a very modest number. A term arises only by ignoring one or more fundamental criteria of distinction between kins, for example, criterion of sex (cousin refers to both male and female), generation (bhai ignores ego's own generation as well as first ascending or descending generation), affinity (whether kin related through blood or marriage), collaterality (consanguineal relative of same generation, for example, brother and cousin), bifurcation (whether kin is secondary, tertiary or distant, for example *pitamaha*), age (whether younger or older for example, *bhai*) and decedence (whether alive or dead).

Importance of Kinship

Next to family, kinship group plays a very crucial role in the daily life, rituals and social ceremonies of Hindus. People turn to their kin not only for help in exigencies of life but even on regular occasions too. The kinship group may consist of 4 to 5 families or as many as 20 to 35 families. The important kinship groups after the family are *vansh* (lineage) and *gotra* (clan).

Vansh is an extension of family. It is a consanguineous unilateral descent group whose members trace themselves from a known (and real) common ancestor. *Vansh* is based on more precise and specific genealogy. It may be either patrilineal or matrilineal.

The *Vansh* members are treated as brothers and have fraternal allegiance to each other. Its ties lapse after several generations but the number of obligated generations is not usually specified clearly. The *Vansh* fellows who live in the same neighbourhood or same village exchange economic aid, pool labour at harvest, help in dispute settlements, and cooperate with each other almost on all important occasions.

A main link among the families of a *vansh* is common participation in ritual functions. They participate together in each other's lifecycle observances like birth, death and so forth. They worship the same deities and follow the same restrictions. The *Vansh* fellows also cooperate for economic purposes.

The *vansh* passes into *gotra* which is also a unilateral kin group but is larger than the *vansh*. It has a mythical ancestor and is exogamous. Each person inherits the *gotra* of his father. According to T.N. Madan, 'the separation of a lineage is usually a gradual process and comes about through the slow, piecemeal relinquishing of mutual exchanging—sometimes under protest and sometimes mutually accepted—rather than in an abrupt, explosive break'. The exogamous principle is, however, not relinquished, even after abandoning lineage cooperation.

The *vansh* relations are limited in time and space, whereas the *gotra* relations endure through time and across space. The members of a *gotra* usually have an origin story linking all of them to the same supernatural or mythical source. Cooperation within the *gotra* depends on economic factors as well as distance in place of residence. Today, the functions of *gotra* are minimal and is now limited for regulating marriage.

A man's relations with his feminal kin, *i.e.*, kin related through his mother, his married sisters, his wife and his married daughters, are equally important in his life. The exchange of gifts, periodic visits, reciprocal support in personal emergencies, and regular communication strengthen their relations with each other. Mother's brother has many obligations to perform for his neices and nephews on different occasions. The feminal kinsmen, are more concerned with the individual and his problems as a person

than as a member of a group. Hence, we can say that feminal relationships help to integrate each person and each village into a social network of villages that affect many aspects of village life.

Features of Kinship in Different Zones

Let us look at the features of kinship in different zones.

Northern zone

Though kinship behaviour in the northern zone changes slightly from region to region and within each region from caste to caste, yet comparative study shows that it is possible to talk of an 'ideal' northern pattern referring to practices and attitudes generally found to be common among the majority of castes. Some important features/folkways of the kinship organization of the northern zone are as follows:

- (i) Kin junior to 'ego' are addressed by their personal names and senior to 'ego' by the kinship term.
- (ii) All children in ascending and descending generations are equated with one's own sibling group (brothers and sisters) and all children of one's sibling group are again equated with one's own children.
- (iii) The principle of unity of generations is observed (for example, great-grandfather and grandfather are given same respect as father).
- (iv) Within the same generation, the older and the younger kin are kept distinct.
- (v) The duties and behaviour patterns of the members of three generations are strictly regulated.
- (vi) Some of the ancient kinship terms having Sanskrit origin have been replaced by new terms; for example, *pitamaha* is replaced by *pita*. Suffix 'ji' is added to kinship terms used for kin older than the speaker (for example, *chachaji*, *tauji*, etc.) In Bengal, instead of 'ji' suffix 'moshai' is added.
- (vii) Marriage among close kin is not permitted.
- (viii) After marriage, a girl is not expected to be free with her parents-in-law; but when she becomes a mother, she achieves position of respect and power, and restrictions on her are lessened.
- (ix) The family is so structured that children, parents and grandparents either live together or social kinship obligations towards them are clearly met.
- (x) Apart from the joint family which represents a person's intimate and nearest circle of relations, there is always a larger circle of kin who play a part in his life. This kindred represents the circle of his *patri*-kin or *matri*-kin who may stand by him and help him when the immediate family no longer suffices.

Central zone

The important features of kinship in Central India are:

- (i) Consanguinity is the main consideration which rules marriage.
- (ii) The kinship terminology shows intimacy and closeness between various kin. The relations between kin are governed by the custom of *neota*-gifts according to which cash-gift is given equivalent to cash-gift received. The *neota*-registers are maintained and preserved for generations.

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- (iii) Many castes are divided into exogamous clans. Among some castes, the exogamous clans are arranged in hypergamous hierarchy.
- (iv) Some castes like Marathas and Kunbis practice bride-price too, though dowry custom also exists among them.
- (v) In Gujarat, *mamera*-type of cousin marriage (with mother's brother) and levirate (marriage with husband's brother) are practised by some castes.
- (vi) The custom of periodic marriages in Gujarat has led to child marriages as well as unequal marriages. Such marriages are practised even today.
- (vii) In Maharashtra, the clan organization of the Marathas is similar to that of the Rajputs which is arranged in a ladder manner. Clans are grouped into divisions and each division is named according to the number of clans it comprises; for example *panch-kuli*, *sat-kuli*, etc. The clans are arranged in hypergamous order, the highest being the *panch-kuli*, followed by the *sat-kuli*, etc. The *panch-kuli* can marry among themselves or can take a girl from the *sat-kuli*, etc., but do not give their daughters outside the *panch-kuli*.
- (viii) Though the kinship terms are mostly northern yet some terms are borrowed from the Dravidians in the south; for example, use of the terms *manna* and *nana* for brother along with the term *dada*. Similarly, use of terms *makka*, *tai* and *mai* for sister.
- (ix) Though the family system in Maharashtra is patrilineal and patrilocal, yet in castes like Marathas, the wife moves to and from her father's house very frequently. Once she goes to her father's house, it is difficult to get her back to her husband's house.
- (x) The kinship system of the tribals in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh is somewhat different from that of the caste Hindus. The difference exists in terms of kinship terminology, marriage rules, inheritance system and clan obligations.

Southern zone

The southern zone presents a complicated pattern of kinship system. Though patrilineal and patrilocal family is the dominant family type for the greater number of castes and communities like Namboodris, there are important sections of population which are matrilineal and matrilocal like Nayars; also there are quite a few castes whose systems possess features of both patrilineal and matrilineal organizations like Todas.

Similarly, there are some castes/tribes who practise only polygyny like Asari, Nayars and yet others, who practise both polygyny and polyandry like Todas. Then there are polyandrous patrilineal groups like Asari and also polyandrous matrilineal groups like Tiyan, Nayars; and polygynous patrilineal groups like Namboodris but no polygynous matrilineal groups. There are patrilineal joint families and also matrilineal joint families. Matrilineal joint family, called *Tarwad*, is found among the Nairs of Malabar in Travancore and a few other groups.

The important characteristics of *Tarwad* are:

- (i) The property of *Tarwad* is the property of all males and females belonging to it.
- (ii) Unmarried sons belong to mother's *tarward*, but married sons belong to their wife's *Tarwad*.

- (iii) Manager of *Tarwad* property is oldest male member in the family, called *Karnavan* (his wife is called *Ammayi*).
- (iv) *Karnmavan* is an absolute ruler in the family. On his death, the next senior male member becomes *Karnavan*. He can invest money in his own name, can mortgage property, can give money on loan, can give land as gift, and is not accountable to any member in respect of income and expenditure.
- (v) When *Tarwad* becomes too large and unwieldy, it is divided into *Tavazhis*. A *Tavazhi* in relation to a woman is 'a group of persons consisting of a female, her children, and all her descendants in the female line'.

The following changes may be noted in *Tarwad* after the 1912 Act:

- (a) The *Tarwad* property can now be divided.
- (b) The authority of *Karnavan* has now become limited.
- (c) The members of *Tarwad* have now become entitled to maintenance outside the ancestral house.
- (d) The ancestor worship of *Karnavan* is now no longer common.
- (e) The relations between husband and wife have now become informal and personal and more close and intimate.
- (f) The self-acquired property of a member of a *Tarward* after his death, now goes to his widow and children, and in their absence to mother and mother's mother.

Clan organization and marriage rules in south: A caste is divided into five exogamous clans. The important characteristics of clan organization are as follows:

- (i) Each clan possesses a name of some animal or a plant or some other object.
- (ii) A person from one clan can seek a spouse from any other clan except his own. However, this choice is theoretical because of the rule of exchange of daughters.
- (iii) In marriage, there is not only the rule of clan exogamy but also of family exchange of daughters.
- (iv) Because of the marriage rule of exchange of daughters, many kinship terms are common. For example, the term used for *nanad* (HuSi) is also used for *bhabhi* (BrWi); the term used for *sala* (WiBr) is also used for *bahnoi* (SiHu); the term used for *sasur* (HuFa) is also used for *bhabhi's father* (BrWiFa).
- (v) Marriage between children of two sisters, is not permissible.
- (vi) The marriage with wife's younger sister is practised. Also, two sisters can marry two brothers in one family.
- (vii) There is a system of preferential mating in the south. In a large number of castes, the first preference is given to elder sister's daughter, second preference to father's sister's daughter, and third preference to mother's brother's daughter. However, today cross-cousin marriage, especially the uncle-niece marriage, is a thing of the past.
- (viii) The taboos prescribed for marriage are: a man cannot marry his younger sister's daughter; a widow cannot marry her husband's elder or younger brother; and a man cannot marry his mother's sister's daughter.

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- (ix) Marriage is dependent on the chronological age differences. One example is that the marriage of grandfather and granddaughter is possible in south.
- (x) Marriage is not arranged with a view to widening a kin group, but each marriage strengthens already existing bonds and makes doubly near those people who were already very near kin.
- (xi) A girl has to marry a person who belongs to the groups older than her, i.e. *tam-mum*, and also to the group younger than her parents, i.e., she can marry any of her older cross-cousins. A boy must marry in *atam-pin* group and to one who is a child of a group of *tam-mum*.
- (xii) In south, a girl after marriage does not enter the house of strangers. One's husband is one's mother's brother's son and so on. Marriage in the south, does not symbolize separation from father's house for a girl. A girl moves freely in her father-in-law's house.

Comparison of kinship system of North and South India

- (i) In the south, organization of kin is arranged according to age categories in the two groups, i.e., older than Ego (*tam-mum*) and younger than Ego (*tam-pin*).
- (ii) No special norms of behaviour are evolved for married girls in the south; whereas in the north, many restrictions are imposed on them.
- (iii) In the north, marriage is to widen the kinship group while in the south it is to strengthen already existing bonds.
- (iv) Marriage does not symbolize woman's separation from her father's house in the south but in the north, a woman becomes a casual visitor to her parents' family.
- (v) In the south, an Ego has some kin who are his blood relatives only and others who are his blood relatives and affinal kin at the same time.
- (vi) In a southern family, there is no clear-cut distinction between the family of birth and family of marriage as found in the northern family. In the north, no member from Ego's family of orientation i.e., of father, mother, brother and sister can also become a member of his family of marriage; but this is possible in the south.
- (vii) In the south, kinship organization is dependent on the chronological age differences; while in the north, it is dependent on the principle of generational divisions.
- (viii) In the north, every kinship term clearly indicates whether the person referred to is a blood relation or an affinal kin; but this is not so in the south.

Eastern zone

There are more tribes than caste Hindus in eastern India (consisting of parts of Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Orissa). The more important tribes are: Khasi, Birhor, Ho, Munda and Uraon. The kinship organization here has no one pattern. People speaking Mundan languages have patrilineal patrilocal families. However, joint families are rare in this zone. Cross-cousin marriages are rarely practised though bride-price is common. Woman is addressed as *dual* (you two). Kinship terminology is borrowed both from Sanskrit and Dravidian languages. Khasis and Garos have matrilineal joint family system. After marriage, a man rarely lives with his parents and establishes a separate house.

The kinship organization in India is influenced by caste and language. In this age of sharp competition for status and livelihood, a man and his family must have kin as allies. Caste and linguistic groups may help an individual from time to time but his most

staunch, trustworthy and loyal supporters could only be his nearest kin. It is, therefore, necessary that a person must not only strengthen his bonds with kin but should also try to enlarge his circle of kin. Cousin marriages, preferential mating, exchange rules and the marriage norms which circumvent the field of mate selection are now so changing that kinship relations through marriage are being extended and a person is able to get their help in seeking power and the status-lift that power can bring.

Kinship Usages

We now study the 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. There are some usages which regulate the behaviour of different kin. These usages are called 'kinship usages'. Some of these usages are the following:

- (i) **Avoidance:** In almost 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. 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 *purdah* system illustrates the usage of avoidance. Different explanations have been given for the usage of avoidance. According to Radcliff Brown and G. P. Murdock, 'avoidance serves to forestall further and more serious trouble between relatives'. According to the Freudian explanation, avoidances represent a sort of institutionalized neurotic symptom.
- (ii) **Joking relationship:** Under it, a relation is permitted to tease or make fun of the other. The relationship between *devar-bhabhi*, *jija-sali* is joking relationship. The joking may amount to exchange of abuse and vulgar references to sex.
- (iii) **Teknonymy:** The word 'tekonymy' is a Greek word. 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. He is referred to by her as the father of *Munni* or *Sonu*.
- (iv) **Avunculate:** This kinship usage is a peculiar feature of matriarchal 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. The maternal uncle has a prior right over their loyalties. He comes first among all male relatives.
- (v) **Amitate:** When a special role is given to the father's sister (*bua*), it is known as amitate. The father's sister gets more respect than the mother's.
- (vi) **Couvade:** This queer usage is found among many primitive 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.

3.6 RELIGION

Since the days of the primitive society, religion has always existed in one form or another. There are mysteries and perplexities of life for which there is no adequate explanation.

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Check Your Progress

8. Name the eight forms of Hindu marriage.
9. Name the four main categories of kinship.
10. What is a *muta* marriage?

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The elements of nature, sunshine, wind and rain affect man in a number of ways. **Religion** is the expression of the manner and type of adjustment that is effected by people in terms of their conception of the supernatural. In the words of James Frazer, the author of the book *The Golden Bough*, religion has been explained as 'a belief in powers superior to man, which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life.' According to Ogburn and Nimkoff, 'Religion is the attitude towards superhuman powers'. Such attitude gives rise to coherent systems of beliefs and practices that concern the supernatural order. Thus, religion is a more or less a coherent system of beliefs and practices that concerns a supernatural order of beings, forces, places, or other entities: a system that, for its adherents, has implications for their behaviour and welfare implications that the adherents in varying degrees and ways take seriously in their private and collective lives.

The origin and evolution of religion

The early sociological studies of religion had three distinctive methodological characteristics, these were *evolutionist*, *positivist* and *psychological*. These are shown in the works of Comte, Tylor and Spencer. According to Comte, sociology is one of the fundamental conceptions of the so called law of three stages, according to which human thought had passed through theological metaphysical and positive stages. Comte treats theological thinking as an intellectual error which is dispersed by the rise of modern science. He traces, within the theological stage, a development from animism to monotheism and he explains religious belief in psychological terms by reference to the perception and thought processes of early man. Later, Comte propounded his own religion of humanity and, thus, recognized in some sense a universal need for religion.

However, the works of Tylor and Spencer were rigorous as they were concerned with explaining the origin of religion. They believed that the idea of the soul was the principal feature in a religious belief. They set out to give an account, in rationalist terms, of how such an idea might have originated in the mind of primitive man. According to this, men obtained their idea of the soul from a misinterpretation of dream and death. Spencer refers to that original theory of things as from which the supposed reality of dreams, resulted a supposed reality of ghosts. E.B. Tylor believes animism was the oldest practice of religion. He argues that animism was a result of the efforts of mankind to answer two questions of the difference between a living body and a dead one and what are those human shapes which appear in dreams and visions. The soul is a spirit being which leaves the body temporarily during dreams and visions. Animals were invested with spirits as were human tribes, such as Australian aborigines. Tylor points out that religion, assumes the form of animism with the purpose of satisfying the intellectual capacity of mankind and meet his quest for knowledge about death, dreams and vision. Similarly, naturism endorses the concept that the forces of nature are supernatural powering nature. Max Muller believes this to be the earliest form of religion. He argues that naturism came to exist as a result of man's interaction with nature, typically as the outcome of the reaction of nature on man's emotions. According to him, animism tries to find the source of religion in man's intellectual requirements; naturism seeks it in his emotional needs. Naturism is how man responds to the effect of power and to the nature on his emotions.

However, there is a lot of criticism about the evolutionary approach. The origin of religion is lost in the past. However, theories about the origin of religion can only be based on speculation and intelligent guess work, according to some critics. Moreover,

the exact phases of the evolution of religion do not match with the facts. Andrew Lang has highlighted that the religion of a large number of simplest societies is monotheistic in nature, which according to Tylor was restricted to modern societies.

The sacred and the profane

Durkheim held that the essence of religion is to sustain divisions into the phenomena of sacred and profane ideologies. He does not believe that the essence of religion lies in the belief of a transcendent God. He proclaims that the true aim of religion is to establish the phenomena of the sacred and the profane in the society. The 'sacred' consists of a body of things, beliefs and rites. Supernatural entities are always sacred, that is, they are worthy of being treated with respect whether they are good or evil. Supernatural beings and forces are invisible and intangible, but certain sacred objects are quite tangible and visible, for instance, the alter in a Christian church. On the other hand, everything that is not holy is profane. Profanity is using names without proper respect.

Functions and dysfunctions of religion

Religion has various social functions. Religion is an agency of social control. It disciplines human behaviour in terms of sacred and profane. Performance of rituals and ceremonies gives a sense of collectivity to the society. The law of *karma*, the fear of retribution and such other prescriptions, always has a moderating and civilizing impact on human action. The norms of conduct, once established, regulate social relations. Religion has unified the principles of every society. Religion is an integrating and unifying force of the human society. Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore reason why religion is necessary and is apparently to be found in the fact that human society achieves its unity through the possession by its members of certain ultimate values in common. Although these values and ends are subjective, the influence of behaviour and its integration enables the society to operate as a system.

Though the direct impact of religion remains healthy, elevating and socializing, its indirect effect may be dysfunctional for the society. In Europe, religion hindered the growth of science and inquiry till decline of the organized church in the 19th century. The superstitious superstructure that developed successively, caused immense harm to the society at all levels. Religion inhibits protests and impedes social changes. Religion has resulted in wars, devastations and genocides. While fulfilling the identity function of religion, certain loyalties arise which may actually impede the development of new identities that are more appropriate to new situations.

3.7 SUMMARY

- The word caste has been defined from the Portuguese word *Casta*, which means race, breed or kind.
- The Indologists have viewed caste from the scriptural point of view and believe that the ancient Hindu scriptures have given birth to the concept of caste. They maintain that the varnas have originated from Brahma—the *Virat Purusha* (the Great Man)—and castes are units within the varna system, which have developed as a result of hypergamy and hypogamy.
- Though a number of theories explaining the origin of caste in India have been propounded, no one of them has managed to explain it properly.

NOTES

Check Your Progress

11. Define religion.
12. State the dysfunctions of religion.

NOTES

- Caste has never been static. The caste system has been changing continuously and has always undergone adaptive changes. Though the pace of change might have been slow earlier, in the post-independence period the changes have occurred rapidly.
- Modern liberal education introduced by the British has played a crucial role in undermining the importance of caste in Indian society. Modern education is accessible to all irrespective of one's caste or community.
- Class is one of the most important bases of social stratification. Classes are groups of people into which a society is divided. These groups are ranked on the basis of specific criteria.
- The caste system is based on the principle of inherited inequalities. On the other hand, the class system is based on the principle of equal opportunities. Both are important systems of social stratification but represent two opposite poles.
- The family is the most important primary group in society. It is often called the basic social institution because of its important functions of procreation and socialization. Robert Bierstedt is of the opinion that 'the family, almost without question, is the most important of any of the groups that human experience offers.
- The biological needs of an individual are satisfied in the family. Thus, it is a very important function of the family. Firstly, the family institutionalizes the need of sex satisfaction through marriage.
- Monogamy is a system of marriage in which one man marries one woman. In almost all the modern societies, marriages are monogamous and such families are known as monogamous families.
- In nuclear families, the members comprise the husband, wife and their children. This type of family has become more common with the advent of industrialization and urbanization, which has forced people to move out to new urban centers and seek employment.
- The joint family system can be seen across societies in various forms of extended families. However, it is more prevalent in India and has certain peculiar Indian characteristics.
- In the Hindu society in India, the joint family, the caste system and the village system are considered as the three pillars on which the social edifice is built. It is a very old system and is regarded by the Hindus as a sacred institution having been derived from religion.
- Members of a joint family identify themselves strongly with their family obligations. They discharge their duties towards the family diligently and the family, in turn, protects their interests.
- The institution of joint family has started undergoing change and is moving towards disintegration. This is primarily the result of the forces of modernization, which is transforming Indian society.
- The joint family system has faced serious challenges from progressive social legislations enacted during the British Rule and after independence. Legislations like The Civil Marriage Act, 1872; The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 and The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 have eroded the pre-dominant position of the joint family system in the Indian society.

- In order to ensure the purity and maintain the distinctive identity of different groups in society, Hindu law-makers have stipulated detailed rules and regulations governing the choice of a partner for the union of marriage.
- The institution of marriage is another issue on which tribal people throughout the world have been much maligned. Indian tribes, like their counterparts in other parts of the world, practice several forms of marriage as a matter of convenience and social acclimatization in their respective cultural and ecological settings.
- The tribes of India differ from each other in the manner in which mate selection is carried out. On one hand, society prohibits sexual liaisons or matrimonial alliances between particular kin or in the same clan or *gotra*, but on the other hand it encourages matrimonial alliances between certain other kins.
- Dower comprises of money or property which the wife gets from her husband when she marries him. As per Muslim law, dower is the obligation which is imposed on the husband as a mark of respect to his wife.
- The Christian society is stratified into Protestants and Catholics. The Catholics are further divided into Latin Catholics and Syrian Catholics. These groups are generally endogamous and do not marry intra-group. In Christianity, religion plays a predominant role in marital unions.
- Despite the changing rules of marriage, divorce and live-in relationships, the institution of marriage still occupies an important place in the hearts and minds of people in India.
- In every society, a male at some time in his life, plays the roles of a husband, a father and a son and a brother in some family; and a female plays the roles of a wife, a mother and a daughter and a sister.
- A kin group is group united by ties of blood or marriage. Most kin groups, other than the family, are consanguineal.
- There are mainly four kinship categories: primary kin, secondary kin, tertiary kin, and distant kin.
- Next to family, kinship group plays a very crucial role in the daily life, rituals and social ceremonies of Hindus. People turn to their kin not only for help in exigencies of life but even on regular occasions too. The kinship group may consist of 4 to 5 families or as many as 20 to 35 families. The important kinship groups after the family are *vansh* (lineage) and *gotra* (clan).
- A man's relations with his feminal kin, *i.e.*, kin related through his mother, his married sisters, his wife and his married daughters, are equally important in his life. The exchange of gifts, periodic visits, reciprocal support in personal emergencies, and regular communication strengthen their relations with each other.
- Though kinship behaviour in the northern zone changes slightly from region to region and within each region from caste to caste, yet comparative study shows that it is possible to talk of an *ideal* northern pattern referring to practices and attitudes generally found to be common among the majority of castes.
- Religion is the expression of the manner and type of adjustment that is effected by people in terms of their conception of the supernatural.
- The early sociological studies of religion had three distinctive methodological characteristics, these were *evolutionist*, *positivist* and *psychological*.

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- Religion has various social functions. Religion is an agency of social control. It disciplines human behaviour in terms of sacred and profane. Performance of rituals and ceremonies gives a sense of collectivity to the society.

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3.8 KEY TERMS

- **Hypergamy:** It is the action of marrying a person of a superior caste or class.
- **Varna:** It is the all-India model of castes derived from the ancient Hindu scriptures.
- **Sapinda:** It refers to a person who is related to an individual by virtue of lineal descent.
- **Polygamy:** It is a system of marriage that permits the marriage of one man with more than one woman.
- **Progeny:** It is a descendant or the descendants of a person, animal, or plant.

3.9 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. The essential characteristics of the Indian caste system are as follows:
 - Segmental division of society
 - Hierarchy of castes
 - Restrictions on commensality and social intercourse
 - Differential civil and religious privileges and disabilities
 - Restrictions on occupational choice
 - Restrictions on marriage
2. Sociologists have viewed caste from the stratificational point of view. They study caste in terms of social stratification in a society. They study it as a phenomenon of social inequality. According to them, society has certain structural aspects and it distributes its members in social positions.
3. The four classes of the agrarian class structure in post-independent India are as follows:
 - i. Landowners
 - ii. Tenants
 - iii. Labourers
 - iv. Non-agriculturists
4. Two essential features of a social class are as follows:
 - i. Class-a status group
 - ii. Universal
5. The distinctive features of family are as follows:
 - Emotional basis
 - Formative influence
 - Responsibility of the members
 - Social regulations
6. When descent is traced through the mother, we have the system known as the matrilineal system. Families that trace their descent through this system are known as matrilineal families.

7. A joint family, though a type of extended family, is an important social unit of Indian society. The joint family system can be seen across societies in various forms of extended families. In a joint family, at least, three generations of a family are seen residing together under one roof. However, it is more prevalent in India and has certain peculiar Indian characteristics.
8. The eight forms of Hindu marriage are as follows:
 - i. Brahma vivah
 - ii. Daiva vivah
 - iii. Arsha vivah
 - iv. Parjapatya vivah
 - v. Asura vivah
 - vi. Gandharva vivah
 - vii. Rakshasa vivah
 - viii. Paisacha vivah
9. There are mainly four kinship categories: primary kin, secondary kin, tertiary kin, and distant kin.
10. Muslims also have a system of temporary marriage, called *muta* marriage. This is a marriage settled by a man and a woman by mutual consent and without the intervention of kin. A man is permitted to contract *muta* marriage with a Muslim, a Jew or a Christian girl but a woman cannot contract such a marriage with a non-Muslim. A wife secured through *muta* marriage is known as *sigha*.
11. Religion is the expression of the manner and type of adjustment that is effected by people in terms of their conception of the supernatural.
12. The indirect effect of religion may be dysfunctional for the society. In Europe, religion hindered the growth of science and inquiry till decline of the organized church in the nineteenth century. The superstitious superstructure that developed successively caused immense harm to the society at all levels. Religion inhibits protests and impedes social changes. Religion has resulted in wars, devastations and genocides.

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3.10 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on the changing nature of the caste system.
2. Mention the classification of social classes.
3. List the characteristics of family.
4. What are the functions of family?
5. State the characteristics of the joint family system.
6. Prepare a short note on the rules of mate selection as per the Hindu law.
7. Mention the important ways of mate selection among the tribes in India.
8. What is the importance of kinship?

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Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the various theories of caste.
2. 'Class is one of the most important bases of social stratification.' Explain the statement.
3. Differentiate between caste and class.
4. Describe the various types of family.
5. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the joint family system in India.
6. Analyse the changing nature of the joint family system in India.
7. Assess the recent changes that have taken place in the institution of marriage.
8. Discuss the categories of kinship.
9. Describe the features of kinship in different zones of India.
10. Assess the significance of religion in our daily lives.

3.11 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4 RURAL POWER STRUCTURE

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Unit Objectives
- 4.2 Bases and Emerging Pattern of Rural Leadership
 - 4.2.1 Panchayati Raj and Other Programmes in Rural Areas
 - 4.2.2 Abolition of Zamindari System in India: A Passage for Vital Change
 - 4.2.3 Rural Industrialization and Change in Rural Leadership
 - 4.2.4 New Emerging Patterns of Rural Leadership
 - 4.2.5 Role of Caste and Occupation in Rural Leadership
 - 4.2.6 Group Dynamics and Factors of Rural Leadership
- 4.3 Dominant Caste
- 4.4 Summary
- 4.5 Key Terms
- 4.6 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 4.7 Questions and Exercises
- 4.8 Further Reading

NOTES

4.0 INTRODUCTION

India is the largest democratic country in the world today with more than 1.22 billion population as per the Census data of 2011. In developing countries like India, where majority of its population lives in rural areas and is dependent upon agriculture for its livelihood and where problems like poverty, unemployment, social and economic inequality exists more noticeably in the countryside, the role of public development administration in rural transformation is vital. In India, rural transformation has been one of the most spectacular features during the post-independence period. The process generally implies the change for overall betterment of rural conditions.

One needs to examine critically the role of public administration in rural transformation. An attempt has been made to analyse the impact of state interventions particularly in rural setting. The issue which concern us are: to what extent has the implementation of rural development programmes transformed the rural agrarian structure, socio-economic conditions of rural masses for their overall betterment?

The process of rural transformation has been one of the most spectacular in India during the 'post-independence' period particularly in the last four decades. The process generally implies the changes for overall betterment of the rural condition—development and improvement of economic life in villagers as considered by the economists and other scholars belonging to different disciplines as well as of administrators of the country. Majority of rural population in India is still living under the poverty line. The rural folk are mainly engaged in agriculture and other allied and backward sectors due to lack of adequate infrastructure (i.e. water supply, management, fertilizers, pesticides and so forth) and socio-economic prerequisites. Physical and social constraints have also affected the agricultural development to a large extent. What should be the appropriate level of development and how the implementation of developmental measures can be initiated to obtain the desired goal of rural transformation? Several such questions do arise for the planner of the present day.

In this unit, you will study about the bases and emerging patterns of rural leadership and the concept of dominant caste.

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4.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the role of state in rural development
- Explain issues related to rural leadership and its effects on rural society
- Describe status of rural leadership within rural framework in India
- Analyse the role of caste and occupation in rural leadership
- Interpret the role of group dynamics in rural leadership
- Define the concept of 'dominant caste'
- Assess the criticisms raised against the concept of 'dominant caste'

4.2 BASES AND EMERGING PATTERN OF RURAL LEADERSHIP

It is rightly said 'India lives in its villages'. More than 70 per cent population lives in rural area. There is more pressure on land, with reference to employment. At present, over fifty per cent of the people in rural areas live below the poverty line.

In developing countries like India, where majority of the population lives in rural areas and is dependent on agriculture for its livelihood and where problems like poverty, unemployment, social and economic inequality exist more pronouncedly in the countryside, the role of public development administration in rural transformation is vital. In India, rural transformation has been one of the most spectacular features during the post independence period. The process generally implies a change for the overall betterment of rural conditions.

Rural leadership creates a very strong link between the policy makers, government administration and the society, as well the rural masses. Many researches were aimed at identifying new and emerging leadership trends in the rural Indian society. Sociologists have examined the impact and influence of a few selected social, educational and cultural developments in area of rural leadership.

There are several projects and programmes being operated by the government, to evaluate the effect of a leadership training programmes in many Indian states, with the help of state governments, Department of Panchayati Raj, attitude of the village people towards female leadership, and effectiveness of female leadership in rural areas and decision-making. These programmes seek to design and evaluate additional negotiation training module to further empower female leadership and equip new leaders by strengthening their working efficiency for better leadership and improve the perception of women as good leaders.

The key objectives of these programmes are limited to the following aspects:

- Improvement process and quality of decision-making
- Efficiency in implementation of public programmes at the village level, including the quality and quantity of public goods provided and villagers' reported satisfaction with public programmes

- Creating a good image of women as leaders
- Better provision of goods preferred specifically by women
- Intervention at ground level

Development is an overall outcome of multiple factors promoting and encouraging change. It is, therefore, affected by the overall situation which exists wherever development is sought. In fact, if viewed with a broad (and perhaps more realistic) perspective, development administration does not include only those institutions which are working directly for it, rather Regulatory Administration, Management for Infrastructure Institution and Agriculture Administration are also integral parts of it. Relatively, the authoritative functioning of the *Patwari* and the police, have been relatively less successful in the field of electrification, transportation and communication, mutual trust and distrust relationship between the cooperative agriculture and administration functionaries and the people itself is a matter of concern in the field of development administration. During the 1950s and 1960s, development administration was influenced by the early theoretical approaches to development. Administrators believed that:

- Development was desirable
- Development could be planned, directed and controlled by public agencies
- Poverty could be eliminated by improving the quality of public goods and services
- Obstacles to development could be overcome

Development and administration were primarily viewed as economic, with little concern for equitable distribution of social benefits.

Today, development administration is less bound to Western approaches of development. The focus is an indigenous development that is sustainable and that meets the basic needs of the people. During the British rule in India, the system of administration was involved in keeping up with needs of the rules. However, it did not take the needs of development administration into consideration, with the results that it could not be established as an agent of socio-economic change. With the advent of independence, when the nature and size of bureaucracy underwent a noticeable turn, the massive onus of development which was so far convened merely with non-development duties like maintaining law and order or collecting revenues from the people. While viewing the problem from this angle, one wonders whether a colonial system of administration, which came into existence for the purpose of carrying out non-development work, was capable of shouldering the responsibility of organizing and executing various programmes connected with development of rural leadership and projects by imbibing the spirit of democratic values and mobilization.

Change in Castes, Ethnic Group and Major Occupation

One of the important elements of the Indian social structure is the caste system. This system has also put restrictions on inter caste marriages and performances of religious sacraments and deeds have been defined into terms of the castes system. One of the important features of the caste system in traditional India has been its close association with occupation. Occupations have been categorized as pure and impure and these have been hierarchically grouped.

The information on castes, ethnic groups and major occupations reveals that an overwhelming majority, if respondent and belonging to different castes, is associate with

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agricultural activities which occupy a predominant place in the agrarian economy of the region where the last study was carried out.

As a result of the green revolution in the area, the scheduled castes and other backward castes no more work for their landowner masters on payment in kind. This is due to the introduction of the green revolution as the traditional *Jajmani* system is on decline.

The striking feature of information on castes, ethnic groups and major occupations indicates that the majority of respondents are concerned with agricultural operations, one way or the other, while respondents concerned with service, carpentry, tailoring, and so forth are the lowest in number. The joint family system has been a very common feature in the rural society of India. In recent decades, the phenomena of modernization and urbanization have brought out many changes in the social scene. The rapid growth of population has put unbearable strain on the agricultural sector, the main source of sustenance for the rural masses. In turn, it has also caused disintegration of the joint family system.

State Intervention and Rural Transformation

Rural development has acquired special significance in countries of the Third World. The developing countries have been faced with the task of transforming a traditional society with low levels of literacy, political experience and production. These countries have experienced various developmental plans and strategies to restructure and transform the traditional social structure, in conformity with particular politico-economic goals. India, after independence, has launched vast programmes of planned changes encompassing social, economic and political processes. Among the programmes of rural research-construction, the Community development and Panchayati Raj Institutions have achieved special impetus.

The main focus of many researchers was to see the extent to which the state as an institution has been able to influence and alter the traditional social structure of the village community and has led to the emergence of a new pattern of economic and political relationship among different groups in the society. For socio-economic uplift of Indian villages, the Union and State governments have launched a number of programmes and projects since 1947. Since independence, the states in India have played a vital role in the process of rural transformation.

In this respect, various Community Development Programmes were launched in India in 1952. The blocks came to be established as units of development administration. The national extension service was established soon thereafter, with a view of reinforcing the administrative service to tackle the problems of development and growth. There started a research for alternative programmes of rural development. The ever growing need for more food from rapidly growing population introduced the adaptation of intensive Agricultural Development programmes, high yielding variety programmes and multiple cropping programmes for increasing the production of food grains.

A large number of programmes were introduced in the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1966-67), which includes adaptation of the target group programmes like Small Farmer Development Agency, Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labours Development Agency, Annyodaya and Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas. Besides, certain area development programmes like tribal area development programmes, whole village development programmes and so forth have also been launched.

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Several such schemes have been introduced in the consecutively launched Five-Year Plans. A number of schemes for rural development have been launched in the Twelfth Five-Year Plan as well; namely, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), Integrated Watershed Development Programme (IWDP), Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) and others.

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4.2.1 Panchayati Raj and Other Programmes in Rural Areas

With the introduction of Panchayati Raj and other programmes of rural reconstruction, both, social and political structure in contemporary India, are passing through a period of transition. Simultaneously, other trends like representation of elected people in various organizations, rising pressure for the distribution of economic benefits and facilities, close interaction between processes of economic and political development and emergence of a new class of power elites in the society have led to a shift in the rural social structure. These have very much influenced the whole process of change. This is to identify the agricultural work and to understand the nature and extent of social change.

Developmental programmes have been assigned to Panchayati Raj institutions. Since these institutions consist of elected members, decisions regarding development scheme and allocation of funds are taken democratically. The amount of resources being channeled through these institutions in the recent years is enormous. There is intense competition among various groups and individuals to extract maximum resource allocation after having been elected. Elections of these bodies have also been contested quite intensely with a view to get control over them. Factionalism, personnel bickering and rivalries have been reported on the basis of castes class and class based loyalties.

The 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution have been welcomed as focussing on the political structure, rural leadership and process of rural India, their significance for the vulnerable and weaker sections of the rural society and their participation in the operation of this structure. Women being one of these vulnerable sections in the local government process have come under considerable scrutiny.

Facilities for all methods of family planning are available on a wider scale and at all levels of the health centres and hospitals of rural areas. Apart from sterilization, non-terminal methods like IUD, CC and oral pills are popularized, since a large number of young couples are giving preference to these methods. (Sixth Five Year plan, 1981-376).

Though, apparently, only developmental role has been assigned to the Panchayati Raj, but its social consequences have been such that one cannot afford to ignore their analysis. It is, thus, to examine as to what extent, process of development has been able to transform the traditional social structure, including the transfer of leadership. Since both the processes, namely, development and political awakening, are simultaneously operating, they are of crucial importance to analyse the social background of those groups and individuals that have been associated with these proceeds.

4.2.2 Abolition of Zamindari System in India: A Passage for Vital Change

Indian agriculture, at the time of independence, was predominantly feudal in character. Before independence, the system of land tenure in the district was based on zamindari, which had given zamindars the judicial right to landownership. Zamindars, who were mostly from the upper castes were alone owners of the properties of land. All others

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were their tenants, holding the right to cultivate and paying rent to them. After independence, the zamindari Abolition Act abolished the right of intermediate level of the village land and gave proprietary right to the actual tiller of the land. The abolition of zamindari, however, was not very successful in terms of abolishing the huge differences in the landownership amongst the land-owning and non land-owning castes. Zamindari abolition and the subsequent land reforms were no doubt radical steps to transform the traditional social structure, but they could not bring much change in the existing situation. The enforcement of land reforms legislation enacted by the state government after independence resulted in distribution of land among landless *Harijans* and weaker sections of the society. Thus, abolition of the zamindari system in India has taken power from the upper class of the rural area. It played a vital role for bringing in changes in rural leadership traditions. The nature of landownership and social relations contingent on it has undergone substantial changes during the last sixty years.

4.2.3 Rural Industrialization and Change in Rural Leadership

Industrialization has played a significant role in the development of rural areas in India. The concept of rural industrialization is a process of development of an area and also of participation by area factors and agents of growth of industries. The village and small sector industries consist of traditional village industries like Khadi, handlooms, handicrafts, modern small scale industries and power looms. While traditional industries are generally artisan-based, they are located mostly in the rural areas and mostly provide part-time employment.

Rural industrialization cannot be regarded as a strategic substitute for other critically missing elements of the development process. It cannot replace the need for various kinds of agrarian institutional reforms, in favour of the rural poor and it cannot offset the implication of an impact of unsatisfactory performance in main sectors of the economy.

In recent economic literature and economic thinking, industrialization has been considered as a key to rapid economic development. It offers the prospect of a growing availability of many factored goods, increased employment opportunities, improved balance of payments position and greater efficiency and modernization throughout the economy. Industrialization is characterized by technological innovation and improvement in technical skills that led to higher productivity. Rural industries provide additional employment opportunities, raise production and improve economic condition in rural areas. They are labour intensive. They provide additional employment to men and women. They ensure decentralization of economic power at the hands of few specific classes of the rural society and elimination of monopolistic exploitation of the weaker sections.

4.2.4 New Emerging Patterns of Rural Leadership

The study of leadership has acquired considerable theoretical and methodological sophistication, compared to days when it was believed that leaders were born with particular traits and attributes. Now, leadership is viewed in the social and cultural context, in which it appears. Rightly, leadership is regarded as a function of the group of situation. Many significant contributions towards emergence and strengthening of this trend have come from sociology and anthropology.

Leadership, which is built of multi variant factors, while aiming to accomplish the group or community goals, has become an important element within the social system in which it is operating. Changes within a system naturally demand a change in structural elements like leadership. Leadership is an important function of a community's social

structure in terms of controlling and influencing the behaviour of others in the community. In the changing social structure from the traditional to the modern order, leadership is also prone to change.

Rural leadership plays an important role in moulding the social, political and economic life of a village community. Change within the system will naturally necessitate a change in the structural elements of leadership. In the international concept, the role of leadership in community involvement in action programmes is also a responsible dynamic aspect of the community. As the social relationship depends upon the type of structure of a village, it is related to village social structure.

Social structure has been considered as an arrangement of the relation of parts to the whole, in an ordered way to represent the distributive pattern over the network of inter-personal relationship. Leadership, therefore, depends upon the type of social structure of the community. In a changing village structure, the leadership may constitute a traditional modern continuum.

For a better study of the problem, it will be appropriate to make an analysis of the existing knowledge available on leadership. Rose and Hennery, while revealing researches on leadership have drawn attention to three theories of leadership (i) Trait or the great men theory (ii) leadership as a function of the group (iii) leadership as a function of the situation, in which the group is placed. For proper understanding of the subject, it has been considered important to consider all three aspects of leadership. Since, a group consists of individual members; individual personality traits make different contributions by each member of the group.

It cannot be denied that to perform the function of leadership, an individual must exhibit, as part of the personality and character, some qualities which distinguish him from other members of the group. However, leadership is regarded as a desired activity and it has been also considered as a relation between an individual and a group, built around some common interests and behaviour as directed or determined by the leader.

A leader occupies a special status in the group. He is considered to be a central figure by all group members who find in him qualities which can help members of the group to achieve the desired goals. Leadership aims at maintaining integration and continuity of the group structure. The problem highlighted by this study:

- (a) Leadership is the property of the group and
- (b) As the group structure changes, leadership would also change

In the traditional village social structure, there are certain aspects which may be considered as important for leadership, viz., sex, age, inheritance and caste. Due to the patriarchal society, leadership in north-Indian villages has been the privilege of only males. In a joint family setting, the head of the family occupies an established position, by virtue of being senior in age and more experienced than other members of the family. In addition, the headmen of the village typified the hereditary character of power which carried forward from father to the son.

4.2.5 Role of Caste and Occupation in Rural Leadership

Caste and occupation in traditional Indian villages are close to each other. Thus, caste and occupation stratification in the village structure provided leadership position, which is occupied mostly by those who enjoy a higher rank in the caste and occupational hierarchies. However, in north Indian villages, leadership based on religion and clientele system, has also been considered traditional in nature. Leadership plays an important

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role in forming political classes and class. Voting in the rural area is simply filled into the prevailing system.

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Politics has got involved in traditional leadership. It is the caste system, which made available to the leadership structure, an ideological base for political mobilization, providing it both, a segmental organization and an identifiable system on which support could be crystallized. This leadership was forced to make concession to local opinion, articulate potential competition on traditional lines and in turn, organize castes for economic and political purposes. Three aspects of caste consist of caste councils, arbitration procedures and so on. There is the integration aspect in which the caste system not only determines the individuals' social status on the basis of the group into which he is born, but also differentiates and assigns occupational and economic rules. It, thus, gives a place to every individual from the highest to the lowest and makes for a high degree of identification and integration.

The power elites of different castes are dominant figures in the politics of village Panchayat and political parties. Political bosses are the mainstream of agrarian lobbies and other pressure groups, like the traditional village panchayat, castes association, peasant organization and so forth. If a social structure is based on caste, political parties cannot ignore this social reality. Leadership has become an unavoidable fact of human beings. Everyone is involved in some way in some kind of political system. Even in the rural society today, leadership plays a vital role in forming various pressure groups and peasant unions.

Caste in India has been employed as a factor for achieving political power. The contexts of leadership in India are determined by the caste structure. Political parties cannot ignore this social contempt. Since leadership protects caste intersects, caste factors in leadership have been solidified, irrespective if there are growing confrontations and competitive roles. Leadership has become a reflection of caste and religion loyalties. The role of caste is not confined to elections alone; it is extended to the actual operation of the state apparatus. The penetration of caste in leadership has made the state apparatus biased in favour of some castes and against others. The role of caste in Indian leadership has distorted the processes of secularization in the country and it has made the state apparatus biased in favour of the cases which dominate the social structure.

Caste is employed to play an ideological role in leadership to legitimate capitalistic exploitation. The democratic political process in India is linked with the building of capitalism and the conflicts, generated by the capitalistic path of development, are diverted towards caste confrontation. Caste is projected as a reality of Indian society by the ideologues of capitalism and the exploited peasants and workers are divided through caste conflicts. The tyranny of the rich peasants over their landless agricultural labours is explained away as a caste phenomenon. Landowners belonging to the upper and middle castes employ the state apparatus to extract surplus value by oppressing landless agricultural labourers and exploitative agrarian relations are defended with the help of state functionaries. The basic activity of social exploitation is undertaken by the rural rich, by means of caste factors in leadership.

4.2.6 Group Dynamics and Factors of Rural Leadership

Group dynamics is that division of social psychology which investigates the formation and change in structure and functions of psychological groups. In a practical sense, it is also conceived as a technique of fostering conciliation between individuals and groups regarding important issues and practices. In some villages it has been seen that there are

no village leaders, but leaders of small groups or functions based on caste, kinship and inter village connections. Mr. Oscar Lewis (1954; 3-6) while studying village leaders in an Indian village found that there were not village wise leaders but leaders of factions. He observed, 'leadership in village Rampur is limited to faction leadership and is primarily of a protective and defensive nature, in which each faction or combination of factions defend their family interests.

The factions were generally known by the names of their leaders. These were organized along caste lines and were distributed as follows. The Jat factions were by far the most powerful and dominant in the political life of villages. Due to a small number and economic dependence of most of the lower castes, they did not have the strength to act as independent factions. They were no political groupings, nor temporary alliances of individuals to fight court cases, although some of them taken on political faction became involved in power politics. Rather, they were primarily kinship groupings which carry on important social, economic and ceremonial functions in addition to their factional struggle against one another. The inter faction relations of both, Jats and non-Jats extended across village lines.

The community, in the sense of a cohesive and united community, hardly exists and caste and kinship still form the core of social organization. Village wise leadership does not exist and the idea of positive and constructive leadership in the public interest is now only gradually beginning. There was the advantage that the leadership was spread out rather than concentrated, so village level worker could reach the faction leader of constructive work in the village. To ignore these factions, or just as bad, to admit that they exist and then forget about them would help to perpetuate them rather eliminate them. Therefore, in such villages, for constructive programmes the officials should approach through faction leaders, instead through village headmen or Pradhan. The organization of leadership on a faction base provided for a much closer representation of people than is possible in the more sophisticated and monolithic type of political democracy of some western nations, based on delegated authorities. In view of this, it may be desirable to build upon the present faction organization, a sense of wider community localities. However, it has been pointed out that village panchayats are working successfully in some villages.

As a consequence of the two world wars, urbanization and industrialization, the traditional village social order has undergone many changes. The joint family social system is being replaced by nuclear units and as a result, younger generations are assuming more responsibilities. The spread of female education has given more opportunities to women to take up important positions in village social life. The caste system now tends to shift to the class system as a result of better and newer occupational opportunities.

Political freedom further hastened the process of change. Every individual now has certain fundamental rights, such as freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of association and opportunities to his economic position, irrespective of age, sex, caste and creed. In this respect, the pattern of rural leadership is changing.

The community development programmes launched in October 1952 further accelerated the process of change. These programmes which are a part of the process of modernization taking place in Indian villages, have had their influence of institutions like the cooperative society, the panchayat and the village school, besides helping to improve agricultural production. The programmes aimed at stimulating local efforts,

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initiative and leadership among the village community. This leadership is to be developed through democratic methods, based on group consensus in decision-making, without any limitation of age, caste, sex or class and open to achievement. A favourable attitude to the extent of participation in village development activities will also determine the modern orientation of a leader. The means that preferred the leader to induce in community participation for development activities are also a measure of the traditional modern dimensions of leadership.

Although as a result of development factors; economy, land reforms, irrigation facilities, electricity, improved communication and mass media, the traditional village social structure is undergoing a change, a modern social order is yet to emerge. To the extent the Indian village is traditional; leadership would continue to be on the traditional pattern. However, since change is moving towards modernism, leadership too would move in the direction of modernity. Traditional and modern leadership is not mutually exclusive of age, sex, caste or class, for traditional. Irrespective of whether a leader achieves his leadership position through heredity or achievement, the extent he desires to change the village social structure from traditional to modern order will be an important measure of modern leadership.

With reference to rural leadership and its emerging pattern, voluntary organizations have an important role. Voluntary organizations are autonomous and flexible. They are initiated by a group of like-minded people to change and transform the socio-economic life of people, especially the weaker sections. The essential feature of voluntary organization is initiated not only to solve problems but to prevent the occurrence of problems.

A voluntary organization includes a wide range of activities like construction and maintenance of educational institutions, hospitals, inns, roads and so forth providing jobs to the needy and various economic development programmes and community services. It has an administrative structure and a duly constituted managing committee. It is an organization initiated and governed by its own members on democratic principles without any external control.

There are various voluntary organizations whose main functions have been to provide relief as well as help when the local people get affected by flood, fires, epidemic, cyclones, earthquakes and other natural calamities. In this respect, it is the responsibility of the leader of such an organization to get resources from the state and central government. Navyuvak Mangal Dal and Ramleela Samiti, as voluntary organizations, are functioning to perform rural transformation.

Efforts are also on to introduce elements of integrated rural development of concerned communities at local levels. In the colonial Indian period, agrarian structure was headed by a class of intermediate level who oppressed and exploited the mass of peasantry. There was neither security of tenancy nor alternative livelihood. Therefore, peasants showed their powerful urges in the form of movements to transform the agrarian structure. Later on they were organized by political parties and people like Baba Ramchandra and Swami Sahajanand. They took interest in rural leadership and rural development. After the green revolution, when the Indian agrarian society entered a phase of rapid capitalistic transformation of agriculture, the peasant movement, led by rich peasants was mainly launched for either infrastructural facilities or monetary demands, or for support prices of agricultural products. The other major area of peasant organization leadership demanded lowering down of the cost of production. This required subsidized rates of canal irrigation, electricity, fertilizers and so forth.

Role of Information Technology in Rural Leadership

It is observed that rural leadership has great significance in the transformation of social, political and economic lives of rural people. It is an important function of community and social structure, in terms of controlling and influencing the growth behaviour of others in a community. While changing the social structure, leadership is also prone to change. Leadership depends on the types of social structures of the village community. The significance of social structure is an important factor to determine the acceptability of the village people to social change and development. In a traditional village social society, certain aspects such as sex, caste and inheritance have special significance. Social rank is conferred on the basis of age, physical strength, occupation or income. In Indian villages, leaders are found in various contexts such as caste, faction lineage and territorial groups. The institutions perpetuating the social life of the village community altered the pattern of social interaction to a great extent. This resulted in changing the role structure of members of the community. The relations got patterned on the basis of new roles. In the light of the above, a shift in the role structure of the leader, as a result of change in other elements of the community social system, would alter the pattern of leadership within that system.

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4.3 DOMINANT CASTE

The concept of ‘dominant caste’ was propounded by Prof. M. N. Srinivas. It first appeared in his essay on the social system of a Mysore village. This was so perhaps because Professor Srinivas was unconsciously influenced by African studies on the dominant clan and dominant lineage. Srinivas developed the concept in his study on Rampura village which is not far away from Mysore city in Karnataka state. Srinivas, in fact, wanted to do a comprehensive study on Rampura and he went to Stanford for writing a monograph on Rampura. But all the three copies of his field work notes, which were processed over a period of eighteen years, were destroyed in his Stanford office. Later on, he published *Remembered Village* in 1976 which talked about Rampura.

The definition of ‘dominant caste’ has undergone some change over a period of time. Srinivas worked in Rampura in 1948. His finding was first reported in 1955. He defined the concept as under:

‘The concept of dominant caste which has emerged in recent sociological research is important in this connection. A caste is dominant when yields economic and political power and occupies a fairly high position in hierarchy (even in the traditional system of a caste which acquired economic and political power did succeed in improving its ritual status).’

Srinivas says that the existence of dominant caste is not in particular to Rampura only. It is found in other villages of the country also. For instance, in Mysore villages, Lingayat and Dakkalanga in Andhra Pradesh, Reddy and Kamma in Tamil Nadu, Gounder, Padayach and Mudaliar in Kerala, Nayan in Maharashtra, Maratha in Gujrat, North India, Rajput, Jat, Gujjar and Ahir are dominant castes. Traditionally, small castes owing land in rural areas, on yielding political power or inheriting a literary tradition, were able to dominate the villages. Srinivas has provided historical reasons for the power exercised by the traditional higher castes. He says that the traditional high castes had influence because of western education and benefits which they conferred.

Check Your Progress

1. How is the caste system associated with occupation in India?
2. When were the Community Development Programmes launched in India and what was their main objective?

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It was in 1962 that M.N. Srinivas specified the following three characteristics of a dominant caste:

- (i) A caste dominates when it yields economic and political power.
- (ii) It has a high rank in caste hierarchy.
- (iii) Numerical strength.

The earlier definition of dominant caste was reviewed by writers of studies on several villages. Srinivas also looked into the field and the comments made by the others. In 1966, he reviewed his earlier definition which runs as under:

‘For a caste to be dominant, it should own a sizable amount of the arable land locally available, have strength of numbers, and occupy a high place in the local hierarchy. When a caste has all the attributes of dominance, it may be said to enjoy a decisive dominance.’

Characteristics

On the basis of the definitions of dominant caste given by Srinivas and the comments offered by other sociologists a concept could be made which includes the ideal type of dominant caste.

1. Economic and Political Power

The power of a particular caste lies in owning land. The caste which has larger portion of land in a village wields greater power. The size of the land is also related to irrigation. In case of larger landowning and adequate irrigation facilities, the yields will increase. Second, the larger landowning caste also provides jobs to the landless farmers and marginal farmers. Such a situation renders the superordinate landless labourers as the ‘servants’ of the large landowning caste. These castes also apply modern techniques of agriculture such as chemical manure, improved implements and new patterns of cropping.

Yogendra Singh (1994) observes that the social anthropologists have found the presence of dominant castes in most of the south Indian villages. The basic determinant of a dominant caste is the superior economic status, especially in land. In the south Indian villages, for instance, Brahmin and Okkaliga are dominant castes. ‘The Havik Brahmins in village Toltagadde in Malau area of Mysore and Smarth Brahmins in the Kumbapettai village in Tartjore (Tamilnadu) have been observed to be dominant castes. Okkaliga are dominant in the village Rampura, Wangala and Delana in Mysore.’

Putting his analysis of dominant castes, Yogendra Singh further observes:

‘An interesting common factor which plays a very significant role in the dominance of these castes in the villages is their superior economic status, especially in land. Brahmins in Toltagadde have ownership of all cash crop lands; Kumbapettai Brahmins traditionally controlled all lands; Okkaligas in Wangala; and Delanas control more than 80 per cent of land; Rajputs in Senapur, eastern UP control 82 per cent of land in the village; and the Vaghela Rajputs in Cassandra village in Gujarat have control over all the lands in the village. In all these villages the degree of dominance of these castes is high.’

Higher education is also accepted by the big landowning castes. Administrative and income generated in urban areas have also given economic power to these caste groups. Besides economic power, namely, agriculture and jobs in administration, the big landowning castes have increased their prestige and power because of their status in Panchayati Raj. Srinivas says that ‘the introduction of adult franchise and Panchayati Raj has resulted in giving a new sense of self-respect to the villagers’. Srinivas argues

that the economic and political power which has come into the hands of big landowning castes has, thus, enhanced their power status.

2. High rank in caste hierarchy

Normally, the caste which is traditionally the highest in the caste hierarchy enjoys the status of dominance. The Brahmins and the Rajputs have traditionally been dominant in the villages. The Brahmins are at the top of the caste hierarchy and they officiate or preside at the religious festivals and rituals of the village. The Rajputs have been the feudals—*Thakurs* in the village. They hold traditionally larger portions of the village land. The economic and political power, thus, in the village has given the dominant status to both the Brahmins and Rajputs.

Recently, the criterion, namely, economic and political power, has undergone a change. The reservations made for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women have given a new attribute to the concept of dominant caste. As a result of this provision, power has passed into the hands of numerically large peasants who own land. Some of the scheduled castes, who are large in number and who are educated and avail other opportunities available to them, have also gained economic and political power. The high rank in the caste hierarchy is in favour of those castes which have benefited from their reserved status. Today, the traditional higher status in the hierarchy is no longer an attribute of a dominant caste.

3. Numerical strength

Before the advent of modernization and development, numerical strength had no power of the dominance in a caste. It is only recently that a numerical strength of a caste has assumed importance because of the vote bank created by adult suffrage. The castes which have large number of voters, naturally, determine the fate of a candidate contesting elections. What is called these days as ‘caste-war’ is actually the importance of a caste to determine the fate of a candidate.

Today, a caste is dominant not only in single village but extends to a cluster of villages. A caste group which has only a family or two in a particular village but which has decisive dominance in the wider region, will be dominant and important locally because of the ties which binds it to its dominant and main relatives. It is equally important that other people in the village are aware of the existence of this network. On the contrary, a caste which is dominant in a single village will find that it has to reckon with other caste that has regional dominance.

4. A sizeable amount of the arable land

Normally, in India’s villages, smaller number of big landowners occupy larger portion of land. In other words, the caste which has larger portion of village land wields power. The big landowners, thus, are patrons of the bulk of the poor villagers. In villages, those castes which have larger portion of land enjoy power and prestige. Srinivas says that landownership is a crucial factor in establishing dominance. He observes:

‘Landownership confers not only power but prestige, so much so that, individuals who have made good in any walk of life tend to invest in land. If landownership is not always an indispensable passport to high rank, it certainly facilitates upward mobility.’

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Criticism

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The decades of 1950s and 1960s in the field of rural sociology witnessed a keen competition between those who preferred Redfield's approach to village studies and those who preferred Radcliffe-Brown's analysis of functional analysis. Despite differences in their approach, both the camps focused on culture. Later on, Louis Dumont stressed the importance of culture and caste as determining variables in the study of Indian civilization as a whole.

The concept of 'dominant caste', it is argued, has emerged out of the African studies on dominant class. When Srinivas put forward the concept of dominant caste, it was seriously commented upon by sociologists and social anthropologists. As a matter of fact, during the 1950s and 1960s, the academic environment in the country, in rural sociology and social anthropology, was charged by studies on caste and village communities. Some of the criticisms of the concept have relevance even today in our understanding of rural society. These criticisms are discussed in the subsequent section.

• *Dominant caste today is found only in traditional villages*

Srinivas has argued that a dominant caste has most of the power in the village within its fold. In fact, it is the dominant caste which runs the village and maintains the village system.

The empirical reality today has undergone vast transformation. Surely, in the past, the powerful families in the village were the big landowning families. The Brahmins and the Rajputs, in the earlier periods of history, got immense favour from the feudal lords and the British rulers. In order to keep these higher castes in favour of the ruling group land was given as gift. Those who received such favours included Brahmins, Rajputs and the Marathas. Viewed from this perspective admittedly, the Brahmins and the Rajputs became big landowning castes.

But, with the land reforms including land ceiling and abolition of zamindari and zagirdari, big landowning has ceased to be a determinant factor of dominant caste. In place of big landholding, political power has become a decisive factor in the formation of a dominant caste. Andre Beteille very rightly observes:

'The powerful families in the past were the big landowning families. These included the principal Brahmin families among non-Brahmins, the Maratha family. Today, political power whether in the village or outside is not as closely tied to ownership of land as it was in the past. New bases of power have emerged which are, to some extent, independent of both caste and class. Perhaps most important among these is the strength of numerical support.'

D.N. Majumdar, anthropologist, who conducted a study on Monana village of Uttar Pradesh in 1958, observes that the Brahmin and the Thakur were the dominant castes in Mohana. But, at a later stage, he finds that the dominance of the Thakur group has begun to be shaken up, ever since the legal removal of its economic pillar—the zamindari system—which was the strong medium through which it held the various other castes in a position of economic subordination. But Majumdar also finds that with the abolition of zamindari, much of the economic power of the Thakur is retained. He says that 'with their wide money-lending business they still are a powerful group.'

If economic power is considered to be an important factor for the formation of a dominant caste, it is only limited to the traditional villages, such as, that of tribals which have not received the impact of modern political transformation.

• ***Dominant caste is not always numerically a preponderant caste***

Yet another criticism of dominant caste falls into two camps. One camp of scholars argues that in traditional villages it is not the numerical strength but secular power and ritual status that determine the status of a dominant caste. Among those who stand for this argument include D.N. Majumdar and others. However, the second group consisting of Andre Beteille, M.N. Srinivas and Yogendra Singh has advanced the idea of ritual and secular status of a caste as dominant. This group asserts on an empirical evidence that nowadays 'with the coming of adult suffrage, numerical strength has become very important and the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes have assumed a greater importance'.

Majumdar does not consider numerical strength as a decisive factor in the formation of a dominant caste. Historically 'Indian villages probably never exercised majority rule or accepted majority verdict. The feudal India did not compromise with numerical strength. Besides, alone—Brahmin, a *sadhu*, a *zaamindar*, a social worker—each has exercised more influence than a numerically preponderant community in the village'. Majumdar denies the idea that scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, though having numerical strength may occupy a status of dominant caste. According to him, 'the backward classes, scheduled castes preponderate in many villages, even a particular caste like the *Lodha* or the *Pasi* may be numerically the largest caste in a village, but authority and importance may attach to the few upper castes families, or to the *zaamindar* family, i.e. the social matrix of Indian village'.

Thus, on one hand, it is argued that the numerical strength has ceased to be a factor in the making of a dominant caste while on the other hand, it is also held that the dominant caste is based on empirical strength. Modern forces of democracy and development including the improvement of the status of scheduled groups have gone a long way in making a group dominant in a village.

• ***Dominant caste is a part of structuralist approach***

Most of the criticism labelled against the dominant caste is that of theorists who oppose structuralist approach in the study of Indian society. Louis Dumont is the leader of this approach. M.N. Srinivas, while giving the concept of dominant caste, also follows the line of a structuralist. Srinivas stands for hierarchy, i.e., the opposition between pure and impure. He looks at the pure caste, namely, Brahmins and Rajputs as the higher castes in the caste hierarchy; he has taken upper caste view in the construction of dominant caste. This perspective of Srinivas has been criticized by Edmund Leach. In fact, Srinivas has overlooked the force of history when he writes:

'Historical data are neither as accurate nor as rich and detailed as the data collected by field anthropologists, and the study of certain existing processes in the past.'

The making of a dominant caste, thus, is highly empirical and does not take into consideration the forces of history. A cursory view of the contemporary rural India would immediately show that much of the relevance of dominant caste has fallen into erosion. As a matter of fact, there has been sea-change in the social reality of Indian villages that much cannot be comprehended with the help of this concept. The reservation given to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, the intensification of democratization, and the introduction of Panchayati Raj through 73rd Amendment to the Indian Constitution have gone a long way in shrinking the influence of dominant caste. However, there are some politically dominant groups which have begun to exercise influence on the villagers.

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• Village Unity

Traditionally, it is argued that Indian villages all through its periods of history have maintained unity. There have been wars and attacks, ruling dynasties have come and gone, and neighbouring states have waged wars against one another, but there has not been any disturbance in the unity of the village, the collective consciousness among the villagers has been so strong that they have unbreakable ties among themselves which are manifested in the celebrations of village festivals, rituals and ceremonies. The *Panch Parmeshwar* has been the supreme body in the village life. A person is not shy of remaining imprisoned than to be punished by the village panchayat.

The traditional unity of village has been explored by social anthropologists. It is said that the fabric of village life consists of caste and kin groups. The ties of castes and kin have always divided the villages into numerous factions. Andre Beteille's Sripuram is very clearly divided into the Brahmin households and the untouchables. Srinivas argues that caste and kin have created cracks in the village.

4.4 SUMMARY

- It is rightly said 'India lives in its villages'. More than 70 per cent population lives in rural area. There is more pressure on land, with reference to employment. At present over fifty per cent of the people in rural areas live below the poverty line.
- Rural leadership creates a very strong link between the policy makers, government administration and the society, as well the rural masses.
- There are several projects and programmes being operated by the government, to evaluate the effect of a leadership training programmes in many Indian states, with the help of state governments, Department of Panchayati Raj, attitude of the village people towards female leadership, and effectiveness of female leadership in rural areas and decision-making.
- Development and administration were primarily viewed as economic, with little concern for equitable distribution of social benefits.
- One of the important elements of the Indian social structure is the caste system. This system has also put restrictions on inter caste marriages and performances of religious sacraments and deeds have been defined into terms of the castes system.
- Rural development has acquired special significance in countries of the Third World. The developing countries have been faced with the task of transforming a traditional society with low levels of literacy, political experience and production.
- With the introduction of Panchayati Raj and other programmes of rural reconstruction, both, social and political structure in contemporary India, are passing through a period of transition.
- Developmental programmes have been assigned to Panchayati Raj institutions. Since these institutions consist of elected members, decisions regarding development scheme and allocation of funds are taken democratically.
- Indian agriculture, at the time of independence, was predominantly feudal in character. Before independence, the system of land tenure in the district was based on zamindari, which had given zamindars the judicial right to landownership.

Check Your Progress

3. Who devised the concept of dominant caste?
4. List the three essential characteristics of a dominant caste as per Professor M. N. Srinivas.

- Industrialization has played a significant role in the development of rural areas in India. The concept of rural industrialization is a process of development of an area and also of participation by area factors and agents of growth of industries.
- The study of leadership has acquired considerable theoretical and methodological sophistication, compared to days when it was believed that leaders were born with particular traits and attributes.
- Social structure has been considered as an arrangement of the relation of parts to the whole, in an ordered way to represent the distributive pattern over the network of inter-personal relationship.
- Politics has got involved in traditional leadership. It is the caste system, which made available to the leadership structure, an ideological base for political mobilization, providing it both, a segmental organization and an identifiable system on which support could be crystallized.
- Caste in India has been employed as a factor for achieving political power. The contexts of leadership in India are determined by the caste structure. Political parties cannot ignore this social contempt.
- Group dynamics is that division of social psychology which investigates the formation and change in structure and functions of psychological groups.
- The community, in the sense of a cohesive and united community, hardly exists and caste and kinship still form the core of social organization. Village wise leadership does not exist and the idea of positive and constructive leadership in the public interest is now only gradually beginning.
- A voluntary organization includes a wide range of activities like construction and maintenance of educational institutions, hospitals, inns, roads and so forth are providing jobs to the needy and various economic development programmes and community services.
- There are various voluntary organizations whose main functions have been to provide relief as well as help when the local people get affected by flood, fires, epidemic, cyclones, earthquakes, other natural calamities.
- It is observed that rural leadership has great significance in the transformation of social, political and economic lives of rural people. It is an important function of community and social structure, in terms of controlling and influencing the growth behaviour of others in a community.
- The institutions perpetuating the social life of the village community altered the pattern of social interaction to a great extent. This resulted in changing the role structure of members of the community.
- The concept of 'dominant caste' was propounded by Professor M. N. Srinivas. It first appeared in his essay on the social system of a Mysore village. This was so perhaps because Professor Srinivas was unconsciously influenced by African studies on the dominant clan and dominant lineage.
- The definition of 'dominant caste' has undergone some change over a period of time. Srinivas worked in Rampura in 1948. His finding was first reported in 1955.

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- It was in 1962 that M.N. Srinivas specified the following three characteristics of a dominant caste:
 - i. A caste dominates when it yields economic and political power.
 - ii. It has a high rank in caste hierarchy.
 - iii. Numerical strength.
- Higher education is also accepted by the big landowning castes. Administrative and income generated in urban areas have also given economic power to these caste groups.
- Normally, in India's villages, smaller number of big landowners occupy larger portion of land. In other words, the caste which has larger portion of village land wields power. The big landowners, thus, are patrons of the bulk of the poor villagers.
- Most of the criticism labelled against the dominant caste is that of theorists who oppose structuralist approach in the study of Indian society. Louis Dumont is the leader of this approach.
- The traditional unity of village has been explored by social anthropologists. It is said that the fabric of village life consists of caste and kin groups. The ties of castes and kin have always divided the villages into numerous factions.

4.5 KEY TERMS

- **Factionalism:** It refers to arguments or disputes between two or more groups.
- **Feudalism:** It is the system of political organization which prevailed in Europe from the 9th to about the 15th centuries having as its basis the relation of lord to vassal.
- **Monograph:** It is a long, detailed scholarly piece of writing on a specific subject.

4.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. One of the important features of the caste system in traditional India has been its close association with occupation. Occupations have been categorized as pure and impure and these have been hierarchically grouped.
2. The Community Development Programmes were launched in India in 1952. The blocks came to be established as units of development administration.
3. The concept of 'dominant caste' was propounded by Prof. M. N. Srinivas. It first appeared in his essay on the social system of a Mysore village.
4. The three essential characteristics of a dominant caste as per Prof. M. N. Srinivas are as follows:
 - i. A caste dominates when it yields economic and political power.
 - ii. It has a high rank in caste hierarchy.
 - iii. Numerical strength.

4.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Name some of the rural development programmes launched during the Fourth Five-Year Plan.
2. How has the Panchayati Raj institutions contributed to the development of rural areas in India?
3. What are the new emerging patterns of rural leadership?
4. Write a short note on the role of caste and occupation in rural leadership.

Long-Answer Questions

1. 'Rural development has acquired special significance in countries of the Third World.' Explain the statement.
2. How has the abolition of the Zamindari system provided a passage for vital change?
3. 'Industrialization has played a significant role in the development of rural areas in India.' Discuss the statement.
4. Discuss the role of group dynamics in rural leadership.
5. Critically analyse the criticisms raised against the concept of 'dominant caste'.

4.8 FURTHER READING

- Atal, Y. 2006. *Changing Indian Society*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications.
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- Hasnain, N. 2004. *Indian Society and Culture: Continuity and Change*. New Delhi: Jawahar Publishers and Distributors.
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UNIT 5 PROBLEMS OF INDIAN SOCIETY

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Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Unit Objectives
- 5.2 Poverty
- 5.3 Gender Inequality
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5.0 INTRODUCTION

Even though India has made a place for itself as one of the fastest growing economies in the world yet it has not completely overcome the social maladies which plague its society. Poverty, gender inequality, human trafficking and communalism are some of the poignant issues confronting the Indian society. Being a part of the Indian society, it is impossible that you have not realized the disturbing inequality that exists between the rich and poor in India. The poor of our country are unfortunately trapped in the vicious circle of poverty. The existence of poverty may be attributed to a number of factors, but still it bears the semblance of a social problem that questions the very meaning of human life.

Although India has taken giant strides in the participation of women in the workforce, a lot more needs to be done. The bulk of working women in India either work in the agricultural sector or the unorganized sector. Both of these sectors do not provide adequate protection or benefits to women. The article published on September 24, 2013 in the new Women, Business and the Law 2014 report shows the number of legal barriers to women's economic participation dropped by half around the globe, but progress is uneven.

Human trafficking is another social problem in India. As per data released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), human trafficking numbers rose by almost 20 per cent in India in 2016 against the previous year. According to NCRB, there were 8,132 human trafficking cases last year against 6,877 in 2015, with the highest number of cases reported in West Bengal (44 per cent of cases), followed by Rajasthan (17 per cent).

Communalism is another social problem afflicting the Indian society. India was born in the aftermath of a communal massacre that claimed the lives of thousands of Hindus and Muslims. Even though secularism is one of the most cherished goals of our Constitution, the Indian history has been marked with several incidents of communal wars and violence.

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5.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Interpret the concept of poverty
- Summarize the government policies and programmes undertaken to eradicate poverty in India
- List the problems of working women in India
- Analyse the concept of 'dowry'
- Discuss the legal framework established the world over for combating terrorism
- Define communalism
- State the factors affecting communalism

5.2 POVERTY

The Indian economy has been developing since 1950. The country has witnessed sustainable economic growth in the last six decades. The various sectors of the Indian economy have made modest to good progress. Out of these, there were also some noteworthy structural changes. A gradual shift was noticed and the Indian economy scaled from being an underdeveloped to a developing economy. It made a significant headway from poverty to prosperity. However, despite such remarkable economic developments, certain concerns continue to plague the Indian economy. One such feature happens to be the low per capita income. Per capita income in India is one of the lowest in the world. This indicates low economic welfare of the people and the prevalence of poverty in the country.

Humankind has been plagued by poverty for centuries. However, with the passage of time, numerous measures were implemented to alleviate poverty. One of the greatest achievements of the twentieth century has been the alleviation of poverty in many parts across the globe. Despite such economic success, some countries of Asia, Africa and South America are still poverty-stricken.

One third of the population of these developing countries still remains in abject poverty. It is a misfortune that India falls under this category. The problem of poverty is considered to be the biggest challenge to development planning in India.

Poverty can be defined as 'a state or condition in which a person or community lacks the financial resources and essentials to enjoy a minimum standard of life and well-being that's considered acceptable in society.'

Concept of Poverty

Mollie Orshansky, the developer of poverty measurements that are in use by the US government, says 'to be poor is to be deprived of those goods and services and pleasures which others around us take for granted.'

A socio-economic malady, poverty is one of the worst challenges facing India today. Poverty not only refers to an absence of necessities of material well-being, but also the denial of opportunities for living a tolerable life and enjoying a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-respect and respect for others. There are two types of

poverty. One is income poverty and the other is human poverty. Income poverty refers to the lack of necessities of material well-being. Human poverty refers to the denial of opportunity for living a tolerable life.

The definition of poverty is varied for most countries. Poverty in India has been referred to as that situation in which a person is unable to earn adequate income to buy the minimal means of subsistence. These include a satisfactory level of nutritional diet, minimum required clothing, housing and minimum level of health facilities such as clean water and so on. Poverty can be classified into two categories: absolute poverty and relative poverty.

- (i) **Absolute poverty:** Less prevalent in developed countries, absolute poverty is a state in which people do not have the minimum level of income deemed necessary for living in a civilized society. Absolute poverty refers to the percentage of populace living below the poverty line.
- (ii) **Relative poverty:** Relative poverty refers to the phenomenon when the income for consumption expenditure of a section of the society is distinctively below the average income level of the society. Relative poverty indicates that a group or class of people belonging to lower income group is poorer when compared to those belonging to higher income group. Since income is distributed unequally in almost all the countries—whether developed or undeveloped—relative poverty exists in every country.

The Meaning of Poverty Line

Poverty line is a level of personal income defining the state of poverty. This concept is very frequently used by economists to measure the extent of poverty in a country. In order to find out the extent of poverty and measure the number of poor people in the country, the economists use the concept of poverty line. Poverty line has been defined as a level of personal or family income below which one is classified as poor according to governmental standards. Poverty line can be identified through the following steps:

- Poverty line is identified in terms of a minimum nutritional level of food energy required for subsistence. This minimum nutritional level of food energy is expressed in terms of minimum daily intake of calories. The Planning Commission of India has defined the poverty line in terms of nutritional requirement of 2,400 calories per person per day for rural areas and 2,100 calories per person per day in the urban areas.
- Poverty line is also identified in terms of per capita consumption expenditure required to get minimum calorie intake. Thus, poverty line is set at the level of consumption expenditure per person required for the minimum calorie intake.

The percentages of populace which falls below poverty line are identified as the underprivileged. Head Count Ratio calculates the extent of poverty in India. This method measures the number of poor as the proportion of people living below poverty line.

Causes of Poverty

There are several factors responsible for poverty in India. Some of them are discussed as follows:

- **Growth of population:** One of the major problems of poverty in India is the high growth rate of population, especially among the poor. This is because of their strong belief in traditions, illiteracy and also their preference for the male child,

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which results in an increase in population. With limited income and numerous mouths to feed, people are unable to make ends meet.

- **Low rate of economic development:** The low rate of economic development is another major cause of poverty. The rate of economic development in India has been below the required levels. This means that we have low per capita income that results in a low standard of living. Population in India has recorded an increase of average rate of over 2 per cent during the plan period. The employment opportunities increase slowly because of low growth rate in the economy. This has kept the poor families in a state of constant poverty.
- **Unemployment:** The unemployment rate in India was 9.9 per cent in 2012. With a large number of people being unemployed, India is facing the twin challenges of unemployment and underemployment. There are less job opportunities compared to the number of job seekers. Though efforts have been made to promote small and cottage industries to generate employment, even these industries could not absorb sufficient workforce so as to reduce poverty. Thus, unemployment intensifies the problem of poverty to a massive degree.
- **Lack of education:** The growth of population has long been associated with the lack of education. Since the poor have limited access to education, they usually end up with low-paid jobs. This in turn, results in low income. Since most underprivileged people are illiterate, they think that the more the number of members in the family, the more it will help them in acquiring wealth.
- **Inflationary pressure:** The constant rise in price has only made things more difficult for the poor people. Inflation has reduced the real income of fixed and low-income earners. As a result, there is a marked decline in the purchasing power of the poor. Thus, the poor cannot avoid a decline in their living standards.
- **Socio-cultural factors:** The socio-cultural set-up of the country also contributes to poverty to a large extent. Usually, people belonging to lower castes and tribal groups comprise the poor. Illiteracy and limited chances of mobility perpetuate poverty. Factors such as the prevalence of casteism, existence of joint family system, communal hatred and inheritance laws have proven to be an obstacle for economic development.
- **Growth strategy:** The various strategies designed in the government plans have not been implemented properly. Some are yet to be developed. In fact, the growth strategy has kept the poor out of the development process. Prof. H. Meghnad Desai points out, 'India's poverty creating programme is larger than its poverty removal programme.'
- **Inequalities in income:** The inequality of income in rural and urban areas of the country is another cause of poverty. During the plan period, a large proportion of increased income has been cornered by the affluent ones. Due to inequalities in the distribution of income and assets, even a small rise in per capita income could not affect the poor. Hence, the problem of poverty has become acute.
- **Inadequate anti-poverty measures:** In view of the large magnitude of the problem of poverty in the country, the anti-poverty measures taken by the government are far from adequate. Some of them have been implemented half-heartedly and the ones, which have been implemented, have benefited only selected sections of the populace. Despite the implementation of measures, success in alleviating poverty has been limited.

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- **Capital deficiency:** Capital formation directly contributes to economic growth by reducing poverty. There is a dearth of capital in India which results in low productivity, low per capita income and the end result happens to be poverty. As in all developing countries, the credit market in India does not function well. Those who can offer collateral go to formal markets, while those who cannot have to resort to informal credit markets where the interest rate on loan is quite high.
- **Globalization:** Globalization has resulted in pushing many householders to reduced circumstances. In the wake of globalization, farmers began to utilize their lands for the production of export crops, thereby bringing down the production of important food crops. Liberalization has also forced small farmers to compete in a global market where the prices of agricultural goods are low.
- **Political factors:** The political structure of the country is also one of the factors accounting for the continuation of poverty. Political power is concentrated in the hands of the upper strata of the society, both in the urban and rural areas. Economic policies are formulated to promote the interest of the richer section of the society. Poor people, particularly peasants, landless labourers, tribal people and slum dwellers suffer in the process.
- **Discrimination:** The poor are often discriminated against in social institutions. They cannot avail of education, healthcare and other opportunities as freely as other social classes.
- **Prejudices:** The society is prejudiced against the poor. They are seen as unhygienic and lacking integrity.
- **Casteism:** Many poor people also belong to the historically oppressed castes. Thus, they are relegated to the fringes of the society, especially in areas and regions where casteism is prevalent.
- **Communalism:** Communal hatred and feelings can result in the oppression and victimization of the poor.
- **Parochialism:** Provincial attitudes hamper the growth, progress and development of the poor people.

Government Policies and Programmes to Eradicate Poverty

The problem of poverty—a multidimensional challenge for India—needs to be addressed seriously. Poverty alleviation and improvement in the standard of living of the masses has been one of the most important objectives of planning in India. However, the emphasis that is laid on the objective of poverty alleviation and strategy to achieve this objective has changed over the years. The measures which have been adopted by the government for the removal of poverty are as follows:

- **Economic growth:** Economic growth can be helpful in removing poverty because of the trickle-down effect. It was thought that the benefits of economic growth would trickle down to the underprivileged in the form of more employment and more income because of the expansion of agricultural and non-agricultural activities. The Twelfth Five-Year Plan appraisal document, prepared by NITI Aayog exuded confidence that growth in 2016-17, would be 7 per cent to 7.75 per cent.

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- **Population control:** High growth rate of population among the lower strata of the society is an important factor that is responsible for the perpetuating problem of poverty. Jansankhya Sthirata Kosh (JSK) has been registered as an autonomous society of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The Government has provided a ₹100 crore corpus fund to signify its commitment to the activities of the Kosh. JSK has to use the interest on the corpus and also raise contributions from organizations and individuals that support population stabilization.
- **Agricultural development:** Along with a substantial increase in plan allocation and credit for agriculture proper, an ambitious Bharat Nirman for rural infrastructure, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) to dovetail employment security with land and water conservation, and the Backward Regions Grants Funds (BRGF) have enabled Panchayati Raj institutions in poorer regions to make their own plans. In addition to enhancing the scope of these initiatives, and making modifications as suggested by the various working groups, the Eleventh Plan introduced the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY). This put in effect the NDC resolution to 'introduce a new scheme for Additional Central Assistance to incentivize states to draw up plans for the agricultural sector more comprehensively, taking agro-climatic conditions, natural resource issues and technology into account, and integrating livestock, poultry and fisheries more fully.' The Twelfth Five-Year Plan continued with RKVY with an outlay of ₹ 63,246 crore.
- **Land reforms:** The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 was passed in 2013 by the central government and came into effect on 1 January 2014. Land acquisition was central to the government's thrust in infrastructure development. The Act seeks to balance the need for facilitating land acquisition for various public purposes, including infrastructure development, industrialization and urbanization, while at the same time, meaningfully addressing the concerns of farmers and those whose livelihoods are dependent on the land being acquired.
- **Development of cottage and small-scale industries:** The small-scale industries have been given a special place in the industrialization programme. Since these industries have played an important role in the generation of employment and in ensuring a more equitable distribution of income; the government has provided necessary incentives, support technical assistance and infrastructure facilities to promote these industries.
- **Public Distribution System:** The government has also launched a scheme of Public Distribution System (PDS). The objective of this scheme is to provide cheap and subsidized food grains to the poor. The PDS functions through a wide network of fair price shops. Since June 1997, a new scheme known as the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) has been adopted in order to provide subsidized food grains for the families falling below the officially estimated poverty line at the rate of 10 kgs per month per family.

As passed by the Parliament, the government notified the National Food Security Act, 2013 on 10th September 2013 with the objective to provide for food and nutritional security in human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity. The Act provides for coverage of upto 75 per cent of the rural population and upto 50 per cent of the urban population for receiving subsidized food grains

under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), thus covering about two-thirds of the population. The eligible persons are entitled to receive 5 Kgs of food grains per person per month at subsidized prices of Rs. 3/2/1 per Kg for rice/wheat/coarse grains. The existing Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households, which constitute the poorest of the poor, will continue to receive 35 Kgs of foodgrains per household per month.

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5.3 GENDER INEQUALITY

Since time immemorial, women have been forced to depend upon men for sustenance and financial support. The social conditions and social disabilities (early marriages, more number of children, lack of education and skills), superstitious beliefs and rituals, religious sanctions, and the overriding patriarchal value system prevalent in most parts of the world have ensured that women have continued to have a subservient position even in the 21st century. Women in India had always participated in the unorganized and the agricultural labour sector. However, in recent times, there has been a huge influx of women into the organized labour market in India and as a result of which the contributions of women are being given increasing importance in society. There are some reasons for bringing about these changes. Industrialization and the consequent economic growth have created a large market for them. Increased educational and other infrastructural facilities for women have opened up a number of avenues for them, resulting in a sharp rise in the proportion of women's employment outside the home. Legislations have paved the way for equal opportunities for women, and rising expectation levels in standards of living necessitate incomes from both husbands and wives. The occupations which have seen an influx of women include finance, services (teaching, nursing), publishing, retailing, banking and consumer products—these are all occupations that permit flexibility, and involve gradual flexible ascendancy with a lot of breathing space to accommodate family life.

The positive repercussions of women gaining education and a foothold in the labour market are many. It has been seen that the more educated and financially independent the women of a society are, the fewer will be the hurdles to growth and socio-economic developments of that society. In fact, in most of the developed countries, the literacy and educational levels of the female population, and their participation in the labour market, are considerably higher than that in developing and underdeveloped countries. This establishes a direct correlation between female education and employment, and the level of development in any society.

Economic Status of Women

Economic empowerment of women is one of the most vital conditions for the upliftment of women's social status. Unless women become economically independent or make nearly equal economic contribution to the family for its sustenance, they cannot be equal to men in the decision-making process. The problem of gender-based discriminations or subordination of women is very much rooted in the economic dependence of men. The economic empowerment of women is a vital element of strong economic growth in any country. Empowering women enhances their ability to influence changes and to create a better society. They are equal to men in all aspects. Women are more perfect in the power to create, nurture and transform. Today, women are emerging as leaders in growing range of fields be it aeronautics, medicine, space, engineering, law, politics, education, business, all that is needed in today's world, is their empowerment.

Check Your Progress

1. Define relative poverty.
2. What is income poverty and human poverty?

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In India, the empowerment process has already begun. We are now witnessing a steady improvement in the enrolment of women in schools, colleges, and even in professional institutes. Due to the impact of increasing globalization and information-technology, women have broken new paths, i.e., of entrepreneurship. However, the progress is more visible among upper-class families in urban cities.

In Indian villages, the economic activities that are present include that of cultivators, artisans and people performing menial services. In each of these categories, women are involved in the process of earning a livelihood for the family, putting in an almost equal amount of labour both in production and marketing of products of agriculture and handicrafts. In most parts of India, women are still involved in the production and marketing of items such as vegetables, processed and semi-processed foodstuffs as well as handicrafts. In India, agriculture remains the major economic activity for women, since the majority of Indians are employed in the agricultural sector. In rural areas, around 80 per cent of the female labour force is engaged in agriculture and related activities. In the agricultural sector, there has been a huge decline in the number of women cultivators and an increase in the percentage of agricultural labourers over the past few decades. This has resulted in a decline in the proportion of women who were earlier cultivators. Apart from agriculture, women are also employed in a number of industries, trades and services in the unorganized and organized sectors.

Data from the 66th round of the survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) indicate that female work participation rate has decreased between 2004–05 to 2009–10. The share of women in usual status workers declined from 28.7 per cent to 22.8 per cent. In rural areas this has declined from 32.7 per cent to 26.1 per cent and in urban areas from 16.6 per cent to 13.8 per cent. The gap between the wages in the urban areas is also quite marked as it results from the employment of women in different and lower-paying activities. They are exploited at various levels. They should be provided with proper wages and work at par with men so that their status can be elevated in society.

Women and Paid Work

As you learned, women's paid labour force participation has increased significantly in the last two decades. The increase in the labour force participation of married women with children has too increased dramatically. These trends are not only on account of an increase in part-time employment rather a majority of women work full-time round the year. However, most of this increase occurred in the informal sector. For women, who are characterized by limited skills, low education levels and low status, the informal sector is the only arena in which they can attempt to eke out a living. But less attention has been paid to gender differences within the informal sector.

Although it is commonly believed that paid employment benefits a woman's mental and physical health, it has been found that in contrast to such beliefs, employed women report more stress, depression, and psychological stress than their male counterparts. It does not, however, mean that men have a lesser degree of occupational stress. Quite often, men's jobs are challenging and demanding as well. However, studies have found that the strain associated with balancing the demands of work and family has disproportionately negative bearing on women. Moreover, the informal sector is characterized by poor bargaining power, lack of working capital or access to training and technology, and has little support from government. Formal sectors are also not spared by the gender disparity and inequalities, promotions, trainings are given to men

first and only then to women. Disparity in salary also prevails though both men and women possess the same qualification and positions.

Women Working in the Informal Sector in India

The informal sector in India plays a large role in its development. However, simultaneously, it is affected by a number of problems like absence of practically feasible service rules, absence of wage rules and hindrances to career development. Another fact worth noting is that as much as 94 per cent of the total women workforce is part of the informal sector in India such as garment factory, domestic work, working as sales girls and so on. However, they are forced to suffer gender discrimination, which is nearly absent in the formal sector. In addition to this, the amount of income generated by them is lower than that generated by their male counterparts, which means that nearly 50 per cent of the population contributes to less than 50 per cent of the national income. Informal employment consists of both, self-employment in informal organizations (i.e., small and/or unregistered) and wage employment in informal work profiles (i.e., without secure contracts, worker benefits, or social protection).

The concept of informal sector was first introduced by Hart, with the distinction between wage and self-employment as the essential difference between the formal and informal sectors. Later, the International Labour Organization broadened the scope of the informal sector. Informal activities are typically characterized by ease of entry, reliance on indigenous resources, family ownership of enterprises, small scale of operations of labour-intensive and adaptive technology, skills acquired outside formal schooling system, and unregulated and competitive markets.

It is found that the majority of the women who are employed in the informal come from a section of society who require income to survive. Moreover, about 50 per cent of these women workers also happen to be the solitary income earners of their families. Another surprising fact is that only 7.5 per cent of all women workers are part of some sort of registered trade union. One has to note here that along with their employment outside of the home, most women also have to put in 5 to 7 hours of unpaid work within the household doing chores and bringing up children.

Most women workers have a small number of alternatives to choose from as far as lucrative jobs are concerned. A variety of studies conducted by Papola (1982, 1992), evidently and categorically reveal another shocking reality that women are discriminated against in the urban labour market rather than the rural labour market. This prejudice affects a drop in the contribution of women in economic activities.

Problems of Working Women

There are several problems faced by working women. Many problems have remained unsolved in their domestic as well as working place, from the time they stepped out of the four walls of their home for the first time. Their problems are different. Some of the problems faced by women workers are as follows:

- The age old belief of male superiority over women creates several hurdles for women at their place of work.
- Most of the women tend to be concentrated in the poor service jobs whereas men are in an immediate supervisory position, which gives the superior male boss an opportunity to exploit their subordinate women. Moreover, enacting laws is not sufficient.

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- Cyber-crimes that is cases of hacking, spamming, spoofing, cyber stalking and email fraud are rampant in India.

They have problems of adjusting to time schedules with other working adults in the family, wanting privacy and freedom. They also want a greater participation in the financial management and a desire for a balanced life (Kaur and Punia, 1981).

Some of the major problems that women face while working include the following:

- (i) Glass ceiling/competition:** Breaking the glass ceiling is the greatest problem faced by women in their promotion. Despite performing well year after year, they find it difficult to get promotion to the higher cadre. Despite achieving all the goals on time, very often it is found that a higher number of males get elevated to better posts and are the preferred candidates for promotion, resulting in humiliation for women candidates.
- (ii) Time crisis:** Another problem a woman has to face at work is of time constraints to meet deadlines. At a managerial level, there are a lot of responsibilities and the expectation of the superiors from women in such positions is also very high. Since they have a family to look after, it is even more difficult for them to attend to their work responsibilities effectively. Several times, it leads to an injustice on their part towards either the home responsibilities or work responsibilities. They are affected by their problems both positively and negatively. In a negative manner, it brings about a lot of work pressure as they find themselves facing shortage of time and this makes it even more difficult for them to spend appropriate time on the assignments given to them by their superiors.

Let us look at some suggestions to help women balance work and family:

At Work

- Setting realistic goals at workplace.
- Ensuring that the company offers options such as flexi-time, telecommuting or job-sharing arrangements.
- Planning workweek with great care, prioritizing work on the basis of their importance.
- Making a conscious effort not to take home any work.
- Learning to say 'no' to work commitments that one cannot do justice to.
- Establishing a routine to mark the end of the workday and the start of the family time.
- Women workers are given more work but paid less especially in the unorganized sector.
- Women are discriminated with regard to recruitment, promotion, increment, training, over – time allowance, facilities at work place and so on.

At Home

- Organizing for the next day's routine the previous night (setting out clothes for oneself and children, setting out work).
- Asking spouse/partner to share with the work and responsibilities, instead of considering oneself to be a superwoman.

- Establishing a routine that is followed by the children and spouse/partner.
- Encouraging children to do as many things as they can by themselves.

Domestic Problems of Working Women

Nature of other problems varies with the nature of category to which the working women belong, their personality dimensions, their capacity to work, their motivation ability to work and to adjust to the family conditions. Kalhan (1972) comments on problems of working women, that husband and wife both going for work is common today. This naturally gives rise to problems.

Essentially, it is a woman's problem because the working wife, when she returns from her work, has to ensure that her family does not face any deprivation. The family has to be fed and looked after. She observes, 'The Indian working woman's luck in this respect is much harder than that of her counterpart in many other countries, where entire industries are geared to take drudgery out of housework. There are hardly any crèche where she can place the children and expect them to be looked after until she can return from work and take care of them herself' (1972). For a happy home, it is essential that the job timings of women do not coincide with those of the husband and children. The husband and children feel neglected and irritated if the women's working hours are such as to keep them away from the home when their children and husband come from or go to school and office. These are the problems associated with work-family role conflict.

Unmarried working women also have several problems in this society. On taking up a job, they face the society more openly for the first time and this creates an adjustment problem. Their growing independence, both financial as well as in thought and action rebel against the method of choosing a life partner. The longer they work, the more difficult it becomes for them to settle for a match arranged by the parents. To find a suitable accommodation in a hostel, in a family, or with friends is another problem.

Women Entrepreneurs

Skill, knowledge and adaptability in business are the main reasons for women to plunge into business ventures. According to data, women account for about 1/3rd of all entrepreneurs worldwide. In Western nations, women are recognized and are more prominent in the business world. However, Indian women entrepreneurs face some major constraints. These are as follows:

- Ñ **Lack of confidence:** In general, women lack confidence in their strength and competence. The family members and the society are reluctant to stand beside their entrepreneurial growth.
- Ñ **Socio-cultural barriers:** Women's family and personal obligations are sometimes a great barrier for succeeding in business career.
- Ñ **Market-oriented risks:** Stiff competition in the market and lack of mobility of women make the dependence of women entrepreneurs on middleman indispensable.
- Ñ **Motivational factors:** Self-motivation can be realized through a mind set for a successful business, attitude to take up risk and behaviour towards the business society by shouldering the social responsibilities.

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¶ **Knowledge in business administration:** Women must be educated and trained constantly to acquire the skills and knowledge in all the functional areas of business management.

¶ **Lock of awareness about financial assistance:** Various institutions in the financial sector extend their maximum support in the form of incentives, loans, schemes. Even then, every woman entrepreneur may not be aware of all the assistance provided by the institutions.

¶ **Identifying the available resources:** Women are hesitant to find out the access to cater their needs in the financial and marketing areas. In spite of the mushrooming growth of associations, institutions, and the schemes from the government side, women are not enterprising and dynamic to optimize the resources in the form of reserves, assets, manpower, or business volunteers. Highly educated, technically sound and professionally qualified women should be encouraged for managing their own business, rather than being dependent on wage employment outlets. The unexplored talents of young women can be identified, trained, and used for various types of industries to increase the productivity in the industrial sector.

These days there are many examples of successful entrepreneurs, for example, Indra Nooyi, the CEO of Pepsi Coke, Naina Lal Kidwai, Sulajja Firodia Motwani, the Joint Managing Director of Kinetic Motors and Managing Director Kinetic Finance and so on.

5.3.1 Dowry

Dowry refers to 'the property, money, ornaments or any other form of wealth which a man or his family receives from his wife or her family at the time of marriage.' The wider definitions of dowry include what a woman's natal family spends on the marriage celebration, the feasting and the gift giving associated with it. The real curse of the dowry system appears to lie with what the leading Indian sociologist M.N. Srinivas has called the new dowry—property or cash demanded or in various forms expected by the groom's family. This often turns out to be a grave burden on those families who have agreed to be trapped into unequal exchanges along hypergamous lines.

The problem of dowry related violence is clearly a thoroughly modern phenomenon. Thus, there is no need to re-write Hindu scriptures, because one cannot undo the past. The Hindu cultural texts are arguing from within the sphere of the *dharma*, and do not endorse cruelty to women for the sake of material possessions, that is, *arth*. Most writings use dowry in at least three senses. The first is in the form of presents, jewellery, household goods and other properties taken by the bride to her new home or given to her during the marriage rituals. These are items to be used by her, or by the couple, as a sort of foundation for the new nuclear household unit.

A second form of dowry may be constituted by what families, particularly the bride's family, conspicuously spend on the occasion of the marriage celebration. In this respect, Srinivas stated ironically that Indian weddings are occasions for conspicuous spending, and this is related to the maintenance of what is believed to be the status of the family. Such expenditure on the marriage benefits the couple indirectly, probably in terms of status rather than in a financial sense directly.

The third type of dowry is property expected or even demanded by the husband, more often by his family, either as a condition for the marriage itself, or at a later stage.

There is much scope for these three forms of dowry to become intertwined and mixed up in the minds of writers as well as in social reality.

Under the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, a demand made for dowry is an offence. Section 498 of the Indian Penal Code specifically deals with a situation when coercion is a willful conduct of the husband or a woman's in-laws of such a nature as is likely to drive the woman to commit suicide or cause grave physical or mental injury to her. The harassment of a woman by her husband or by any relative of her husband with a view to coercing her or any relatives to meet any unlawful demand of property is also dealt with in this section.

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5.4 HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking may also be termed as the 'modern form of human slavery' the roots of which lie in most of the civilizations. It can be visualized in wall paintings, monuments and remains of old civilizations. Kautilya in his Arthashastra (Chapter 13, Book III, 'Rules regarding slaves and laborers') provides clues about slavery during the fourth century BC. Today the phenomenon of trafficking of persons has diversified the definitions, interpretations, and public understanding and it takes on different forms, and fulfills different economic and physical needs and purposes. The UN negotiations which later lead to the United Nations 2000 Protocol on Trafficking showed the differences between two different viewpoints on trafficking definition. According to the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), "Trafficking" should include all forms of recruitment and transportation for prostitution, regardless of consent'.

According to the Human Rights Caucus (HRC), 'Prostitution is work and that force was the important factor in defining trafficking'. The anti-prostitution viewpoint for females includes groups like the Human Rights Caucus, the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW), and Network of Sex Workers Project (NSWP). The campaign literature of CATW states that, 'Prostitution victimizes all women, justifies the sale of any woman and reduces all women to sex'.

According to them, recognition of the sex-industry economically will further widen inequality of gender internationally. Janice Raymond of CATW states that, 'If women in prostitution are counted as workers, pimps as businessmen, and buyers as customers, then governments can abdicate responsibility for making decent and sustainable employment available to women'.

CATW dismisses the reasoning that there may be limited options for women and thus, prostitution is a survival tactic. The social utility of prostitution is questioned by the CATW. However, according to some other people these viewpoints are challenged by the emerging research showing that it is sex-related workers, rather than coerced innocents, who form the majority of female trafficking worldwide. In the present era, the larger majority of migrated people no longer work in the developed countries alone, as is often assumed. One third of the above mentioned over 190 million migrated people emigrated from one developing country to the other and an equal number of people have migrated from developing countries to developed countries and vice versa. Similarly, these migrated masses are no longer engaged in similar type of the employment. Many of them are highly skilled workers (SAARC, 2006).

Traditionally, trafficking has been closely related to prostitution and more specifically to female and girl sex workers who are forced to sell themselves for prostitution purposes. It was revealed in the 19th century that business of prostitution came from England, the United States and other Western European countries.

Check Your Progress

3. What are the problems faced by women workers in India?
4. Mention the major constraints faced by women entrepreneurs in India.

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Human trafficking has been defined as, 'The commercial trade of human beings, who are subjected to involuntary acts such as begging, prostitution or forced labour'.

India appears on the tier-two list for watching the human trafficking of the US as India has not been able to cope up with the problem of effectively fighting against the human trafficking and other related issues. India is considered to be a main source, destination, and country for human trafficking and for the purposes of forced labour and sexual exploitation for commercial purposes. In India, the approximate turnover from human trafficking is more than 20 billion rupees per year. Out of the total number of people who are affected by human trafficking, the majority belongs to women and children.

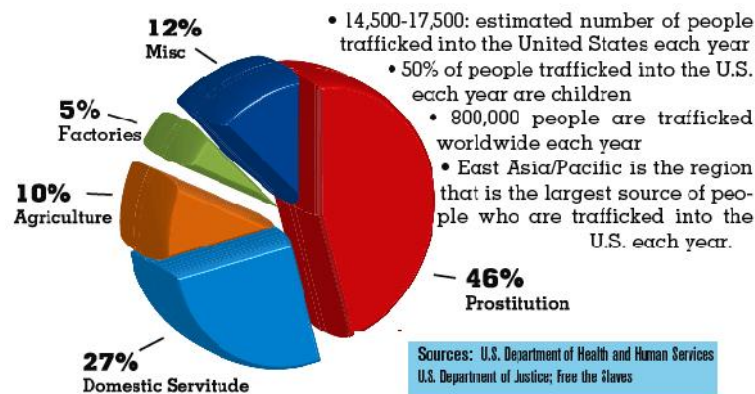


Fig. 5.1 Human Trafficking Ratio

The problem area is very large. It is found that the trafficked victim may sometimes get further victimised by the legislation formalities if the same are violated by them.

Very often, human trafficking is considered similar to prostitution. This may be due to the incorrect analysis of the violation of human rights in trafficking. Thus the actual 'criminals' manage to get away from the legal proceedings. Hence, it is required that the term is demystified and the trends and dimensions are understood from a human right background at a very low level so that the problem is addressed in a proper way to protect the female from further exploitation.

Operational Methods for Trafficking

The trafficking routes are very complicated and dangerous as these ranges from human trafficking within one country and runs between the neighbouring countries to inter-continental and globalized business scenario via the international borders. Thus, the trafficked people moved from undeveloped, rural background and poor localities to more developed, urban, politically stable and rich countries for employment.

Once women are transported into India through the borders of Nepal or Bangladesh, they are kept in certain parts of West Bengal and Odisha where they are 'sorted and graded' and then sold or sent for sale to the other parts of India. Further details can be gathered from the Asian Development Bank (2002) researches and Shamim (2001).

Recruitment for Trafficking

According to the studies the needy and unemployed people are recruited by the traffickers, during special periods and durations, from various places like shopping halls, railways or bus stations, airports, streets, their houses, cafes, hotels, bars, restaurants, beauty contests and beauty parlours, national highways, hotels, malls, quarry and construction work sites,

and areas where locals people are displaced without any proper rehabilitation. The best duration for recruiting people is before the harvesting season or during a drought, when many people are workless and need employment for their own survival and that of dependents.

The traffickers recruit people during or for festivals season. The traffickers use range of the tactics or strategies like, 'drugging, kidnapping and abduction to persuasion, material inducements, befriending and deception'.

Legal Framework for Trafficking

Article 23 of the Indian Constitution provides for the prohibition of human trafficking for any kind of 'exploitation, including commercial sexual exploitation, labour and servitude'. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has noted the issue of human trafficking in particular to that of women and children and has decided to give primary preference to the human trafficking. There is surplus allotment and various other steps have been taken to implement this decision.

According to the new human protocol for trafficking that was adopted during the UN General Assembly in November, 2000, 'Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.'

The forms of the exploitation included, 'At a minimum, forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. The consent of a victim to the intended exploitation is irrelevant where any of the exploitative means have been used.'

There should be strict and stringent laws against traffickers and the female exploiters globally. Today, the brothel owners or the people who are associated with female exploitation are being punished accordingly. However, there are not many instances of traffickers being identified and punished. There is a need for further investigation in this regard and then corrective measures should be taken at all levels. In Delhi Domestic Working Women's Forum vs Union of India [case number: 1995 (1) SCC 14], the Hon'ble Supreme Court has pointed out the 'need for legal representation for rape victims'. Therefore, this is also applicable to them. Thus, services for providing required legal help, aid and assistance could be utilized for this purpose by the victims and relatives of the victims.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), many NGOs and social welfare agencies like the United Nations Development Fund for Women, commonly known as (UNIFEM) also felt the need for providing solution to this complex multi-layered and multi-dimensional problem. The NHRC along with UNIFEM conducted a research process that was action packed with several activities of anti-trafficking agents and dealers. This also included prevention and protection of women and children and prosecution of the culprits. In the past, the Government of India has undertaken many measures to combat this human trafficking problem through several laws. The Ministry of Women and Child Development, has established a nodal agency with the help of the Indian government to deal with human trafficking at different levels. The Ministry of Home Affairs has established a nodal cell for combating human trafficking. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has also prepared a plan to prevent and combat human trafficking. Yet, there is no proper definitions of the existing laws and there are many loopholes in the system itself.

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Future of Women Trafficking

Today commodities are being manufactured only for the profit which depends upon the power of labour. There can be an increase in the profits if the raw material and labour power cost is reduced. The labour rates are very low in the Asian subcontinent specifically in southern Asia. This is mainly because of over population and prevailing poverty conditions.

- At any given time in 2016, an estimated 40.3 million people are in modern slavery, including 24.9 in forced labour and 15.4 million in forced marriage.
- It means there are 5.4 victims of modern slavery for every 1,000 people in the world.
- 1 in 4 victims of modern slavery are children.
- Out of the 24.9 million people trapped in forced labour, 16 million people are exploited in the private sector such as domestic work, construction or agriculture; 4.8 million persons in forced sexual exploitation, and 4 million persons in forced labour imposed by state authorities.
- Women and girls are disproportionately affected by forced labour, accounting for 99 per cent of victims in the commercial sex industry, and 58 per cent in other sectors.

There are different opinions that are put forward by the researchers in this regard. These are as follows:

- There can be no prevention of trafficking until the problem of poverty is resolved and the social system is changed.
- This can be no prevention of crime till the traffickers/smugglers remain at large in the society.
- Trafficking will not stop as long as there are corrupt and loose officials who facilitate the criminals by taking commission and there are improper definitions of the legal framework and its poor implementation techniques.

Solutions

There are many solutions provided to this problem. Effective monitoring of the data on trafficking cases is needed. In order to stop human trafficking, there is a need for several short-term and long-term measures to be taken up at all the possible levels. There is an urgent requirement to spread among the public—awareness and class consciousness about the human trafficking. This can be easily done with the help of the NGOs, media, self-help groups and education. With the eradication of poverty and illiteracy, this issue can be combated. Indian borders need to be secured so that human traffickers can be kept away. There should be co-ordination between the law enforcement agencies and non governmental organizations (NGOs) in exposing human trafficking networks.

There should be proper guidelines for monitoring the trafficking cases. These should include collation of data of the review period (details of cases registered, charge sheets and so forth) separately under different sections of various laws like the ITPA, IPC and other local acts. Investigation in the human trafficking cases should be conducted to destroy this long trail and, thus, there is a need for coordination between various government departments like police, public welfare, health, women and child, NGOs, and so forth.

Check Your Progress

5. Define human trafficking.
6. What are the operational methods for trafficking?

5.5 COMMUNALISM

The Indian society has a long history of external aggression. But it is adequately adept in accommodating and assimilating the alien cultures in spite of resentment to the outside forces. In a plural society like India, such cooperative activities sometimes have been reasons for insecurity. The period of the Mughal dynasty that preceded colonial rule was a turbulent period witnessing numerous wars and upheavals. Moreover, the divide and rule policy of the British sowed the seeds of communalism in India.

Communalism can be conceptualized as an ideology which is based on blind loyalty towards one's own religion, and at the same time, antagonism against the other religions. Such an ideology divides the society into religious groups who have differing—and sometimes conflicting—interests. Communal people practice politics through religion.

The term 'communalism' came to be first used by the British in the context of colonies like India where substantial religious minorities existed alongside a religious majority. This specific connotation had a certain element of divisiveness and bigotry and the term—with its negative specifications—continued much after the Partition and Post-Independence era. The issue of communalism was debated during the Minto-Morley and Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. It was at this debate that the delegates referred to the existence of 'communal feelings' and 'communal principles' in India, and issues pertaining to the representation of the various religious groups were talked about.

Communalism has been a problem in India for quite some time. As the national liberation movement drew near its goal, communalism spawned the pernicious 'two-nation' theory. It ultimately led to the Partition of India. The upsurge of communalism based on the *mandir-masjid* issue distorted the feelings of nationalism among the Indian masses, thereby undermining the spirit of harmony.

Historical constructions were clearly part of a more general assertion of community and status by many different groups and classes. What such assertions and counter assertions did paradoxically was to transform the very sense of 'community', and redefine it at every level. In an earlier period, the discourse of community had perhaps been stronger, in the sense of being more universal and unchallenged by any other discourse. At the same time, however, the notion of the individual community was weaker since it was applicable at many different levels of sub-caste, sect, dialect and other regional and religious groupings, and was not much concerned with numbers or the precise boundaries that separated different communities from each other. Much of this survived into the late nineteenth and even the twentieth century. But the balance of forces was against its long survival in its old form. The new 'communities' were now territorially more different than earlier, less tied to a small locality and less parochial on account of the changes in communication, politics and society more generally. They were at the same time historically more self conscious, and much more aware of the differences between themselves and others, the distinction between 'us' and 'them' (Pandey, 1990).

It can be said that such a construction of differences culminates in communal violence. Communalism has many connotations. Prof. Emeritus T.K. Oommen, while addressing a gathering at the India Islamic Cultural Centre, New Delhi, on intervention into such problems said that 'these are recurring events nowadays and one needs to look at the root cause'. Communalism and such terrorisms have different manifestations.

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He agreed that there are six dimensions of communalism, and three of them are variants of a political force which are a threat to the state. They are as follows:

- **Secessionist communalism:** This form of communalism is characterized by a religious community claiming to establish its own territory or state. It functions as an independent political community that wishes to withdraw its support from the existing government and form a national identity separate from it. Hence, these kinds of communal feelings may be designated as secessionist communalism. The Khalistan Movement is an example of secessionist communalism.
- **Separatist communalism:** Another form of communalism refers to the tendency of religious groups to form a separate territory based on their religious identity. It wishes to integrate culture and territory in the form of a separate province or district. Such communists believe that it is important for them to maintain cultural specificity, and so, there should be a separate politico-administrative arrangement, which could be a district or a province within the federal polity. When the Sikhs demanded a separate Punjabi Suba—even though it was couched in linguistic terms—it was chiefly seen as a demand for a separate Sikh province within India. When such demands are coloured by a need to maintain the cultural specificity of a religious group and a separate province is seen as an instrument that can make this possible, we can say that the group is practising separatist communalism.
- **Welfarist communalism:** Welfarist communalism refers to the claims of a religious collectivity to be acknowledged as a community that has suffered at the hands of the society by being subject to financial and other hardships. They claim that they should be provided welfare schemes in matters of employment, land distribution industrial licenses and so on; they seek political representation. In this context, the mobilization of the religious collectivity is attempted as an interest group geared to the welfare of its members. Hence, this form of communalism is defined as welfarist communalism.
- **Assimilationist communalism:** This kind of communalism relates to claims that small religious groups are assimilated into big religious groups. The forced conversions are included in this category. The incidents of re-conversion can also be termed as assimilationist communalism.
- **Retreatist communalism:** In this kind of communalism, a small religious community avoids participating in or separates itself completely from political activities of the state. The example of this kind of communal practices is seen in the Bahati community.
- **Retaliatory communalism:** The practitioners of this kind of communalism adopt practices that are intended to harm those belonging to religious communities other than themselves; for example, killing of priests, maulvis and so forth.

Incidence of Communal Violence and Riots

Communalism culminates in communal violence, and these riots have become a distinctive feature of communalism. The clash of two religious groups and their internal tension results in communal riots. While communalism breeds communal politics, riots are a clear manifestation of communal tension. Communal riots mainly stem from communal ideology. We can classify an event as a communal riot:

- When violence is perpetrated.

- The main groups identified as the participants in the riot face each other or members of the other group at some point during the violence. (Varshney, 2002)

Violence operates through what Brass calls 'institutionalised riot systems' (Brass, 1997). This means that riots are deliberate, planned and calculated, and they take place because of certain objectives in mind. Brass argues that the Indian politics is steeped in communal discourse and is marked by hegemony. (Brass, 2003)

In this context, Brass argues that riots are produced through a series of dramatic events which can be analysed through the following three stages:

- (i) Preparation/rehearsal
- (ii) Activation/enactment
- (iii) Explanation/interpretation

The preparation or rehearsal is the initial stage of instigating a riot. Riots are enacted or activated in certain circumstances that can range from political agenda to electoral competition. They might be perpetuated to reinforce the strength of certain ethnic, religious, or other culturally marked groups by highlighting the need for solidarity in face of the opposing communal group. Then, the riots and communal violence are analysed in a broader struggle within, but also outside the local community to control the explanation or interpretation of the causes of violence (Brass, 1997). The third phase involves the wider elements of society like journalists, politicians, political commentators and social scientists. In fact, the need for explaining and analysing riots is as important as the first phase in which it was produced.

The chronology of communal riots reveals that such riots are not caused spontaneously or due to any religious differences. In fact, such riots are the results of political and economic interests. During the Partition, it was the conflicting political interests of the elites of two opposing religious groups that led to communal violence. In the 1960s and 1980s, the involvement of local economic and political factors played a crucial role in the production of riots. The Hyderabad riots in 1981; Meerut riots in 1982; Hazaribagh riots in 1983; Delhi and Bhiwandi riots in 1984; Ahmedabad riots in 1985; Meerut, Berhampur and Amritsar riots in 1986 and again Meerut riots in 1987 reveal that communalism and communal violence are being deeply embedded into the Indian political scenario. The 1990s marked the changing political equations within the country. The killing of the Australian missionary Sir Graham Staines and his two sons by Dara Singh (a Bajrang Dal activist) and his associates is also an example of rare cases where people are considered guilty for communally driven crimes. Godhra carnage in 2002 was the first Indian riot to get extensive media coverage. Riots also took place in Dhule, Maharashtra between the Hindus and Muslims in October, 2008. The Assam (Kokrajhar) violence of 2012 also impacted the entire nation with the exodus that resulted from the ethnic conflict. Similarly, there has been a spate of communal violence in the Moradabad district of Uttar Pradesh. Riots also occurred between the Hindus and Muslims in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh in April, 2013. However, these riots were controlled much before they could intensify.

In the present day context, the reality is quite complex as communalism involves a complex interplay of many factors taking in both communalizing of politics and the politicization of religion, the jostling by different communities and the tensions created by mass conversion.

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5.5.1 Theoretical Approaches to the Origin of Communal Violence

There has been no attempt to develop the theories of collective violence which specifies the general approaches to understand such violence. Some of the theories on the origin of collective violence are explained as follows:

i. Structural strain theory

In Neil J. Smelser's (1963) theory of collective behaviour, which can be considered to follow on from the tradition of 'theories of social disintegration or breakdown,' he not only develops a theoretical framework, but also makes his theory specific to the analysis of 'hostile outbursts'. He regards six factors as the determinants of collective behaviour. These are as follows:

- (a) Structural conduciveness
- (b) Structural strain
- (c) The growth and spread of generalized belief
- (d) Precipitating factors
- (e) Mobilization of participants
- (f) Deployment of social controls

Smelser formally defines a 'hostile outburst' as mobilization to action based on a hostile perception. The strain is further increased by the development of a hostile belief and generalized aggression when it comes to be directed against particular groups.

ii. Collective violence as a form of social control

An attempt to explain collective violence in terms of the theory of social control was made by Roberta Senechal de la Roche (1996), who considers certain forms of violence as the exercise of social control. A group moves to self-help by violence when it defines a form of conduct as deviant and reacts to it. Roberta distinguishes the following four types of collective violence depending on the degree of organization and whether the deviant behaviour is attributed to an individual or a group:

- (a) Lynching (relatively unorganized and directed against individuals)
- (b) Pogrom/riot (relatively unorganized and directed against a group)
- (c) Vigilantism (highly organized and directed against individuals)
- (d) Terrorism (highly organized and directed against a group)

iii. Power approach to inter-group hostility or competitive ethnicity

The conflict theory regards rioting as an extreme form of the expression of ethnic conflicts: 'we may say therefore, that race riots are extreme forms of racial conflict in which two racial groups struggle in a particular kind of political, social, economic and legal conflict setting, using riots as an alternative and ultimate technique to establish, maintain or change power relations in society' (Swan, 1980). Since pogroms are instituted by the dominant group, the aim of that group is generally not to bring about change, but to maintain or restore a particular social, economic or political power and/or to prevent the minority obtaining an advantage.

iv. Culturalist approach

Harvey E. Goldberg (1977) stresses the ritualized character of pogroms. He stresses the cultural and symbolic logic of collective action in pogroms, which displays parallels to ritual activity. According to this approach, the destructive activities involved in pogroms:

- (a) Should not be described negatively as 'unstructured' because there are existing cultural expectations among the actors regarding the course the action will take;
- (b) Should not simply be regarded as a random expression of aggression because it follows condensed symbolic forms which originate in existing cultural traditions that often emphasize the polarity of social categories;
- (c) The symbolic forms may simultaneously be aimed at the creation of a new order or the restoration of the old;
- (d) This symbolic aspect places pogroms in a historical context and hence gives them a significance extending beyond the individual motives of the participants.

Religious riots are often an extension of religious rituals, and in some cases their course too is ritualized.

Causes of Communal Violence

The intense and unprecedented barbarity witnessed during many of the communal riots in India cannot be assigned to any single factor. Various perspectives have emerged from scholars who have different ways of interpreting their causation. On the one hand, sociologists perceive the problem of communalism as a result of 'relative deprivation,' whereas the Marxist scholars analyse the class dimension involved in communalism. Some political scientists view the problem resulting from power struggle and establishing hegemony over a particular group. There are other groups of scholars who perceive the problem of communalism as resulting from religious fundamentalism. Communal group conflicts and religiously inspired violence are seen by these scholars as defensive reactions against experiences of alienation, anomie, relative deprivation and exclusion in the face of rapid socio-economic changes. Some perceptions on causative factors can be analysed in the subsequent sections.

I. Bipan Chandra: communalism and false consciousness

Bipan Chandra, a leading scholar in the field, uncovers the class analysis on communalism in his book *Communalism in Modern India*, 1984. He focusses on the middle class or the petty bourgeoisie base of communalism under the conditions of relative economic stagnation. The distorted pattern of colonial economy produced a large middle or service or tertiary class which neither integrated with the productive sectors nor was capable of being productively absorbed by the colonial economy or by underdeveloped capitalism today. Owing to economic stagnation, the middle classes were compelled to compete with each other for scarce opportunities and resources. The crisis of the colonial economy and society constantly generated two opposing sets of ideologies and political tendencies among the petty bourgeoisie. On the one hand, when social change and revolution appeared as immediate possibilities, the petty bourgeoisie enthusiastically joined the struggle for radical transformation of their existing social condition. On the other hand, when revolutionary change receded into the background, the petty bourgeoisie shifted to short-term considerations and advantages to the struggle for individual survival, to egoistic and selfish politics, that is, to the strategy of trying to recover or maintain the existing social

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position. Groupings around religion leading to communalism, and other similar groupings and ideologies, could and did play an important role in this struggle (Chandra, 1984).

II. Steven Wilkinson

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Wilkinson opines that ethnic riots should not be regarded as spontaneous eruptions of anger. More often than not, they are planned by vested interests such as the politicians. This means that these same politicians will also try to prevent riots if it suits their interests. Therefore, most communal outbursts are mechanized by political pundits who try to increase their political mileage by playing on existing communal tensions (Wilkinson, 2003).

Wilkinson offers three reasons for variations in state performances. Firstly, India has had a history of corruption, criminalization, politicization and general lack of state capacity which has reduced it to a mere spectator in the riots. Secondly, since the minorities are not represented adequately in the administration, they do not feel protected by the Indian state governments. Thirdly, the degree of party competition determines whether the government tries to attract 'Muslim swing voters', which in turn, decides whether the government will instruct the respective administrations to ensure the safety of the minorities.

III. Ashutosh Varshney

Societies that appear to be living in peace are characterized by the existence of institutionalized peace system that leads to the integration of various civic organizations. The local administration requires the help of these social organizations at various points. Therefore, if these organizations are inter-ethnic and associational, they can easily deal with ethnic conflicts that arise in their territory. However, with multi ethnic societies, one finds that relations between various communities are weak.

Varshney gives the example of Hyderabad where there is a lack of association between the Hindus and Muslims, that hinders the formation of mutual relations. This lack often leads to the perpetration of violence where even the lawful authorities become mere spectators.

However, the above arguments have explored the various means of interpreting the causes of communal violence in India. While analysing the causative factors for communalism, a close correlation between religion, communalism and communal riots are established. In this regard, there are four main categories which can be explored and underscored in terms of aspirations, attitudes and actions.

The first is the religious category. People in this category have the traits of tolerance, compassion and humility instilled in them. These traits spring from their religiosity. These people are rooted in the religious culture, rituals, customs and traditions. They seek solutions to personal problems with the mode of religious thinking.

The second category is that of the communalists who politicize religion. They belong to that religious stream or tendency which is highly self-conscious, and they promote strong and proud identification with their religion. They seek solutions to social and political questions on the basis of the principles enshrined in religious texts and scriptures. They are self-righteous and, therefore, lean towards moral and religious fundamentalism.

The third category is that of militant communalism that primarily emerges as a result of political mobilization of the communalists. The militant communalists glorify

their religion to the extent of decrying other religious communities. Keeping in view the political mobilization of the communalists in colonial and post-colonial periods, the emergence of militant communalism was almost inevitable.

The fourth category is that of the 'rioteers'. Though they are absolutely unrelated to the first, they are indirectly related to the second category and ideologically aligned with the third category. They succeed in isolating the religious category by making them ineffective. Lacking in socio-cultural and political assertiveness, the religious categories are marginalized and frequently surrender to the dreaded actions of the rioteers. The rioteers are sometimes part of the political machines manipulating electoral politics in conformity with the interests of specific, powerful, social and local groups in the society (Puri, 1991).

However, this analytical framework helps one to recognize the various underlying forces which are instrumental in causing communalism. So, communal tensions are the outcome of many inter-related factors in a country like India, which is marked by enormous religious, linguistic and regional diversity.

Factors that have affected Communalism

Communalism distinguishes people on the basis of religion and uses violence to harass and violate the 'other'. The following is a list of ten factors that have affected communalism:

- (i) **Social factors:** Those who have a communal mindset give precedence to their ethnic or cultural belongingness rather than to the society. Besides, the social conditions are an important determinant of communal harmony or hostility.
- (ii) **Religious factors:** Various religious organizations try to incite conflicts to serve their own ends. They propagate their own religion and belittle those belonging to other religions. Their aim is to create hatred among different religious groups.
- (iii) **Political factors:** Many political parties fan feelings of zealous bigotry for their political interests. They try to win votes by privileging one religion over other and this may give rise to communal hatred.
- (iv) **Economic factors:** Certain religious communities have been seen to enjoy better economic standing than others. This may give rise to feelings of marginalization among the less privileged, and they might see a revolt or rebellion as a valid means of getting what they want.
- (v) **Legal factors:** Sometimes, the legal system of a particular area, region, or state fails its inhabitants. It fails to protect their interests, and they decide to take law into their own hands and resort to violence.
- (vi) **Psychological factors:** Often, psychological repression on account of being discriminated against or being marginalized may seek an outlet in violence against the oppressors.
- (vii) **Administrative factors:** When public administrators and holders of government positions show preference for one religion, it is bound to result in feelings of antagonism between two religious groups.
- (viii) **Historical factors:** There are certain groups that share a history of communal violence such as the Hindus and Muslims, and Arabs and Jews. When one group refuses to look past their history, and focusses too much on the history of antagonism, it lays the foundation for ceaseless communal hatred.

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- (ix) **Local factors:** The relationship between two communities at the local level has much to do with communal violence. The differences in habits, culture, religious practices, beliefs and other factors may become too apparent and the clash of interests can lead to violence.
- (x) **International factors:** It has been seen that an international conflict can translate to local violence in another state.

Preventing Communalism

Communal frenzy and religious intolerance can pose a serious threat and danger not only to the integration and prosperity of the country, but also to our national unity. It is easier to argue that before Independence, the communal riots were the result of the British policy of divide and rule. Shifting the burden on someone else is, perhaps, the best strategy in such matters. But now the reality is different and known to be more complex, considering the communalizing of politics and the politicization of religion, the jostling by different communities for their own interests and the emergence of leaders who speak only for their own community. Several questions arise in this context. Why did the administration fail to combat such an important issue? What can be done to reverse the surging tide of communalism before it engulfs the entire country?

However, in this regard, a very pertinent question arises such as whether secularism is the most effective solution for communalism. Secularism may be described as a movement intentionally ethical, negatively religious, with a political and philosophical antecedent (Hastings, 1985).

All states confer upon its citizens the freedom to practise the religion of their choice. It regards individuals as autonomous entities regardless of the religion they belong to, and it cannot promote or interfere with religions.

D.E. Smith believes that the institution of a secular state concerns three different but inter-related sets of relationship concerning the following:

- (i) Religion and individual (freedom of religion)
- (ii) The state and the individual (citizenship)
- (iii) The state and religion (separating state and religion)

Freedom of religion implies that the state would not interfere as far as the process involving an individual's choice of religion is concerned. With the second set of relationship, the individual is seen as a citizen of the state, and not as belonging to a particular religious group. And in the last set of separation of state and religion, the chief assumption is that the state and religion are two different entities with entirely different objectives. The state should not try to promote, regulate, direct or otherwise interfere in religion (Smith, 1963).

This idea of secularism is boldly traceable in the basic framework of the Indian Constitution. However, in modern India, the meaning of secularism—as Ashish Nandy would claim—has two connotations.

The first meaning relates to the secularization of the state. The term is used to mean what it means in the English-speaking Western world. It implies that the public sphere is a place that is free from the specification of religion. In other words, one can be a follower of any religion, but when one enters the public space, one has to leave one's faith behind. In the Indian context, it manifests itself in such slogans as 'India first'. Contrastingly, the non-Western meaning of secularism centres around the notion

that all religions deserve equal respect. This means that irrespective of whether the public life is free of religion, it should become a space where the religious and secular forces can interact freely. This should take place in a way that in the ultimate analysis, all important faiths in the state should contain within themselves an in-house version of other faiths, both as a source of internal criticism and as a reminder of the diversity of the theories of transcendence (Nandy, 1990).

Many Indians regard secularism as a larger package that consists of a set of standardized ideological products and social processes—development, mega-science and national security being some of the most significant among them. This package often plays the same role in relation to the people of the society—sanctioning or justifying violence against the weak and the dissenting—that the Church, the ulema, the sangha and the Brahmins played in the earlier times (Nandy, 1990).

The above arguments emphasize on the complex character of the Indian secular state. Despite the different policies of India's immediate neighbours, India has achieved and sustained secularism, but not communal harmony. Secularism appears to be failing to eliminate sectarian conflicts fermenting the Indian society for decades.

Thus, secularism is not the only means of eliminating communalism. For dealing with communal violence, more effective measures are required. People who preach communal hatred from religious places and their sympathizers and those who glorify violence should be dealt with more strictly than the rioters themselves. A new consensus can be forged on the role of religion by adopting a democratic agenda which must include the following:

- Creating statutory mechanisms for resolving inter-community disputes
- Promoting unceasing democratic dialogue with communalists
- Mounting democratic pressures on communalists to understand the conditions instrumental for the formulation of ideology
- Making conscious efforts to posit religion as a critical and powerful ally of secularism and deepening the latter with egalitarian values

Moreover, respecting religious pluralism and recognizing democratic and cultural regionalism are important for strengthening the consensual political culture. Such a democratic agenda alone can halt the communalization of the state and enable it to curb communal riots decisively and firmly by creating a climate for intervention and for the assertion of the religions in combatting communal riots. The communal strains may not be eradicated, but the socio-cultural disturbances caused by communal riots may be stopped. This will also strengthen the resolve of the civil society to debate on communalism.

At the end, it can be said that a democratic, secular and socialist polity vigorously promoted can be an effective antidote to communal politics. This can be achieved only when the focus of politics is not merely winning elections, but the generation of strong pressures through political campaigns and mass mobilizations for solving people's socio-economic problems. In the Indian context, secularism cannot be completely divested of religious sensibilities. Our religio-cultural ethos does not yet permit any such approach. The question is of masses at large and their religious sensibilities. The secular leaders of various religious communities can come together and form solidarity committees to fight communalists in whichever community they might be. For this, it is important to do honest and rigorous criticism of what is bad in one's community and acknowledge with generosity what is good in the other community. Such an approach can build bridges of understanding and mutual confidence (Engineer, 1994).

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Check Your Progress

7. What is welfarist communalism?
8. Define assimilationist communalism.

5.6 SUMMARY

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- The Indian economy has been developing since 1950. The country has witnessed sustainable economic growth in the last six decades.
- One third of the population of these developing countries still remains in abject poverty. It is a misfortune that India falls under this category. The problem of poverty is considered to be the biggest challenge to development planning in India.
- Poverty not only refers to an absence of necessities of material well-being, but also the denial of opportunities for living a tolerable life and enjoying a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-respect and respect for others.
- Poverty can be classified into two categories: absolute poverty and relative poverty.
- Poverty line is a level of personal income defining the state of poverty. This concept is very frequently used by economists to measure the extent of poverty in a country.
- The problem of poverty—a multidimensional challenge for India—needs to be addressed seriously. Poverty alleviation and improvement in the standard of living of the masses has been one of the most important objectives of planning in India.
- Since time immemorial, women have been forced to depend upon men for sustenance and financial support.
- The positive repercussions of women gaining education and a foothold in the labour market are many. It has been seen that the more educated and financially independent the women of a society are, the fewer will be the hurdles to growth and socio-economic developments of that society.
- Economic empowerment of women is one of the most vital conditions for the upliftment of women's social status. Unless women become economically independent or make nearly equal economic contribution to the family for its sustenance, they cannot be equal to men in the decision-making process.
- There are several problems faced by working women. Many problems have remained unsolved in their domestic as well as working place, from the time they stepped out of the four walls of their home for the first time.
- Unmarried working women also have several problems in this society. On taking up a job, they face the society more openly for the first time and this creates an adjustment problem.
- Skill, knowledge, and adaptability in business are the main reasons for women to plunge into business ventures. According to data, women account for about 1/3rd of all entrepreneurs worldwide.
- Dowry refers to 'the property, money, ornaments or any other form of wealth which a man or his family receives from his wife or her family at the time of marriage.' The wider definitions of dowry include what a woman's natal family spends on the marriage celebration, the feasting and the gift giving associated with it.
- Under the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, a demand made for dowry is an offence. Section 498 of the Indian Penal Code specifically deals with a situation when coercion is a willful conduct of the husband or a woman's in-laws of such a

nature as is likely to drive the woman to commit suicide or cause grave physical or mental injury to her.

- Human trafficking may also be termed as the ‘modern form of human slavery’ the roots of which lie in most of the civilizations. It can be visualized in wall paintings, monuments and remains of old civilizations.
- Traditionally trafficking has been closely related to prostitution and more specifically to female and girl sex workers who are forced to sell themselves for prostitution purposes. It was revealed in the 19th century that business of prostitution came from England, the United States and other western European countries.
- Article 23 of the Indian Constitution provides for the prohibition of human trafficking for any kind of ‘exploitation, including commercial sexual exploitation, labour and servitude’.
- Communalism can be conceptualized as an ideology which is based on blind loyalty towards one’s own religion, and at the same time, antagonism against the other religions. Such an ideology divides the society into religious groups who have differing—and sometimes conflicting—interests. Communal people practice politics through religion.
- Separatist communalism is another form of communalism refers to the tendency of religious groups to form a separate territory based on their religious identity.
- Communalism culminates in communal violence, and these riots have become a distinctive feature of communalism. The clash of two religious groups and their internal tension results in communal riots.
- Riots are enacted or activated in certain circumstances that can range from political agenda to electoral competition.
- The chronology of communal riots reveals that such riots are not caused spontaneously or due to any religious differences. In fact, such riots are the results of political and economic interests.
- Bipan Chandra, a leading scholar in the field, uncovers the class analysis on communalism in his book *Communalism in Modern India*, 1984.
- Communal frenzy and religious intolerance can pose a serious threat and danger not only to the integration and prosperity of the country, but also to our national unity. It is easier to argue that before Independence, the communal riots were the result of the British policy of divide and rule.
- Many Indians regard secularism as a larger package that consists of a set of standardized ideological products and social processes—development, mega-science and national security being some of the most significant among them.

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5.7 KEY TERMS

- **Poverty:** It not only refers to an absence of necessities of material well-being, but also the denial of opportunities for living a tolerable life and enjoying a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-respect and respect for others.
- **Parochialism:** It refers to a limited or narrow outlook, especially focused on a local area.

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- **Hypergamous:** It is the practice of marrying into a higher caste or social group.
- **Pogrom:** The organized destruction of an ethnic group is called a pogrom.
- **Anomie:** It is a social condition in which there is a disintegration or disappearance of the norms and values that were previously common to the society.

5.8 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. Relative poverty refers to the phenomenon when the income for consumption expenditure of a section of the society is distinctively below the average income level of the society.
2. Income poverty refers to the lack of necessities of material well-being. Human poverty refers to the denial of opportunity for living a tolerable life.
3. The problems faced by women workers in India are as follows:
 - The age old belief of male superiority over women creates several hurdles for women at their place of work.
 - Most of the women tend to be concentrated in the poor service jobs whereas men are in an immediate supervisory position, which gives the superior male boss an opportunity to exploit their subordinate women. Moreover enacting laws is not sufficient.
 - Cyber-crimes that is cases of hacking, spamming, spoofing, cyber stalking and email fraud are rampant in India.
4. The major constraints faced by women entrepreneurs in India are the following:
 - Lack of confidence
 - Socio-cultural barriers
 - Market-oriented risks
 - Motivational factors
 - Knowledge in business administration
 - Lack of awareness about financial assistance
5. Human trafficking is defined as the action or practice of illegally transporting people from one country or area to another, typically for the purposes of forced labour or sexual exploitation.
6. The trafficking routes are very complicated and dangerous as these range from human trafficking within one country and runs between the neighbouring countries to inter-continental and globalized business scenario via the international borders. Thus the trafficked people moved from undeveloped, rural background and poor localities to more developed, urban, politically stable and rich countries for employment.
7. Welfarist communism refers to the claims of a religious collectivity to be acknowledged as a community that has suffered at the hands of the society by being subject to financial and other hardships. They claim that they should be provided welfare schemes in matters of employment, land distribution industrial licenses and so on; they seek political representation.
8. Assimilationist communalism relates to claims that small religious groups are assimilated into big religious groups. The forced conversions are included in this category. The incidents of re-conversion can also be termed as assimilationist communalism.

5.9 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What is the meaning of the term 'poverty line'?
2. Write a short note on the factors responsible for poverty in India.
3. Mention the legal framework which helps in combating human trafficking.
4. Prepare a short note on the origin of communalism in India.
5. What are the factors affecting communalism?

Long-Answer Questions

1. 'The problem of poverty is considered to be the biggest challenge to development planning in India.' Discuss this statement.
2. Summarize the government policies and programmes undertaken to eradicate poverty in India.
3. What are the domestic problems of working women?
4. Critically analyse the concept of 'dowry' with reference to the Indian society.
5. Suggest measures for curbing human trafficking.
6. Evaluate the incidence of communal violence and riots in India.
7. Explain the theoretical approaches to the origin of communal violence.

5.10 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 6 DEVELOPMENTAL CONCERNS

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Structure

- 6.0 Introduction
- 6.1 Unit Objectives
- 6.2 Development Induced Displacement
- 6.3 Regional Disparities
- 6.4 Ecological Degradation and Climate Change
 - 6.4.1 Major Acts and Regulations Related to the Environment
 - 6.4.2 Climate Change and Global Warming
- 6.5 Sustainable Development
- 6.6 Summary
- 6.7 Key Terms
- 6.8 Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’
- 6.9 Questions and Exercises
- 6.10 Further Reading

6.0 INTRODUCTION

India, the fastest growing economy of the world is undergoing the problem of sustainable development. India’s primary urgency is to provide livelihood and employment to its population, in addition, to creating sustainable economic opportunities at both micro and macro – levels. The Indian government needs to take sustained measures with the objective of achieving the target of double-digit GDP growth. Sustainable development is coupled with the issues of global warming, regional disparity—both of which are poignant issues in India. India has to provide affordable houses to millions, ensure food and nutritional security, and making health services accessible and affordable. For sustainable inclusive growth, jobs have to be created. In this unit, you will study about development induced displacement, regional disparities, ecological degradation, climate change and sustainable development.

6.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- State the ways in which development induces displacement
- List the types of development projects
- Explain the concept of regional disparity with reference to India
- Define ecological degradation
- Explain the effects of air pollution, noise pollution and soil pollution and ways of controlling them
- Analyse the concept of climate change and global warming in the current scenario
- Describe the major Acts and regulations formulated with reference to the environment
- Define sustainable development

6.2 DEVELOPMENT INDUCED DISPLACEMENT

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Development and displacement are two sides of the same coin in the process of industrialization and development in India. These are facts that matter in national life, and appear even more amazing when you consider the mega dams and displacement in India. You will be surprised to know that the electric power you enjoy at your home, school and college, and the other luxurious materials that you use in your life are made possible only when millions of people belonging to the rural and tribal communities are displaced from their own habitat. In India itself, more than 50 million people have been uprooted from their homes and huts during the last sixty years. They have been displaced from their agricultural farms, forests and rivers and sacrificed in the name of 'national interest'. Thus, industrialization and development as matters of national interest have been mostly brought at the cost of many poor people's land, resources and identity.

It is said that too many people have been displaced due to the construction of dams and the undertaking of other developmental projects in India. Since the degree and nature of displacement varies, the exact figures of the displaced people are uncertain. It was estimated in 1998 that there were about 21.3 million Displaced Persons and Project Affected People in India in the period between 1951 and 1990. This figure was not satisfactory as it did not take many states into account. In the year 2007, it was re-estimated that the total number of development-displaced (DP) and others economically deprived of their livelihood without physical relocation (Project Affected People) for the period 1947–2000 was more than 60 million in the country.

In a report published by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2012, about 60-65 million people in India have been displaced within the country due to developmental projects. Globally over 60 per cent of people forced out of their homes are victims of internal displacement. Of the 43 million people forced to flee their homes, 26 million are displaced within their own country, 16 million are refugees and one million are asylum-seekers.

However, despite this alarming statistics of development-induced displacement of the millions of people, the last sixty years have seen the issue being ignored by policymakers, governments and political activists. This is clear from the fact that there is no accurate data available with them regarding the actual numbers displaced, in economic or physical terms, as a result of the development projects including industrial complexes, irrigation projects, hydroelectric projects and super-thermal and nuclear plants.

Dams are perceived as the harbingers of a new, modern India. Jawaharlal Nehru had once said that dams are the temples of modern India. He knew that development in India could not be carried out without building dams.

Ways in which Development Induces Displacement

Development projects usually involve the introduction of direct control by a developing agency over land once occupied or owned by some other group or community. Urban renewal schemes, hydroelectric projects, natural resource extraction projects, industrial parks as well as irrigation projects, all require land. In fact, it will not be possible to build dams, canals, bridges or highways without land. Therefore, a common outcome of such projects is the upheaval and displacement of communities already existing in the said areas.

It is not only physical development programmes that result in the expropriation of land and displacement of population. Conservation projects including programmes for re-introducing wildlife, and creating game parks and bio-diversity zones also result in people getting displaced.

The main causes of development-induced displacement over the past fifty years are noted to be as follows:

- (i) Water supply (dams, reservoirs, irrigation systems)
- (ii) Transportation (roads, highway, canals)
- (iii) Energy (oil exploration/extraction, mining, power plants, pipelines)
- (iv) Large mono-crop plantations such as oil palms, grains, sugarcane and soya
- (v) Forest reserves, national parks and forest reserves
- (vi) Population redistribution schemes
- (vii) Urban infrastructure

Urban renewal and beautification schemes that are aimed at developing cities so as to attract urban dwellers as well as tourists, result in entire neighbourhoods being displaced. It is, therefore, quite likely that in the coming years, development projects will impact a growing number of people. Estimates indicate that going by the urban growth rate that exceeds about 6 per cent each year, over two billion people will be residing in large cities with populations exceeding a million by the year 2025.

Definition of the Displaced Persons

People move from one place to another due to several reasons. However, not all people who migrate will be termed as displaced. In regard to the development projects and their consequences, the term 'displaced persons' is used for people who are forced to move out of their habitat, whether it is individually and formally owned, or is a customarily and collectively owned area. Some of them lose all access to most of their lands, but their houses may be left untouched. For instance, many groups that are forest dependants are denied access to their livelihood when their habitat is declared a park or sanctuary, but they do not move away physically. They are called project-affected persons since the prevalent laws recognize only individually titled land ownership.

The difference between project affected persons and displaced persons is that the former become economically alienated from their resources for livelihood, but are not always forced to relocate physically. The latter, however, are the people who are not only deprived from using their resources, but they are also uprooted from their habitat.

Such people who are forcibly uprooted by any development are typically displaced within the borders of their own countries. They are commonly termed as internally displaced, and this form of displacement is known as internal displacement. The UN guiding principles on internally displaced persons define them as follows: 'internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border' (UN, 2004).

These displaced people are distinguished from refugees. In legal terms, the latter are defined as those who have fled across an international border to escape danger or due to fear of being persecuted. This legal distinction is significant because unlike refugees,

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there are no international instruments of law to protect internally displaced people. No specific international body is obligated to protect the rights of internally displaced people or to respond to their requirements, needs or grievances. In fact, it can be quite a challenge for external help to reach internally displaced people. Therefore, most such internally displaced people are even more vulnerable than refugees.

Types of Development Projects and Displacement

Displacement can be of the following types:

- (i) Physical (individuals, families and communities are actually relocated from one place to another)
- (ii) Economic (individuals, families or communities cease to have access to natural resources that are vital for the sustenance of their livelihood, eg., forests and grasslands for their cattle to graze and fresh drinking water)
- (iii) Physical and economic

Development projects usually impact not just the people in the vicinity of the project area, but also people who inhabit the nearby areas. For example, if a dam or mine is constructed, in addition to the people residing on lands used for the project, people residing downstream from a dam may also lose out on fishing facilities required to sustain them. The pollution from these mines may adversely affect the health of the entire community. Such conditions force people to move.

There is a wide range of development projects. We will, however, focus on the following three categories:

- (i) Dams
- (ii) Urban renewal and development
- (iii) Natural resource extraction

Dams and Displacement

Of all the types of development projects that result in physical displacement, the projects that cause the most physical displacement are the construction of dams.

The infrastructure related to these dams, including irrigation canals and power stations, cause the maximum displacement in India. This is partly due to the enormity of the projects of mega dams and high dams. According to the World Bank Environment Department (WBED), it is estimated that approximately 40 per cent of the annual development-induced displaced—which is more than 4 million people—is an outcome of dam projects. An overall estimate of dam projects-related displacement over the second half of the twentieth century shows that about 30 to 80 million people were displaced in the world. These estimates, however, do not take into account the full extent of displacement outside or beyond the dam and reservoir sites.

Various reports that have assessed projects related to large dams and their impact on the economy, environment and society, indicate that the impact cannot be ignored. In regard to such impact, the 2000 report of the World Commission on Dam (WCD) provides a comprehensive overview of the impact of big dam projects, which includes not only direct displacement and resettlement, but also indirect displacement. The information to support such claims relate to the following:

- (a) Inundation of precious agricultural land and animal habitat
- (b) Capturing of sediment by dams, resulting in soil erosion and degradation downstream

- (c) Endangerment of freshwater habitats, resulting in the extinction of life forms in the rivers and wetlands
- (d) Seismicity induced by reservoirs
- (e) Spread of diseases by insects thriving in stagnant reservoir water
- (f) Environmental destruction and human death resulting from dam failure or collapse

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India ranks third in the world when it comes to building dams. At present, there are 4877 completed large dams and 313 large dams are under construction in India. Dams have been the biggest cause of the destruction of habitat and displacement of people in the last fifty years. Even though large dams comprise merely 26.6 per cent of the total displacement-causing projects funded by the World Bank, the displacement that results from building them makes up 62.8 per cent of the total number of people displaced. It is quite apparent that project authorities do not consider the issues of displacement and rehabilitation as important parts of the project. The main issues are related to engineering specifications and benefits from electricity and irrigation. In this event, concerned authorities rarely attempt to study the displaced population in detail, which makes it difficult to find out the actual number of displaced persons.

Official figures are usually underestimates. They indicated that only 1,000 people were displaced by the Hirakund dam project in Orissa. However, research leads us to believe that 1,80,000 people were displaced. According to official estimates, the Farakka Super Thermal Power plant project in West Bengal did not impact anyone. However, the World Bank reports that over 63,325 people were affected.

Urban Infrastructure and Transportation and Displacement

Most of the urban infrastructure and transportation projects that lead to displacement include clearing and upgrading of slums. However, every year many thousands of slum dwellers are displaced due to such projects. Slum dwellers are displaced across the world due to the following reasons:

- Setting up of industries and commercial estates
- Building and upgrading of sewerage systems, schools, hospitals, ports, etc.
- Constructing communication and transportation networks, including those connecting various urban centres

As per the report of the World Bank Environment Department (WBED), there occurs approximately 60 per cent development-induced displacement annually. Among these, the displacement of about 6 million people is a result of urban infrastructure and transportation projects. Till now, the project of Jabotabek in Indonesia, which resulted in the displacement of approximately 40,000–50,000 people and Hyderabad Water Supply Project in India, which ousted 50,000 people, are among the largest urban displacements on record.

Natural Resource Extraction and Displacement

It is to be mentioned that this category of projects includes those having to do with mineral and oil extraction. In the absence of any specific study dealing with these kinds of projects, no cumulative or annual statistics are available on the number of people displaced by such natural resource extraction projects worldwide. However, anecdotal evidence and figures from the World Bank projects mentioned that displacement due to such projects is much lower than due to many other dam and urban renewal and

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development projects. The issue of displacement due to such projects has often been neglected. This is likely due to the following two factors:

- (i) Firstly, such projects like mining and oil projects cause only limited number of displacement as compared to large infrastructure projects.
- (ii) Secondly, the displacement caused by such projects is often indirect. For instance, seepage from an oil pipeline might cause drinking water contamination and the destruction of farmland, leading families to abandon their homes and lands for safer conditions elsewhere.

In contrast to the direct displacement caused by many large infrastructure projects, such indirect forms of displacement are less apparent and seldom lead to formal resettlement operations. Also, since the activities of such projects are not occurring in the open field but in the underground, the actual physical displacement is lesser than in any other developmental project.

6.3 REGIONAL DISPARITIES

In India, development has been mostly in urban areas which have created inequalities between the various states. Many call this the gap between 'India' and 'Bharat'. Aside from the urban-rural divide, there is also the gap between the rich and the poor which is widening. There are 100 or so billionaires in India; at the same time, India is home to 800 million people who earn less than ₹ 20 a day. According to a committee headed by former Reserve Bank governor, C Rangarajan, there were 363 million people, or 29.5 per cent of India's 1.2 billion people, who lived in poverty in 2011-12. India has the ignoble distinction of having more poor people in the five BIMARU states than all the countries of sub Saharan Africa combined.

Moreover, there are a total of seven states in India which are lagging behind in the race of economic growth namely Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. These states are known as the BIMARU states. Along with development efforts in these BIMARU states, there are efforts being made to include conflict ridden states of the North-East region (backward economically) and Jammu and Kashmir (economically stable but socially vulnerable) into the mainstream.

Various factors are taken into consideration while determining national inequalities which are as follows:

- The level of literacy
- Female education
- Nutritional standards
- Infant mortality
- Morbidity
- Employment
- Income distribution
- Public distribution system
- Political commitments and their corresponding interactions
- Infrastructural facilities for all contribute to these striking variations among states in the livelihood of common people.

Annual growth rates of different states between 1999 and 2008 strongly reveals economic disparities in the country as per the data Gujarat (8.8 per cent), Haryana (8.7 per cent), or Delhi (7.4 per cent) were much ahead in the race as compared to Bihar (5.1 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (4.4 per cent), or Madhya Pradesh (3.5 per cent).

In 2013-14, Puducherry attained highest GSDP growth of 10.69 per cent among 33 Indian States and Union Territories. Only Puducherry had growth rate of above 10 per cent followed by Meghalaya (9.76 per cent), Chandigarh (9.64 per cent), Madhya Pradesh (9.48 per cent) and Delhi (9.35 per cent). With Gross State Domestic Product growth rate of 9.12 per cent Bihar is at number 7 and Gujarat is at number 10.

Six states/UTs had growth rate between 9 - 10 per cent and 5 states had between 8 - 9 per cent. The bottom five states, in reverse order, are Odisha (1.82 per cent), Telangana (4.76 per cent), Rajasthan (4.79 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (4.95 per cent) and Chhattisgarh (4.99 per cent).

Though the Indian Government is constantly trying to improve the economic status of different states by undertaking different policies and programmes, yet the issue is of major concern. The Five-Year Plans introduced by the Indian Government have proved to be useful in reducing regional disparities. In India, planned development through Five Year Plans have always emphasized on developing backward regions. Recently, there have been indications that certain states in India would be designated as backward so as to increase central assistance to these states. Another factor that may help in reducing regional disparities between states is the rise of coalition politics in India. In recent times, it has been seen that major regional political parties, especially in the BIMARU states, hold the key to government formation at the centre. To support the national parties to form the government at the Centre, many of these regional parties extract their pound of flesh. This often includes economic packages or debt relief to states where the regional party is in power. However, analysts point out that although the gap between different states may reduce, the income inequality that has widened between the rich and the poor can only reduce if alternative economic policies are followed at the Centre. This would entail a rethink of the neoclassical economic theories presently being followed in India.

6.4 ECOLOGICAL DEGRADATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Ecological degradation refers to erosion of the quality of natural environment caused, directly or indirectly, by human activities. In this section, we will study the various types of environmental pollution.

1. Air Pollution

The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 defines 'air pollutant' and with reference to them defines air pollution. 'Air pollutant' means any solid, liquid or gaseous substance (including noise) present in the atmosphere in such concentration as may be or tend to be injurious to human beings or other living creatures or plants or property or environment. Air pollution means the presence in the atmosphere of any air pollutant. In this connection, the definition of 'emission' is also relevant. 'Emission' means any solid, liquid or gaseous substance coming out of any chimney, duct or any other outlet. There are 'standards' and legislation that exist for emissions.

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Check Your Progress

1. What is the difference between project affected persons and displaced persons?
2. What are the types of displacement?
3. List the various factors considered while determining national inequalities.

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Approximately 95 per cent of earth's air occurs in the lower levels, the troposphere. In the natural state, air contains 78 per cent nitrogen, 21 per cent oxygen, 0.4 per cent carbon dioxide plus small amounts of other gases and water vapour. The remaining 0.5 per cent of the planet air occurs in the upper levels, the stratosphere together with gases like ozone.

Air pollutants can be primary or secondary. Primary pollutants are carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide (all formed from the combustion of fossil fuels), CFC and particulate matter. Secondary pollutants are acid rain and ozone. Sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide combine with water in the atmosphere and react with sunlight forming acid droplets. These acid droplets constitute acid rain.

Sources of Air Pollution

The sources of air pollution are both natural and man-made (anthropogenic).

Natural sources: The natural sources of air pollution are volcanic eruptions, forest fires, sea salt sprays, biological decay, photochemical oxidation, extraterrestrial bodies, pollen grains of flowers and so forth. Radioactive minerals present in the earth crust are the sources of radioactivity in the atmosphere.

Man-made: Man-made sources include thermal power plants, industrial units, vehicular emissions, burning of fossil fuel, agricultural activities and so forth. Thermal power plants have become the major sources for generating electricity in India. The main pollutants emitted are fly ash and SO₂. Metallurgical plants also consume coal and produce similar pollutants. Fertilizer plants, smelters, textile mills, chemical industries, paper and pulp mills are other sources of air pollution.

Automobile exhaust is another major source of air pollution.

Indoor air pollution: The most important indoor air pollutant is radon gas. This is responsible for a large number of lung cancer deaths each year. These could be emitted from building materials like bricks, concrete and tiles. Many houses in the underdeveloped countries including India, use fuels like coal, dung-cakes, wood and kerosene in their kitchens. Complete combustion of fuel produces carbon dioxide which may be toxic; however, incomplete combustion produces the toxic gas, carbon monoxide.

Effects of Air pollution

1. **Effects on human health:** Years of exposure to air pollutants including cigarette smoke adversely affect the natural defenses of the body and can result in lung cancer, asthma, chronic bronchitis and other ailments. Many other pollutants may have toxic metals which can cause mutations, reproductive problems or even cancer.
2. **Effects on plants:** Air pollutants affect plants by entering the cells through stomata. The damage results in the death of the plant.
3. **Effects on aquatic life:** Air pollutants mixing up with rain can cause high acidity in fresh water lakes, which affects aquatic life especially fish. Some of the freshwater lakes have experienced total death of fish.
4. **Effects on materials:** Because of their corrosiveness, particulates can cause damage to exposed surfaces.

Control of Air Pollution

Air pollution can be minimized by the following methods:

1. Setting up of industries after proper environmental impact assessment studies.
2. Using low sulphur coal in industries.
3. Removing sulphur from coal (by washing or with the help of bacteria).
4. Removing NO_x during the combustion process.
5. Removing particulate from stack exhaust gases by employing electrostatic precipitators, bag-house filters, cyclone separators, scrubbers and so forth.
6. Vehicular pollution can be checked by regular tune-up of engines, converters, by engine modification to have fuel effective (lean) mixtures to reduce CO and hydrocarbon emissions and slow and cooler burning of fuels to reduce NO_x emission (Honda Technology).
7. Using mass transport system, bicycles and so forth.
8. Shifting to less polluting fuels (hydrogen gas).
9. Using non-conventional sources of energy.
10. Using biological filters and bio-scrubbers.
11. Planting more trees.
12. Through the Air Pollution Control Act, 1981.

2. Noise Pollution

We hear various types of sounds everyday. Sound is a form of mechanical energy emitted from a vibrating source. A type of sound may be pleasant to someone and at the same time unpleasant to others. The unpleasant and unwanted sound is called noise.

The CPCB (Central Pollution Control Board) has recommended permissible noise levels for different locations.

Effects of Noise

1. **Interferes with man's communication:** In a noisy area, communication is severely affected.
2. **Hearing damage:** Noise can cause temporary or permanent hearing loss. It depends on the intensity and duration of sound level. Auditory sensitivity is reduced with noise levels over 90 dB in the mid-high frequency, for more than a few minutes.
3. **Physiological and psychological changes:** Continuous exposure to noise affects the functioning of various systems of the body. It may result in hypertension, insomnia (sleeplessness), gastro-intestinal and digestive disorders and so forth.

Control of Noise Pollution

1. Reduction in the sources of noise.
2. Noise making machines should be kept in containers with sound absorbing media. The noise path will be interrupted and will not reach the workers.
3. Proper oiling will reduce the noise from machinery.

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4. Use of sound absorbing silencers. Silencers can reduce noise by absorbing sound. For this purpose, various types of fibrous material can be used.
5. Planting more trees that have broad leaves.
6. Through Law. Legislation can ensure that sound production is minimized at various social functions. Unnecessary blowing of horn should be restricted especially, in vehicle-congested areas.

3. Water Pollution

Water pollution can be defined as an alteration in the physical, chemical or biological characteristics of water, making it unsuitable for the designated use in its natural state.

Sources of Water Pollution

Water is an essential commodity for survival. We need water for drinking, cooking, bathing, washing, irrigation and for all industrial operations. Water has the property to dissolve many substances in it. Therefore, it can easily get polluted. Pollution of water can be caused by point sources or non-point sources. Major point sources of water pollution are industries, power plants, underground coal mines, offshore oil wells and so forth.

Groundwater Pollution and Surface Water Pollution

Groundwater pollution

Groundwater forms about 6.2 per cent of the total water available on planet earth, and is about thirty times more than surface water, i.e., streams, lakes and estuaries. Septic tanks, industry (textile, chemical, tanneries), deep-well injection, mining and others are mainly responsible for ground water pollution which is irreversible. Ground water pollution with arsenic, fluoride and nitrate pose serious health hazards.

Surface water pollution

The major sources of surface water pollution are as follows:

- Sewage
- Industrial effluents
- Synthetic detergents
- Agrochemicals
- Oil
- Waste heat

Effects of Water Pollution

The following are some of the important effects of various types of water pollutants:

- Oxygen-demanding wastes
- Nitrogen and phosphorus compounds (nutrients)
- Pathogens
- Toxic compounds
- Waterborne diseases
- Reduction in dissolved oxygen in water resources

Pesticides in drinking water ultimately reach humans and are known to cause various health problems. DDT, aldrin, dieldrin and so forth have therefore, been banned.

Control of Water Pollution

It is easy to reduce water pollution from point sources by legislation. However, due to the absence of any defined strategies it becomes difficult to prevent water pollution from non-point sources. The following points may help to reduce water pollution from non-point sources:

- Judicious use of agrochemicals like pesticides and fertilizers which will reduce their surface run-off and leaching. Avoid the use of these on sloped lands.
- Use of nitrogen-fixing plants to supplement the use of fertilizers.
- Adopting integrated pest management to reduce reliance on pesticides.
- Prevent run-off of manure. Divert such run-offs to basin for settlement. The nutrient rich water can be used as fertilizer in the fields.
- Separate drainage of sewage and rain water should be provided.
- Plantation of trees would reduce pollution and will also prevent soil erosion.
- Industrial effluents to be allowed only after treatment.

4. Thermal Pollution

Thermal pollution can be defined as the presence of excessive heat in the water which can cause undesirable changes in the natural environment.

Heat producing industries like thermal power plants, nuclear power plants, refineries and steel mills are the major sources of thermal pollution.

Effects of Thermal Pollution

- The dissolved oxygen content of water is decreased as the solubility of oxygen in water is decreased at high temperature.
- High temperature becomes a barrier for oxygen penetration into deep cold waters.
- Toxicity of pesticides, detergents and chemicals in the effluents increases with the increase in temperature.
- The composition of flora and fauna changes because the species which are sensitive to increased temperature due to thermal shock, will be replaced by temperature tolerant species.
- Metabolic activities of aquatic organisms increase at high temperatures and require more oxygen.
- Discharge of hot water near the shores can disturb spawning and can even kill young fish.
- Fish migrations are affected due to the formation of various thermal zones.

Control of Thermal Pollution

The following methods can be employed for the control of thermal pollution:

- Cooling ponds
- Spray ponds
- Cooling towers

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5. Marine Pollution

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The main sources of marine pollution are: 1) rivers, which bring pollutants from their drainage basins 2) catchment areas, and, coastlines where human settlements in the form of hotels, industry, agricultural practices have been established and 3) oil drilling and shipping.

Most of the rivers join the ocean. The pollutants which these rivers carry, from their drainage basins, are finally poured into the sea. These include sewage sludge, industrial effluents, synthetic detergents, agrochemicals, solid wastes, plastics, metals and waste heat released by industries.

In the sea, the pollutants get diluted and the organic matter is further broken down as in river water. Still, many pollutants, especially the recalcitrant ones, remain unchanged or are partially degraded causing marine pollution.

Tankers and other shipping means, industries like petroleum, refinery, lubrication oil using industry, metal industry and paint industry, automotive wastes refineries, ship-accidents and offshore production add to marine pollution.

Oil in sea water can spread over a large area of the sea and remain dispersed or get absorbed by sediments. It can cause adverse effects on marine life.

Control of Marine Pollution

- Toxic pollutants from industries and sewage treatment plants should not be discharged in coastal waters.
- Run-offs from non-point sources should be prevented from reaching coastal areas.
- Sewer overflows should be prevented by keeping separate sewer and rain water pipes.
- Dumping of toxic, hazardous wastes and sewage sludge should be banned.
- Developmental activities on coastal areas should be minimized.
- Oil and grease from service stations should be processed for reuse.
- Oil from ballasts should not be dumped into the sea.
- Ecologically sensitive coastal areas should be protected by not allowing any drilling.

6. Soil Pollution

Soil is the upper layer of the earth's crust which is formed by weathering of rocks. Organic matter in the soil makes it suitable for living organisms to thrive. Dumping of various types of materials, especially domestic and industrial wastes, causes soil pollution.

Domestic wastes include garbage, rubbish material like glass, plastics, metallic cans, paper, fibres, cloth rags, containers and paint varnishes. Leachates from dumping sites and sewage tanks are harmful and toxic which pollute the soil.

Thermal power plants generate a large quantity of 'fly ash'. Huge quantities of these wastes are dumped on soil, thus, contaminating them.

Industrial wastes also contain some organic and inorganic compounds that are refractory and non-biodegradable.

Soil also receives excreta from animals and humans. The sewage sludge contains many pathogenic organisms, bacteria, viruses and intestinal worms which cause pollution in the soil.

Effects of Soil Pollution

Sewage and industrial effluents which pollute the soil ultimately affect human health. Various types of chemicals like acids, alkalis, pesticides and insecticides found in the industrial discharges affect soil fertility by causing changes in its physical, chemical and biological properties.

Some of the persistent toxic chemicals accumulate in the food chain and ultimately affect human health. Sewage sludge has many types of bacteria, viruses and intestinal worms which may cause various types of diseases.

Control of Soil Pollution

- Effluents should be properly treated before discharging them into the soil.
- Solid wastes should be properly collected and disposed off by appropriate methods.
- From the wastes, useful products should be recovered.
- Biodegradable organic waste should be used for the generation of biogas.
- Cattle dung should be used for methane generation. Night soil can also be used in the biogas plant to produce methane gas.
- Microbial degradation of biodegradable substances is also one of the scientific approaches for reducing soil pollution.

7. Nuclear Hazards

Radioactive substances are present in nature. They undergo natural radioactive decay, in which unstable isotopes spontaneously give out fast moving particles, high energy radiations or both, at a fixed rate, until a new stable isotope is formed.

These particles and rays pass through paper and wood but can be stopped by concrete wall, lead slabs or water. Damage caused by the different types of radiations depends on the penetration power and the presence of the source inside or outside the body.

Control of Nuclear Pollution

1. Setting up of nuclear power plants should be carefully done after studying both long-term and short-term effects.
2. Proper disposal of wastes from laboratories using radioisotopes should be done.

8. Solid Waste Management

Higher standard of living of ever increasing population has resulted in an increase in the quantity and variety of waste generated. It is now realized that if waste generation continues indiscriminately, then very soon it would be beyond rectification.

Management of solid waste has, therefore, become very important in order to minimize the adverse effects of solid wastes. Solid waste (waste other than liquid or gaseous) can be classified as municipal, industrial, agricultural, medical, mining waste and sewage sludge.

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Sources of Urban and Industrial Wastes

These wastes consist of medical waste from hospitals, municipal solid waste from homes, offices, markets (commercial waste) small cottage units, and horticulture waste from parks, gardens and orchards.

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The urban solid waste materials that can be degraded by micro-organisms are called biodegradable wastes. For example, vegetable wastes, stale food, tea leaves, egg shells, peanut shells, dry leaves and so forth are solid wastes.

Wastes that cannot be degraded by micro-organisms are called non-biodegradable wastes, e.g., polyethylene bags, scrap metal, glass bottles and others.

Industrial waste consists of a large number of materials, including factory rubbish, packaging material, organic waste and acids. There are large quantities of hazardous and toxic materials which are also produced during industrial processing.

Effects of Solid Wastes

Municipal solid waste heap up on the roads due to improper disposal system. People clean their own houses and litter their immediate surroundings which affect the community including themselves. This type of dumping allows biodegradable materials to decompose under uncontrolled and unhygienic conditions. This produces foul smell and breeds various types of insects and infectious organisms, besides spoiling the aesthetics of the site.

Industrial solid wastes are sources of toxic metals and hazardous wastes, which may spread on land and can cause changes in the physicochemical and the biological characteristics, thereby affecting the productivity of soils. Toxic substances may leach or percolate and contaminate the ground water.

Management of Solid Waste

For waste management, we must focus on three 'Rs' - Reduce, Reuse and Recycle before destruction and safe storage of wastes.

- (i) Reduction in the use of raw materials
- (ii) Reuse of waste materials
- (iii) Recycling of materials

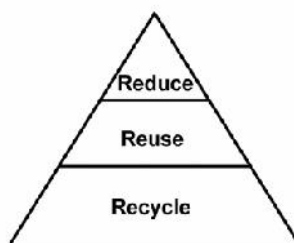


Fig. 6.1 The Three Rs of Solid Waste Management

For discarding wastes, the following methods could be used:

- Sanitary landfill
- Composting
- Incineration

Role of Individuals in Preventing Pollution

The role of every individual in preventing pollution is of paramount importance because if every individual contributes substantially, the effect will be visible not only at the community, city, state or national level, but also at the global level as environment has no boundaries.

It is the responsibility of the human race which has occupied a commanding position on this earth to protect the earth and provide conducive environment for itself, and innumerable other species which are on this earth. A small effort made by each individual at his own place will have pronounced effect at the global level. It is appropriately said 'Think globally, act locally.'

Each individual should change his or her lifestyle in such a way so as to reduce environmental pollution. It can be done through the following suggestions:

1. Help more in pollution prevention than pollution control.
2. Use eco-friendly products.
3. Cut down the use of Chloro Fluoro Carbons (CFCs) as they destroy the ozone layer. Do not use polystyrene cups that have CFC molecules in them, they destroy ozone layer.
4. Use the chemicals derived from peaches and plums to clean computer chips and circuit boards, instead of CFCs.
5. Use CFC free refrigerators.

The manufacture and operation of such devices should be encouraged that do not pollute the environment.

Air pollution can be prevented by using clean fuel, i.e., hydrogen fuel. Hydrogen for that matter, should not be produced by passing current in water, in that case the environment will be polluted. So, solar hydrogen fuel is the need of the hour.

The following are the practical hints for an individual to prevent pollution:

- Reduce your dependency on fossil fuel, especially coal or oil.
- Save electricity by not wasting it when not required because electricity saved is electricity generated without polluting the environment.
- Adopt and popularize renewable energy sources.
- Improve energy efficiency. This will reduce the amount of waste energy.
- Promote reuse and recycling whenever possible and reduce the production of wastes.
- Use mass transport system. For short visits, use bicycle or go on foot.
- Decrease the use of automobiles.
- Use pesticides only when absolutely necessary, that too in right amounts.
- Use rechargeable batteries, it will reduce metal pollution.
- Use less hazardous chemicals wherever possible.
- The solid waste generated during one manufacturing process can be used as a raw material for some other processes.

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- Do not put pesticides, paints, solvents, oils or other harmful chemicals into the drain or ground water.
- Use only the minimum and required quantity of water for various activities.
- Plant more trees, as trees can absorb many toxic gases and can purify the air.
- Check population growth so that demand of materials is under control.

6.4.1 Major Acts and Regulations Related to the Environment

In this section, we will have a look at major acts related to the environment, for example, air, water and soil.

Environmental Protection Act

The Act came into force on 19 November, 1986. The Act extends to the whole of India. Some terms related to environment have been described as follows in the Act:

1. Environment includes water, air and land and the interrelationship that exist among and between them and human beings, all other living organisms and property.
2. Environmental pollution means the presence of any solid, liquid or gaseous substance present in such concentration as may be or tend to be injurious to the environment.
3. Hazardous substance means any substance or preparation which by its physico-chemical properties or handling is liable to cause harm to human beings, other living organisms, property or environment.

The Act has given powers to the central government to take measures to protect and improve the environment, while the state government coordinate the actions. The most important function of central government under this Act includes:

Setting up of:

- (a) The standards of quality of air, water or soil for various areas and purposes.
- (b) The maximum permissible limits of concentration of various environmental pollutants for different areas.
- (c) The procedures and safeguards for the handling of hazardous substances.
- (d) The prohibition and restrictions on the handling of hazardous substances in different areas.
- (e) The prohibition and restriction on the location of the industries and to carry on processes and operations in different areas.
- (f) The procedures and safeguards for the prevention of accidents which may cause environmental pollution and providing for remedial measures for such accidents.

The power of entry and inspection, power to take samples, etc., under this Act, lies with the central government or any officer empowered by it.

For the purpose of protecting and improving the quality of the environment and preventing and abating pollution, standards have been specified under Schedule I-IV of Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, for emission of gaseous pollutants and discharge of effluents/waste water from industries.

These standards vary from industry to industry and also vary with the medium into which the effluent is discharged or the area of emission.

Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981

The salient features of the Act are as follows:

1. It provides for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution.
2. Air pollution has been defined as the presence of any solid, liquid or gaseous substance (including noise) in the atmosphere in such concentration as may be or tend to be harmful to human beings or any other living creatures or plants or property or environment.
3. Noise pollution has been inserted as pollution in the Act in 1987.
4. Pollution control boards at the central or state level have the regulatory authority to implement the Air Act. Just parallel to the functions related to the Water (Prevention and control of pollution) Act, the boards perform similar functions related to the improvement of air quality.

The boards have to check whether or not the industry strictly follows the norms or standards laid down by the board under Section 17 regarding the discharge of emission of any air pollutant. Based upon analysis report, consent is granted or refused to the industry.

5. Just like the Water Act, the Air Act has provisions for defining the constitution, power and function of pollution control boards, funds, accounts, audit, penalties and procedures.
6. Section 20 of the Act has provision for insuring emission standards for automobiles. Based upon it, the state government is empowered to issue instructions to the authorities in charge of registration of motor vehicles (under Motor Vehicle Act, 1939) that is bound to comply with such instructions.
7. As per Section 19, in consultation with the State Pollution Control Board, the state government may declare an area within the state as 'Air Pollution Control Area' and can prohibit the use of any fuel other than the approved fuel in the area causing air pollution. No person shall without prior consent of the State Board operate or establish any industrial unit in the 'Air Pollution Control Area'.

The Water and Air Acts have also made special provisions for appeals. Under Section 28 of the Water Act and Section 31 of the Air Act, a provision for appeals has been made. An appellate authority consisting of a single person or three persons appointed by the head of the state, the Governor is constituted to hear such appeals as filed by some aggrieved parties due to some order made by the state board within thirty days of passing the orders.

The appellate authority, after giving the appellant and the state board, an opportunity of being heard, disposes off the appeal as expeditiously as possible.

Penalties include a fine of up to ₹5000 a day and/or imprisonment for up to one and a half to six years for first offence and fine of ₹10000 a day and imprisonment of one and a half to six years.

Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974

It provides for maintaining and restoring the wholesomeness of water by preventing and controlling its pollution. Water pollution is defined as such contamination of water, or such alteration of the physical, chemical or biological properties of water or such discharge as is likely to cause a nuisance or render the water harmful or injurious to public health

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and safety or harmful for any other use or to aquatic plants and other organisms or animal life.

The definition of water pollution has, thus, encompassed the entire probable agents in water that may cause any harm or have a potential to harm any kind of life in any way.

The salient features and provisions of the Act are summed up as follows:

1. It provides for maintenance and restoration of the quality of all types of surface and groundwater.
2. It provides for the establishment of Central and State Boards for pollution control.
3. It confers them with powers and functions to control pollution.

The Central and State Pollution Control Boards are widely represented and are given comprehensive powers to advise, coordinate and provide technical assistance for prevention and control of pollution of water.

4. The Act has provisions for funds, budgets, accounts and audit of the Central and State Pollution Control Boards.
5. The Act makes provisions for various penalties for the defaulters and procedure for the same.

The main regulatory bodies are the Pollution Control Boards, which have been conferred the following duties and powers:

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB):

The board is supposed to:

1. Advise the central government in matters related to the prevention and control of water pollution.
2. Coordinate the activities of State Pollution Control Boards and provides them technical assistance and guidance.
3. Organize training programmes for prevention and control of pollution.
4. Organize comprehensive programmes on pollution-related issues through mass media.
5. Collect, compile and publish technical and statistical data related to pollution.
6. Prepare manuals for treatment and disposal of sewage and trade effluents.
7. Lay down standards for water quality parameters.
8. Plan nation-wide programmes for prevention, control or abatement of pollution.
9. Establish and recognize laboratories for analysis of water, sewage or trade effluent sample.

The State Pollution Control Boards also have similar functions to be executed at the state level and are governed by the directions of CPCB.

1. The board advises the state government with respect to the location of any industry that might pollute a stream or a well.
2. It lays down standards for effluents and is empowered to take samples from any stream, well or trade effluent or sewage passing through an industry.
3. The State Board is empowered to take legal samples of trade effluent in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Act. The sample taken in the presence of the

occupier or his agent is divided into two parts, sealed, signed by both the parties and sent for analysis to some recognized lab. If the samples do not conform to the prescribed water quality standards (crossing maximum permissible limits), then 'consent' is refused to the unit.

4. Every industry has to obtain consent from the Board (granted for a fixed duration) by applying on a prescribed proforma providing all technical details, along with a prescribed fee, following which analysis of the effluent is carried out.
5. The Board suggests efficient methods of utilization, treatment and disposal of trade effluents.

The Act has made detailed provisions regarding the power of the Boards to obtain information, take trade samples, restrict new outlets, restrict expansion, enter and inspect the units and sanction or refuse consent to the industry after effluent analysis.

While development is necessary, it is all the more important to prevent pollution which can jeopardize the lives of people. Installation and proper functioning of effluent treatment plants in all polluting industries is a must for checking the pollution of water and land. Despite certain weaknesses in the Act, the Water Act has ample provisions for preventing and controlling water pollution through legal measures.

Penalties include a fine of up to ₹5000 a day for first offence and/or imprisonment from one to six years. On repeated offence, the penalty goes up to ₹ 10000 a day and/or imprisonment from one to six years.

6.4.2 Climate Change and Global Warming

Let us discuss the concept of climate change and global warming in the following section.

Climate Change

Climate is the average weather of an area. It is the general weather conditions, seasonal variations and extremes of weather in a region. Such conditions which average over a long period, for at least thirty years is called climate.

The Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change (IPCC) in 1990 and 1992 published the best available evidence about past climate changes, the greenhouse effect and recent changes in global temperature. It was observed that earth's temperature has changed considerably during the geological times. It has experienced several glacial and interglacial periods. However, during the past 10,000 years of the current interglacial period, the mean average temperature has fluctuated by 0.51°C over the 100 to 200 year period. We have relatively stable climate for thousands of years due to which we have practised agriculture and increased population. Even small changes in the climatic conditions may disturb agriculture that would lead to migration of animals including humans.

At its 43rd Session (Nairobi, Kenya, 11 - 13 April 2016), the IPCC had decided to prepare a special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems.

Anthropogenic activities are upsetting the delicate balance that has been established between various components of the environment. Greenhouse gases have increased in the atmosphere resulting in the increase in the average global temperature.

This may upset the hydrological cycle, resulting in floods and droughts in different regions of the world, causing sea level to rise, changes in agricultural productivity, famines and death of humans as well as livestock.

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Global Warming

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Troposphere, the lower most layer of the atmosphere, traps heat by natural processes due to the presence of certain gases. This effect is called greenhouse effect, as it is similar to the warming effect observed in the horticultural greenhouse made of glass.

The amount of heat trapped in the atmosphere depends mostly upon the concentration of heat trapping or greenhouse gases and the length of time they stay in the atmosphere. The major greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide, ozone, methane, nitrous oxide and water vapour.

The average global temperature is 15°C. In the absence of greenhouse gases, this temperature would have been 18°C. Therefore, greenhouse effect contributes to a temperature rise to the tune of 33°C.

Heat trapped by greenhouse gases in the atmosphere keeps the planet warm enough to allow us and other species to exist. The two predominant greenhouse gases are water vapour which is controlled by the hydrological cycle and carbon dioxide which is controlled mostly by the global carbon cycle. While the levels of water vapour in the troposphere have relatively remained constant, the levels of carbon dioxide have increased.

Other gases whose levels have increased due to human activities are methane and nitrous oxide. Deforestation has further resulted in elevated levels of carbon dioxide due to the non-removal of carbon dioxide by plants through photosynthesis.

Warming or cooling by more than 2°C over the past few decades may prove to be disastrous for various ecosystems on the earth, including humans as it would alter the conditions faster than some species could adapt or migrate. Some areas will become inhabitable because of droughts or floods following the rise in the average sea level.

Greenhouse Gases

The phenomenon that worries the environmental scientists is that due to anthropogenic activities, there is an increase in the concentration of the greenhouse gases in the air that absorbs infra-red light containing heat and results in the re-radiation of much of the outgoing thermal infra-red energy, thereby increasing the average surface temperature beyond 15°C. The phenomenon is referred to as the enhanced greenhouse effect to distinguish its effect from the one that has been operating naturally for millennia.

The greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, chlorofluorocarbons, methane and nitrous oxide. These are the greenhouse gases present in the troposphere which result in an increase in the temperature of air and earth.

Impact of Enhanced Greenhouse Effect

The enhanced greenhouse effect will not only cause global warming, but will also affect various other climatic and natural processes.

1. **Global temperature increase:** It is estimated that the earth's mean temperature will rise between 1.5 to 5.5 °C by 2050, if inputs of greenhouse gases continues to rise at the present rate. Even at the lower value, earth would be warmer than it has been for the past 10,000 years.
2. **Rise in sea level:** With the increase in global temperature, sea water will expand. Heating will melt the polar ice sheets and glaciers, resulting in further rise in the sea level. Current models indicate that an increase in the average atmospheric

temperature of 3°C would raise the average global sea level by 0.2-1.5 metres over the next 50-100 years.

One metre rise in sea level will inundate low-lying areas of cities like Shanghai, Cairo, Bangkok, Sydney, Hamburg and Venice, as well as agricultural lowlands and deltas in Egypt, Bangladesh, India China. This will affect rice productivity. This will also disturb many commercially important spawning grounds, and would probably increase the frequency of storm damage to lagoons, estuaries and coral reefs.

In India, the Lakshadweep Islands with a maximum height of 4 metres above the sea level is vulnerable. Some of the cities like Mumbai may be saved by heavy investment on embankments to prevent inundation.

Life of millions of people who have build homes in the deltas of Ganges, the Nile, the Mekong, the Yangtze and the Mississippi rivers will be affected, by the sea level rise.

3. **Effects on human health:** The global warming will lead to changes in the rainfall pattern in many areas, thereby affecting the distribution of vector-borne diseases like malaria, filariasis and elephantiasis.

Areas which are presently free from diseases like malaria may become the breeding ground for the vectors of such diseases. The areas likely to be affected in this manner are Ethiopia, Kenya and Indonesia. Warmer temperature and more water stagnation will favour breeding of mosquitoes, snails and some insects, which are the vectors of such diseases. Higher temperature and humidity will increase/aggravate respiratory and skin diseases.

4. **Effects on agriculture:** There are different views regarding the effect of global warming on agriculture. It may show positive or negative effects on various types of crops in different regions of the world. Tropical and subtropical regions will be more affected since the average temperature in these regions is already on the higher side. Even a rise of 2°C may be quite harmful to crops. Soil moisture will decrease and evapo-transpiration will increase, which may drastically affect wheat and maize production.

Increase in temperature and humidity will increase pest growth like the growth of vectors for various diseases. Pests will adapt to such changes better than the crops.

To cope up with the changing situation, drought resistant, heat resistant and pest resistant varieties of crops have to be developed.

Measures to Check Global Warming

To slow down enhanced global warming the following steps will be important:

- Cut down the current rate of use of CFCs and fossil fuel.
- Use energy more efficiently.
- Shift to renewable energy resources.
- Increase in nuclear power plants for electricity production.
- Shift from coal to natural gas.
- Trap and use methane as a fuel.
- Adopt sustainable agriculture.

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- Stabilize population growth.
- Efficiently remove carbon dioxide from smoke stacks.
- Plant more trees.
- Remove atmospheric carbon dioxide by utilizing photosynthetic algae.

6.5 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development is such a concept that signifies that the rate of consumption or the use of natural resources should be approximate to the rate at which these resources can be substituted or replaced. It also requires that a nation or a society should be able to satisfy its requirements—social, economic and others, without undermining the interest of our future generations. Developed countries use too many natural resources and such practice cannot continue for long. Mother Nature has been making available its resources and services and it is also serving as a receptacle for absorbing wastes for too long a time. We have to realize now that nature today is very fragile. Nature is finite. Moreover, experts have warned that it has reached a critical threshold beyond which it would lead to ecological decline that would further lead to nothing but ‘disaster’. These experts are strong advocates of ‘limits to growth’ philosophy.

This concept of sustainable development can be further extended to the principle of justice and equity (equal distribution) between the developed and underdeveloped countries of north and south. Therefore, national as well as international leaders and institutions have a major responsibility for sound developmental, economic and environmental issues. They should keep in view the principle of equity and those principles that determine the intergenerational inequities.

Another aspect of sustainable development is related to system analysis, that is to say, how economic, social and environmental systems interact at various scales of operation, to lead sustainable development that will strike optimal balance among the three subsystems. It must ultimately lead to reduced poverty in developing countries by minimizing resources depletion, environmental damage and social instability.

Thus, sustainable development should lead to:

- Protecting the environment
- Avoiding depletion of non-renewable resources
- Seek reliance on alternative sources
- Equal access to resources
- Intergenerational distribution of resources
- Systems thinking

Sustainable Global Governance

In the 1970s, it was realized that there were ‘limits to growth’. If growth continued unbridled at the existing rates, it was asserted that it would exhaust the limited stock of natural resources of the earth. Although, technological innovations have contributed in pushing outwards the ‘limits to growth’, it is now being argued that the limits must be evaluated in terms of the ‘carrying capacity’ of the environment. There is a consensus over the fact that growth without commensurate efforts at environmental protection will pose a global threat.

Check Your Progress

4. List the methods for controlling air pollution.
5. Define water pollution.
6. What are the main sources of marine pollution?

The international community has responded to this perceived threat and environmental protection and sustainable development concerns are now on a high priority of the international agenda. The last century has seen a proliferation of international legal instruments—declarations and agreements—aimed at environmental protection. Whereas declarations are more general in nature, containing a general commitment to environmental protection without being legally binding, agreements contain binding obligations for the member states and deal with specific issues relating to particular environmental problems.

On various occasions, the highest representatives of states and governments have got together in international conferences on environmental protection and development. The basic principles for environmental protection, such as the precautionary principle, the polluter pays principle and the principle of sustainable development, etc., have also taken shape. Moreover, an international structure has been put in place, which is devoted to further the objective of environmental protection. There are also talks of setting up a centralized world body—a World Environment Organization (WEO)—to address the problems of environment. However, despite the intensified efforts at the international level, there are numerous challenges that must be met in order to allow these initiatives to be successful in their endeavour.

Various environmental problems have been identified, some related to the conservation of natural resources and ecosystems, such as forests, wildlife, biodiversity, wetlands, migratory species and so forth. These issues put a question mark on how much the earth can give. Other issues relate to ensuring that we stay within the limits of the ‘carrying capacity’ of the environment. These issues, mostly relating to ozone depletion, global warming, hazardous wastes, Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), hazardous chemicals, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), atmospheric pollution and marine pollution relate to the basic question of how much the earth can take.

Because of the diversity of environmental problems, the legal regime at the international level is necessarily fragmented, with over 200 Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) each dealing with different environmental problems.

The basic principles of environment management are increasingly being incorporated into political constitutions since the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment held in 1972. Therefore, the Stockholm Conference has taken issues such as proper use of natural reserves, environmental development as well as ecological pollution into consideration and they found expression in constitutional form. These are often articulated in terms of obligations which are stated clearly to its citizens. Moreover, a duty is often imposed on citizens to safeguard the national environment. Most of the developing countries exhibit this constitutional trend.

In the post-Stockholm years, increasing concern over continuing environmental degradation led the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to convene the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1983. The report of the Commission (the Brundtland Report) was a catalyst for the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit. Among other outcomes, the Summit adopted Agenda 21, a comprehensive plan of action for addressing both environment and development goals in the 21st century and the Rio Declaration.

To ensure effective follow-up of Agenda 21 and UNCED as a whole, the General Assembly established in 1992 the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) as a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

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The Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 was another landmark event for the development of global environmental governance.

Equitable Use of Resources for Sustainable Lifestyle

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There is a big division in the world in the use of resources, viz., north and south, more developed countries (MDCs) and less developed countries (LDCs), haves and have-nots.

It is observed that MDCs have only 22 per cent of world's population, but they use 88 per cent of natural resources, 73 per cent of energy and command 85 per cent of income; in turn, they contribute a big proportion to its pollution. On the other hand, LDCs have very low or moderate industrial growth and have 78 per cent of the world's population. They use only 12 per cent of natural resources, 27 per cent of energy and have only 15 per cent of global income. The rich have gone richer and the poor have become poorer. There is a huge gap between them. This is not sustainable growth.

The solution to this problem is to have better equitable distribution of resources and wealth. A global consensus has to be reached for balanced distribution. There are two major causes of unsustainability. These are as follows:

- (i) Overpopulation in poor countries
- (ii) Overconsumption of resources by rich countries

The rich countries will have to lower their consumption levels and the minimum needs of the poor must be satisfied by providing them resources. The need of the hour is fairer sharing of resources between the rich and poor, which will bring about sustainable development for all.

Within the concept of sustainable development, industrial ecology plays a significant role in order to create a balance between industrial development and preservation of natural resources. It refers to the adoption of such industrial processes, technology, equipment and raw material where the products can be recycled after their life cycle is complete or can be put to alternative use or a byproduct can be made out of it. This not only reduces the pressure on raw materials and compensates them for producing afresh; it also reduces the costing impact. Advanced technology also reduces wastage and is more energy efficient.

6.6 SUMMARY

- It is said that too many people have been displaced due to the construction of dams and the undertaking of other developmental projects in India.
- Dams are perceived as the harbingers of a new, modern India. Jawaharlal Nehru had once said that dams are the temples of modern India. He knew that development in India could not be carried out without building dams.
- It is not only physical development programmes that result into the expropriation of land and displacement of population. Conservation projects including programmes for re-introducing wildlife, and creating game parks and bio-diversity zones also result in people getting displaced.
- Of all the types of development projects that result in physical displacement, the projects that cause the most physical displacement are the construction of dams.

Check Your Progress

7. Define sustainable development.
8. What is the role of industrial ecology in sustainable development?

- It is to be mentioned that this category of projects includes those having to do with mineral and oil extraction. In the absence of any specific study dealing with these kinds of projects, no cumulative or annual statistics are available on the number of people displaced by such natural resource extraction projects worldwide.
- In India, development has been mostly in urban areas which have created inequalities between the various states. Many call this the gap between 'India' and 'Bharat'.
- The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 defines 'air pollutant' and with reference to them defines air pollution. 'Air pollutant' means any solid, liquid or gaseous substance (including noise) present in the atmosphere in such concentration as may be or tend to be injurious to human beings or other living creatures or plants or property or environment.
- Water pollution can be defined as an alteration in the physical, chemical or biological characteristics of water, making it unsuitable for the designated use in its natural state.
- Thermal pollution can be defined as the presence of excessive heat in the water which can cause undesirable changes in the natural environment.
- The main sources of marine pollution are: 1) rivers, which bring pollutants from their drainage basins 2) catchment areas, and, coastlines where human settlements in the form of hotels, industry, agricultural practices have been established and 3) oil drilling and shipping.
- The role of every individual in preventing pollution is of paramount importance, because if every individual contributes substantially the effect will be visible not only at the community, city, state or national level, but also at the global level as environment has no boundaries.
- Climate is the average weather of an area. It is the general weather conditions, seasonal variations and extremes of weather in a region. Such conditions which average over a long period, for at least thirty years is called climate.
- The average global temperature is 15°C. In the absence of greenhouse gases, this temperature would have been 18°C. Therefore, greenhouse effect contributes to a temperature rise to the tune of 33°C.
- The enhanced greenhouse effect will not only cause global warming, but will also affect various other climatic and natural processes.
- Sustainable development is such a concept that signifies that the rate of consumption or the use of natural resources should be approximate to the rate at which these resources can be substituted or replaced.
- Another aspect of sustainable development is related to system analysis, that is to say, how economic, social and environmental systems interact at various scales of operation, to lead sustainable development that will strike optimal balance among the three subsystems.
- Within the concept of sustainable development, industrial ecology plays a significant role in order to create a balance between industrial development and preservation of natural resources.

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6.7 KEY TERMS

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- **Acid rain:** This is rain consisting of water droplets that are acidic due to the polluted atmosphere.
- **Anthropogenic:** This word refers to changes in nature made by people.
- **Sewage sludge:** A by-product of sewage treatment is usually a semi-solid waste or slurry is called sewage sludge.
- **Radioisotopes:** These are radioactive isotopes of an element.
- **Incineration:** A waste treatment technology, which includes the combustion of waste for recovering energy, is called incineration.
- **Systems thinking:** It is a management discipline that concerns an understanding of a system by examining the linkages and interactions between the components that comprise the entirety of that defined system.

6.8 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. The difference between project affected persons and displaced persons is that the former become economically alienated from their resources for livelihood, but are not always forced to relocate physically. The latter, however, are the people who are not only deprived from using their resources, but they are also uprooted from their habitat.
2. Displacement can be of the following types:
 - (i) Physical (individuals, families and communities are actually relocated from one place to another)
 - (ii) Economic (individuals, families or communities cease to have access to natural resources that are vital for the sustenance of their livelihood, for example, forests and grasslands for their cattle to graze and fresh drinking water)
 - (iii) Physical and economic
3. The various factors considered while determining national inequalities are as follows:
 - The level of literacy
 - Female education
 - Nutritional standards
 - Infant mortality
 - Morbidity
 - Employment
4. The methods for controlling air pollution are as follows:
 - Setting up of industries after proper environmental impact assessment studies
 - Using low sulphur coal in industries
 - Removing sulphur from coal (by washing or with the help of bacteria)
 - Removing NO_x during the combustion process
 - Using mass transport system, bicycles
 - Shifting to less polluting fuels (hydrogen gas)
 - Using non-conventional sources of energy

- Using biological filters and bio-scrubbers.
 - Planting more trees.
5. Water pollution can be defined as an alteration in the physical, chemical or biological characteristics of water, making it unsuitable for the designated use in its natural state.
 6. The main sources of marine pollution are:
 - i. Rivers, which bring pollutants from their drainage basins
 - ii. Catchment areas, and, coastlines where human settlements in the form of hotels, industry, agricultural practices have been established and
 - iii. Oil drilling and shipping.
 7. Sustainable development is such a concept that signifies that the rate of consumption or the use of natural resources should be approximate to the rate at which these resources can be substituted or replaced.
 8. Industrial ecology plays a significant role within the concept of sustainable development. It refers to the adoption of such industrial processes, technology, equipment and raw material where the products can be recycled after their life cycle is complete or can be put to alternative use or a byproduct can be made out of it. This not only reduces the pressure on raw materials and compensates them for producing afresh; it also reduces the costing impact.

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6.9 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What are the ways in which development induces displacement?
2. Write a short note on the existence of regional disparities with special reference to India.
3. Define ecological degradation.
4. List the effects of water pollution.
5. Mention the methods of controlling soil pollution.
6. List the measures to check global warming.
6. Prepare a short note on sustainable global governance.

Long-Answer Questions

1. How has construction of dams contributed to displacement of mankind?
2. What are the effects of noise pollution and how can it be controlled?
3. Discuss the management of solid waste.
4. Explain the major acts and regulations formulated in India with reference to protection of the natural environment.
5. Critically analyse the concept of climate change and global warming.

6.10 FURTHER READING

NOTES

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UNIT 7 TRANSFORMATION OF INDIAN SOCIETY

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Structure

- 7.0 Introduction
- 7.1 Unit Objectives
- 7.2 Process of Transformation
 - 7.2.1 Secularization
 - 7.2.2 Industrialization
 - 7.2.3 Globalization
- 7.3 Urbanization
- 7.4 Modernization
 - 7.4.1 Impact of Modernization on Indian Society
- 7.5 Summary
- 7.6 Key Terms
- 7.7 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 7.8 Questions and Exercises
- 7.9 Further Reading

7.0 INTRODUCTION

Constant change has always been the way of nature. As Heraclitus, the Greek philosopher once remarked, one cannot step into the same river twice, since by the second time one steps in, the river has changed its direction.

All human societies undergo change and it is imperative to understand that society is always in a constant state of flux. Indian society has undergone a plethora of changes right from its inception, beginning from the transformation of an agricultural society into an industrial society. With the growth and development of technology, the Indian society is now termed as information society, or knowledge society. This unit will explore the various changes in Indian society with a particular focus on the concepts like secularization, industrialization, globalization, urbanization, and modernization of Indian traditions. This unit will also help you to understand the important processes of social change such as globalization, urbanization and modernization.

7.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Explain the process of transformation
- Define the concept of urbanization and modernization
- Discuss the impact of modernization on Indian society

7.2 PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION

History reveals that man's life has been transformed from the caves and jungles to the palatial buildings. People, family, religion, value system, etc., will not remain same forever.

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Societies grow, decay and modify to changing conditions. Every society, from primitive to industrial and post-industrial, has witnessed continuous state of transformation. Change is permanent, although the intensity or degree of change is different in different societies.

According to Giddens (2001), in human societies, to decide how far and in what ways a particular system is in a process of change or transformation, we have to show to what degree there is any modification of basic institutions during a specific time period. There are social systems which change very fast, whereas there are others which have ties with the remote past. World religions like Christianity and Islam maintain their ties with ideas and value systems pioneered thousands of years ago.

Scholars like Aristotle, Plato, Hegel and others have written at length on various aspects of change during their times. In fact, sociology as a separate discipline emerged in the middle of the 19th century as an effort to explain the socio-cultural and economic changes that erupted in Europe following the industrialization and democratization processes. It will not be wrong to state that major classical sociologists were preoccupied with explaining change, more precisely articulating on the change that followed the rise of capitalism in the West. Considering change as an important aspect of study, the father of sociology, August Comte, even remarked that the role of this discipline is to analyse both the Social Statics (the laws governing social order) and Social Dynamics (laws governing social change (Slattery, 2003)). Similarly, Herbert Spencer also talked about change in his analysis of 'Structure' and 'Function'. 'Structure' indicated the internal build-up, shape or form of societal wholes, whereas 'function' signifies their operation or transformation (Sztompka, 1993). He has measured change or progress taking into consideration the degree of complexity in society. According to Spencer, society passes from simple, undifferentiated, homogeneity to complex, differentiated, heterogeneity. Another classical sociological thinker, and one of the founders of the discipline, Emile Durkheim talks about evolutionary change in his famous work '*The Division of Labour*' and observes that society passes from 'mechanical solidarity' to 'organic solidarity'. Karl Marx explains societal change with his economic deterministic model and describes change of society from primitive communism to socialism. Max Weber's analysis of religious codes and its impact on economic development in his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* examines the major aspects of change.

Social change and Social Development

Following the meaning and definitional analysis of the concept, the features of social change can be discussed given as follows:

- (i) **Social change is universal:** Social change is inevitable. It is not only inevitable, it is also universal. It is found in every society. From primitive society to the post-industrial one, change is found everywhere. No society or culture remains static forever. Human beings changed themselves from nomads, food gatherers to agriculturists and later modern, industrial beings.
- (ii) **Social change is continuous:** Right from the time mother earth came into being to the present times, society/life has been in a continuously changing mode. No society or people can be stopped from the influences of change. It is a never-ending process.
- (iii) **Social change may produce chain reactions:** Change in one aspect of a system may lead to changes of varying degrees in other aspects of that system. According to Biesanz and Biesanz (1964), the change from hunting and food gathering to

agriculture was a revolution in technology that led eventually to the development of civilization by making large and diversified societies possible. Similarly, the Protestant emphasis on Bible reading as a road to salvation led to a great rise in literacy. Further, introduction of the system of reservation for backward communities in government institutions and offices in India has brought changes in their socio-economic status, interpersonal relationships and also in the social and economic structure of the country. Similarly, improvement in literacy in the country leads to economic independence of women which in turn brings changes in the whole notion of family, marriage and husband-wife ties.

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(iv) Social change may be planned or unplanned: Change may occur with or without proper planning. People, government or any other agent may initiate change through plans or programmes and may determine the degree and direction of change. The Government of India after Independence devised several socio-economic developmental programmes to bring the country out of poverty and unemployment through the broader provision of Five Year Plans. In the 70 years of Independence, the country has seen phenomenal improvement in literacy, health, infrastructure and industry, and considerably managed to overcome poverty, hunger and unemployment problems. Apart from the planned social change, there can be changes which are unplanned and happen accidentally. Changes due to natural calamities like earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, etc., belong to this category.

(v) Social change is temporal and directional: Change can be directional. It happens in a particular direction. In several instances, such direction is planned, predetermined and is fixed ideally. Such changes are called as progress. However, change in general may happen in any direction. Similarly, the rate or tempo of change varies from time to time and place to place.

Some changes may take months and years while some may occur rapidly. Social change is temporal in the sense that it involves the factor of time. It denotes time sequence. It can be temporary or permanent. Time is an important component in the process of change.

(vi) Social change is value-neutral: The concept of social change is not value-laden or judgemental. It doesn't advocate any good or desirable and bad or undesirable turn of events. It is an objective term which is neither moral nor immoral. It is ethically neutral.

7.2.1 Secularization

Secularism implies the absence of religion or religious beliefs from the process of rule-making and governance. An organized institution like a national or local government is said to be secular when it keeps religion out of its functioning. Religion is not allowed to be one of the considerations while framing policies and making rules for orderly running of a government and society.

Does secularism then mean that religion is banned from the public domain? No, certainly not. Religion is allowed to be followed and propagated and citizens are free to follow any religion. The State does not interfere in such religious beliefs. However, the State itself does not have a religion or religious belief. It exists in a religion vacuum. A secular State does not have a religion and is neutral towards all religious beliefs. Many a times, secularism is defined as a situation in which politics and religion are kept apart.

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Its origin can be sketched to the western world view. So, it is important to understand its philosophical base to fully understand its implication, its importance and its limitations. The word secular has been derived from the Latin word *sacularis*, which meant, among other things, 'that which belongs to this world, non-spiritual and temporal as opposed to spiritual or ecclesiastical thing'. It is a form that is applied in general to the separation of state politics or administration from religious matters. Secular education is a system of training from which religious teaching is absolutely eliminated. Philosophically, the term reveals the authority of positivism and utilitarianism.

The relation of secularism to religion was defined as 'mutually exclusive rather than hostile'. Neither theism nor skepticism enters into the secularist scheme as neither can be proved through experience. The term secularism was invented in 1850 by G.J. Molyoake, who saw it as a movement that provided an option to theism. Historically, secularism mixed together with and was at its best with atheism. Atheists like Charles Bradlaugh, Charles Watts, G.E. Forte, etc., were closely connected with the movement. Bradlaugh quarreled that secularism was bound to challenge theistic belief and that material growth was impossible, as long as superstitions born out of religious beliefs and practices remained a powerful force in society.

The basic principle of secularism was to look for human improvement by material means alone, these means were judged as sufficient to reach the desired end. Its beliefs could be maintained by intellect and were similarly applicable to all humanity. Morality was seen as being based on reason and trying to establish the common welfare.

Western liberal ideas like nationalism, secularism and democracy had a deep impact on the Indian intelligentsia. It increasingly integrated them in its debates, resolutions and strategies of struggle against British colonialism and it later on included them in the Constitution. Over the last seventy years or thereabouts, a lot of questions, both theoretical and procedural, have come up. One such question that was much debated and contested in the 1980s, 1990s and the first decade of this century, is the concept of secularism itself.

The penchant to privatize religion and classify life into the private and the public sphere was never very marked in India, as here religion continues to swing the lives of the people. The British Government supported the inclination to recognize and compute political interests in religious and communal terms. Despite of establishing the concept of the rule of law and a common judicial system, the British Government based personal (family) laws on grounds of religious laws and differences. In spite of all these factors, it cannot be denied that secularism as a value had a huge impact on the leaders of the national movement.

Secularism is a very important aspect of the Indian way of life and governance. It has helped in promoting communal harmony and in keeping national integration at the forefront. Prof. N.R. Madhava Menon in his paper *Constitutionalism and Management of Diversity in Multi-cultural Societies* deals with the significance of Indian Constitution to manage various problems in a multi-cultural society. He points out that secularism is a basic feature of the constitution that cannot be changed even by Parliament. There is no state religion and the state is prohibited against discrimination on the basis of religion. He believes that multi-culturalism can survive and communal harmony can prevail only when you ensure equality of status among people and equal opportunity for everyone as conceived in the Constitution of India.

Donald E. Smith, Professor of Political Science in Pennsylvania University, provided what he regarded as a working definition of a secular state. This was in his book *India*

as a *Secular State*. He says 'The secular State is a State which guarantees individuals freedom of religion, deals with the individual as a citizen irrespective of his religion, is not constitutionally connected to a particular religion, nor does it seek to promote or interfere with religion.' The definition given by Smith reflects three aspects of secularism in the form of inter-related relations, which are as follows:

- Religion and individual
- Individual and State
- State and religion

These relations are like the three sides of a triangle, touching each other at three points and creating their mutually related angles. These three sets of angular relationship contain the sum total of religious freedom available in a society.

The first of these three angles reflect the relationship between religion and individuals. This relation contains 'positive freedom of religion', which implies 'reasonable unrestrained liberty of believing and practicing one's religion.' In other words, every person should be free to follow any religion and to act upon its teachings and reject all others without any interference from the state. Religious freedom is the soul of the principle of liberty enshrined in the Preamble to the Constitution of India.

The second angular relation reflects the relationship between the state and individuals. It contains 'negative freedom of religion.' By 'negative freedom of religion', he means 'absence of restraints, discriminations, liabilities and disabilities, which a citizen might have been otherwise subjected to.'

The third angular relation emanates from the relationship between the state and its religion. It contains 'neutral freedom of religion.' It implies that the state has no religion of its own and has an attitude of indifference towards all the religions present and practiced in the State.

The term 'secular' denotes the three-fold relationship among man, state and religion. The word Secular has not been defined or explained under the Constitution in 1950 or in 1976 when it was made part of the preamble. A Secular State means a State that protects all religions equally and does not uphold any religion as the State religion. Unlike in England, where the Queen is the Head of the Protestant Church, in India there is no provision to make any religion the 'established Church' or the religion of the State. The State observes an attitude of neutrality and impartiality towards all religions. It is assumed that the secular state, howsoever constructed, will minimally have to contend with and respond to each of the demands of equality, liberty and neutrality. The liberal claim rests on the impossibility of different religious communities in the same democratic polity to live together in harmony, without some model of secularism that embodies the normative force of liberty, equality and neutrality.

Theories of Secularism

Secularization theory describes that as modern society moves ahead, it will become increasingly secular, and religion will become increasingly hollow. As the rise of science in the 17th century, sociological commentators have realized that religion may be in a permanent decline, and some have proposed that science and intelligence, both rooted in the Enlightenment, are abomination to religious faith. Karl Marx (1818–1883), Emile Durkheim (1857–1917) and Max Weber (1864–1920), the founders of sociology, and William James (lectures from 1901–1902) are four eminent men who all noted this decline of religion.

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Gandhiji's secular theories took on a particular meaning in the particular context of the Indian national movement. Indian society has been conventionally infected by the evils of caste and creed-based prejudice. The caste-oriented stratification of the Indian society has delayed all chances of national unification from the early days of the Indian society. The situation was made difficult by the presence of diverse religious groups in the country that were not ready to cooperate on any ground to reach a common platform of commonality. The traditional style of the religious and the self-styled spiritual preachers fuelled these divisions more often than not. Gandhi felt very sad that India's age old tradition of religious tolerance was not being upheld when it was needed the most. What disturbed him the most was the insight that it would be impossible to organize any nation-wide movement against a common enemy—the British oppressors—if society keeps on being divided on religious basis. For Gandhi, secularism was a total necessity for bringing about any form of constructive and all-encompassing political movement.

Gandhi preached his ideals of secularism and religious tolerance across the whole country. He showed his sympathy for the Muslim leaders by the support that the Congress extended to the Khilafat movement. He wrote at length on the need of secularism in India, and made many speeches to the same effect all over the nation. It was not an easy of tasks for Gandhi. The British were adamant on executing the policy of divide and rule. It took its worst form after the declaration of separate elections for the different communities in the Government of India Act in 1935. Indian national movement always had many communal tensions. Gandhi's monumental efforts at bringing together the different communities in India were not fully realized. The British policy of divide and rule had its effects, and the demand for a separate Muslim nation came up. Gandhi was hurt when he heard about it, but he realized his helplessness. Even at the time of strong riots on the eve of Indian independence, Gandhi was on roads trying to unite the warring communal groups. Even his death in many ways be related with his life-long commitment to secular principles.

Significance of Secularism

The importance of secularism to India, and in fact the world, can hardly be overemphasized. Religion is so personal and emotional that it has the power to destroy any society if used as a political weapon. States must keep religion out of the political system to ensure peaceful co-existence. Most modern and liberal democracies have imbibed secularism as the defining characteristic of their political system.

There are many religions in the world and the questions that arise at this juncture are as follows:

- Which religion should be followed by a person?
- Can a State compel its citizens to follow a particular religion?
- Can a State have its own religion?
- Can a State give preferential treatment to the followers of a particular religion?

The answer to all these questions is negative if the State has adopted the principle of secularism. A secular state is neither supposed to compel its citizens to adopt a particular religion nor it can give preferential treatment to the followers of a particular religion. Secularism eliminates God from the matters of the State. This is essential to keep religion in the private sphere.

Secularism ensures that religion does not determine State policy. It insulates public policy-making from the influence of religion and, thereby, eliminates any bias or discrimination that can creep into this process.

7.2.2 Industrialization

Industrialization refers to sustained economic growth following the application of innate sources of power to mechanized production. Industrialization is not only a mechanical process, but a social process as well. It affects the socio-cultural environment somewhat subtly and produces far-reaching consequences in various spheres of social life. Industrialization has rightly been described as the second wave of change in human civilization. Thus, industrialization brings about a wide range of changes covering the whole gamut of social life. The consequences in various spheres of social life have been discussed as follows:

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Economic Structure

- (i) Industrialization reduces the proportion of population directly engaged in agriculture. The invention of new agricultural technologies reduces the demand of direct physical labour.
- (ii) The productive sector of the economy moves from a subsistence level to a surplus marketing level.
- (iii) A high degree of labour mobility takes place.
- (iv) The occupational hierarchy becomes too complex with many divisions and subdivisions. The specializations and professionalization add further complexity to it.
- (v) There is seen a substantial growth in marketing and commercial centres for the sale of consumer goods for procurement of raw materials and unfinished products.

Demographic Structure

- (i) With the increment in medical technology and standard of living, the mortality rate is considerably reduced.
- (ii) The growth of industrial centres results in heavy migration from villages to industrial centres. W.E. Moore rightly remarks, 'The historical association between industrialization and urbanization is by no means complete, but is very pronounced.'
- (iii) Heavy migration to industrial centres results in growth of urban slums.

Social Structure

The social consequences of industrialization are many and varied. Some of these are as follows:

- (i) Social mobility has led to the disintegration of the joint family. There is weakening of family and kinship ties.
- (ii) With industrialization, two cultural processes go on simultaneously. There develops a common standardized culture best suited to the industrial way of life. This culture becomes more and more popular through rapid expansion of mass media. On the other hand, the regional culture gets more distinction and identity.
- (iii) Stratification system in pre-industrial societies was largely based on ascriptive factors. However, with the growth of industrialization, the traditional system of stratification started breaking down. Industrial society is based on values of 'achievement'. So, the closed system of stratification is replaced by an open system of stratification. Social mobility, both inter-generational and intra-generational, becomes the norm.
- (iv) Secular and rational attitude gradually replace the traditional religious faiths.

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Political Structure

Pre-conditions for the development of industrialization are the creation of a cohesive nation-state organized around a common language and culture.

- (i) Enfranchisement of the population and the institutionalization of politics around mass parties or in other words democratization.
- (ii) Rise of a welfare state and growth of numerous agencies of social control. This results due to the increasing role of state in maintaining integration, stability or equilibrium in society.
- (iii) Growth of a universal legal system.

Education and Religion

Industrialization itself is a product of certain changes in education. Traditional religious education is replaced by secular scientific and utilitarian education. Industrialization also brings about profound changes in religious institutions. Religion, which was the agency of social control, tends to lose all these functions. The cognitive functions of religion are taken over by science.

Thus, industrialization has a number of consequences on Indian social life. The old principles of collectivism, ritual purity, spiritualism sacredness, emotional bond are being replaced by individualism, secularism, materialism and contractualism. In spite of such changes, the traditional values and cultural ethos have not been replaced, nor have they disappeared completely from the Indian society.

Structural Changes Associated with Development

In the first instance, society begins to reorganize its people and other resources in the following ways:

- (i) With respect to *technology*, there is a change from simple and traditional techniques towards the application of scientific knowledge.
- (ii) In *agriculture*, the change is from subsistence farming towards commercial production of agricultural goods.
- (iii) In *industry*, the transition is from the use of human and animal power towards industrialization proper, or the use of power driven machines tended by wage earners and producing goods that are sold for a price in the market.
- (iv) In *ecological arrangements*, there is a movement from the farms and villages towards urban centres.

There has been a change of social structures during economic and social development, structural changes that nations experience as they attempt to push their economies forward. Firstly there is structural differentiation, or the establishment of more specialized and more autonomous structural units. The second is the emergence of new patterns of integration or the establishment of new coordinative structures, especially legal, political and associational as the old social order is made more complex and perhaps obsolete by the process of differentiation.

Structural Differences in Periods of Development

There has been a change from multifunctional role structure to several more specialized structures. In pre-industrial societies, production was based on kinship units. Exchange

and consumption were embedded deeply in family and the village. However, with economic growth, several kinds of economic activities were removed from this family community complex.

Emile Durkheim: Solidarity as an active force in economic life

Most of the insights of Durkheim concerning economic integration are found in his book, *The Division of Labour in Society*. To analyse how social life is integrated, Durkheim set up a dichotomy between two types of society—segmental and complex. To him, segmental society is a homogeneous society with the presence of mechanical solidarity. There is the presence of repressive law in such society. Here, on one hand there is the subordination of the individual to the undifferentiated collective conscience of the society and in differentiated or complex societies, powerful forms of integration operate. There are restitutive laws present in complex societies. He differed from Spencer in that he stressed the increased salience of integration in complex societies, rather than tending to regard it as a by-product of individual interactions.

Max Weber: The origins and sustaining conditions for capitalism

Max Weber made a comparative analysis of societies by using the method of the ideal type. Weber mentioned two kinds of ideal-type constructs. A historically unique configuration such as 'rational bourgeoisie capitalism' refers to the systematic and rational organization of production itself. While identifying the historical conditions that gave rise to industrial capitalism, Weber rejected the explanation that the rise of capitalism could be explained by the increase of population. On the positive side, he considered the rise of ascetic Protestantism, especially Calvinism, established social and psychological conditions conducive to this form of capitalism. To him, bureaucracy also forms the most rational form of social organization for perpetuating industrial capitalism. Weber found certain institutional structures permissive for industrial capitalism and found these structures in the political and legal complex. So, Weber specified certain institutional conditions under which maximum mobility is both permitted and regulated. Weber also stressed the political and legal regulation of money and exchange. Above all, rational capitalism cannot flourish unless the political authority guarantees a money supply with relatively stable values. As to the type of medium of exchange, Weber saw the advantage of a generalized money currency since it allows for expansion of market and creation of credit. However, unlike traditional economists, Weber was not interested in the regularities produced within the capitalist system of production, but in establishing the important background institutional conditions under which the capitalist system itself and its regularities could exist.

7.2.3 Globalization

Some people think that globalization is a dangerous virus that has infected many aspects of life, such as economy, politics, and social-cultural. It strongly attacks the strength of body, especially family life. Globalization, therefore, is refused, denied, or rejected by many people. Meanwhile, some people argue that globalization is the way that helps people to reach a great joy of life. Family, as a former institution of life, has many advantages from the so-called globalization. It is true to say that globalization actually has both the negative and positive effects. In the 20th century, both family and population have changed in India. India is experiencing several changes, such as demographic transition, industrialization and urbanization, skill development, social mobility, legal, etc. The effects of globalization are very significant and far reaching. The former concept

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refers to free flow of labour and capital across international borders, and the latter refers to spread of globalization through local cultures. Globalization is an emerging union of economies and societies around the globe and it is a complex process that affects many aspects of social life in the societies like quick growth, reduction in rate of poverty, introduction of Internet, etc. The spread of hepatitis swine flu, AIDS and other similar life threatening diseases are the other aspect of the globalization.

According to Shiela, 'Globalization is the term to describe the way countries are becoming more interconnected both economically and culturally. This process is a combination of economic, technological, sociocultural and political forces'.

Sometimes, the term globalization is used for economic globalization references, that is, integration of national economies into the international economies through trade and business with foreign countries, foreign direct investment, capital flow, migration of human beings, and the exchange and spread of technology. These processes of change have both functions and dysfunctions. Among the positive developments are: opening of demographic window (due to declining birth rate, lower life expectancy in old age, and progression of baby boom children); improvement in literacy rate; rapid expansion of education at all levels; greater flow of labour, capital and technology across international borders with emigrants sending a significant part of remittances; increased productivity of service and industrial sectors; infrastructure development; promotion of tourism; new opportunities abroad due to ageing of industrialized economies; empowerment of women; and new ideas of equality and justice. Among the dysfunctions are: environmental degradation; increasing marginalization among the agricultural labourers and artisans; rising disparities; religious and community bigotry promoted by leaders, media and market; trafficking of women and children; a large number of cases of female feticide; violence against female; and at the root of many other dysfunctions, an idea that all the emergent problems of the country are due to historic perspective.

Development in Indian Industry after Globalization

A few years back, air conditioner was considered as a luxury item. Nowadays, luxury items like air conditioners, four wheelers, laptops, washing machines, etc., are no longer considered as luxury products. These are treated as necessity today. Due to considerable and continuous enhancement and changes in the living standards and conditions of the Indian middle class family, there is a huge demand for the air conditioners from non-branded assembled air conditioners to branded products in the Indian market.

The opening of the Indian economy for foreign capital has not attracted a significant flow of capital or technology into the economy of India. This is true in case of production sector and basic infrastructure. The export rate has risen, but import rate continues to be as usual. This was partly due to the consistent and continuous devaluation of the rupee and partly because of general improvement in the world trade. Presently, there will be a huge trade deficit. There is an increase in foreign debt. The liberalization of the Indian economy and its association with the world economy has increased the GDP growth rates of the country, which picked up from 5.6 per cent in 1990–91 to a peak level of 77.8 per cent during the year 1996–97. The growth rates have slowed down. However India has still managed to achieve 5–6 per cent growth rate in three of the last six years. A global comparison shows that the Indian economy is growing fast and is just behind the China. (Source: Public Enterprise Survey, 2006–07 and earlier issues)

Automobile Industry

The important growth has seen in the automobile sector in India after the liberalization policy adopted by the Government of India. There was usually a long queue for purchasing a scooter in India before 1991. However, after globalization, in 2013, exactly after 22 years every brand of international automobile is available in Indian market and on Indian roads. Multinational companies are offering attractive prices with easy to pay options. Indian roads are flooded with these international automobile brands.

Many delegations of several developed and European government and business corporates have visited India for strengthening bilateral industrial cooperation. Similarly, Indian delegations also discuss about investments, promotions and industrial developments in India. The results of same are quite appreciable for the Indian market and economy. As per CSO's Index of Industrial Production (IIP) (Base 1993-94-100) during 2007-08 the industrial growth rate has been 8.3 per cent. The development of communication technology has given benefits to many aspects of life. Information is shared on Internet which is accessible by people anywhere and anytime. At the same time, with globalization, several social values such as human rights and democracy have come up. These norms are useful not only for social and political needs, but also for family life. Human rights awareness has encouraged people to give equality to both males and females. Earlier, females and children had no opportunity to make decisions in a household, but today they have a right to do so. Finally, with the development of communication, information, and transportation, an opportunity has been provided to the people to know each other in the same world. Relationship and marriage amongst couples from overseas has become common these days. One of main indicators of globalization is the spread of the IT sector and its variable like, access to telephones (including cellular phones, also called mobile phones) in the different parts of the country. The cell phones may be used as a proxy indicator of globalization, as it is used for not only communication and conducting business, but is also required for the Internet access. The growth impact of telephones including cellular phones has been recognized in a number of studies. (Waverman, Meschi, and Fuss, 2005).

7.3 URBANIZATION

According to Thompson Warren, 'Urbanization is the movement of people from communities concerned chiefly or solely with agriculture to other communities, generally larger, whose activities are primarily centred in government, trade manufacture or allied interests.' He observes that urbanization not only involves a movement from villages to cities but also involves a change in the attitude, values, beliefs and behaviour of the migrants.

Urbanization is universal and brings about economic development and social change. It can also be defined as a process of concentration of population in a particular territory. According to Mitchell, 'Urbanization is a process of becoming urban, moving to cities, changing from agriculture to other pursuits common to cities.'

The eminent Indian sociologist, Dr G.S. Ghurye, has defined urbanization in a functional manner. According to him, 'urbanization means migration of people from village to city and the effect of this movement upon the migrants and their families and upon fellowmen in the villages.'

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Check Your Progress

1. What did Herbert Spencer's analysis of 'structure' indicate?
2. Who wrote the book *The Division of Labour*?

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It is important to distinguish the concept of urbanization from the concepts of urbanity and urbanism. As we have seen, urbanization is a process which refers to change in values, attitudes and beliefs of people who migrate from villages to cities and the impact of this movement on people who are left behind in the villages. Urbanity, on the other hand, is the state of the people living in an urban area which is distinct from those living in the villages. It refers to a pattern of life in terms of work, food habits and the world view of people living in the urban areas. Urbanism is characterized by a system of values, norms and attitudes towards the inter-personal relations in terms of individualism and anonymity.

Evidence of urbanization in India is available from the Harappan period and throughout the history of India. The cities of Mohenjodaro and Harappa (presently in Pakistan) were established in the Indus river valley way back in 2,500 BC. It has been pointed out by archaeologists that urbanization in Harappa could be ascertained from archaeological findings of brick technology, agriculture and irrigation facilities.

Other examples of urbanization in the ancient period of Indian history are the cities of Pataliputra (Patna) and Vaishali during the Magadh rule around 300 BC. In the medieval period of Indian history, cities like Kannauj, Delhi, Agra, Daulatabad, Hyderabad, etc., had acquired importance.

With the advent of the British colonialism from the 17th century onwards, there was a growth of urban centres like Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Except Delhi, all the other urban centres were port cities and facilitated trade and commerce undertaken by the British rulers.

Pattern of urbanization during the British rule

During the 19th century, when the British firmly established themselves politically in India, urbanization in India entered a different phase. Cities like Calcutta, Bombay and Madras evolved from mere trading centres to political centres. This period also saw rapid technological advancements, new modes of transport and communication, emergence of new economic institutions, etc. All this made the process of urbanization quicker and smoother.

While urban centres gained in prosperity, the rural areas of India became neglected. Cottage industries and rural artisans suffered a lot because of the exploitative economic policies of the British. This forced the rural artisans and other workers to migrate to cities in search of wage employment. Thus, it can be said that the process of urbanization strengthened the cities at the expense of the villages.

With the spread of education in these urban centres, the educated sections joined the bureaucracy or took up jobs as teachers, doctors, lawyers, journalists, etc. They became the intelligentsia and the elites of the Indian society and aligned their world view with the western world. They also brought about new political and economic ideas.

The new process of urbanization provided ample scope for occupational and social mobility and slowly broke the stranglehold of the caste system. This process, which got a boost during the 19th century, gathered greater momentum in the 20th century.

From the beginning of the 20th century and especially after independence, urbanization in India has taken place at a fast pace. The modern Indian cities have become centres of economic, political, administrative and cultural power. The pattern of urbanization in the 20th century can be understood in terms of its demographic, spatial, economic and socio-cultural aspects.

Demographic aspect

Population has always been an important aspect of urbanization in India. The Indian population growth exploded in the 20th century and, as a result, urban population also grew rapidly. The share of urban population in India has grown from 10.8 per cent in 1901 to 31 per cent in 2011. The steady growth in urban population over the last 110 years has been partly due to rapid economic development in the cities and towns and partly due to the slow agricultural growth in the rural areas.

Spatial aspect

The Indian urban scenario has witnessed a lot of spatial disparities. These disparities are the result of regional disparities, imbalanced concentration of population in certain areas and changes in the definition of urban areas in the census. These disparities can be observed from the following facts:

- Increase and decrease in the number of towns and cities due to changes in the definition of urban areas.
- Variation of urbanization amongst different states with urban domination in states like Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.
- Concentration of urban population in the big cities with the population in such cities growing much faster than in other smaller towns.
- Growth of metropolitan cities with population of more than one million.

It is important to know about the following two concepts while talking about the spatial aspect of urbanization in India:

- **Over-urbanization:** Cities and towns do not have an unlimited capacity to accommodate the growing population and providing them with civic amenities, medical facilities, schools, etc. Thus, when the population of a city goes beyond a certain limit, the administration of that city fails to provide its citizens with the requisite facilities. It is at this juncture that a city is said to have become over-urbanized. Cities like Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata are examples of such over-urbanization.
- **Sub-urbanization:** When cities and towns get over populated, they expand beyond their boundaries and take the adjoining rural areas within their fold. This phenomenon is known as sub-urbanization. Thus, sub-urbanization refers to the urbanization of rural areas around the towns and cities and it is characterized by the following features:
 - o A sharp increase in the urban uses of land.
 - o Inclusion of the surrounding areas within the municipal limits of the towns and cities.
 - o Intensive communication of all types between the town or city and its surrounding areas.

Economic aspect

Urbanization is both a cause and a consequence of economic development. It is more of a consequence because economic development entails a huge movement of labour and other inputs from the rural areas to the towns and cities. The National Commission on Urbanization of India recognizes the importance of the Indian cities and towns. It considers urbanization to be a catalyst for economic development.

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When we look at the various cities in India, we see that some have come up at places where there was no habitation at all. One of the earliest steel cities in India was Jamshedpur. It was the result of the setting up of the Tata Steel Plant, which has provided employment to members of the Santhal tribe that stayed nearby. Apart from Jamshedpur, three more steel cities also emerged after independence. They were Rourkela in Orissa, Bhilai in Chattisgarh and Durgapur in West Bengal. These steel cities and steel factories completely modified the whole socio-economic scenario of that area. They progressed from being backward areas to cosmopolitan and prosperous urban centres. Thus, you see the important and crucial role played by industries in urbanizing India.

Features of Urban Society

Urban society all over the world has a few common features. Let us discuss them briefly as follows:

- **Large population:** The urban society is characterized by a large population in any particular area. Since, urban society comprises cities and towns, and they have high population levels, large population becomes its inherent characteristic. Along with large population, there is the prevalence of high density of population.
- **Non-agricultural occupation:** In any urban society, the occupational pattern reveals that most of the people are engaged in non-agricultural economic activities like government jobs, entrepreneurship, jobs in factories or other service industries (banks, colleges, etc.), retail business, etc.
- **Heterogeneity:** This is an important feature of all urban societies. The existence of a large population with diverse backgrounds is bound to result in heterogeneity. Thus, urban societies have a great deal of variance in so far as customs, festivals, lifestyles, ideologies, etc., of its members are concerned.
- **Tolerance:** Urban areas comprise members from various castes, religions, regions, languages, etc. For all of them to live peacefully together, a high degree of mutual tolerance is absolutely essential. Since, urban areas have been largely peaceful and prosperous; it implies that tolerance is a significant feature of the urban society.

Features of urbanization in ancient and medieval India

The process of urbanization in ancient and medieval India had certain distinct features, which can be classified under the following three broad categories:

1. **Political, demographic and spatial factors:** The processes of urbanization in ancient and medieval India had a very close relationship with the rise and fall of political regimes. Cities emerged on the basis of political considerations and were built around the ruler and his kinsmen. An important physical feature of these early cities was the fortification that was undertaken to protect them. High walls, deceptive ditches and secret tunnels were part of the elaborate steps taken to defend the cities and its people.
2. **Economic factors:** Despite the fluctuating fortunes of the political dynasties of those times, the economic institutions have shown some degree of stability. Guild formation was an important feature of the cities of that time. These guilds performed important functions in the traditional towns in terms of banking, trading, manufacturing, etc.
3. **Religious and socio-cultural factors:** Religion was an important aspect of statecraft in the ancient and medieval times. The rulers patronized a particular

religion or sect and their capital cities acquired the culture of that particular religion or sect. For example, when Pataliputra was ruled by Chandragupta Maurya, it reflected a Brahmanical Hindu civilization. However, when the reins of the kingdom went to Ashoka, Buddhism flourished in the same city. The traditional towns were heterogeneous in terms of multiplicity of religious, sectarian and caste groups.

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Re-urbanization

The term re-urban was introduced by the sociologist C.J. Galpin. It referred to the composite urban settlements wherein the urban and rural population intermingled and stayed connected with and dependent upon each other. These composite settlements were characterized by a blending of rural and urban life. Thus, 'Re-urbanization' was the process that resulted in the development of a composite settlement.

The blending of urban and rural life is not a new phenomenon. The rural-urban fringe has always been a composite area where the rural and urban folks interacted and intermingled. In contrast to ancient times, the distinction between the city and the village has blurred. The city has expanded and passed into the countryside. Beyond the city there is a large area where farms and urban homes are completely mixed and it is not possible to demarcate between them. These composite regions are called re-urban.

In these regions, most of the facilities enjoyed by the urbanites are also enjoyed by the farmers. The farmers use the banking services available in the cities and send their children to the city schools. Similarly, the urbanites grow vegetables and raise poultry in their backyards. Thus, the re-urban region is a distinct ecological type, which is not entirely urban but is city-dominated or city-centred. This kind of an ecological setting, according to some sociologists, is the most desirable for human beings. They believe that the re-urban areas would replace the city and large scale 'Re-urbanization' would take place.

However, there are others like Professor Bergel who thinks that is not going to happen. Their reasoning is that the industries need large number of labourers who are required to stay on the factory premises. Such labourers cannot be allowed to stay far away from the factories. Thus, 'Re-urbanization' would not get the support of industrialisation.

Causes of Urbanization

The factors that are mainly responsible for urbanization are as follows:

- **Industrialization:** Industrialization is considered to be the single most important cause for urbanization to have taken place. The emergence of modern industries has proved to be a turning point for the global economic and social development and change. The great impetus to urbanization came with the industrial revolution in England followed by the one on the European continent and finally in the United States of America. With the setting up of industries, there was a demand for labour and people moved in from rural areas to fulfil this need and also to satiate their desire for new and more remunerative employment opportunities. Thus, began the process of urbanization.

New habitations developed in and around industries, which had modern amenities like good houses, schools, hospitals, parks, roads, electricity, piped water, public transport, etc. The people who had moved in from the villages found the urban areas better and more comfortable and settled there. They also brought their families in due course of

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time. Thus, industrialization gave the initial push towards the process of urbanization and reinforced it thereafter.

In the modern era, it is the pace of economic development that determines the growth and development of a country. Industries have fuelled this growth and taken many countries to great heights. Industries cannot operate without men and machines. Therefore, labour and capital are imperative for the growth and success of any industry. This demand for labour is a very significant pull factor for the people living in isolated rural areas to migrate to areas in and around the industries. Similarly, the poverty and lack of employment opportunities proved to be a push factor for the rural populace to move towards these industrial towns.

Thus, industrialization started the process of urbanization and it continued unabated due to its own momentum and the desire of people to lead a modern and comfortable life.

- **Social factors:** Another reason for urbanization is the social factor. The rural folks got attracted by the educational, health and other infrastructural facilities available in the cities. Besides, the cities provided them with more privacy and a great degree of anonymity, which helped them lead their lives without the constant interference of family members and neighbours as it used to happen in villages.

Urbanization fuels many aspirations of the rural population and results in rapid migration of people from the countryside to fulfil these aspirations. This further quickens the pace of urbanization.

- **Modernization:** Modernization is also an important cause of urbanization. Modern facilities in cities like better roads, excellent communication systems, schools and hospitals, etc., attract the rural people to come to the cities in search of a happy and comfortable life. Modernization is a process of adopting the new and better options that are available so as to make human life comfortable. Quite naturally, it brings forth urbanization because it is the city that gets modernized much before the villages.

Modernization and westernization are sometimes used interchangeably. Urbanization is an important feature of the western world and, therefore, it is natural for it to be influenced by modern developments.

- **Employment opportunities:** People from the rural areas migrate to urban areas in search of work opportunities and contribute to the process of urbanization. The villages are mostly agricultural and there is no requirement of a big labour force to work on the land. In fact, the agricultural sector in the rural areas gives rise to a phenomenon called 'disguised unemployment'. This means that though people appear to be employed in the agricultural sector, they actually contribute nothing because their labour is not at all required. They are unemployed from the productivity sense of the word, but such unemployment is disguised by the fact that they are engaged in the fields.

Modern manufacturing and service industries that come up in the cities are big attractions for the rural population. They believe that they can improve their lives by moving out towards the urban centres.

Theories of Urbanization and Models of the City

Urbanization results in the growth and development of existing cities and the emergence of new cities. Sociologists have studied cities intensively and have given three important

models that describe the internal structure of cities. These three models of the city are related with the following three theories:

- 1. The concentric zone theory:** Park and Burgess (1925), who gave us this theory after studying the city of Chicago in USA, have laid down that the city is a series of circles. Each circle differs in the manner the land is used. The centre of the circles is the 'Central Business District'. This district is used for government offices, banking, commerce, shopping and entertainment. Land prices in this district are extremely high.

The second circle is earmarked for 'wholesale light manufacturing' and the third for 'low-class residential area'. The low-class residences are occupied by the poor people. The next zone is the 'medium-class residential area' represented. This area is inhabited by the blue-collar workers. The fifth circle is the 'high-class residential area' wherein the rich people stay in luxurious apartments and villas.

The next circle is earmarked for the heavy manufacturing industries and the outlying business district is represented by the seventh circle. The next two circles show the residential and industrial sub-urban areas. These lie on the outskirts of the city. The last circle represents the commuters' zone, which is located the farthest away from the central business district. This area lies on the outermost periphery of the city. It must be kept in mind that this theory was developed after studying the city of Chicago and may not be applicable to Indian cities.

- 2. The sector theory:** This is the theory associated with the second type of model of the city and one of its chief proponents was the economist Homer Hoyt. It views the large city as a number of sectors and not as a series of concentric zones. The sectors are the products of the pattern in which the cities have grown. It gives details of the transportation path in urban areas by clearly laying down the road and rail lines, the highways and waterways.

The cities of San Francisco in USA and Chandigarh in India seem to have been designed on the basis of the Hoyt's model. His model emphasizes upon rental values and characteristics of residential areas. He says that the population of a city moves along the transportation path as the city grows. The higher income groups move faster than the rest.

- 3. The multiple nuclei theory:** The third model of the city is given under this theory. Here, the cities have different centres and the pattern of land use and rents are influenced by this ecological process. In the process of development of a city, the first nucleus of the city develops around a port or mine. The other nuclei develop thereafter due to the different types of activities in the city. The Mumbai city is of this type.

Harris and Ullman (1945) suggest that the land use patterns of some cities are developed around some district nuclei, but not in a single centre. The nuclei are districts having different functions.

Problems of Urban Society

You have seen that continuance urbanization has led to over-urbanization in many Indian cities due to concentration of population in these cities. This over-urbanization reduces the efficiency of the urban centres and creates a large number of problems. Thus, the challenge lies in making our cities optimum in size. But this is easier said than done because the pull factor of the big cities is very strong and people keep on migrating from

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rural areas in search of a better life. The other reasons for these problems are defective urban planning, apathetic civic administration, rampant corruption, lack of civic sense in our people, etc.

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The problems posed by urbanization and over-urbanization in India are as follows:

- **Housing:** The housing needs of our cities are enormous and both the government and the private entrepreneurs have failed to bridge the gap between demand and supply. According to estimates, about half the population in our big metropolitan cities have to do with temporary or no shelters. Many of them live in slums that are not fit for human occupation and many others live in the open (at railway stations, bus stations, on pavements and under bridges or flyovers). The living conditions of such people are much worse than what it was in the rural areas from where they migrated to the cities in search of a new and comfortable life.

This acute problem is caused due to a variety of reasons. Firstly, the severe pressure of population pushes up the demand for housing to very high levels. Secondly, the shortage of affordable houses keeps large sections of the urban population out of the market for readymade houses. With modest income-levels, it is not possible to buy the highly priced urban homes. Thirdly, the pressure on land and its scarcity pushes up the prices of houses. Even if any agency wants to construct affordable homes, the high input costs do not allow it to do so.

- **Water supply and drainage:** The problem of water scarcity has assumed gigantic proportions in our cities and it has been predicted that the future would be even worse. No city administration is able to provide water around the clock. The sad part is that there seems to be no common water policy, which can address this issue in the country. Providing clean drinking and cooking water has to be a priority of the government and the people cannot be made to suffer in respect of such a basic necessity of life.

Drainage facilities in our cities have also taken a hit with the rapid increase in population. The amount of solid waste generated by our cities has grown many times and the old network of sewage pipes is unable to handle the load. This results in clogging of drainage pipes and overflowing of man holes. A comprehensive solid waste management program has to be undertaken by our cities to ensure the beauty and efficacy of our urban areas.

- **Electricity:** The demand for electricity in our cities have gone up by hundreds of times due to the increase in population and the use of new and sophisticated electrical gadgets like computers, air conditioners, television, etc. A higher population needs more lights, fans and street lights. A richer population needs more electricity to run their fancied electrical gadgets.

The demand and supply gap in respect of electricity has risen considerably and despite the best efforts of the government, electricity generation, transmission and distribution has failed to keep pace with the ever-increasing demand.

- **Transportation:** Transportation in our cities is a big challenge for all concerned. The commuters have to cover long distances because most of the working class people live far away from their places of work. They are mostly dependent upon public transport systems like local trains, buses and, of course, the metro trains. These modes of transport are not adequate and, therefore, they always remain heavily crowded. Though the Delhi metro and the new buses in Delhi are pretty comfortable, generally, public transport does not provide a pleasant experience.

The service providers cannot enhance comfort levels as they are constrained by the fact that they cannot charge high fares because the poor people also use these facilities.

On the other hand, rising income-levels have enabled the rich and middle class to buy more cars and two-wheelers. This has created the problem of traffic jams and raises the issue of efficient traffic management. The number of private vehicles on roads, especially in Delhi, has gone up so high that traffic snarls have become a part of daily routine.

- **Pollution:** Pollution is a major problem faced by our cities. Due to the rapid growth of population, the vehicular traffic has increased manifold resulting in discharge of pollutants from the vehicles. For the same reason, the generation of solid waste has gone up many times and our sewage management system is unable to cope with it. This results in waste matter flowing on to the streets or flowing in to the rivers or lakes in and around our cities.

The air and water pollution in our cities give rise to various ailments, which result in suffering of our people. Besides, they add to the burden on our urban health infrastructure. Studies have shown that the air and water pollution caused by urbanization is coming back to hit us. The incidence of cancer in urban India has increased and the reason being given is the high level of pollutants in our food, water and air.

The level of air pollution in Delhi could be curtailed because of the intervention of the Supreme Court of India. The court directed the Delhi Government to make it mandatory for buses and trucks plying in Delhi to use Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) as their fuel. This has resulted in improving the air quality in Delhi.

- **Sanitation:** The level of sanitation in our cities is abysmal. Though, we have large municipal corporations, their functioning leaves a lot to be desired. Garbage is not disposed on time, drains are not cleaned regularly, roads are not swept daily and people are totally devoid of civic sense. In fact, our cleanliness level could be much higher if only our people did not throw waste all over the city. The corrupt and incompetent municipalities are primarily responsible for the mess in the sanitation situation of our cities. There is no accountability and they manage to go unpunished.
- **Health problems:** It is estimated that about 300 million people in India live in towns and cities. As in other parts of the world, a rapid growth of population has resulted in a significant part of urban population residing in slums in India. About 33 per cent of India's urban population lives in slums. Slums are characterized by overcrowding, poor hygiene and sanitation and the absence of proper civic services. Most of the cities in India face various health challenges of communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, maternal and child health problems, natural calamities and threat of reemerging and emerging diseases. While the characteristics of each city may vary according to local circumstances, common urban health and social challenges include the following:
 - o Overcrowding
 - o Air pollution
 - o Rising levels of risk factors like tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and the harmful use of alcohol
 - o Road traffic injuries

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- o Inadequate infrastructure, transport facilities
 - o Poor solid waste management systems
 - o Insufficient access to health facilities in slum areas
- **Transport and traffic problems:** Cities have a high level of accumulation and concentration of economic activities. They are characterized by complex spatial structures that are supported by transport systems. The larger the city, the greater is its complexity. Majority of transport problems are often related to urban areas. Urban productivity depends heavily on the efficiency of its transport system to move labour, consumers and freight between multiple origins and destinations. Also, important transport terminals, such as ports and airports, are located within urban areas. The most notable urban transport problems include the following:
 - o Wasting time of motorists and passengers
 - o Delays, which may result in late arrival for employment, meetings and education, which, in turn, may result in lost business, disciplinary action or other personal losses
 - o Inability to forecast travel time exactly
 - o Wasted fuel leading to air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions due to increased idling, acceleration and braking
 - o Wear and tear on vehicles
 - o Stressed and frustrated motorists, leading to road rage and reduced health of motorists
 - o Obstacles in the passage of emergency vehicles traveling to their destinations.
 - o Spillover effect from congested main arteries to secondary roads and side streets as alternative routes are attempted, which may affect neighborhood amenity and real estate prices.
 - **Employment problems:** While the Indian economy continues to clock above 8 per cent growth, the latest National Sample Survey on employment and unemployment in India has revealed that the unemployment rate in urban India was as high as 45 while that in rural India was 17. According to the 61st round of employment and unemployment for July 2004 to June 2005 carried out by the National Sample Survey Organization, the unemployment rate — the number of person unemployed per 1,000 persons in the labour force — was 17 in the rural areas and 45 in the urban areas. Moreover, the survey also found that the unemployment rates for females was higher than that for males and was highest among urban females. The survey that covered over 7,999 villages and 4,602 urban blocks (covering 79,306 households in the rural areas and 45,374 households in the urban areas) showed that between 1999–2000 and 2004–05, the unemployment rate remained almost the same for rural males and decreased by 1 per cent point for urban males. However, this increased by about 1 per cent points for women in both rural and urban areas.
 - **Lack of civic facilities:** Cities in India lack many civic facilities, such as water supply and sanitation, roads and drains, street-lights, collection and disposal of solid waste, maintenance of public places, burial grounds and crematoria, cattle pounds, registration of births and deaths and maintenance of markets.
 - (i) **Water supply:** According to the 54th round of National Sample Survey (NSS), an estimated 70 per cent of urban households reported being served

by tap and 21 per cent by tubewell or handpump. Almost 66 per cent of urban households reported having their principal source of drinking water within their premises, while 32 per cent had it within 0.2 km. Almost 41 per cent had sole access to their principal source of drinking water, which means that 59 per cent were sharing a public source. About 15 per cent of households do not get sufficient drinking water from their principal source, between April and June, May being the worst month. In the aggregate, 91 per cent of urban households have found the quality of drinking water served by their principal sources to be satisfactory. About 18 per cent urban population is using some supplementary source of drinking water, while 96 per cent urban population is storing their drinking water.

The guiding principles for developing an efficient water supply and sanitation programme should be as follows:

- Protection of the environment and safeguarding of health through the integrated management of water resources and liquid and solid waste
 - Organizational reforms, promoting an integrated approach and including changes in procedures, attitudes, and behaviour, and the full participation of women at all levels
 - Community management of services, backed by measures to strengthen the capacity of local institutions in implementing and sustaining water and sanitation programmes
 - Sound financial practices, achieved through better management of existing assets and extensive use of appropriate technologies
- (ii) **Urban sanitation:** The 54th round of NSS reported that 26 per cent of households reported using no latrine, 35 per cent reported using septic tank, and 22 per cent reported using sewerage system. This indicates that as many as 43 per cent of households in urban areas either had no latrines or no connection to a septic tank or sewerage. As regards waste disposal, 71 per cent of urban households reported removal of household waste by household members, 14 per cent by local authorities, and 12 per cent by private agreement among residents. About 47 per cent of urban households reported removing of their waste to community dumping spot, and 30 per cent, to individual dumping spots. Almost 90 per cent of urban households reported concern regarding mosquitoes, 66 per cent regarding flies and 50 per cent regarding problems related to foul odour.
- (ii) **Treatment of urban waste water:** Three-fourths of surface water resources are polluted and 80 per cent of the pollution is due to by sewage alone. On the other hand, in addition to organic matter sewage contains nitrogen, phosphate and potassium in sufficient quantities, which are essential nutrients for plant growth. Sewage is also viewed as an economic source of methane fuel. Thus, it can be a valuable resource after with due treatment and processing. Water supply has direct linkage with sewage generation. A survey of 345 towns with population between 50,000 and 100,000, revealed that over 95 per cent of them do not have any waste water treatment facilities, and disposal on land, and direct and indirect use for irrigation is the predominant mode of disposal.

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Measures to Remedy Urban Problems

The Government of India, state governments and the municipalities have to take up large-scale remedial measures, if they wish to stem the rot in our cities. Some of these measures could be the following:

- **Systematic planning:** Steps have to be undertaken to plan for a systematic growth of cities. They cannot be allowed to grow haphazardly in an unplanned manner. The long-term goal must be to create more and more urban centres across the country in a dispersed manner so as to reduce the population pressure on a few big cities.
- **Revival of cities:** Most of the problems faced by Indian cities can be addressed by undertaking large scale repair and renovation of the existing urban facilities. This requires a lot of funds and the governments have to come to the aid of the municipalities. The municipalities too should find ways and means to augment their revenues and also involve the private sector in certain projects. The public-private partnership (PPP) model can be a possible way out.

In recent times, the Government of India has been funding a project by the name of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), which is aimed at reviving the decaying cities of India. One of the areas in which this project has already contributed is the purchase and deployment of new buses in cities across the country to improve public transport.

- **Shifting industries:** Industries must be encouraged to move away from cities and also from its peripheries. They have to be shifted to backward areas. This would help in creating new industrial towns and also ease the pressure upon the existing cities.
- **Amendment of archaic laws:** You have to free the cities from the clutches of archaic laws like the Rent Control Act and Urban Land Ceiling Act. These laws have to be amended to reflect the reality of today. No landlord would like to invest money in a residential house and then give it out on rent at a very low rate. Such laws would never help in tackling the acute shortage in the housing sector.
- **Structural decentralization:** The administration of large cities through centralized municipalities is not working well in India. In this context, it has been suggested by many to decentralize some of the powers of the municipality to the Residents' Welfare Associations (RWAs) or Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs). The powers that can be devolved include cleaning of roads and drains, maintenance of parks and street lights, garbage disposal; etc. The municipalities can allow these RWAs or NAGs to collect and appropriate certain taxes like the house tax or the road tax. Such a system would let the local community decide the manner in which they would like to create and maintain the institutions and facilities that have an impact upon their daily lives.
- **Pollution control:** With the rapid industrialization of India, the problem of pollution has been aggravated in the country. Industrialization is characterized by growing number of cities, increasing traffic, rapid economic development and higher levels of energy consumption. Factors, such as the high influx of population to urban areas, increase in consumption patterns and unplanned urban and industrial development, have led to the problem of pollution in urban areas, especially vehicular pollution. Vehicular emissions are of special concern as these are ground

level sources and thus have the maximum impact on the general population. The other important fact to be noted is that vehicles contribute significantly to the total air pollution load in many urban areas.

There are various air pollution control technologies and urban planning strategies available to reduce air pollution. Efforts to reduce pollution from mobile sources include the following:

- o Enactment of primary regulations
- o Expansion of regulation to new sources, such as cruise and transport ships, farm equipment, and small gas-powered equipment (such as lawn trimmers, chainsaws and snowmobiles)
- o Increased fuel efficiency
- o Conversion to cleaner fuels, such as bioethanol and biodiesel
- o Conversion to electric vehicles

De-urbanization of Cities

It is interesting to note that in the midst of rapid urbanization in India, a simultaneous process of de-urbanization is also happening.

At the outset, you should be clear that this process has to be seen from the prism of activity of groups of people and not from the prism of the city being only a physical entity. As a physical entity, the city still attracts people and urbanization is said to be continuing. But when you focus on the activity of groups of people within a city, you see that many of the activities are actually slowing down or moving out from the city centres to the peripheries.

The hectic economic activity in the city centres or the central business districts of the cities have slowed down in many Indian cities. These areas have become inhabited by the low income groups and are faced with very many social problems. The new immigrants to the city also find their way to these places. Together they constitute a big group, which is willing to do some unskilled or semi-skilled work. In short, they have become a large, low-income, low priority group. The new service sector industries like information technology companies, software parks, business process outsourcing units (BPOs), etc., are all setting up their business on the outskirts of these cities. They are far removed from the central business districts. As a result, the educated and upwardly mobile technocrats and entrepreneurs are all moving out from the inner confines of our urban centres. The new growth centres are emerging on the boundaries of our cities.

This process of economic decline in the city centres and economic boom at the periphery of the cities is what is being called as de-urbanization of the cities. It is also being referred to as urbanization of villages. This is so because a number of villages on the fringes of the Indian cities are getting converted in urban areas by the movement of economic activity towards them. A fine example of this is Delhi and the National Capital Region. Places like Gurgaon, Noida, Ghaziabad, etc., have seen a massive boom and a large number of villages in these areas have become urbanized. This has happened due to the setting up of new service sector industries and the development of high quality residential complexes. Thus, while the business districts of Delhi got de-urbanized to some extent, the sub-urban and rural areas outside the city got urbanized.

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Check Your Progress

3. Define urbanization, according to Thompson Warren.
4. Differentiate between urbanization and urbanity.
5. What do you understand by the term 'de-urbanization'?

7.4 MODERNIZATION

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According to Daniel Lerner, modernization includes a 'disquieting positivist spirit' touching both public and private institutions. The terms modernization and urbanization are often quoted together, and lead to an increase in the spread of literacy and social mobility.

Modern education, western literature and philosophy have widened the mental horizons of visionary national leaders and reformers. Various provisions have been implemented for the protection of low-caste people. There are number of amendments in the Constitution and legislations have been passed to remove backward class disabilities. Untouchability has been declared a crime. Law has abolished bonded labour. There are many special laws to protect the weaker sections of society.

Caste-system has continuously changed with the changing times, and this can be seen in its origin and process of evaluation, and moving through the eras of modernization, sanskritization and westernization. In modern India, many discriminatory practices and deformities has already been brought to an end slowly but steadily. It has become more liberal and less restrictive in social life of the people. Old style of authority and power exercised by caste particularly by elders has already diminished except for a few rural areas. Traditional barriers on marriage, hereditary occupations, and commonality are of less significance today.

7.4.1 Impact of Modernization on Indian Society

The concept of tradition has always occupied an important place in Indian sociological thought. Indian sociologists have often ventured to acquire deeper knowledge of social phenomena prevailing in the country. According to D.P. Mukherji, there is no getting away from tradition for Indian sociologists. This is so, especially because their role is to study the principles that govern social life in India, common living, common sharing of social heritage and the continuity of social structure, in order to guide the future course of the country whose culture is 'eternal'. (Majumdar, 1961)

The concept of tradition has been defined by many sociologists, social anthropologists and indologists; however, none have defined it clearly. D.P. Mukherji however, pleads for a philosophical approach in order to improve the understanding of society. Yogendra Singh contends that tradition means value, i.e., themes encompassing the entire social system of Indian society, prior to the beginning of modernization, were organized on the principles of hierarchy, holism, continuity and transcendence. These four value-themes were deeply interlocked with other elements of Indian social structure. Hierarchy was evident in the caste system with caste and sub-caste stratifications and also in Hindu concepts of human nature, occupational life cycles (ashramas) and moral duties (*Dharma*). (Singh, 1986)

Holism meant a relationship between individuals and groups in which the former was encompassed by the latter in respect of duties and rights. The collective aspect always occupied an important place in the life of the individual. The collective life was reinforced in the traditional social structure of India in terms of family, caste, village community, etc. The traditional values were never challenged at the cost of rationality derived from non-sacred principles of evaluation. D.P. Mukherji's concept of Indian society is a derivative of what he calls 'the philosophy of Indian history' which remained unrecorded. But it has a history of ideas exemplified in the daily conduct of its people. Indian culture, essentially being social, has a history expressed in Indian society. The

history, economics and philosophy of India had always centred on social groups. (D.P. Mukherji, 1958)

The concept of tradition has different connotations for Indian sociologists. Ram Krishna Mukherji regards tradition as ‘the schematic point in organism’ (in the context of Indian society) which can be used as a comparative frame of reference for measuring social change in India. He further stated that Indian traditions provide four dimensions of integration in our people. Social change is almost a variation on this intra-India static four dimensional model: the place where an Indian is born, where he is brought up and dies, the kin group to which a person belongs, the caste to which he is affiliated, and finally the linguistic region with which he is integrated. (R.K. Mukherji, 1965)

Moreover, R.K. Mukherji quoted D.P. Mukherji to emphasize the economic aspect of structural change which can have a significant impact and bring about an alteration, ‘Traditions have great power of resistance and absorption’. Unless the influence is very powerful (which is possible only when modes of production are changed), traditions survive through adjustments. The capacity to adjust is a measure of the vitality of tradition. Indian sociologists should precede the socialist interpretations of changes in the Indian tradition in terms of economic forces. (R.K. Mukherji, 1965)

Yogendra Singh, has however, come out with a paradigmatic concept of tradition in his book, *Modernization of Indian tradition*. He refers to traditions as evolving from primordial tradition to modernization with a pattern of change in quality. His concept of Indian tradition, contrary to the meta-social views, is analytical as indicated in a unified worldview, ritual styles and belief systems. He does not delineate tradition as entity or substance, but as a variable identified under the components of little and great traditions, contributing extensively to the process of transformation and synthesis. Y. Singh refers to two kinds of changes — ‘orthogenetic changes’ (primary) and ‘heterogenetic changes’ (secondary). While orthogenetic changes refer to those changes within the cultural tradition of India itself, heterogenetic changes refer to changes brought about due to contact with other traditions.

The evolutionary process of modernization is a smooth one, and there is no serious breakdown in the system caused by institutionalization of modernizing changes. Caste, as an institution however, has the potential for negotiating with modernizing trends and adapting to modern institutions. Yogendra Singh is concerned about the constant coordination of modernization with conciliation as an assumed pre-requisite for democratic modernization in India.

Modernization, in its initial stages in India, according to Eisenstadt did not lead to any serious system breakdown because of the peculiar structural characteristics of the Indian society. Here, the cultural system was fairly independent of the political system. Modernity in India developed as a sub-structure and sub-culture without subsequent expansion in all sectors of life. However, Y. Singh’s main concern was with structural changes which would take place due to modernization. Inconsistencies have arisen due to structural changes that India has undergone during the post-colonial phase of modernization. Micro-structures like caste, family and village community have retained their traditional character. Caste per se has shown unexpected elasticity and latent potential for adaptation with modern institutions, such as democratic participation, political party organization and trade unionism. This is even though joint family and particularistic norms continue to prevail. These contradictions are magnified at the level of macro-structures such as the political system, bureaucracy, elite structure, industry and economy.

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In fact, the major potential sources of breakdown in the process of modernization in India can be attributed to structural inconsistencies such as democratisation without spread of civic culture (education), bureaucratization without commitment to universalistic norms, rise in media participation and aspiration without proportionate increase in resources and distributive justice, verbalization of a welfare ideology without diffusion into the social structure. (Eisenstadt, 1966)

At the outset, it must be said that there has been considerable modernization of Indian traditions and constant adaptation with the process of modernization. There has been no breakdown in the traditional value systems, rather it can be said that there has been a discontinuity between expectation and performance. Y. Singh would deny a policy of controlled suppression in favour of a 'series of conciliatory steps through a forceful strategy of mobilization'. This would lead him to accept that the chances of institutional breakdown are minimal on the Indian scene. (Y. Singh, 1986). There is in fact a rational coordination instead of complete reliance on modernization.

7.5 SUMMARY

- According to Giddens (2001), in human societies, to decide how far and in what ways a particular system is in a process of change or transformation, we have to show to what degree there is any modification of basic institutions during a specific time period.
- Considering change as an important aspect of study, the father of sociology, August Comte, even remarked that the role of this discipline is to analyse both the Social Statics (the laws governing social order) and Social Dynamics (laws governing social change (Slattery, 2003).
- Social change is inevitable. It is not only inevitable, it is also universal. It is found in every society.
- Change in one aspect of a system may lead to changes of varying degrees in other aspects of that system.
- Change may occur with or without proper planning. People, government or any other agent may initiate change through plans or programmes and may determine the degree and direction of change.
- Secularism implies the absence of religion or religious beliefs from the process of rule-making and governance. An organized institution like a national or local government is said to be secular when it keeps religion out of its functioning.
- The relation of secularism to religion was defined as 'mutually exclusive rather than hostile'. Neither theism nor skepticism enters into the secularist scheme as neither can be proved through experience.
- The basic principle of secularism was to look for human improvement by material means alone, these means were judged as sufficient to lock the desired end. Its beliefs could be maintained by intellect and were similarly applicable to all humanity.
- The term 'secular' denotes the three-fold relationship among man, State and religion. The word Secular has not been defined or explained under the Constitution in 1950 or in 1976 when it was made part of the preamble.

Check Your Progress

6. Which four dimensions do Indian traditions provide as a means to integrate the people?
7. Differentiate between orthogenetic changes and heterogenetic changes.

- Industrialization refers to sustained economic growth following the application of innate sources of power to mechanized production.
- Globalization is an emerging union of economies and societies around the globe and it is a complex process that affects many aspects of social life in the societies like quick growth, reduction in rate of poverty, introduction of Internet, etc.
- According to Thompson Warren, 'Urbanization is the movement of people from communities concerned chiefly or solely with agriculture to other communities, generally larger, whose activities are primarily centred in government, trade manufacture or allied interests.'
- The term re-urban was introduced by the sociologist C.J. Galpin. It referred to the composite urban settlements wherein the urban and rural population intermingled and stayed connected with and dependent upon each other.
- According to Daniel Lerner, modernization includes a 'disquieting positivist spirit' touching both public and private institutions.
- The terms modernization and urbanization are often quoted together, and lead to an increase in the spread of literacy and social mobility.
- The concept of tradition has always occupied an important place in Indian sociological thought.

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7.6 KEY TERMS

- **Development:** Development refers to improvement in the quality of life and advancement in one's state of condition.
- **Social change:** Social change refers to any significant alteration over time in behaviour patterns and cultural values and norms.
- **Secularism:** Secularization is the transformation of a society from close identification and affiliation with religious values and institutions toward nonreligious values and secular institutions.
- **Industrialization:** Industrialization refers to sustained economic growth following the application of innate sources of power to mechanized production.

7.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Spencer's analysis of structure indicates the internal build-up, shape or form of societal wholes.
2. *The Division of Labour* was written by Emile Durkheim.
3. According to Thompson Warren, 'Urbanization is the movement of people from communities concerned chiefly or solely with agriculture to other communities, generally larger, whose activities are primarily centred in government, trade manufacture or allied interests.'
4. Urbanization is a process which refers to change in values, attitudes and beliefs of people who migrate from villages to cities and the impact of this movement on people who are left behind in the villages. Urbanity, on the other hand, is the state

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of the people living in an urban area which is distinct from those living in the villages. It refers to a pattern of life in terms of work, food habits and the world view of people living in the urban areas.

5. 'De-urbanization' is a demographic and social process whereby people move from urban areas to rural areas. It is, like suburbanization, inversely related to urbanization.
6. The place in which a person is born, where he is brought up and dies, the caste he is affiliated with and the linguistic region with which he is integrated are the four dimensions to integrate people.
7. Orthogenetic changes refer to those changes within the cultural tradition of India itself, whereas, heterogenetic changes refer to changes brought about due to contact with other traditions.

7.8 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Define secularism and list its various aspects.
2. What are some of the social consequences of industrialization?
3. List the main causes of urbanization.
4. State the major problems that are faced by the urban society of India.
5. Write a short note on the concept of de-urbanization.

Long-Answer Questions

1. What is social change? Explain in detail.
2. Discuss the features of social change.
3. Do you believe that India is a secular country? Give reasons for your answer.
4. Discuss Max Weber's views on the origins and sustaining conditions for capitalism.
5. Discuss the theories of urbanization associated with the models of the city.

7.9 FURTHER READING

Atal, Y. 2006. *Changing Indian Society*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications.

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