

PREFACE

In a bid to standardize higher education in the country, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has introduced Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) based on five types of courses viz. *core, discipline specific, generic elective, ability and skill enhancement* for graduate students of all programmes at Honours level. This brings in the semester pattern, which finds efficacy in sync with credit system, credit transfer, comprehensive continuous assessments and a graded pattern of evaluation. The objective is to offer learners ample flexibility of choose from a wide gamut of courses, as also to provide them lateral mobility between various educational institutions in the country where they can carry their acquired credits. I am happy to note that the University has been recently accredited by National Assessment and Accreditation Council of India (NAAC) with grade "A".

UGC (Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020 have mandated compliance with CBCS for U. G. programmes for all the HEIs in this mode. Welcoming this paradigm shift in higher education, Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU) has resolved to adopt CBCS from the academic session 2021-22 at the under graduate Degree Programme level. The present syllabus, framed in the spirit of syllabi recommended by UGC, lays due stress on all aspects envisaged in the curricular framework of the apex body on higher education. It will be imparted to learners over the six semesters of the Programme.

Self Learning Materials (SLMs) are the mainstay of Student Support Services (SSS) of an Open University. From a logistic point of view, NSOU has embarked upon CBCS presently with SLMs in English/Bengali. Eventually, the English version SLMs will be translated into Bengali too, for the benefit of learners. As always, all of our teaching faculties contributed in this process. In addition to this we have also requisitioned the services of best academics in each domain in preparation of the new SLMs. I am sure they will be of commendable academic support. We look forward to proactive feedback from all stakeholders who will participate in the teaching-learning based on these study materials. It has been a very challenging task well executed, and I congratulate all concerned in the preparation of these SLMs.

I wish the venture a grand success.

Professor (Dr.) Subha Sankar Sarkar
Vice-Chancellor

Netaji Subhas Open University
Under Graduate Degree Programme
Choice Based Credit System (CBCS)
Subject : Honours in Sociology (HSO)
Indian Society
Course Code : GE-SO-11

First Print : December, 2021

Netaji Subhas Open University
Under Graduate Degree Programme
Choice Based Credit System (CBCS)
Subject : Honours in Sociology (HSO)
Indian Society
Course Code : GE-SO-11

: Board of Studies :

: Members :

Professor Chandan Basu

*Director, School of Social Sciences
Netaji Subhas Open University, NSOU*

Professor Bholanath Bandyopadhyay

*Retired Professor
Department of Sociology
University of Calcutta*

Professor Sudeshna Basu Mukherjee

*Department of Sociology
University of Calcutta*

Kumkum Sarkar

Associate Professor of Sociology, NSOU

Srabanti Choudhuri

Assistant Professor of Sociology, NSOU

Professor Prashanta Ray

*Emeritus Professor
Presidency University*

Professor S.A.H Moinuddin

*Former Professor
Department of Sociology
Vidyasagar University*

Ajit Kumar Mondal

Associate Professor of Sociology, NSOU

Anupam Roy

Assistant Professor of Sociology, NSOU

: Course Writers :

Units : 1 - 4

Soumitra Srimani

*Associate Professor of
History, NSOU*

Units : 5 - 9

Sathi Naik

*Faculty of Sociology,
Women's Christian College*

Units : 10 - 12

Anupam Roy

Assistant Professor of Sociology, NSOU

Units: 13 - 20

Ratnabali Biswas

*Assistant Professor of Sociology
Berhampur Girls' College*

: Course Editors :

(i) Ajit Kumar Mondal

*Associate Professor of
Sociology, NSOU*

(ii) Namrata Basu

*Faculty of Sociology
University of Calcutta*

: Format Editor :

Ajit Kumar Mondal

Associate Professor of Sociology, NSOU

Notification

All rights reserved. No part of this Self-Learning Material (SLM) may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from Netaji Subhas Open University.

Kishore Sengupta
Registrar



**Netaji Subhas
Open University**

**UG : Sociology
(HSO)**

Course Title : Indian Society

Course Code : GE-SO-11

**MODULE – 1 : Ideas of India : Civilization, Colony, Nation,
and Society**

Unit - 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Dynamics of Indian Civilization : An Overview	9 – 21
Unit - 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious, Linguistic and Cultural Plurality : Unity in Diversity	22 – 38
Unit - 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Great Tradition and Little Tradition	39 – 52
Unit - 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Nation Building : Issues and Challenges	53 – 66

MODULE – 2 : Institutions and Processes

Unit - 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Village, Town, and Region	69 – 84
Unit - 6	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion : Its Functions	85 – 100
Unit - 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Family : Concept, Types and Functions	101 – 116
Unit - 8	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender : Types, Roles and Functions	117 – 130
Unit - 9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Groups and Their Distinctions	131 – 148

MODULE – 3 : Kinship and Marriage

Unit - 10 □ Kinship and Marriage : Meaning and Types 151 – 167

Unit - 11 □ Changes in Kinship and Marriage : Nature and Factors 168 – 186

Unit - 12 □ Relevance of Marriage, Family, and Kinship Today 187 – 203

MODULE – 4 : Social Stratification in India

Unit - 13 □ Varna, Caste and Jati : Changing Dimensions 205 – 221

Unit - 14 □ Bourgeoisie, Working Class and Middle Classes 222 – 238

Unit - 15 □ Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other
Backward Classes 239 – 258

Unit - 16 □ Religious Minorities and Ethnic Groups : Issues
and Problems 259 – 277

MODULE – 5 : Social Change

Unit - 17 □ Social Mobility 279 – 294

Unit - 18 □ Sanskritization 295 – 310

Unit - 19 □ Urbanization 311 – 327

Unit - 20 □ Westernization 328 – 344

MODULE - 01

**IDEAS OF INDIA : CIVILIZATION,
COLONY, NATION AND
SOCIETY**

Unit - 1 □ Dynamics of Indian Civilization : An Overview

Structure

- 1.1 Objectives**
- 1.2 Introduction**
- 1.3 History of Indian civilization**
- 1.4 Advent of Aryans**
- 1.5 The Epics**
- 1.6 Invasion by Foreigners : Cultural factors**
- 1.7 Social Factors**
- 1.8 Political Factors**
- 1.9 Summary**
- 1.10 Questions**
- 1.11 Suggested Readings**
- 1.12 Glossary**

1.1 Objectives

- Demonstrate thinking skills by analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating historical information from multiple sources.
- Develop the ability to distinguish between fact and fiction while understanding that there is no one historical truth.
- Develop an informed familiarity with multiple cultures.

1.2 Introduction

With a vast landmass having some distinct diverse characters with various river systems, climatic variations, different crop pattern and eating habits, different flora

and fauna, different language and above all vastly different way of living including faith India is an example of unique entity. The anthropologists argue that all the six major racial types the Negrito, the proto-Australoid, the Mongoloid, the Mediterranean, the Western Brachycephals, and the Nordic had found their way within the Indian population. Hence, it is improper to conclude India a country of unipolar symptoms. For the absence of written documents for the earliest days of 'history' other than literatures deeply connected with religious rituals and sermons it is difficult to draw a near correct picture of those days.

1.3 The History of Indian Civilization

The date when the first human being left his footprint in this part of the world is a matter of debate. But it has been widely accepted that the people here became 'civilized' much earlier than others in the globe. India poses a puzzle to many in the outside. When more advanced countries of the present day were nowhere to an orderly social system, the people in some parts of this land were succeeded in raising a well-planned urban life where the inhabitants could establish trading relations with faraway places. Equipments they normally used for cultivation and for domestic use still can be found in use in India. The bullock-carts and the straw huts as depicted in Bharat sculptures of about 130 B.C.E. and the plough used by farmers in Kusana reliefs of 200 C.E. are still common phenomenon in India. Sometimes historians ask themselves how to narrate this story of continuity. The progress made by India during the long course of its existence is undeniable. Despite these still saddle quern are relevant in daily life since the days of the Indus people. Even some crop patterns including their sowing time, their consumption and preservation remain more or less same with only some nominal changes and improvements.

The Indus Valley civilization is one a very few of its kind in the world. Archaeological excavations reveal a lot about the daily life and community behavior of those who had raised a number of urban settlements scattered in an area covering hundreds of kilometers. Examination of the findings surprised the archaeologists though the seals could not be properly read. No doubt, some conclusions are debatable. Still it is an accepted fact that the people who used to reside there could successfully adopt an advanced life-style. Existence of granary and common bath established the fact of their improved social structure probably with a certain kind of municipal administration. But the most revealing thing is the absence of a deity and place of worship. Existence of a female figure may provide certain clue towards

a 'devi' worship with worship of fertility through pipal tree and such like. If these are so then India of today is yet to find newer modes of worship.

1.4 Advent of Aryans

Excavated sites covering urban life are the one side of the entire picture the other being the villages. Without surplus produced in the villages no urban life is possible. But village and villagers were lost since structures are not available. Village got prominence during the days of the Aryans. The Aryans, a nomadic tribe arrived in India and started with a pastoral life which ultimately culminated in a rural one. Hence one can find the hymns in the Vedas are addressed to the Gods in the shape of nature. Worship of nature still prevails in many forms. Indian village is primarily caste-based. With the coming of Islam feelings of community rose its head and character of village changed accordingly. Occupation was one of the principal factors for rural settlements. There were food-gatherers and hunters to whom the British considered aborigines. They were and are forest-dwellers and solely depend on their own customs prevailing from the days not known. These people divided and subdivided into many tribes maintain their traditional habits and livelihood. Growth of modern living, extension of urban settlements, and use of machines all have affected seriously. These tribes have been taken into established religious communities for which they are losing their identities. Even once the deity of the Sabaras, a tribe in Odhisa, Lord Jagannath is now universally worshipped by the Hindus. This is a unique aspect of Indian social life where a vast majority community adopted a deity of a group of forest-dwellers of a tiny corner in Odhisa. With the spread of modern-day living and unimaginable growth in population forest covers are withering away very fast leaving those dependent on forest with no other option than to abandon their traditional living. This process has been going on for last couple of centuries but without major opposition. During the colonial rule rebellion against the rulers were crushed paving the way for state control over forests.

Through their livelihood, occupation and customary offerings to the deities, all of whom are actually totems innumerable numbers of forest-dwelling tribes are the fountainheads of varied cultures of India. Since these people constantly avoided urban culture they became non-entities to the ruling communities. But their usefulness to the 'civilized' population did never diminish. The epics also present such stories. One cannot forget the importance of forest-dwellers in supporting the cause of Rama and also that hunter-family's timely intervention when all the Pandava brothers faced

possibility of extinction by a conspiracy of Duryodhana. In both the anecdotes the composers tell the eternal tale of the victory of truth and justice over evil. The truthfulness of these are not beyond any suspicion, but they still exemplify the values of Indian family life. Often these are accepted as the core of India's traditions.

1.5 The Epics

The stories within the Mahabharata have a lot of similarities with historical events. The battle in Kurukshetra is sometimes termed as fictitious. But by singing at least one sacred hymn from the Vedas before recital of any part of the epic it has acquired certain historic relevance. Again, the genealogy of the patron of the performer was also recited. By doing so the people of the day nearly discarded the caste-system propounded by the Aryans. The Brahminical superstructure in the Indian society probably took shape between 200 B.C.E and 200 C.E. when the reading of scriptures became exclusive privilege of the Brahmins. The epics provide no exclusive clue by which superiority of the upper castes can be understood. Most important of the stories is the life and activities of Krishna who came from an intermediary caste and not from the Kshatriyas, the warriors. Still we have learned of his innumerable soldiers who eventually fought along the Kurus. Such stories are absent in any of the Greek epics. Again, the story of Janamejaya's performance of a yajna for the complete annihilation of the Nagas, the cobra demons who could take a form of snake at will and had killed Janamejaya's father Parikshit II surpasses the original story of the epic. This cobra is the totem of many tribes for time immemorial. The sacrifice of Janamejaya remains incomplete without the presence of Astika, the son of a Brahmin father and a Naga mother, giving a different dimension of the social order. Because a son of clean Brahminical parentage was considered a true Brahmin. Again, Somasrwas, the chief priest in that sacrifice was not a clean Brahmin. These stories have been considered as sacred as the other parts of the epic which establishes the fact that classification of the Indian society, primarily based on occupation was of much later date from the date of composition of the Mahabharata.

The story of the Nagas who were chiefly in possession of the forests in the Gangetic valley and in the foothill of Punjab. Food gathering was easier here to the initial Aryan nomads. In that context the Nagas had the similar status of that of the Aryans. These forest-dwellers were so strong that they could not be easily vanquished. Here a mixture between the foreigners and the local hunters took place. Since a good

number of poor Brahmins were not provided any livelihood, as the Vedas tell us, they adopted a forest life and married girls from there. Absence of women flock among the invaders is an accepted fact. This position led inter-mixture and creation of a social order which was ultimately absorbed within the Aryan culture. Late D.D. Kosambi, the Marxist historian was sure that during the days of the early settlement of the Aryans the young Brahmins in their early phase of apprenticeship in the Guru's seminary had to devote at least twelve years in memorizing the Vedas and to bear a lot of domestic responsibilities there. They had no time nor scope to plough and to produce food. Hence dependence on the Nagas was a natural course. On the other hand those Nagas were never a warrior tribe. It is believed that remains of ochre-washed pottery of Hastinapura I were the creation on this Naga tribe. Gradually, the Nagas transformed themselves from hunters and food-gatherers into agriculture. Their relation with the Kurus is established in the stories of the Mahabharata. This is one of the principal aspects of the growing Indian society where mixtures of several bloods was usual at least before the reckoning of the Common Era.

The Vedas, the epics and the Jain and Buddhist texts render certain help for getting some idea of the earliest period of our reckoning. Travelogues help sometimes but fail to produce pictures in wide canvass. Since the twelfth century the Indian started history writing. In some regions archeological findings strengthen our imaginations and help to construct ideas of habitations there. India's uniqueness in holding numerous sects, tribes and lingual groups in a single canvas deeply rooted in her long historic traditions which started emanating from various sources. As many as 180 language groups with nearly 550 dialects were listed by the celebrated linguistic, G. A. Grierson in his monumental research, the Linguistic Survey of India. It is true that these assertions faced challenge but theories relating divergence in language are universally accepted. Even the framers of the constitution of independent India could not ignore these facts. Initially 11 major languages were recognized and the figure had to be raised first up to 15 in 1967 and again by 18 in 1992. Ignoring such context it has been fanatically tried to project this society a monolithic one by ignoring the realities experienced by the people of India for many generations. The theory of nationhood has more or less been built up with European experiences. The concept of nation-state is a western one and to scan Indian scenario with that instrument leads to a false notion. The sense of nationalism which India has developed is quite different from those rooted in the western thought and practice. Traditions of acceptance and of co-habitation have developed a mosaic where all the colours and patterns have converged successfully. It has been widely believed that

a long-drawn historical process in India beaded socio-cultural diversity into a thread of unity. Cultural pluralism in a way strengthened that unity.

How the Indian civilization was first born and then continued after so many turbulence had amazed the western readers. Exploring India and 'Indian-ness' became one of the primary duties of the British colonisers. It started in the late eighteenth century first, with the survey of Major James Rennell and then with the foundation of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. The British probably had no idea about the vast and rich antecedent of their newly-conquered race. Wealth of India and its artisan crafts including fine weaving for long had been street gossip in parts of Europe. But the actual knowledge about this country and its society was gathered by the foreign rulers when they intruded interiors. The pictures made them surprised since all conjectures about this land were shattered.

Now the question is, which India they had been expecting? 'In the first perception, i.e., unity and diversity as two ends of a continuum, the two concepts retain both their distinctiveness and interlinkages. In fact, in this sense, a deft management of diversity is a continuous process, or part of a ceaseless effort that goes on in a plural society to achieve a harmonious interdependent co-existence amongst communities insisting on maintaining the distinctiveness of their identity.' (Ajay k. Mehra; 'Unity and Diversity in India : Two Ends of a Continuum or a Converging Horizon?' in Imtiaz Ahmad and others eds. *Pluralism and Equity Values in Indian Society and Politics* New Delhi, 2000. pp.115-16) Their expectation of nearly a single linguistic group, same food habits and above all a single religion did not match with India. Moreover, religions of different shades had also flourished under royal patronage and seldom had they posed problems in curving out relationship among different kingdoms. India also had never witnessed religious wars in her soil though persecutions were very common. Two things posed as puzzles to the British. How people having so many faiths stay along for many centuries and how the lingua franca was to be detected. William Jones, the founder president of the Asiatic Society of Bengal suggested that all the languages spoken by the people here had monogenesis. He strongly believed that all the languages had their common root. Needless to say that primary proposition was to establish this root in the west. Studies of Sanskrit and its grammar became popular among the early European scholars who championed the cause of the Orientalism. But one premise was forcefully established that the past of the orient was glorious which had by that time evaporated. With the rise of Utilitarianism the British as the ruler resolved to take care of the interest of the people of India.

1.6 Invasion by Foreigners : Cultural Factors

One very important aspect of the Indian society is that it could digest a lot of foreign elements. India had the misfortune of having been prey for invaders for centuries. If one takes historical context the value of pluralism would be visible in many facades. That also played pivotal role in state formation too. Pluralistic tenets influenced not only social but also political, economic and above all cultural factors. When fragmented this pluralistic trend pursued a determined role to achieve strong as well as long-lasting political authority. In the process both nation and state came into existence simultaneously. Whatever means were available the forces for unity strenuously endeavour to deploy. In a sense, the tendency of diversity was buried under the alter of unity. An evolutionary process got shape first with a political agendum. Formation of an orderly state was the primary goal. While achieving this tribes and races initiated a further process of assimilation. They helped to emerge a variety of kinship, mode of living, pattern of settlements, systems of production, rules of land tenure and finally community life.

In fact, the Aryans whose legacy we are proudly following had their origin in faraway place. These nomadic tribe finally decided to settle here and introduced an agrarian society with a hunter and pastoral past. Their social as well as transcendental way of life are still relevant in some parts and within some communities. Mixture with the indigenous social order was inevitable and the end product has gradually become the social system in India. The Vedic tradition of Rajachakravarty was not only a glorification of a sovereign but also a symbol of assimilation of several local political and administrative systems. In the process a large and divergent patterns were merged into one to project a broader political order. Empires in the ancient period came into being by innumerable assimilations-tribal, cultural and administrative. It is not known whether those people laid out a fixed agendum for creating a political order. The political order was not necessarily a complete indigenous one. Greco-Roman shadow was also too deep. Invasions through the north-west brought a number of novelties. From wearing apparels, ornaments to sculptures foreign elements intruded. This mixture produced one of the finest schools, the school of Gandhara arts. Rise of the Mahayana sects within the Buddhism popularized this school which is one of the identities of India in its ancient past. The long shadow of the Greco-Roman mode of architecture hugely flourished during the Maurya reign and continued in the later days. Contacts with outside by curtesy of traders strengthened the long process of this assimilations.

1.7 Social Factors

While spreading the ethos of imperial order the people propounded that hegemony which was able to rule upon people residing in different geographical settings. Those who were ruled readily accepted their rulers and their administration. Language and local traditions including tribal ones did not affect very much. But the society was dominated by the upper castes whose hegemony was often resented by the lower ones. The dissensions did not breed revolts. What India achieved was evolution. Larger kingdoms and then empire flourished chiefly on trade. Trade was the forte of the lower castes. The financial strength of the traders helped them to get some elevation in the prevailing social order. Ultimately they became intermediary caste and was duly honoured. They found salvation within newly emerged faiths like Jainism and Buddhism. These two were totally opposed to the Aryan way of rituals sacrifice and many others. But their surge could not be restricted. Royal patronage started coming and Buddhism spread out by crossing the seas. Asoka's baptism is well known. In one of his rock edicts he declared that all his subjects were his own offspring. This might be a political declaration. But through it he clearly expressed his desire to accommodate all irrespective of their creed. In this way a trend was set for accommodations. As a result, India is the only country where nearly all types of religion are practiced. This is no mean achievement if viewed in larger worldly context.

History of Buddhism is nothing but assimilation of several traditions which became a singular one and finally found its place within the settled Aryan, now we may call it Hindu religion. This metamorphosis is revolutionary one which helped people with different as well as conflicting ideologies in merging into one. Rise of Jainism and then Buddhism ushered in the simultaneous rise of the lower strata in the social order. Growth of regional varieties of classical Sanskrit was one of the principal gains. None of the Jain and Buddhist texts are written in the classical language which was in the sole custody of the learned high castes. The rise in the use of Prakrit is the signal for the rise of the people from below. This could happen by not affecting the existing caste pattern. Hence, India did not experience bloody conflicts which 18th century Europe had to. European scholars seldom could assess this phenomenon. Unitary tendency for generations taught the people to remain faithful to it. Though divergent in many ways religion and tradition stitched a lot.

Apart from tradition and culture mixture of blood also produced new groups of people. The Rajputs had their origin in the Grujjar-Pratiharas who in turn had their

roots in central Asia. A complex and shady origin did not prevent the Rajputs in the medieval ages in fighting the Muslims to protect honour and dignity of the Hindus. Once who had not been considered 'Indian' by any of the Aryan standards, became the sole protector of Hinduism, sometimes synonymous to India itself. Unitary trend of culture expanded its wings manifold and helped to produce a picture of oneness. In the course of hundreds of years such churning continued. But it is wrong to conclude that the Rajputs posed as a single unit. Their tribal character had never been lost which generated animosity among themselves. Then, the tradition of the Rajachakravarty haunted them and a violent fight began to claim that position. By that way these tribes or clans acquired the Indian culture.

Thirteenth century witnessed another phenomenon. The Muslims invaded India and the rule of Islam started to continue for more than five centuries. All the earlier invaders ultimately lost their identities and gradually merged themselves within Indian social and religious environment of which we have already discussed. The Muslims maintained their identity and never allowed any aberration. Whichever land they occupied, converted the entire lot into their own fold. That process was not practiced here. On the contrary, there was a constant attempt to practice co-habitation. The racial dissensions and warfare were highlighted by the western scholars and the colonial rulers without giving credence to the fact that the invaders in India had lost their foreign connection forever. To them such co-habitation of strongly opposing people was never possible. They perceived social and political interactions on the basis of the two communities, Hindu and Muslim. The history tells that the Muslims converted nearly an entire race over whom they had established their suzerainty. But those marauds people could not succeed in doing so in India. On the contrary, both the people, ruler and ruled decided to stay together without being too much involved in the social structures of each other. Islam brought a loose sense of democratic behavior. They refused to give credence to any caste system. At the same time, the presence of the Sufi saints helped to treat all irrespective of one's caste and creed.

The coming of Islam coincided with the growth of the Bhakti cult. It is wrong to conclude that the Bhakti movement had been influenced by the Sufi order. The Bhakti movement with its earlier roots in the south slowly arrived at the north and could acquire a pan-Indian status. Interestingly enough both these orders had a number of similarities. The propagators of the orders, both the Hindus and Muslims usually detested official patronage. The saints used to live in their respective hospices away from locality. Their daily life was the symbol of hardship which

enthused common people. They seldom discriminate among their followers. Religious piety was the sole motto. In the process assimilation of people from various faiths could be possible. This unique religious orders could be embraced by anyone and that too by not discarding his or her own faith. The followers' had only religion i.e.; mutual love and nominal adherence to rituals. Even Gandhi, while leading his famous march towards Dandi only chanted the bhajana of Narsinghdas Mehta, a Vaisanabite saint. Relevancy was such that people took this as a clarion call of Gandhi in Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930.

Under the Mughals, who acquired the sole credit of ruling uninterruptedly for so long a period without any major disturbance. Credit goes to Babar, the founder first and then to his grandson, Akbar. Akbar was the first ruler in the medieval India to visualize a pan –Indian empire. In attaining this he pursued a policy of tolerance towards his Hindu subjects. By awarding even-handed justice to all, irrespective of race and religion Akbar brought peace and order which were to stay for long after him. He is also credited for bringing first the Rajputs within the state craft and then extended the net. Family relations established by his was followed by his successors. Aberrations due to the policies of Aurangzeb brought disaster and ultimate withering of the empire. Akbar's intention was to provide a stable as well as orderly administration. He maintained the traditional rural social structures without any interference from above. In doing so he started a process of cultural mixture. Not only did he try to introduce liberal Islam but also advocated self-respect for all. To fulfil this he started paying respect to the Hindu scriptures and customs. Upon advice of Birbal he used to chant thousand names of the sun since the emperor to the Indians represent the sun. For all such 'heathen' behaviours he had to face rebellion from the orthodox elements among his own community Still he remained undaunted. He started a process of translation of the Indian religious scriptures and epics into Persian, the court language so that non-Hindus could understand the eternal values of Indian philosophy.. In course of time, this language was adopted by the learned Hindus. This was not the end. Due to the mixture of two communities a new language Urdu appeared. Ultimately, it became the lingua franca of all in the north and north-west India.

The 'functional hierarchy' on which Rajni Kothary has put so much emphasis had emanated from 'manifold frame of identification' as well as their 'inter-dependence'. This inter-dependence often over-lapped with each other facilitating the process for unification. Mixtures in manifold could also be possible due to this inter-dependence. Since all types of rigidity were avoided a society, loosely stitched

could emerge. To achieve this all the groups or units always avoided to discard those shades of identification which might have hurt the sentiments of the others. This is also applicable to the different units of independent India. All the constituent provinces do not have identical interests. Protection and up-keeping of the interests of respective states are the primary political agenda of the states. In many cases these create tension and shabby quarrel among them. Still the flame and heat never reach such a proposition which is impossible to douse. This practice remains all along for which Indian federation works.

1.8 Political Factors

Already social and cultural aspects have been dealt with. Other important façade of this unity is political. The British rulers used to claim that fragmented India could be brought under a single rule for the use of the English language and the railways. The role played by the railways cannot be denied. But the English could be understood and spoken by a factional part of the Indian population. During the freedom struggle the leaders from different parts of India could assemble on a single platform to draw a common agenda. The sense of nationalism did not develop among the masses. But they a vast majority of whom were illiterate followed ritualistically their leaders whoever they may be and came from whichever part of India. Nobody should be oblivious of the prevailing schism among the leaders about the means and procedures of the movements. All were overcome without any significant turmoil excepting the divisive final phase. The two-nation theory ultimately divided the country, and the Indian nationhood acquired its ultimate shape. Still the essence of the theory which divided India failed to corrupt nationalism of the Indians. People in the newly emerged nation quickly dumped that ideology and embraced all in providing that sense of unity which had been the guiding principle during the days of struggle.

Independent India could draw her constitution by keeping regional differences at a bay. Regional aspirations were honoured in free India. To achieve a state based on language Patti Sriramalu's sacrifice set a new trend. A number of states in later days were formed to honour the aspirations and wishes of the people of the regions. Division of Punjab into two was necessitated for the same reason. But the state of India as a single unit was never challenged. The motive of the leaders of free India was to present a welfare state and that became the principal plank of various political parties. Elections were fought to achieve the same. Democracy and democratically

elected institutions' pivotal role in this field have been immense. People from across the length and breadth of this land participates in the elections without any hesitation to be ruled by a bunch of representatives not necessarily from one's own region. The sense of national unity prevailed over regional identity.

1.9 Summary

The Planning Commission envisaged during the freedom struggle was nourished for an over-all growth of the country. To do so resources from one region were shifted to another with a view to provide a uniform development of the country as a whole. But sometimes divisive prospects also haunt the entire process. Those can simply be termed as fissures. The leaders having various shades of opinions from extreme right to extreme left finally understood the value of tradition in the daily life of the people. They embarked with such political agenda which subtly or broadly focused towards caste, creed, and language and so on.

1.10 Questions

- (i) Discuss in detail the multiple dimensions associated with Indian civilization. (10 marks)
- (ii) Explain the influence of foreign invasions on Indian culture and civilization. (10 marks)
- (iii) Briefly discuss the historical background of Indian civilization. (5 marks)
- (iv) Analyse the role of Indian constitution in shaping the political framework of country. (5 marks)

1.11 Suggested Readings

- (i) India after Gandhi by Ramachandra Guha.
- (ii) The Discovery of India by Jawaharlal Nehru.
- (iii) The Argumentative Indian by Amartya Sen.
- (iv) The Great Partition by Yasmin Khan.
- (v) India : Brief History of a Civilization by Thomas R. Trautmann (2015)

- (vi) Society and Culture In India : Their Dynamics through the Ages by Indra Deva, Shrirama (2018)
- (vii) Ancient India and Indian Civilization by P. Masson-Ousel, P. Stern, H. Willman-Grabowska (1996)

1.12 Glossary

- (i) Culture the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.
- (ii) Civilization the stage of human social and cultural development and organization that is considered most advanced.
- (iii) Brahmacharya the first of the four stages (Ashramas) of life.
- (iv) Brahmanas a collection of ancient Indian texts with annotations on the hymns of the four Vedas.

Unit - 2 □ Religious, Linguistic and Cultural Plurality : Unity in Diversity

Structure

- 2.1 Objectives**
- 2.2 Introduction**
- 2.3 India – Land of Diversity**
- 2.4 Colonial Influence – Role of Social Reformers**
- 2.5 Summary**
- 2.6 Model Questions**
- 2.7 Suggested Readings**
- 2.8 Glossary**

2.1 Objectives

- Meaning Of Diversity
- Reasons Behind Diversity, Economic and Social differences
- Brief introduction about unity in diversity

2.2 Introduction

Diverse culture and behaviour could never be placed in an air-tight compartment. So, to rule such a vast country the British policy was to divide the people as efficiently as possible. In a way they succeeded in dividing the country on the basis of faith. Till then India was able to put such a face which could reflect a various universe. No doubt that the indigenous society prior to the arrival of the Muslims was strictly divided along caste line and in majority of cases caste depended on occupations. The Dharmashastras prescribed different rules for the upper and lower caste. Untouchability was practiced and colonies of the castes in very lower strata away from the village were very common. Still the caste rules and their applications

varied according to local conditions. The artisan- producer might be untouchable but the produce of his or her were necessarily not so. This custom prevailed for centuries which also put impetus to the production systems. Social orders were such which conducted the production systems and finally established a feudal order. Surprisingly, lands were awarded to the Brahmins who by rule were not allowed to plough. They had to depend on the hired labour who incidentally was in the lower strata. The sense of 'class' as defined in the Marxist doctrine was absent. Caste was the basis and was accepted for centuries together without any major modification. Even the intrusion of foreign elements could hardly change it. How did so many element converge into a unitary one- is a matter to be surprised. "the eclectic rather than proselytizing style of spiritual integration characteristic of India tradition; the absence of either a unifying and continuous secular tradition; and above all, a highly differentiated social system that has brought functional hierarchies, spatial distinctions and ritual distance into a manifold frame of identification and inter-dependence." (Rajani Kothari; State Against Democracy; In Search of Humane Governance. Delhi, 1988. Pp 155-56.)

2.3 India – Land of Diversity

India is the only country where nearly all major religions of the present day are practiced as well as preached. We may find such scenario in some other countries but language spoken is more or less same which not the situation in India is. Here, religious and linguistic diversities are very prominent. Still India is united. Continuity of tradition in nearly original forms is very normal. Indian society has been evolving with some set practices and orders. These are the combination of multiple units and sometimes their factions. Needless to say that the villages are caste-based. But their power to absorb a lot of foreign elements is immense. Outward appearance may vary from one to another but basic tenets of family life remain more or less similar. Though professions of the inhabitants differ from each other, livelihood seldom. Religious ceremonies, rituals during a marriage etc.; were identical though the class of priests differed. This is the strength which helps the Indian social stricture remain intact. Juxtaposition of fragments of historical traditions has created a unipolar system by absorbing social, political, economic, and cultural units.

The constitution of the free India allows all to practice his or her own faith individually and in assembly. Secularism is the hallmark of Indian polity. This

secularism means that the state allows all and does not remain thoroughly neutral. However, the people here use to stay beside each other for centuries together. It is true that Buddhism and Jainism like Sikhism are treated as the part of broader Hinduism. Similar some smaller faith are also viewed in the same manner. Others, which are opposed to Hinduism include Islam and Christianity. Islam arrived here more than a millennium so does Christianity. Since Islam could occupy state power its roots are sphere extended too deep and too broad. This was not the case with Christianity. After colonizing India the East India Company also tried to promote mass conversion with a hope that similarity in faith between the ruler and the ruled would secure their position permanently. But all of the efforts went into vein. Here lies the success of Islam.

What is often not clarified in this mode of classifying the religious traditions is whether their classification under one or the other of these two categories derives from antiquity or if it is a recent invention and what were the specific circumstances in which they came to be so classified.' (Imtiaz Ahmed; 'Basic Conflict of 'We' and 'They' between Religious Traditions, between Hindus, Muslims and Christians in India 'in Imtiaz Ahmad and ors.ed.s. Pluralism and Equality : Values in Indian Society and Politics. New Delhi, 2000. P.157)

The historians have culled huge amount of literature and epigraphic evidences emanating from past and suggest the construction of religious traditions in terms of a sharp divide of either mutual tolerance as supposed to be existed among different groups of people. Customs and behavioural patterns of people for centuries remain more or less similar still today. Even from the names and surnames of a person or individuals one can identify one's religion and caste too. Since the period concept of society emerged four categories of names commonly used were : ethnic names derived from tribal or names of community, names derived from the country of origin, honorific and generic terms already used with reference to outsiders. It is also said that these terms do not follow any evolutionary pattern. It is a common believe that the Muslims did also find place in such terms like 'yavana', 'tājika', 'mlechha' etc. in the ancient Sanskrit texts. But this was not so. All the intruders and not followers of the established faith were identified with such terms.

Similarly, inscriptions and literary works of ancient Persian and Arabic sources attest to the relative absence of an essentialised representation of Hindus as a reified religious group or community. (Imtiaz Ahmad. P. 159). Then how the term 'Hindu' came into existence? It has become well-known that this very term denotes

geographical origin i.e.' the people residing on the banks of the river Sindhu (Sindh or Indus) were called the Hindus by foreigners. Initially by this term some people residing in a place were identified and not that by their own faith. But with the passing of time the terms 'Hindu' as well as 'Hinduism' was related to the adherents of a faith. Subsequently even ethnic, sectarian or caste was determined with such terms which are closely and solely related to religions.

In a broader perspective terms like Brahmana, Rajput, Syed, Sheikh etc. though have religious affiliations, commonly understood to have caste or ethnic origins. As and when ethnicity got prominence, it is believed that the Hindus and Muslims, the most populous communities fought among themselves more than between them. During the formative years the Muslims tried to maintain their 'purity' in a conquered land but to extend power and to retain sovereignty this trend lost ground. Though a 'true' Muslim used to believe that as a philosophy Islam stood opposite to Hinduism and as a result never they could meet. Too and often the 'ulema' tried to convince and force rulers at Delhi to order mass conversion or to face death. But none obliged. Since the rulers had their own agenda they normally used to maintain a status quo. No doubt, some overzealous rulers showed bigotry but, they were few in number. Due to such atmosphere the Hindus and Muslims used to stay together. Same stories were repeated if one goes through the history of the Sikhs. Their rise was to save the down-trodden and oppressed. Oppression by state and also by upper caste and privileged people was normal. Fight between the Sikhs and the Mughal state from the reign of Jahangir was too bloody. Even the Guru was tortured and beheaded. Still a bond among people remained.

From certain compulsions and social churning Guru Nanak in the late 15th century united some fragmented tribes and some marginal people from the Hindu society and preached a new faith. No worship of deity is the hallmark of his religion. The new faith called Sikhism (Sikh meant disciple) which within a very short span became popular in the north and north-west of India. Similar was the appeal of Sant Ravidas, a messiah of the untouchables. These new faiths opened gateway of salvation to a large section of masses who due to primarily for their low caste could not participate in religious programmes. The Sikhism posed serious problems to the mighty Mughals. Some Gurus laid down their lives. But the unitary force of the religion and the teachings of self-righteousness prevailed for which after so many battles with the Mughals and the East India Company the Sikhism is vibrant with its cultural ethos.

2.4 Colonial Influence – Role of Social Reformers

This condition continued for centuries and still prevails. Under the colonial rule aberrations became prominent. It was the policy of the colonial masters, especially from the days when seeds for freedom movement was sown, to divide the people on the basis of creed and caste. But the very term 'Unity in diversity' was coined by Vincent Smith, a civilian cum historian of India in the 1920s. By these words he must have mentioned the unitary nature of the Indian society and not the British state system here. Even this unity was not the creation of the Indian nation post 1947. A deep sense of unity amidst its socio-cultural diversity had been detected by Vincent Smith, the civilian cum historian. The British could only bring such diverse elements within a broad administrative and territorial unit. Presence of innumerable big and small, even miniscule ethnic groups with their language, sometimes not in script; religions again sometimes only in forms of totem did not prevent people in sharing their territories with others. Some of these groups or tribes had fought with the foreigners to protect their own identities and lost. Their defeat in war field failed to dilute their traditions and cultural roots within a bigger world.

In free India Jawaharlal Nehru decided to give equal weightage to all the traditions and ethnic values. While describing the position under Nehru for preserving the traditional Indian philosophy in 'new' India Prof. S. Gopal once mentioned that "This will also help us to see what truth is in the oft-repeated charge that India has never been a nation and was always a prey to anarchy and invasion till the British came. But even in the remote past there has always been a fundamental unity of India-a unity of common faith and culture." (S. Gopal ed. Jawaharlal Nehru : An Autobiography. New Delhi. 1983. P. 8). It has been widely admitted that heterogeneity within Indian society and culture had not been a new import. It was the principal thread of unity of this great race. It is the historical evolution of the Indian society and its socio-cultural traditions are eclectic spiritual integration. This integration was made possible mostly by voluntary submission and that too by not a total discard of individualism. Hence, local sub-cultures and an intermittent, unstable and discontinuous political centre continued to stay. Such diverse features went into making a plural 'multi-centre' social tradition, keeping the great variety and heterogeneity in a 'continuous pattern of coexistence'.

In India major traditions had their roots in religions, a vast number of which were active for long. Often religion and its practices were subtly inter-woven with

caste. Primarily within the Hindu social order occupational castes have their own and distinct faith. This faith has worked as a primary binder of the community. In the process presence of 'gotra' also had its share of contribution. Innumerable village with people professing identical 'gotra' still exist. The 'gotra' gives a sense of social unity which very rarely could be ignored. Since the day one when indigenous society had been taking shape both family and relations grew simultaneously. Tradition in India was and still is to accommodate all the elements from outside. Though family life was guided strictly by certain rules framed within scriptures those sometimes became corrupt due to inflow of foreign elements.

One aspect of Hinduism is the absence of a well-worked out theory or practice. 'The culture of the low castes incorporated forms of worship and practice which differed from that of the high castes, leading to a fundamental dichotomy between notions of Sanskritic Hinduism and popular Hinduism.' (Imtiaz Ahmad; op.cit. p.161). But the Sanskrit sourced do not provide a single model but many model some of which stand opposed to each other. For this the philosophical tenets do not provide a singular mode of practice and worship, but a lot of numbers. Consequently, orthodoxy either within texts or in practice is absent. This is the tradition of India. But irony remains in the other form. Liberal though in religious thought social customs continue to be rigid. Social stratification in some parts of India is still serious as well as severe. Untouchability continues through every Indian enjoys right to vote and to be elected. Acquisition of high ministerial berth even through democratic process has failed to remove the caste stigma. Some reputed temples also refuse entry of the untouchables. Gandhi started a movement of temple entry for every Indian and also promoted depressed communities. He used to call the untouchables, 'Harijan' meaning sons of the god and started publishing a paper in the same nomenclature. But all his efforts failed to improve the situation.

Growth in English educated population in the late-19th century brought some radical changes. The process had already been continuing since the days of Rammohan and the Young Bengal movement in the 1830s in Bengal. After 1857 and with the establishment of three universities in three Presidencies urge for western education grew and with its westernized people started leading social life. It is true that their presence was limited within urban areas. But those urban intellectuals sowed the seeds of modern India. Whether it was Rama Krishna Pranhansa, Keshab Chandra Sen, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Dayananda, Madhav Govind Ranade and men like them or Sir Syed Ahmad Khan the goal was to cultivate modern thinking. Religious reform movements stimulated cultural rejuvenation. Previously, in the name of

orientalist learning the hidden policy to establish superiority of the occident had been subtly undertaken. But the second half of the 19th century India started to identify its own strength. In that way the western influence was much deeper primarily the coastal regions and the regions where the Hindus highly outnumbered the Muslims or where as in Bengal the Hindus occupied influential positions (Sumit Sarkar; *Modern Times : India 1880s - 1950s..* New Delhi, 2018 p. 311).

But it will be wrong to think that the Muslims lagged far behind. Prof. Sumit Sarkar understands that their position in the western United Province (now Uttar Pradesh) was an exception. With a rich Urdu cultural background the Muslim 'asraf' gentry constituted cultured gentry there. Before 1857, the policy of the government was to act in tandem with them for which association of the Urdu-speaking Hindus joined hand with the Muslims and established the Delhi College. There Urdu was the medium of instruction even in the Science faculty which had still been not possible in Calcutta or in Bombay. But the rebellion of 1857 changed the entire environment. The Hindus were now favoured by the government and on account of pressure from the communal elements within the Hindus the Persian was replaced by Hindi in nagri script in the law courts. This official change brought such cultural milieu which ultimately divided the elites first and then the masses in northern India.

Some enlightened in India viewed the progress of the west (to them it was primarily Europe and most probably excluding its eastern part with Russia) due to the presence of secular ideas. One contingent feature of European social order after secularism became established as the principle of social and political life was tolerance. Since the late 19th century intellectuals started adorning secular values. These secular ideas had been practiced and that too very radically by some students of the then Hindu College in Calcutta. They were called the 'Young Bengal' or the Derozians (the pupils of the young professor, Henry Louis Vivian Derozio of the College). But these chosen few failed to popularize their ideas. Secular ideas were propagated chiefly by the western educated few who used to stay and preach in the urban areas. With the birth of Indian National Congress Indian could achieve the first goal i.e.; a political platform which could accommodate all views. Still regional divides along with caste division persisted.

Both religion and caste could make deep impact in India's social and political life in the initial decades of 20th century. Often people from the down-trodden castes within the Hindus and the minorities looked on going freedom struggle at askance. The debate of majority versus minority, in fact, had its origin in the 1880s with the birth of the Congress. The leading figures of the Congress were chiefly high-caste

educated Hindus though a few like Dadabhai Naoroji or Badriddin Tayebji could be found. Formation of the Indian National Congress in a sense fuelled suspicion in the minds among the minorities. In 1906 some leading Muslims formed their own political platform, the Muslim League to protect their interest. Bengal was partitioned in 1905 in such a manner by which the newly created province of Eastern Bengal and Assam could have a Muslim majority. The demand for annulment of the partition and a vigorous movement for it made some leading Muslims nervous. They chose to have their own political agenda and a party. Formation of the Muslim League was meant for that. In 1909 to place their demand of separate electorate for the proposed Council elections they led by Aga Khan met the Viceroy at Simla and finally succeeded in achieving their goal. This was the beginning of a politics based on faith, hitherto unknown here. When the minority, Muslims could convince the colonial masters the down-trodden among the Hindus followed suit.

The Census of 1931 identified and listed the untouchables and other castes in the lowest strata of the Hindu society. Meantime the Congress led by Gandhi had started civil disobedience movement. To tackle the movement and to bring some changes in governance the government called for a round table conference at London. In face of this Dr. B. R. Ambedkar raised the issue of the depressed classes. He demanded for separate electorate for them. The Congress raised strong objection but failed to convince any of the parties. Previously it was religion which divided the Indian 'unity' and now it was the turn of the caste. For such atmosphere social coherence started disappearing.

Now religion along with caste raised their heads and with passing of each day the gulf between the majority 'Hindu' and the minority began to widen. Now to the depressed castes started distancing themselves from the upper castes who got a sudden degree of solace in the freedom struggle and projected themselves as sole spokesmen of their entire community. But the depressed people did not subscribe to that position. Hence the gulf could not be narrowed least to fill. Even Gandhi's fast and subsequent Poona Pact somehow brought peace. But the break between 'majority' Hindus representing high and intermediary castes and 'minority' Hindu consisting of down-trodden remained. In the far south, especially present Tamil Nadu a rich literary and cultural tradition laced knitted with religious fervour' emerge on closer look as significantly different in implications from the cult of Tamil (Mother Tamil) in the '20th century (Sumit Sarkar, op.cit. p. 331) It is well-known that the earlier part of the 19th century the Tamil officials used to write an official letter in Persian, land deals etc. in Marathi, study music in Telugu, performed religious

offerings in Sanskrit and correspond among themselves in Tamil. But with the passing of time vernacular was popularized which brought the people closer while enriching the language itself. (Sumit Sarkar, op.cit. p. 331) Growth of some vernaculars like Oriya and Assamese had nearly the same history though both were nourished to oppose Bengali which had been in use in government offices and in law courts. These are some broad features of the growth of regional linguistics and culture in some parts of the country. But in the other way these changes also sowed seeds of division.

It has been widely believed that due to the policies of the colonial rulers Indian social fabric got punctured. But the Indian social order which was also closely linked with economy as well as education also had a distinct role. Social reform movements though spearheaded in some parts of the country and religious reforms like the Brahmo and Arya Samaj movements could only brought changes in limited scale. Basic arrangements continued to be unchanged. The leaders of the Congress were aware of the situations but could do nothing to amend. Moreover since the days of the Swadeshi Movement under current of hatred for the Muslims started flowing among the majority community. During those days Bengal had its pre-eminence both in politics and in culture. The divide could not be healed though Bengal was reunited in 1911. This situation ultimately alienated the Muslim minority from the main stream politics. Gandhi's movements enthused large number of people but association with the Muslims is still not beyond question. To mend the fence the Congress leaders jumped into action and that too during 1937-39 consequent to the implementation of the Government of India Act of 1935. Here again, its sphere of action was limited in the then United Provinces, Bihar and Bombay where it formed governments on its own. Then it tried to gain confidence from all, especially of the Muslims. But that was too late.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah's rise and his Two-Nation theory finally triumphed. India has a long history of rule of minority communities who came from outside but prior to the invasion of the English all invading mass adopted India as their own land. Oppressions of several kind for generations failed to divide India. But twentieth century witnessed the power of religion and community on the basis of which a new state Pakistan was born. Akbar S. Ahmed while describing the Pakistan movement writes, 'Pakistan meant more than just territory, more than a defined area with boundaries. Pakistan meant a culmination of a Muslim movement rooted in history.' (Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity : The Search for Saladin. Karachi, 1997. P. xviii) Hence, the sense of separation on the basis of religion had not been a new nor novel phenomenon.

Free India inherited the politics based on religion and caste. It is true that with the creation of Pakistan and partition of the Punjab and Bengal huge number of Muslims went to Pakistan. But the Hindu minority in the newly-created state had to migrate into India as they were not treated there on equal term. This created new problems. As free India adopted secularism and the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy right to vote was given to all. Though Pakistan was created on the basis of religion all the Muslims did not leave India. Now they decided to protect their interest. On the other hand, the Hindu majority was not truly united. The depressed class within it along with the tribes enjoyed reservations both in legislature and in government employments. This was a huge task and the leaders dealt this as efficiently as possible otherwise India could have been Balkanised.

With the growth of communication and spread of the Aryans in the deep of the Gangetic Valley two major things happened. First, the Aryan social order was constantly increased with involvements of several tribes and groups whom the Aryans were able to conquer. Secondly, stratification process was initiated. The true and pure Aryans constituted their own society who demanded service and various obligations from those who had been subjugated. This social discrimination was so strict that the vanquished tribes who were the original inhabitants of the land had lost all the social, economic and political power. The Dasa was only to serve the people in the higher echelon and to carry out their dictates. Oppressive rules were inflicted to keep the social order intact. But this failed to survive for eternity. Aspirations of the people in the lower strata and accumulation of resource pursued them to think otherwise. Apart from this marriage among the communities also facilitated a social change. Ownership patterns of land could not be changed but trading activities plated havoc. From the Dasas grew the Vaisya, the trading community who could increasingly command the resources available. Expansion in territorial limits of the kingdoms expanded the communication network too. Regions in the farthest areas were gradually accessible. Administrative requirements paved the establishment of markets where mutual connections among various types of people could also be established. Economic expansion ushered in new mode of religious performance by discarding the earlier forms where huge Yagnas with animal sacrifice was a must to the privileged ones. Those for long had been denied to take part in such rituals now demanded their shares. They now adopted a novel mode without any serious tremor.

The period around sixth century B. C. E. Mahavira, the Jain monk and Goutama Buddha initiated newer methods of religious performance. Both of them renounced earlier forms and practices. Instead they preached universal tolerance by which

social divisions lost importance. The Jainism could not spread itself in major parts of India and it was limited primarily among the trading communities in the western and some portions of the peninsular India. But the message of Buddha got such acceptance in many parts of the continent that ultimately India has been known as the land of Buddha. It used the language of common men in spreading its messages. Prakrit or Pali assumed the position of lingua franc. Hence, Buddhism was not confined in a particular place neither within a particular community. Its appeal broke all the barriers and in one way unified a lot. From the days of imperial Magadha Buddha started gaining relevancy not only in religious or social but also in political lives of people. Under Asoka state patronage took such a turn that diplomacy also revolved around the tenets of Goutama Buddha. This unique feature in the Indian statecraft when education was too limited made this land a place of surprise to the outsiders. The phenomenal growth in the Buddhism made its position vulnerable even within its followers. India in the dawn of the reckoning under Common Era assumed enviable position by absorbing several foreign elements within it. Alexander's invasion in the fourth century B. C. E. and subsequent connections established by a number of tribes far away from India. Regular communications and trading activities reached their height during the rule of the Kushanas who themselves were of foreign origin. In course of time, the Buddhism was adopted a number of countries where Indian culture got easy acceptance.

The Buddhism opened huge avenues of learning, painting sculpture and also architecture. "The art and architecture of Burma, (Myanmar), Thailand, Korea, Japan, and China, and hence world art, would be much poorer without Buddhist motifs developed under Indian influence." (Kosambi; *The Culture and Civilisation...* p. 96) Wide influence of India upon the daily life and spiritual world of a number of countries since the days of the Mauryas remains an accepted fact. It is a fact that the statecraft in Tibet till 1959 remained under a strong Buddhist influence. A number of countries in central and South East Asia not only adopted Buddhism but used to believe that Buddhism had been the guiding force of their civilization. Most of the classical Mongol and Tibetan literature were nothing but offshoots of Buddhist literature and philosophy. Not just religion but the way of life was also guided by the same philosophy. A number of temples, monasteries in numbers of countries in the South East Asia still carry traditional rituals with great reverence. Though Buddhism has lost its place in central Asia presence of a huge number of ruined stupas (relic monuments) and recently destroyed gigantic statue of Buddha in the Bamian cave in Afghanistan are the relics of Indian influence in various forms.

In the spiritual world India's presence got acceptance in a far away land and among the races of different source. Buddhism 'not only influenced Manichaeism but must earlier have helped in the formation of Christianity. The scholars who wrote the Dead Sea scrolls. Though good Jews, show peculiarities that appear to be of Buddhist origin. Their practice of living in a monastery almost on top of a necropolis would be repulsive to Judaism, though quite agreeable to Buddhists. The 'Teacher of Righteousness' mentioned in the documents of this (probably Essene) Palestinian foundation bears the precise title of the Buddha. It is not, therefore, surprising that the Sermon on the Mount should sound more familiar to Buddhists than to the followers of the Old Testament who first heard it preached.' (Kosambi; op.cit. pp. 96-7). Often Buddhist principles got precedence over a Semitic faith. Religious and some traditional practices even in Arabia were emanated from Buddhism. Achievements of Indian thought and practices could be possible due to the strength of adaptability taught in Indian philosophy, and here lies its success.

The strong message of Buddhism encompassing all the segments of a social order infused required vitality within it. Ultimately, India's way of life was transported to those lands. In this way Asoka became a name to reckon with in faraway lands when the venerated monarch had lost all his glory within India. More significant is the fact that after a near total eclipse of Buddhism itself in its place of origin it survives still in some of those countries. Through the rise, growth and its decline Buddhism transformed a tribal society into a monarchy with absolute authority and then to feudalism. India was able to maintain a close co-habitation of monarchy with oligarchy and finally with republic in the shapes of sixteen mahajanapadas (principalities or/ and kingdoms) Buddha himself arrived during those days. Rise of Magadhan Empire wiped out small kingdoms and presented an economy under which trade and commerce could flourish. Creation of wealth was started and communication with various regions developed. These acted as conditions for a unified social order covering a number of regional practices. First Jainism and then Buddhism assumed the thread for unifications. Success story of the latter has already been mentioned. But none can deny the role played by Jainism which still being practiced by a good number of people in the western and southern parts of India. Apart from these major two there were others too, most important of whom were the Ajivikas. For the absence of stories of mutual hatred the prevailing peace and respect for each other helped in developing schism in society. It was not a novel one. Since the days of composition of scriptures questions were raised by the Charvakas who sometimes challenged the presence of all-powerful being. Their arguments though

not so popular but were churned in many ways. Finally, majoritarian views had to incorporate some of the core ideas coming out from different sources.

Side by side Jainism and Buddhism a school of monotheistic order also got credence. It is not surprising that the Vedic rituals and Brahminical practices as preached through the Brahmans could not overshadow the Upanishadic teachings. Importance of the Upanishads can be judged when one traces the rise of the Brahmo movement in the 19th century Bengal. A learned as well as modern man like Rammohan Ray took refuge under the tenets of the Upanishads while fighting the Christian missionaries working for conversions in India. Rammohan discarded idolatry without having moral and scriptural support from the Christians who were hell-bent in discrediting Hinduism. To the foreign masters, particularly in the 19th century Indians were nothing but fallen children of some glorious clans once who could nurture civilized way of living. Rammohan and then others like Swami Vivekananda, Keshab Chandra Sen, Swami Dayananda to name a few after him took cudgels to establish the vibrant nature of the Indian civilization. Their motive was to establish such an identity of India which was able to adopt everything good and vibrant and to rectify the anomalies as and when required.

India also went through the days of Sankaracharya whose primary aim was to clear all the misgivings of Hinduism. In doing so he decided to demolish all the practicing religions prevalent during his time and to present a unified character of his 'India'. In a way Brahminical superiority was established. Along with this position Sanskrit regained its position. In theory the Vedic texts remained immutable, Sanskrit as living language had started adoption of regional variations. Cultural changes predominated by not affecting core points. "High culture was associated with the elites at various courts and focused on the aesthetics expressed in creative literature, sculpture, architecture and philosophy, together with their style of life. Quite apart from the elite, it was also assumed that ordinary people were materially well off, with little to complain about." (Thaper; Early India. p. 280). But complaints were there. Sanskritisation of all phases of life certainly affected the people living in lower strata of society.

Starting from the period covering the 5th and 6th century C. E. caste became dominant. The Brahmins could own land but could not plough. Engaging hired labour was essential for food production. Similarly, a variety of occupations gave birth to a number of occupational castes some of whom were clean and the rest unclean. Varied nature of local customs prevailed and for this occupational castes

barring some could be involved in the social structure. Another very important difference made distinct change in their status in the north and in the peninsular India. The Dravid community's adoption of certain Aryan values and above all language for rituals brought them closer to the Aryan core pattern. Though social customs did not match religious ceremonies acquired similarities gradually. Through these a pan-Indian fabric could be weaved.

Wealth of India and internal strife, particularly in the north allured foreigners for long. Within a very short period after the death of Mohammad western India was invaded by the rising Muslims from Arabia. Its effect was nothing. But with the beginning of the 8th century India's north-west became an easy prey of the invaders. The onus in protecting the borders was assumed by the Rajputs who became champions in protecting the Brahmins and also cow. Now these became viewed as performance for Dharma which must be the Karma. In this way Hinduism began to be practiced. But the very origin of the Rajputs was not beyond dispute as it was widely believed that their ancestors were first Hunas and then Gurjar-Pratiharas. With this hazy ancestry they were considered the standard-bearers of the Hindus in face of constant threats. In one way divergent culture and way of life became integral part of Indian scenario.

Islam after a long and bloody endeavor could succeed in occupying India. Their arrival put Hinduism in a challenge. Plunder and destruction of places of worship and conversion jeopardized the established social order. But in spite of several attempts and those for several centuries basic structure of the Indian society remained more or less the same. Though some Brahminical privileges were threatened orthodoxy practiced as a way of compensation. Traditional Hindu society was now strictly compartmentalised. Caste became synonym of class. The ruling community was by and large warrior and learned cleric. On the other hand, the general administration and particularly, financial one with trade and commerce became monopolized by some communities within the Hindus. These close contacts sometimes opened avenues for co-operation. In face of the Indian traditions the invaders could hardly remain pure. They saw the classification of their society into Asraf elite) and Azlaf (commoner) sections. Hence, social division remained too distinct in both the communities. Dominance of upper caste or ancestry whichever suits shaped the community behavior of both Hindus and Muslims. This continued for generations. Even the more powerful and 'enlightened' foreign rulers in the late 18th and 19th centuries failed to alter. But these divisions could not deter the cultural unification which can be considered the soul of Indian civilization.

Contact with Islam helped to develop some social patterns. The Hindus were too much involved with caste of a person for which India had failed to innovate technological devices. Occupational castes were considered lower for which scope of their mental upliftment was too remote. The Muslims were least concerned with caste. They were interested in production for which slaves were set free for their greater service to the masters. When the growth from below was accepted then liberal attitude towards faith was also encouraged. With the spread of Sunni faith schism also developed since 8th century. Hence, traditional Islam arrived with Sufi saints. These saints were often opposed to the Koran and Hadith and were determined to preach the sermon of universal love. They were greeted in India since the Bhakti cult had already been practiced here. The Bhakti movement was originated in the South revolving Siva. This practice transported to the Gangetic provinces during the Tripartite Struggle in the 10th-11th centuries. In the north Bhakti evolved with the worship of Rama and Krishna. Like the Sufis the followers of Bhakti cult tried to demolish caste barriers and made bridge between the two rival communities. Though looked by the leaders of the society at askance appeal of these cults and their saints to the masses cutting all barriers is still vibrant.

2.5 Summary

Several religious movements helped regional languages to grow. A huge number of hagiographies along with prayers sometimes in form of songs and music produced huge amount of literary works. Songs like Bhajanas and Qwalies enthused mass participation irrespective of religion, gender and language. In a way traditional as well as classical literary works lost importance to the works composed eulogizing the cult. Islam also brought a new language in India. Initially, it was Arabic. But during the Mughals Persian became the court language and a new one, Urdu emerged for the masses. This became a lingua franc

India is a land of any languages derived from opposing cultural entities as we have noted earlier. The languages chiefly spoken on the north of the Vindhya had their origins in the Aryan group of languages either in closer or in distant way. But the languages spoken in the peninsular India are quite different. In a number of surveys, it has been proved that spoken words though vary within a mere 1 to 15 kilometers the scripts are uniform. This script helps people in a wider perspective to remain united for centuries.

2.6 Questions

- (i) Explain how India has portrayed the problem of Unity and diversity in its socio-cultural structure. (10 marks)
- (ii) Discuss in details the challenges to cultural unity in India. (10 marks)
- (iii) How regional diversity saves the ancient Indian culture ? (5 marks)
- (iv) Why is India known as a Museum of many races ? (5 marks)

2.7 Suggested Readings

- (i) Unity in Diversity : The Indian Experience in Nation-Building by M.S. Gore
- (ii) India : Unity in Diversity by T. K. Suman Kumar Indian Society : Unity in Diversity by Ajay Shah
- (iii) Unity in Diversity by O.P. Ghai
- (iv) Unity in Diversity : The Indian Experience in Nation-building by M.S.Gore
- (v) Godbout, Adelard (April 1943), “Canada : Unity in Diversity”, Foreign Affairs, 21 (3): 452–461, doi : 10.2307/20029241, JSTOR 20029241
- (vi) Kalin, Ibrahim (2004a), “Ibn al-Arabi, Muhyi al-Din”, in Phyllis G. Justice (ed.), Holy People of the World : A Cross-cultural Encyclopaedia, ABC-CLIO, pp. 385–386, ISBN 9781576073551

a. Glossary

- (i) Diversity — Diversity is defined as individual differences between groups based on such things as :
 1. Abilities
 2. Age
 3. Disability
 4. learning styles
 5. life experiences

6. neurodiversity
 7. race/ethnicity
 8. class
 9. gender
 10. sexual orientation
 11. country of origin
 12. cultural, political or religious affiliation
 13. any other difference
- (ii) Equality — The term “Equality” (in the context of diversity) is typically defined as treating everyone the same and giving everyone access to the same opportunities. It is sometimes used as an alternative to “inclusion”.

Unit - 3 □ Great Traditions and Little Traditions

Structure

3.1 Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Social Revolution

3.4 Social Orders

3.5 Role of Eminent Anthropologists

3.6 Integration of Village

3.7 Influence of State

3.8 Summary

3.9 Questions

3.10 Suggested Readings

3.11 Glossary

3.1 Objectives

- To study the contribution of eminent anthropologists
- Life history of anthropologists
- Theories and concepts emphasized/propounded by them

3.2 Introduction

India has acquired a unique position where traditions, religious customs and rituals are intact. With the passing of time the Indians steadfastly tried to absorb all available customs in their daily life. Hence, the Vedic rituals though in modified forms, the Jain and Buddhist customs in different and sometimes in contradictory modes, the Islamic customs and those also in two broad arms are still practiced by the people. Number of non-believers and atheists are microscopic meagre. Since the

number of the Hindus is overwhelmingly high in respect of others their dominance in the social and cultural lives are imminent. Here, in India religious customs in too and many occasions are allied with daily life in inseparable ways. Not necessarily the followers of this faith use to follow the religious dictums as the other principal religions ask their respective followers to do. But the vast number of people following the Hinduism have already embraced the rituals as the customs of their daily life. These have been going on since the time immemorial. The traditional Hindu social order was created and then historically maintained to preserve the caste system which is largely based on individual professions. In preserving this pattern the Hindus have failed to honour the merit of individual barring him or her to proceed or ascend the other caste. It is nothing less than a stigma in society.

3.3 Social Revolution

Now the question arises whether the social orders could be torn apart to accommodate others who do not belong to that strata of the society. We know that Mahavir, the Tirthankar and Goutam Buddha initiated a social revolution through which mainly the intermediary castes were able to break certain traditions. Their movements assumed such importance that people, irrespective of wealth and social standing embraced those religions. Even some very powerful and authoritarian rulers also converted themselves in those faiths. They acquired the status of 'religion of protests'. The protest was against the traditional customs which had been preventing the enterprising members in the lower strata of society to move forward. No doubt that those movements ushered in a new way of life in the sub-continent. This was not confined only in rituals and customs but could make headway in creating noteworthy cultural and intellectual atmosphere. But rejuvenated traditional forces succeeded in the fourth/ fifth century in dislodging the above two. Since then the social orders were built up in such a way where scripture values started dominating. Interesting enough the scriptures did never acquire a universal acceptance.

With the passing of time dominance of the north and central Indian traditions as well as culture gained ground. The land called 'Aryavarta' had and still has strong differences with the land of the 'Dravida's. Not only linguistics and costumes but also food habits along with mode of worship are sharply different. With the arrival of the Muslims a different religion with its culture also available. Hitherto unknown traditions and behavioural patterns could be found. Primarily the Rajputs fought with the invaders and tried to prevent their suzerainty in the north and the central parts

of India. They failed. Their failure was chiefly due to their segregations from each other. The Rajputs were divided into several clans and fought for years to put the opposite clan under one's dominance. These clan divisions had emanated from their age-old belief relating to their respective lineage. Inter-mixture in any form was strongly discouraged. Hence, each one of these clans had developed their own cultural identity.

Emergence of different units within the indigenous communities did not confine within the 'Aryavarta' but also spread out in the peninsular India apart from the east and the Deccan. Rapid spread of Islam chiefly in the eastern India with the growth of agriculture and reclamation of un-inhabited parts once full of forests and riverine marshes helped to develop a mixed culture. With the arrival of traditional Islamic order some strong dissenting force within also made their presence felt. The Sufies in various orders (Silsila) were very active particularly in the rural life of India. On the other side, the cult of 'Bhakti' which broke the jinx of established rituals and religious customs within the Hinduism found wide acceptance among the downtrodden and the people of the lower order. All such orders juxtaposed in many forms created a new social dimension which by itself became a new cult. They did not, even do net present uniformity. From region to region and from caste to caste such practices vary.

For centuries a large number of tribal communities had been able to protect their identities and customs. In some cases though they were absorbed in the traditional social as well as religious orders they seldom discard their way of life. At least one very common example in their assimilation with the traditional faith can be cited. It is commonly believed that the deity of Lord Jagannath of Puri had its origin in the religious practice of the Sabar community of ancient Odhisa. The Sabars can still be found in limited number. Adoption of the deity or the religious culture of marginalized community far away from the traditional Indian social order proves the power and strength of it in those days. But irony lays elsewhere. Presently, the Sabars don't worship their deity and the Lord Jagannath has become a symbol of ritual for innumerable numbers who follow traditional faith.

3.4 Social Orders

Social orders take shape when response from one of its members is given by his or her fellows living more or less in same environment and condition. In course of

time, social behaviours generate traditions. The sociologists suggest the reading of Indian culture with the help of two different concepts viz.; 'Little tradition' and 'Great tradition'. This very concept strengthen the idea that the civilization and social as well as cultural organisations have their traditions. Initially agrarian economy and society gave birth of some customs and rituals. They took refuge to nature as for the nature they were living and earning livelihood. All their deities were nature's produce. Hence, totem became inseparably allied with their daily life. This pattern is common throughout the world. With evolution of time various novelties were incorporated which act as the founding stone of modern social systems.

Orthogenetic evolution indicates changes in those areas where internal or indigenous factors work for some very essential changes. On the other hand, heterogenetic contacts indicate those changes which occur due to external contact or interference of outside civilization. Some suggests existence of two levels where the social structure of these civilizations operate, i.e.; at the level of folks or peasants and at the level of elites of 'reflective few'. This has been a continuous phenomenon and ultimately produces a mosaic in society.

Since the agrarian community or the peasants are usually confined in particular pockets of a country they are seldom exposed to outside culture. However, in the course of last one hundred years or so mixture of various cultures and ethnic communities nearly destroyed the rural identities. The folks or the peasants are included under little tradition and great tradition includes the elite groups or 'reflective few'. But it will be wrong the think that they stands strictly on separate alters. Both of these are inter-linked and constantly interact with each other. From such interactions emerge all sorts of changes and growth in cultural structure of traditions. Hence, one may conclude that all civilizations start from a primary or orthogenetic level of cultural organizations. With passing of time both the internal growth and external contacts help to build newer traditions. The society being exposed much to the outside world has been able to modernize itself.

3.5 Role of Eminent Anthropologists

It is known today that Milton Singer and Robert Redfield developed the twin concept of Great Tradition and Little Tradition while studying the orthogenesis of Indian civilization in the then Madras (modern Chennai) city. Tradition means handing down of information, belief and customs by word of mouth in way of

examples from one generation to another. In other words, tradition is the inherited practices or opinion and conventions associated with a social group for a particular period. For constant practice of the usages attitudes of the people take shape. Hence, interactional patterns and socio-cultural institutions emerge for posterity.

Like Milton Singer McKim Marriot also have conducted survey at KishanGhari village of Uttar Pradesh. His field of study covered rural area unlike of Singer. Needless to say that urban society is more exposed to foreign elements vis a vis the rural one. Still McKim found that there is constant interaction between Little and Great Traditions. He concludes that Little Tradition consists of local customs, rites, rituals, dialects and Great Tradition contains legitimate form of all these things.

Traditions in many forms have thus emerged which stitch the social fabric consisting of innumerable units. McKim has found that when Little tradition and Great tradition interact with each other two types of movements are observed – upward and downward. When the elements of Little tradition move upward, McKim calls it as ‘Universalization’ and when some elements of Great tradition move downward it is called as ‘Parochialisation’. This type of interaction is reflected in different areas like village community, caste system and so on. This creates a common cultural consciousness among Indians. The common cultural consciousness has been formed by certain processes and factors such as sacred books, rituals etc. Constant interaction between Little and Great traditions helps in cultural continuity in the face of modernization which sometimes create havoc in established social structure.

As noted earlier India possesses certain degree of uniqueness due to intrusion and assimilation of various foreign elements from time immemorial. Beauty of the Indians is that they had refused to forego their traditional values and beliefs entirely. This could be possible for the constant interaction of Little tradition and Great tradition in various forms.

As we have seen for centuries India has been a place of mixed social and cultural traditions. Multi-ethnicity is the major ethos of this country. In fact, geographical texture and natural produce shaped the livelihood of the people of the region. The evolution of culture, mainly in Indian context is the interplay of two factors the physical environment and the metaphysical ideas. As noted earlier new movements of emerging faiths within the broader world of traditional religious order introduced changes which though very effective but never destructive. The complex

formed from these elements is called as national culture. With the diversified landscape the production of crops varied from each other and thus the India's economic life developed on an agricultural pattern and this had a marked influence on the shaping of her culture as a whole. No doubt, that the foundation of Indian civilization is totally based on agriculture.

Conflict and co-existence of two traditions and cultures are vivid in the rural life of India. Tribal communities in different parts of India still practice their own religious rituals and cultural traditions. Again the same people willfully attend the religious festivals of the majority community. This co-existence is a marvel in the social fabric of the country. This tradition is sometimes termed as a position on middle ground. To some the relations between little communities and 'civilized' mass "may be likened with some justification either to the primitive or to the modern Western extreme." (Village India p. 172) The primitive communities are viewed as the 'world' within a highly cultured and advanced social order. To the anthropologists this is unique since the little communities have never diluted their cultural and religious moorings while participating in the major events descending from traditions. For such behaviours the traditional Indian village in many cases despite their modernization still conceived as the extension of the primitive pattern of life. As example, one may cite the existence of little communities though influenced by urban way of life long ago in Kerala, Karnatak, Jharkhand and in Odhisa. How these people have been able to do so? This was made possible due to a" high degree of economic self-sufficiency, political solidarity as against the outside world, and a sense of ritual integrity." (Village India, p. 172) One striking view for such a scenario is that prior to India's colonization by the British Indian villages normally existed in "isolation" from the rest of the world. This state of thing actually shaped the destiny of the villages who succeeded in building a self-reliant economy for themselves. From this economic strength emanated a force to keep cultural identity. The colonial masters were only interested in collecting rent and revenues without disturbing the social behaviours. Since intervention from state was nominal the tribes were able to keep their own respective positions as they had been. No doubt, fissures in the shape of rebellion broke out from time to time. Bone of contention was primarily enactment of forest acts by dint of which the government made the forests and forest products including animals state wealth. But the rebellions did never take an all – India shape and the government was able to put those down at different times of outbreak. Hence, the then state only developed a relationship attached with sovereignty. For such an arrangement village life in India continued to exist in its traditional form.

3.6 Integration of Village

It can't be denied that India has remained united entity despite of its diversity. It has become possible for the give and take atmosphere prevailing for generations. People in India seldom wish and try to break the social chains. Though inter-caste as well as inter-faith marriages have taken strong roots among the members of the traditional societies this practice is still not so popular among the tribal communities and not among the village-dwellers. The villagers whatever tradition or faith they follow still are averse in adopting newer practices. Hence, traditions among the little communities continue. Though the Indian villages often found to be unified in character but they are actually complex while considered in terms of great traditions of Indian civilization. If considered in details then one can easily find several differences of peasant customs more clearly than a lifelong "poring over the Vedas."

As already mentioned that differences in many field exist from time immemorial between the tribal life and the traditions. Not only the tribal villages but village life in general does not necessarily go along the set customs and traditions derived from the ancient texts and scriptures. Holistic and isolated conceptions of Indian village communities are studied thus far seemed most appropriate to students of social life in faraway areas. Still the customs of marriage and even inheritance differ from village to village. As is well-known that the Indian villages were set and grew following caste lines of Indian social order. Hence, it is presumed that all the villagers belong to a singlefamily tree. This is very common among the villagers to accept the village customs which often do not conform to traditional ones. Interesting to note that most of the villages are still connected with outside world primarily for political as well as administrative reasons while maintaining their age-old customs during social and religious functions. There are supralocal patterns too. To study these some scholars suggest that some structural unit larger than the single village might more appropriately be taken as a microcosm for holistic study. (Village p. 173) From outside, it is difficult to assess the contents of the customs of a single village and to draw a uniform picture. Marian Smith, writing of North Indian villages in Punjab, takes further note of ways in which traditional economic and religious organization run far beyond the village. She suggests that some structural unit larger than the single village might more appropriately be taken as a microcosm for holistic study. (Village. P. 173). Similar picture can be availed from the villages in the South. There too. It is very difficult to interpret the rituals and beliefs of Coorg villagers

without tracing the same rituals and beliefs to literary levels in the much larger units of region and nation. If assimilate all the findings gathered from various parts of India then the individual natures of self-created world of Indian little communities can be assumed.

While addressing the problems we cannot say both that the Indian villages are yet to break the shackles of the past and to adopt some systems outside its own ambit. To the sociologists the value of the great traditions of India is as relevant as the peasant lives in various parts of interiors. To understand the both one has to dissect the social fabric at various levels. Value of land and also its possession are very important. Similarities attached with this question among the villages dominated by the Hindus and by the Muslims are seldom common. The same is true when one ventures to study a tribal one. In the 21st. century and under a democratically elected government a sea-change has occurred especially, in administrative and in economic lives. Those changes sometimes affect daily life. Holding pattern of arable lands and in some cases homesteads have also changed. Though the law forbids purchase of lands by non-tribal in tribal villages in recent past the state has come in the scene. For development works and for industrialization the land-holding patterns have changed sharply. In majority of cases tension brew when the state decided to act. These have been causing concerns to the people.

It is false to presume that all along the people in the villages used to live peacefully. There are certain internal divisions of economic interest among groups of landholders and the other below to them. Pattern of agriculture is such that tillers are divided into many sections. Traditionally, the Indian villages had *khudkast's* (i.e.; tillers of the land belonging to the village and in majority of cases belonging to dominant caste) and "*pahikast's*" (i.e.; tillers brought from outside). Hence, tensions in terms of caste and holdings of land were very common. Incorporation of foreign elements in the social order are not unnatural. With the association of others in the village the economic activities also acquired some degree of novelty. Those who came from outside brought their own customs and rituals. Moreover, for economic needs a single village could not remain strictly isolated in the broader economic arena. The villagers have to establish contacts with outside for their own needs. They are to sell their produce and to buy other articles which cannot be produced by themselves within the village. In this process, a small unit like a particular village gets into direct contact with a greater one.

Another very important source of contact was regular visits of agricultural

labours from outside during harvesting. This may happen twice in a year. The people thus coming also bring their respective social behaviours and cultures. They usually do not permanently stay and their character may vary from one year to another. These migratory labours seldom intermix with the local people. But they leave the signs of their social behaviours. Sometimes the apparels they wear and language they speak also have a certain degree of influence over the local population. Immigration thus facilitate inter-mixture in various levels. While people coming from outside has some value similarly migration also occur. Primary reason is economic. But the people going outside and that not necessarily to a particular place also carry their own culture and language to those places. The ultimate result is the mixture between great and little traditions in several forms.

In face of the situations in most of the villages internal divisions are quite normal within each of the villages. Daughters of the village move out and wives move in in many such cases. Any survey to ascertain actual picture can reveal the true character of a village. With the spread of basic education villagers now become well acquainted with the affairs of outside world. Education helps to build some very common sense which in consequence act as the bridge between great and little traditions, faiths and customs. Besides, such environment, the gap between rural and urban societies are daily being minimized. Fast and cosmopolitan urban life invade the village for which the villagers are now more attracted by the outside world.

Each Indian village has normally its own deity to worship. Often the presence of a big temple or a mosque is not certain. Even presence of crematorium is not certain. The villagers use to worship a sacred tree or a place in case of a Hindu village and a burial of a saint in case of a Muslim village. In the tribal villages tree-worship is much popular. Often the priests or preachers as the case may be are brought from outside. It is a common view that the forte of identity is the religion and the way of its performance. But people also join spontaneously in the bigger and traditional festivals like Dasserah, Holi, Diwali, Eid, Muharram etc. During such celebrations local identities become lost in the bigger or universal ones. Some villagers have also converted into Christianity. In some parts of India conversions are not so old. In such villages the people use to offer some cocks or hens as sacrifice at the altar of their church. In doing so they wish to carry out their age-old customs though not in conformity with the Christian rituals. These are ample examples of mixtures of rituals. Hence, the religious and social fabrics of a village present a mosaic in daily life.

While adopting great traditional orders the villagers as little communities have no close coherence or well-bounded physical locus. It has been an accepted fact that as parts of the little community reach beyond the physical village, while many parts of other communities and of the great community reach inside the village. (Village p 175) Sometimes a village is a nexus of much informal activity among nonkinsmen and noncastemen. Assimilation of people takes place since they use to reside side by side and take parts in all social and economic activities in conjunction with each other.

For so many ins and outs in the rural society it may acquire a newer type of civilization as 'secondary'. It is said that urban communities and urban culture in such secondary civilizations are necessarily different from the society and culture of the indigenous folk. It is an accepted fact that such secondary civilizations have acquired heterogenetic in origin and their respective growths. Commonly the villages lose their set identities and make themselves transformed into a newer cultural paradigm. One may ask a question. Whether a secondary civilization is continuation of the civilization or not. Primarily the rural life is termed as the primary civilization and its transformation though sometimes an upliftment is nothing more than secondary one. The 'great tradition' which is characteristically developed by such a primary civilization is a carrying-forward of cultural materials," etc.; "already contained in local little traditions." (Village. P.181)

While following this pattern the little communities would almost seem to cease to exist. Singer and Redfield prefer to believe that development of an urban community in a primary civilization as one in the series of nucleations within a common field (Village. P. 181). Some conditions may befall before the little communities when placed in a primary civilization.

3.7 Influence of State

With passage of time and with simultaneous progress influence and control of state increase. The state usually exercise its authority in two ways. One through its bureaucracy and secondly, through certain interest groups who enjoy some privileges and work on behalf of state. The latter-named group is the principal landholders in the village and sometimes enjoys quasi-judicial power too. During the colonial rule this group was in many occasions tools of the state in one way or other in quelling dissensions. Again there are other types of disunity in the village population which are still rooted into traditional Indian caste system. Great traditions champion Indian

social divisions which have been in place for centuries. People belonging to upper echelon of this order still believe that it is their right to humiliate the people belong to the lower strata. Interesting enough the persons suffering from this environment are also wilfully accept their position. Certainly fissures occur but those are only of temporary nature. Given such situation nature of the state is very difficult to dissect. The state in one hand tries to keep complete harmony in the social order and in the other allows powerful interest groups to oppress on the weaker ones.

After independence India's economic, social and political systems are broadly based on equality, justice, liberty, rationality and secularism. Though India does not have its national language wide use and currently much wider use of English helps people from different region and language group to mix and exchange views with others. In doing so a person seldom forget his identity. In this way Little tradition still exist. The Great traditional elements, on the other hand, are continuously getting mixed with Little traditional elements since contacts among people coming from various ethnic groups have been increasing.

Current relationship between a village and state has brought a certain degree of suspicion in relation to older 'orthogenetic' land administration particularly in north India. That might have descended from top 'as much as it was a result of indigenous growth upward from little communities.' Presence of some administrative manuals drawn during the colonial rule as guide to its officials crystalize an orthogenetic policy towards village societies.(Village p. 183) Primary aim of the British was to ensure assessed revenue collection and those by following a perfect routine. Sometimes they used to collect revenue directly from the tillers and sometimes from highest bidders at auction. In majority of cases the latter ones were not cultivators. As the rate of revenue was in most cases, was very high land-holders of ancient origins had to leave their right for the new comers. As a result, holding pattern changed drastically meaning little communities gave in to the great.

3.8 Summary

During the colonial rule and more specifically during the late 19th century some erudite people in India envisioned a unified India from the Hindu Kush and Himalayas to the seas and oceans in the east, west and south. After the failure of the Rebellion of 1857 people in general started accepting the foreign rule as a fate

accompli. But spread of western education, larger use of the English language and introduction of modern communication systems in the shape of railway, telecommunication and faster postal network created an environment conducive to modern living. People receiving western education also learned about the western democracy, sense of liberty and equality which they had not been experiencing here. But the very idea of 'nation' as emerged and gradually developed in the west was not available in India. It was accepted by some in the late 19th century that India would never be a nation since its social fabric as they viewed, was fragmented due to caste division. Hence, India would never be conceived as a nation with a composite social and cultural mooring. Even the Indian National Congress in its formative days could not gather support from the vast rural India and also from a good number of communities. By the turn of the century this phenomenon of nationhood started gaining some ground.

Struggle for independence brought people nearer though still the participation of all was lacking. For the freedom movement Indians started reviving their glorious past. Discovery of the original script of Arthasastra by Kautilya and excavation of the Indus valley civilization made Indians proud. They were then sure of the superiority over their then rulers in the past. Now the concept of Indianness started taking shape. Still such feelings were confined to a handful few. Like India Egypt, Iraq, Greece, Knossos and China had also their respective glorious past. But unfortunately, except China all had lost their identity in face of several challenges coming from various quarters. Nowhere else has there been, except China and India a real continuity in civilization. In spite of innumerable invasions and mixing of different cultures India has been able to keep and protect her identity for centuries.

Now the question is, from where India has been gathering strength? Once Jawaharlal Nehru claimed that respect to its own past helped India to keep its identity and traditions intact. (*Glimpses of World History*. P. 13). He also claimed that the Indian are the heirs of those who entered in this land from the north west and came down to what was then called Brahmavarta and Aryavarta and Bharatvarsha and ultimately to Hindustan. Intrusion of marauder hordes many times and defeat of the indigenous people at their hands failed to rob this country of its values emanated for centuries. India witnessed constant warfare and massacre of uncountable men and women many times. But all such horrors normally took place in the urban centres.

Since India's artisan craft achieved a world-wide publicity wealth was confined chiefly there. As a result, vast rural population was spared from such destructions. These people without and guidance and directive continued with the ancient faith, traditions and way of life.

3.9 Questions

- (i) Critically examine the concepts of little and Great Traditions for understanding the Indian Villages. (10 marks)
- (ii) Discuss the interaction between 'Little tradition' and 'Great tradition' (10 marks)
- (iii) How does interaction between little and Great tradition bring about social change ? (10 marks)
- (iv) Elaborate the roles of Marriott and Singer in the context of little tradition and Great tradition. (10 marks)

3.10 Suggested Readings

- (i) Great Tradition and Little Traditions : Indological Investigations in Cultural Anthropology by Swami Agehananda Bharati
- (ii) Delpar, Helen (2008). Looking South : The Evolution of Latin Americanist Scholarship in the United States, 1850–1975. University of Alabama Press. p. 68. ISBN 978-0-8173-5464-0. Retrieved 13 August 2017.
- (iii) "Robert Redfield–Anthropology". University of Chicago Centennial Catalogues. University of Chicago Library. Retrieved 1 April 2018.
- (iv) "Book of Members, 1780–2010 : Chapter R" (PDF). American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Retrieved 20 April 2011.
- (v) "ROBERT REDFIELD, EDUCATOR, IS DEAD; Anthropologist at the U. of Chicago 1927-49 Studied Concept of Folk Society". The New York Times. October 17, 1958. ISSN 0362-4331. Retrieved April 1, 2020.

3.11 Glossary

- Great Tradition : The cultural practices of dominant social categories were called the Great Tradition.
- Little Tradition : These were that tradition which do not correspond with the Great Tradition.
- Integration of cult : Modes of worship.
- Folks : The folks or the unlettered peasantry and the elites.

Unit - 4 □ Nation Building : Issues and Challenges

Structure

- 4.1 Objectives**
- 4.2 Introduction**
- 4.3 Concept of Nation**
- 4.4 Other views of Nation**
- 4.5 Nation-State Meaning**
- 4.6 Nation Building in India**
- 4.7 Hurdles of National Integration**
- 4.8 Emergence of Nationalism**
- 4.9 Challenges Faced**
- 4.10 Summary**
- 4.11 Questions**
- 4.12 Suggested Readings**
- 4.13 Glossary**

4.1 Objectives

- Know about the pressing challenges independent India faced in the first decade after 1947.
- Understand how freedom challenged the very idea of a secular India.
- Understand how the integration of princely states into the Indian Union was carried out.
- Understand how the reorganization of states or drawing of the internal boundaries of the Indian states was carried out.

4.2 Introduction

How should we define the term 'nation'? It is a very tough as well as complicated exercise. Whenever we talk about 'nation' we visualize a geographic, linguistic and above all a cultural entity. Etymologically this term has its origin in the Latin word of 'nation' meaning descent or birth. Prof. Eric Hobsbawm once noted that 'nation' is not very ancient concept. To him this concept could have been developed in the 18th century. From the days of modern reckoning people in various parts of the globe tried to remain in a group sharing roughly a common lineage. They decided to share a common language and religion. This in turn had been rooted in common race. In this way the very concept of race emerged. This is roughly the history of the western world where the people though sometimes claiming to propagate same religion and had come out from a common root decided to create their own state. It is a fact that the concept of modern state is not so old but behaviour and economic activities supported by distinct vocabulary called language acted as aspirations to people residing in a particular place to create their own state and thereby formed a nation. But the term 'nation' has its political meaning which is totally different and distinct from a nationality. Nationality becomes relevant when the nation is able to hold on some land and form its own state with the required instruments.

So, formation of a state is the final achievement of nationality. It is very different concept from the concept of kingdom and an empire. A person with his personal might and intelligence can carve out a kingdom by defeating some ones or by inheritance. When a king expands his sphere of influence and occupies vast mass of land with people from different sects, he creates an empire. These seldom can be called state least a 'nation state'. The concept of 'nation state' has its origin mainly in Europe. Formation of the United States of America can also be seen in this line though people gathered there from different parts of the globe even in the late 18th century. Still the people there could build up a notion which helped to develop it into a 'nation state'. Cession of Portugal from Spain and formation of a number of 'nation states' after 1919 in Europe are the perfect examples of it. This pattern became popular in the second half of the 20th century when innumerable colonies were freed from their bondage.

After the conclusion of the Second World War India's emancipation was followed by formation of a number of states after their liberation. But all of those

were and are not 'nation states'. Most of these countries are multi-national in nature. Ethnic and linguistic divisions are so strong that in some cases the smaller groups have various symptoms of nationhood or near nationhood. If one surveys the present positions of the states of the world, he or she will be bewildered in finding the nature of nationalism. Since in very rare cases the theory of 'one nation one state' can be found in practice presence of nation state becomes absurd. It is very common to find several nations in a particular territorial boundary. But it is also not a conjecture that one nation is spread out in several states. India, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and also the United States of America are the example of those states which accommodate several races and nations within them. While the Kurds, the Hazaras and the Tamils can be termed as trans-state nations since they are spread out in many states.

Hence, no one can correctly identify 'nation' in one go. But the primary criteria as accepted by all is the identity on the basis of ethnicity and language may be a logical one. Language has a very powerful appeal as we have seen the formation of Bangladesh on the basis of language only. In this case religion lost the match though it had played havoc only 25 years prior to the formation of Bangladesh. So, one cannot conclude and arrive at a solution in perfectly defining the term 'nation.'

4.3 Concept of Nation

Once sociologist, T. K. Oommen has called certain 'tentative definitional proposals of a nation/nationality, state/citizenship and ethnic/ethnicity.' To him a nation is nothing more than a territorial entity to which the national had an emotional attachment and in which they invest a moral meaning. That is the homeland either inherited or adopted. But a state is not entirely so. It 'is a legally constituted institution, which provides its residents with protection from internal insecurity and external aggression.' Prof. Oommen also makes certain distinction between the state and nation. He says that while territory is common to both, 'there is crucial difference between national territory and the state territory; the former is a moral, and the latter a legal entity... If the state and the nation are coterminous, we have a nation-state. But most states today are multinational, poly-ethnic, or a combination of the two.' (ibid)

If one goes by the assertions of Prof. Oommen than he is to agree with the theory of fusion of a common homeland with a common language. He again says that

nationality 'as the collective identity that the people of a nation acquire by identifying with the nation. This proves that citizenship has been equated with nationality. But in majority of cases nationality is used as term, synonymous to ethnicity. If so, then various cultural groups constituting a nation are described as nationalities.

4.4 Other Views of Nation

We have some other views too. To Anthony D. Smith a nation can emerge with a group of people sharing an historic territory, common myths, and historical memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and a common legal rights and duties for all members. But his version has been challenged since he did not distinguish a nation from an ethnic group. Needless to say, that the idea of a territory is central to all definitions of nation and is the distinguishing feature between nation and other social categories such as an ethnic group. Elaborating on this point Lowell W. Barrington notes that nations are groups of people linked by unifying traits such as myths, values and symbols etc., and also a desire to control a territory that is thought of as group's national homeland. He also says that it is not necessary that they actually control any such territory. Prof. Barrington is sure that the words 'nation' is often mistakenly used as synonyms with 'ethnic group'. No doubt that the very idea of 'nation' chiefly emanates from the existence of ethnicity but ethnic groups are not entirely responsible for creation of a nation. Another inseparable ingredient is the presence of a territory. As an example, one may cite the 'nationhood' of the United States of America where the people do not share a common lineage or ancestry. But they own a territory, share a common language and cultural identity.

Then, how a 'nation' can be defined? None can ascend nor descend while defining a nation. Conceptual ambiguity is there as various structures are available. In elaborating this theory Benedict Anderson suggests that nationality, nation-ness and nationalism, are cultural artifacts of a particular kind. (*Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. P. 13) To him a nation is an act of imagination. Since no cultural or sociological factor is a sole contributory factor in building up a nation it is better to take refuge to imagination. It is commonly suggested that existence of the major institutional forms through which this imagined community comes to acquire a concrete shape. The states and /or nation-states in the 20th century have acquired a profoundly modular character. This view has come out from the experience of the states formed in the last century when

nationalisms with a set of modular forms from which nationalist elites in Asia and Africa had chosen the ones they liked.

On the other hand, Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein think that 'nation' has a historical construct through which current institutions and antagonisms can be projected into the past to assign a relative stability on the communities on which the sense of individualism depends. To them a nation or a nation-state does not have an ethnocentric perspective excepting a sense that is the product of a fictive ethnicity. If one tries to define the concept otherwise then their ancestry and a history of community culture will vanish.' But they have to institute in real (and therefore historical) time their imaginary unity against other possible unities. '(ibid. p. 49) They further argue that 'No nation possesses an ethnic base naturally, but as social formations are nationalized, the populations included within them, divided up among them or dominated by them are ethnicized – that is represented in the past or in the future as if they formed a natural community, possessing of itself an identity of origins, culture and interests which transcends individuals and social conditions (ibid. p. 96).

In his book, 'Ethnicity and Nationalism Prof. Paul Brass states that 'ethnicity' and nationalism are not 'givens', but are social and political constructions' (p. 8) Who formulates this ? His answer is, they are created by elites of ethnic groups with the object of 'protecting their well-being or existence or to gain political and economic advantage for their groups as well as themselves.' (ibid) Hence, to him ethnicity and nationalism are modern phenomena inseparably connected with the activities of the modern centralizing state arising out of specific types of interactions between the leadership of centralizing states and elites from non-dominant ethnic groups, especially but not exclusively on the peripheries of those states (ibid. pp. 8-9).

4.5 Nation-State Meaning

The concept of 'nation-state' was put into practical experiments especially in the modern west in 20th century. In the process many of the constituent groups within the nation –states lost their individual as well as distinct identities. In some cases, they remained dormant. In such states the idea and concept of 'nation' occupies central position. Naturally, here state and nation become synonymous. So, the minority elements within these nations were expected to lose their individual

identities and to get assimilated within that state. By the way the marginal communities are to lose their culture and language if not religion in the first place. Nationalism in such cases can be viewed as a strong and powerful concept by which unity of the state can be kept intact.

Given the situation the dominant group within the nation -state took up the reins in assimilating the smaller constituents with a plea to build the nation itself. Undoubtedly, in some cases the exercise could achieve a certain degree of success depending on the 'effectiveness of their projects of cultural standardization. But the success rate of the project in most of the cases is nominal. Because, the dominant group always tried to enforce its own agenda and also tried to influence economic and social activities in its favour. In such exercise the aspirations of people and their very identity are bulldozed. One can go by the historic experiments undertaken by Hitler before 1940 in his neighbouring countries such as, Austria and Czechoslovakia and ultimately in parts of Poland. Similarly, the Communist rulers of the then Soviet Union also tried to enforce the said model. But dominance of the superior units in both the cases brought only disasters. Hence, the theory of the nation-state is not easy to implement in the ground.

Why such experiments failed? To the sociologists, subjugation of minor or marginal communities always does not yield results. This attempt in general, reinforces a sense of separate identity among the latter vis a vis the dominant community or communities as we have already noted. Hegemony of the dominant unit, primarily in the cultural front usually breeds nationalism or sub-nationalism of the subjugated units. Led by their elites, these movements mobilize the marginal people/peoples for getting their due shares in the society as well as in the state itself. On the other hand, the ruling groups intention is to suppress these and to maintain status quo. In these situations, the possibilities to build the nation become illusive and may end in fiasco.

4.6 Nation Building in India

We already know that India is a land of composite culture with a huge number of ethnic as well as religious groups. That is not the end of the story. Presence of caste and then sub-castes in many forms also has their individual roles to play. Its varied religion, ethnicity, way of living, language etc. are severe challenge towards the process of nation- building. Separate landmass and environment are also contributory factors in that process. The colonial masters used to utter that they had

united India which had been divided and sub-divided into several units. They also used to get solace from the idea that India would be shattered into innumerable units as and when they leave. So, the work was too tough to complete after India's liberation. It is claimed that post-colonial nation-building approach was such by which it was attempted to provide a unitary façade involving several composite units within it.

4.7 Hurdles of National Integration

Indian society has for more than a millennium been divided and again sub-divided into several castes irrespective of creed. The majority community started its shape during 4th-5th centuries the legacy of which is still being carried. Rise of Mahavira and Gautama Buddha in 6th century B. C. E though affected the traditional Indian society for some period those were ultimately evaporated. Ultimately Indians are living within a caste-ridden society. This caste pattern also has regional bearings. As results entire country does not follow standard set of rules and practices. Coming of Islam in the 12th-13th centuries caused a certain degree of social havoc in some parts of India. But the Muslim society was also affected with social divisions. Hence, the people of India do not present a composite order.

Another major problem in India is that the people's social status generally depends on individual's occupations. Within the Hindu society it has been a settled fact for centuries that those who undertake manual work should stay at the bottom of the order. For such practice there exist untouchables who are not allowed to mingle within the higher echelons. On the other hand, the Muslims though don't advocate caste system strictly on the line practiced by the Hindus their society is also broadly divided into 'ashraf's (aristocrats) and 'ajlaf's (common). Moreover, they are also divided between the Shias and Sunnis. Apart from these two major communities there exist a good number of other religious sects and innumerable tribes preaching their individual religious faiths.

Given this position U. Phadnis and R. Ganguly (Ethnicity and Nation-building in South Asia) argue, post-colonial nation-building approaches focused almost exclusively on creating a unified 'national identity' based around either common political values or citizenship or a putative majoritarian 'ethnic' identity. The aim of both approaches, on the whole, has been to produce a pulverized and uniform sense of national identity to coincide with the state boundaries that seldom reflect ethnic divisions on the ground. This type of outlook towards nation-building, as promoted

vigorously by the modernization school of thought, refused to accept the notion that states incorporating more than one 'ethnic nation' could be both stable and harmonious."(p.13)

But the process of nation-building is not smooth one. As noted, Indian social structures were never composite. Moreover, for preceding two centuries the colonial masters' endeavour was to divide and rule India. For their policies unification was not possible neither those were ever envisaged. Process of modernization from within was affected in very limited sphere. Recourse to western education gave birth to a modern elite group who chiefly decided to borrow from the west and to implant those here. They were confined primarily in some towns and selected parts of the country. Even Bengal the breeding ground of the 19th century modernization failed to provide the same atmosphere throughout the province least the entire eastern India. Lack of education was the major contributory factor for most of the hindrance towards the achievement of a unitary façade.

4.8 Emergence of Nationalism

Colonial rule gave birth to a sense of nationalism though Rabindra Nath Tagore was averse to the term 'nation' itself. To him this term was suited to Europe where nationhood emerged either from a common ancestry or from a common language. But Gandhi had a different observation. He envisaged a nation which has its root in the ancient past. Foreign rule though subjugated the people in India but could not vanquish the feelings of the people. Gandhi succeeded in uniting entire India to oppose the foreign rule. Whether India could be claimed as a unified 'nation' or not is a point of high debate. S. N. Banerjee prior to emergence of Gandhi could think about a growing nation. Like Gandhi he also ascribed the oppression of the foreign rule and aspiration of those oppressed helped 'nationalism to grow and flourish. Observing the situation in India Prof. Hobsbawm once described India as a polity that grew out of anti-colonial movement. The leaders of those movements were able in assembling people from various regions with various ethnicity with them. It was the finest achievement of the leaders spearheading freedom struggle.

The British left with a fanciful dream that very soon India would be dismembered. Still India remained united. The leaders in the free India also could bring more than six hundred big and small near independent states within the fold of the newly-born republic. This was more or less handiwork of the elites, the theory as propagated by some. The British left the power with a selected few whom some prefer to call 'elite'.

This group was miniscule minority but was able to carry the entire country with them. They had to combat a host of internal and external pressures to reduce as well as to eliminate if needed, the incongruence between state and society. Society had a strong influence upon the masses who were eventually divided into a large number of groups. Nation-building process in all the countries confronted challenge from the social groups. Threats of separatism were also very strong. Each case of separatism constitutes a unique specimen of state-society contradiction. To overcome such difficulties towards nation-building exercise in the post-independent the state adopted a policy to construct a pan-Indian identity. In doing so the state formulated its economic and cultural policies. Its aim was to honour the aspirations of the people spread put in the vast landmass. But that undertaking opened the flood-gates of dissensions, tribal, regional as well as linguistics. The state's attempts were roughly viewed as a majoritarian one. This brought violent protests threatening to cessations also. A type of ethno-nationalist movement emerged.

Ethnicity could not be overshadowed by majoritarian agenda. India's political atmosphere too often was designed by those people who do not necessarily represent the entire country. For this smaller elements within the society feel themselves neglected. Hence, the future and also survival of India as a nation depends on acceptance of the plurality of nationalities. A strong state tries to decimate group identities in the name of national integration. India is not an exception. This attempt by the state has long been a force for brewing trouble in many parts of the country.

During freedom struggle the Indian National Congress endeavoured strenuously to put the question of nationalism above everything. No doubt, it had roughly a urban character in its initial days. Even the Muslims kept themselves out from it by following advice of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan of Aligarh. Its leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendra Nath Banerjee, R. C. Dutt and men like them could envisage a united India which would be able to accommodate all shades of opinions by overcoming local or regional issues. Hence, a sense of nationalism developed. But the avowed votaries of it were all guided by the western model. During the Swadeshi Movement (1905-11) sense of nationalism (Swadeshi) got a boost. Twentieth century opened with nationalist movements which gathered momentum and ultimately with arrival of Gandhi the Congress could achieve national unity. 'The pre-eminent view of Indian nationalism has been that of an inclusionary, accommodative, consensual and popular anti-colonial struggle. This has entailed degenerating the exclusive affinities of religion as 'communal' in an imagined hierarchy of collectivities crowned by the

ideal of a 'nation' unsullied by narrow-minded bigotry." (Ayesha Jalal; 'Nation, Reason and Religion : Punjab's Role in the Partition of India' in Economic and Political Weekly. Vol.33 No. 32 8 August 1998. p. 2183)

4.9 Challenges Faced

The groups challenging the procedures of national integration are not always homogenous in character. They are often constituted by a number of other smaller ethnic configurations living in geo-social proximity. By incorporating smaller groups within a leading one and finally to form an ethnic identity is still working. This can be found in the north-eastern part of India. One can equate the present position of that region with the colonial and pre-colonial days. As we have noted the presence of a number of ethnic groups during those days, most of whom were not brought within mainstream. So, economic seclusion helped to keep cultural identity intact. Lack of communications was also responsible. The authority always calculated profits for any of the investments it made. As investments towards improvement of social fabric was never within its agenda development had been a far cry. As a result, people in such region felt themselves oppressed by the 'foreigners'. After 1947, participation in the political affairs of the country at the centre again alienated them. They used to believe that the rulers had only changed their colour.

The colonial rulers to some extent, succeeded in transforming India into a politico-territorial entity. They also created new regional politico-territorial units incorporating willy-nilly more than one, in most cases several, such nationalities. But the so-called integration process was marred by imperialist agenda as already noted. The rulers though elected by the people in free India failed to assess the aspirations and grievances of all spread out in the entire land. When development progressed in several fronts newer issues emerged. Since winning the elections became increasingly more vital chunk of resources were deployed in such regions from where majority of seats in the legislature come. Now such conditions fuelled more dissensions in the regions deprived of their dues. To them not only lack of development is issue but cultural hegemony running down from above is also another vital one.

Regional aspirations increasingly become very high which penetrates too deep into the socio-political life of the people living on the margins. This sub-nationalism has strong appeal. In majority of the cases the people demanding recognition of their aspirations started claiming a rich heredity and some claim themselves parts of warrior clans. Since free India inherited such a territorial mass from erstwhile

colonial masters which had been acquired by them with sinister and/or imperial designs. Explaining this Sudipta Kaviraj noted that 'sub-colonial advantages for some linguistic groups, simply because those were the first to receive colonial education and formed the natural reservoir for personnel' (in *Politics in India*, P. 224) for colonial administration advocated nationalism in such a way which excludes a large number of groups and tribes. This left out groups rose with their demands after 1947. In this way first a new state, Andhra Pradesh was created for Telugu speaking people by bifurcating the then Tamil-dominated Madras Presidency.

To keep India united the British used to employ force. In free India that was a far cry. Hence the leaders embraced parliamentary democracy on the Westminster model as they all along had cherished that. Universal adult franchise was given to those vast majority of whom could not even write their names in their vernacular. Elected representatives went to the legislative assemblies in the centre and in the states and started taking policy decisions covering various issues. Small states had smaller representation resulting to non-fulfilment of their aspirations. Sometimes the marginal group of people had to suffer as they had experienced in the earlier days. However, reservations in employments and in people's representation were allowed. But the quantum of loss seldom match to their gains. Nehru, the first prime minister opposed statehood demand on the basis on language. He was afraid that if this were allowed then consolidation of the nation would not be possible. In this context, SudiptaKaviraj explained that Nehru's fear was emanated from such a situation when cessation would be inevitable.(*Ibid.* p. 225) But eventualities could not be averted. We have already talked about the formation of Andhra Pradesh. It was followed by creation of States Re-organization Commission. A number of states were to be formed and all on linguistic basis. This trend did not end. In 1967 Punjab was divided into two Haryana and Punjab since the Sikhs demanded legitimacy of their Gurmukhi language. Assam was divided and some states like Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya were born simply on the basis of ethnicity. Bifurcation of Uttar Pradesh was needed to help the hilly region to flourish. On the other hand, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar were divided to create tribal-majority states. Recently Andhra Pradesh had to cede erstwhile Nizam's kingdom for the formation of Telengana.

4.10 Summary

Whenever a new state is formed aspiration in the other regions with similar perspective gets fuelled. In some cases, this has legitimate claims. Statehood

demands for Vidarbha (from Maharashtra), Bundelkhand (from Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh) have been continuing for quite long. Further division of Uttar Pradesh and statehood demands for separate Gokhland (bifurcating West Bengal), Bodoland (from Assam) are very loud. Previously demands were made for linguistic states but in the recent past regional imbalance and neglect became focal points.

The question is-why there are dissensions among the people of a nation which is so young? One very important reason for these is the over centralization of the state affairs. The government at centre is too powerful and amendments in the constitution also strengthened its position. Moreover, majority of the acts and rules were drawn during the colonial rule. The colonial masters had no interest in satisfying regional needs. Administration to maintain law and order under colonial set up was transformed overnight into an administration to carry out welfare measures. Similarly, bureaucracy also remained same. The strength and devotion of the leaders in free India were never questioned. But the legal systems prevented them to revolutionize. While preventing imposition of Hindi in Tamilnadu in the 1960s demand for more power to the states was initiated. In 1973 the Shiromoni Akali Dal in Punjab adopted a resolution at Anandpur Sahib on the similar line. To suggest constitutional amendments through which states' power and authority could be enhanced Sarkaria Commission was constituted. But its recommendations were shelved.

With the growth in population and bigger use of technology increasingly minimizes scope of employments. Now the demand of the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra for opportunities to the sons of the soil has been gaining ground. This very demand is opposed to social integration. Immigration and migration within the country will be ultimately stopped. Hence hindrance towards nation-building has been increasing regularly.

Whatever difficulty befalls India still a united country. This has been possible due to the tradition prevailing in Indian social system. For centuries together the Indians have embraced and adopted multiple numbers of foreign elements. In this way adaptability here is very vibrant. In the same fashion adoption of the Westminster model and a constitution which enshrines roughly a model of separation of power, individual rights in all spheres of life and above all secular ideals could be possible and smooth. No doubt, that the state is yet to fulfil all the commitments. But the policy since independence in promoting betterments in economic, cultural and social fields has brought progress. Now people is in habit in scaling the progress of self and also of the region of his/her place of residence primarily in economy. This is the

success of Indian state which has been able to engage the people in material world. The competition for better living also acts as unitary force since people from one region to another has constantly been moving for better opportunities. These immigrants try to be associated with the local people and with their language, food-habit as well as culture. This is a very binding which ultimately put down fissiparous trends.

4.11 Questions

- (i) What was the huge obstacle in nation building at the time of India's independence? (10 marks)
- (ii) What were the circumstances when India attained its independence? (10 marks)
- (iii) "Free India was born in very difficult circumstances." Justify the statement with suitable reasons (10 marks)

4.12 Suggested Readings

- (i) Politics of Nation Building In India by ShibaniKinkar Chaube
- (ii) The Politics of Nation building: Problems and Preconditions by Arnold Rivkin
- (iii) Karl Wolfgang Deutsch, William J. Folt, eds, Nation Building in Comparative Contexts, New York, Atherton, 1966.
- (iv) Mylonas, Harris (2017), "Nation-building," Oxford Bibliographies in International Relations. Ed. Patrick James. New York : Oxford University Press.
- (v) Mylonas, Harris (2012). The Politics of Nation-Building : Making Co-Nationals, Refugees, and Minorities. New York : Cambridge University Press. p. 17. ISBN 978-1107661998.
- (vi) **Keith** Darden and Harris Mylonas. 2016. "Threats to Territorial Integrity, National Mass Schooling, and Linguistic Commonality," Comparative Political Studies, Vol.49 : 11 1446-1479

- (vii) Keith Darden and Anna Grzymala-Busse. 2006. "The Great Divide : Literacy, Nationalism, and the Communist Collapse." *World Politics*, Volume 59 (October) : 83-115

4.13 Glossary

- Nation-a large body of people united by common descent, history, culture, or language, inhabiting a particular country or territory.
- Nationality-the status of belonging to a particular nation.
- Nationalism-identification with one's own nation and support for its interests, especially to the exclusion or detriment of the interests of other nations.
- Nation Building-Nation-building is constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state.

MODULE - 2
INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES

Unit - 5 □ Village, Town and Region

Structure

- 5.1 Objectives**
- 5.2 Introduction**
- 5.3 Traditional Structure of Indian Village**
- 5.4 Characteristics of Indian Village**
- 5.5 Socio-economic Changes in Agricultural Village**
- 5.6 Towards Modernization of Village Society**
- 5.7 The Rise of the City**
- 5.8 Transformation of Villages into Towns**
- 5.9 Nature of Influence of Towns**
- 5.10 Towns and Agriculture**
- 5.11 Town is a Shopping Centre for Country People**
- 5.12 Summary**
- 5.13 Questions**
- 5.14 Suggested Readings**

5.1 Objectives

- To understand the traditional structure of Indian village
- To understand the characteristics of Indian village
- To understand the socio-economic Changes in agricultural village
- To understand the towards modernization of village Society
- To understand the rise of the city
- To understand the transformation of villages into towns
- To understand the nature of influence of towns

5.2 Introduction

Rural society means society that lives in village and is dependent on natural environment. Rural economy rests predominantly on agriculture and allied activities. These societies have a low density of population, intimate group relationships and have oral traditions. Rural societies are rich in culture and tradition. However, from the contemporary point of view, they are considered to be socio-economically less developed. Therefore, several developmental activities have been undertaken in our country to improve their socio-economic conditions. On the other hand, urban society includes towns, cities and metros with a specific way of life. An urban society can be defined as an area having higher density of population, people engaging mostly in occupations other than agriculture and domestication of animals, having a distinct ecology and culture different from that of the large society's culture.

India is predominantly a rural country with two third populations and 70% workforce residing in rural areas. Rural economy constitutes 46 per cent of national income. In India on the basis of human settlements rural and urban are two different types of social formation. So, in this cognizance traditionalism and modernism are interwoven in globalized India. Over the past two decades rapid economic growth, counter urbanization, larger capitalistic market set up and gradual changing political scenario have also resulting rural power structure and occupational pattern indeed. Despite the rise of urbanization more than half of India's population is projected to be rural by 2050. Rural transformation and changing pattern of agrarian relation are focal theme of concurrent research in social sciences.

5.3 Traditional Structure of the Indian Village

Studies of the Indian village began in the early stages of the establishment of British colonial rule, and arose out of the necessities of fiscal administration. It was inevitable that in these studies the Indian village with its traditional social order should appear to the eyes of the British writers as a "completely self-sufficient, isolated republic". Their studies of "the village community" were concerned with the self-sufficient socio-economic structure of the village, with systems of communal land-ownership and collective responsibility in the payment of taxes, and with the organs of village self-government which supervised these social mechanisms. The conception of the Indian village which was built up from the study of these aspects of rural society was that of an occluded communal social organism.

The Indian village may certainly be regarded as having maintained a traditional order of society and as having constituted a little isolated universe of its own in the period before the establishment of British rule. We may say with M. N. Srinivas that this isolation was a product of such factors as the absence of roads, the prevalence of widespread political instability and the fact that very little money circulated in the rural areas. Of necessity, this state of society underwent some change under British rule. However, the essential nature of British colonial rule was such that it delayed the modernization of India, barred the way to industrialization and did not lead to the breakup of the self-sufficient economy of the village.

Of course, the idea that the Indian village was completely self-sufficient and isolated is a mixture of myth and reality. M. N. Srinivas and many other writers have pointed out that, although it is true that little currency was in circulation, there were a certain number of itinerant merchants, and weekly markets were long established institution. The self-sufficient division of labour in the village was indeed supported by the caste system, but it was not the case that members of all the castes whose occupations were necessary for the life of the people were present in every village. This was especially so in North India, where caste endogamy and village exogamy combined to draw the villagers into social relations established by marriage which transcended the individual village. We need not add that caste panchayats were organized which united members of the different castes living in neighboring villages.

Further, although it is the practice to speak of the village community, it is not the case that the village was a communistic community in which all the villagers shared equally in the ownership of the land. No community of the kind which is characteristic of the idyllic classless society of the period of primitive communism has been found in the caste society of the Indian village. The communal ownership of land did not exist in all Indian villages and even in those areas where the communal ownership of land was found, the institution of communal ownership was in practice much complicated by the caste hierarchy and distinctions were made between individuals in regard to their enjoyment of communal rights.

5.4 Characteristics of the Indian Village

Nevertheless, the Indian village does possess certain characteristics in the understanding of which we can well employ the concept of the village community.

Further, these characteristics still survive in the modern village community, even although the traditional structure of the village is now in process of dissolution.

(i) Internal Organization of the Village

Among the Indian villages of this period there were some which were inhabited by members of only one caste, but by far the greater part of them were “multi-caste” villages in some degree. The village community was composed of these castes, arranged one above the other in a hierarchy whose rankings were most clearly apparent in the practices observed in regard to commensality.

It was the general rule for the members of the different castes to live in different sections of the village. The first thing which one notices about Indian villages is that the better houses are usually located in the center of the village, while the ill-kept and roughly constructed houses are built round them or are located at points on the circumference of the agglomeration or at a slight distance away from it. Since this is so, one can always distinguish two residential areas at least at first glance – the group of houses occupied by the dominant caste and the group of houses occupied by members of the scheduled castes. These residential areas are denoted by the word ‘thola’, to which the name of the caste living in the area is prefixed. The castes which are represented by only a small number of persons live in a residential area occupied by a larger caste of approximately the same social standing. For example, it is usual for the Brahmins to live in the residential area occupied by the dominant caste. At present there is some irregularity in the geographical distribution of the castes within the village, and the castes are mixed together in a greater degree than formerly, but we may suppose that in the traditional village these distinctions in regard to residential areas were carefully observed.

The castes living in the different residential areas were arranged in a hierarchy which was self-evidently legitimate in the eyes of the villagers and was accepted by them as axiomatic. This ritual ranking, however, was at the same time related to the economic stratification which characterized the village. That is to say, the dominant caste was also the landowning caste, while the Scheduled Castes in the lowest stratum of the village community comprised the poorest section of the landless inhabitants of the village. If we divide the Indian castes into three main strata – the upper stratum containing the Brahmins and the land-owning dominant castes, middle stratum containing the merchant and artisan castes, and the lower stratum containing the aboriginal people and untouchables – we may say that the representatives of the upper stratum in the Indian village were landlords and rich peasants, while the lower

stratum was composed of landless labourers and tenant peasants. The artisan castes in the middle stratum may be regarded as having lived in a state of dependence (economic as well as social) on the castes in the upper stratum.

(ii) The Jajmani System as the Traditional Economic System

As we have stated above, the castes in the Indian village live in separate residential areas and the villagers' consciousness of belonging to a particular caste is strengthened by the social and geographical implications of the contacts which they make in the course of everyday life. As a consequence of this, it would appear that the village was split up into a number of caste groups, but in fact the castes were bound together by the Jajmani system, the traditional occupational organization.

In the period during which the Indian village was based on the communal ownership of land to a greater or lesser degree, certain social relations were established under which the dominant castes, who possessed considerable rights over the communally-owned land, assumed a sovereign role in food production and mobilized the labour of members of the lowest stratum of society for this purpose, causing the artisan castes to manufacture and deliver to them goods required for consumption by these agriculturalists as well as agricultural implements to be used by them in production, and paying these artisans in kind with food grains. This was the Jajmani system. This form of economic organization was not operated according to the principle of an exchange of equal values, but took the form of services performed by the members of the artisan castes and the untouchables for the benefit of the dominant castes (who were the sovereign power in agricultural production and the owners of the land used for agriculture), in return for which the dominant castes gave them an assured livelihood by means of payments in kind. For this reason, the payments in kind made to artisans by the land owners, that is, by the sovereign power in agricultural production, remained at a fixed level, but the quantity of the goods manufactured by the artisans – for example, the number of pots which a potter had to produce for his patron – was not fixed but was dependent on the requirements of the patron. In the case of the blacksmiths, too, there was no limit to the number of occasions on which a peasant patron could command the services of the blacksmith for the repair of his agricultural implements. When there were two or more households of potters in the village the agricultural producers who made payments in kind to the potters as patrons were divided into two groups. The amount of the annual payment in kind was not arrived at by negotiation between individual patrons and clients (client being used in the Roman sense), but was laid down in the first instance by the caste Panchayats of the persons in question, these decisions later

receiving the approval of the village. Similar arrangements were made in the case of the exchange of services between the artisan castes. Among the castes of the lower stratum of society, too, certain persons were granted an assured livelihood by the village. The sweepers, who were allowed to beg the leavings of food from the members of the castes of the upper stratum of village society, are an example of such a case. Their services at marriage ceremonies and funerals were rewarded by fixed payments. The same arrangement was made in remunerating the Brahmins for their officiation at religious ceremonies.

The caste system, associated in these ways with certain traditional hereditary occupations, was maintained by the economic power of the landowners, that is, by the agricultural producers. Agriculture, it need hardly be said, was not an occupation confined to any particular caste, but in general it was main occupation of the dominant castes. These dominant castes were the sovereign power in the economy of the villages. In these circumstances, agricultural production was never organized as a means of acquiring profit by re-investment in the expansion of the scale of reproduction, but had the function of maintaining the traditional mode of living in the village.

(iii) Hereditary Structure of Village Self-Government

The institutions of village self-government which operated under this economic system were run by the dominant castes. The traditional power structure in village government was headed by a hereditary headman who was a member of one of the dominant castes. In many cases, members of certain families in the dominant castes were recognized as being eligible for the office of headman, and this eligibility was hereditary.

This headman, as need hardly be said, had to assume responsibility for tax collection and the maintenance of order on behalf of the ruling power. In this way the headman received recognition as the headman of the village from the external political power. He undertook the collection of the Land Revenue with the co-operation of the Patwari, who compiled the land register and calculated the taxes, and the Chaukidars, who served tax notifications and demands. The Patwari may be described as the village accountant, and most of those who fulfilled this function were members of the Brahmin caste. In contrast, the Chaukidars, who may be regarded as village policemen, were usually recruited from the Scheduled Castes in the lower stratum of society. Again, leaving aside serious offences, the headman had the power to inflict punishments on the villagers in the cause of maintaining law and

order in the village. He was also, of course, the principal mediator in disputes among the villagers. Disputes within a single caste were settled by the caste Panchayats, but disputes which the caste Panchayats found them unable to settle, as well as disputes between castes, were submitted to the mediation of the headman. The headman also presided at many of the religious festivals celebrated in the village.

It goes without saying that the headman's rule over the village was not a dictatorship. His position was strengthened by the support of the dominant castes, and in the background of his administrative power lay influential members of the village community who, like himself, were members of the dominant castes. Between the headman and the villagers lay the leaders of the castes, that is to say, the leaders in the different residential areas of the village. We may be justified in supposing that at this period the actual operation of village self-government was in the hands of an informal assembly of elders composed of these leaders and dominated by influential belonging to the dominant castes.

In concrete terms, the situation in regard to this traditional power structure differed in the Zamindari type villages and the Ryotwari type villages. There were also differences between villages in the areas which came under direct British rule and those in the areas in which the princely states retained their independence. In spite of these differences, however, we may accept the view that, up to the beginning of the present century, the village was allowed a comparatively high degree of autonomy under this system of self-government, and that the economy of the village was self-sufficient to a fairly high degree.

5.5 Socio-Economic Changes in the Agricultural Village

The traditional socio-economic structure of the Indian village which we have briefly described above underwent gradual changes during the period of British rule. In particular, since the beginning of the 20th century the handicrafts which were maintained by the Jajmani system have shown a tendency to disappear under the influence of modern industry. These changes became all the more marked after Indian Independence. Further, the institutional changes in political administration which occurred after Independence had a strong impact on the traditional power-structure of the village. No more than any other social organism could the Indian village – so typical of stagnant Oriental society – be spared the trials of modernization.

(i) Economic Change and Traditional Occupations

These social changes in the village were brought about, first and foremost, by economic factors. Although it is true that imperialist colonial rule barred the way to industrialization, it was impossible for the economy of the Indian village to remain completely unchanged as the times advanced. Economic development led to the penetration of a money economy into the village, and the villagers came to regard a certain level of monetary income as a necessity to be used in purchasing some at least of the manufactured products of modern industry. Further, modern industrial production could not but have some effect on the traditional occupational structure in the village. Certain of the hereditary occupations associated with the caste system became incapable of maintaining themselves, and even where the traditional occupational system was not brought to complete dissolution, many of the traditional occupations came to require fewer workers than in former times. As an example, we may cite the case of the carpenters who had made ox carts in the past, but who found themselves unable to stand up to the competition from vehicle-building works in the towns. When the carpenters living in a village are employed only in repair work, one carpenter can do the work formerly done by three. The same situation obtained in the case of the blacksmiths. When textile mills were established the village weavers found that there was no work for them to do, and they were obliged to abandon their traditional occupation.

Economic development also led to the appearance of new occupations. As the economy developed, even members of the castes whose principal occupation was agriculture were led to open little shops in the villages and to act as dealers in various commodities. In particular, in areas near the cities an increase took place in the numbers of factory workers and transport workers who commuted from their village. In such villages as these the members of all the castes began to live in closer relations with the cities, and changes were liable to occur in the socio-economic structure. Even in villages situated at some distance from the cities, the Chamars, in the lowest stratum of village society found that they could no longer make a living by preparing hides, and the weavers, having lost their traditional occupation, were forced to find some livelihood outside the village and took up the transportation of milk by bicycle or left the village to go to temporary work in brick factories.

On the other side, these changes have resulted in persons who have been deprived of their traditional occupations employing their labour in agricultural production. The monopoly of land held by the dominant castes (the landowners and

organizers of agricultural production in the past) have been broken and increasing numbers of persons in the artisan castes and even in the Scheduled Castes in the lowest stratum of society have come to own land of greater or lesser area and to carry on agriculture as their principal occupation. A discrepancy has appeared between the traditional hereditary occupations of the members of the various castes and their actual occupations, and where this discrepancy has reached great proportions the Jajmani system itself has broken down. When this happens, the annual payments in kind which were intended to assure the livelihood of the workers under the Jajmani system change their nature and assume the form of remuneration paid in exchange for labour. Fixed payments in kind are then to be found only among a certain section of the richer peasantry, and cash payments become general. These developments have wrought great changes in the Indian village, which hitherto has been a cosmos of its own in which the castes lived in a state of interdependence by means of a self-sufficient economy in which payments were made in kind.

(ii) Influence of the New Panchayat System

The second kind of change which has taken place in the Indian village is the change in the realm of political administration. The British colonial administration made some impact on the village through the tax collection system, but provided that the taxes were paid the colonial authorities did not interfere to any great extent in the running of self-government in the village. About the year 1920 attempts were made to establish the Panchayat System, but this institution was not of such a character as to negate the existing traditional power structure in the village. However, the New Panchayat System which was introduced after Independence was put into force by the Government with great expectations, since it was associated with the Community Development Programmes. The New Panchayat System was of a character which was incompatible with the existing form of village self-government. The electoral constituencies and the number of members in the New Panchayats were laid down on a population basis. The Panchayats were chosen by election, and seats were usually reserved for members representing women and the Scheduled Castes.

We may describe this change in local self-government in a few words as being a change from the rule of tradition in the direction of the rule of legitimacy. We may draw attention to the following important points in connection with the new institution. Firstly, the hereditary principle has been negated, and the principle of deciding the choice of leaders by election has been adopted. It is not possible for us to equate this change with the change from “ascribed status” to “achieved status” as

S. C. Dube says, but the use of the electoral method in deciding the choice of leaders implies a change in the type of leader which is regarded as ideal. The new institution has at least opened the way to the overthrow of the state of affairs in which the dominant castes monopolized the office of the head-man. Secondly, the decisions taken in connection with the administration of the village must now be taken on a majority vote and not as a result of unanimity among the members. Formerly decisions had been taken by the leaders of the dominant castes, and a compromise agreement was regarded as the unanimous decision of the whole meeting. It was difficult for any of the members to resist such decisions but now that the voting procedure has been adopted it has become possible for members to express their opposition. Thirdly, the connections between the panchayats and the external political power have been strengthened under the new system, and the questions discussed in the village include an increasing number of matters which could not be dealt with within the administrative institutions of the village itself. Even under the old system of local self-government it was not the case that the village was completely closed and isolated, but in former times the village was more independent than it is now, and it was easy to maintain the social order of the village unchanged. However, matters are different now. We may say with D.G. Mandelbaum, "the old councils were arbitrary, conserving agencies whose prime function was to smooth over or settle village friction. The new panchayats are supposed to be innovating, organizing bodies working for changes rather than conserving solidarity". The Panchayat's business brings it into contact with their higher administrative organs of the Government in connection with such matters as the Community Development Programmes, extension work and the organizing of agricultural co-operative associations. When such activities are undertaken at the initiative of the superior organs of government, there are more chances of changes of leadership to occur at village level and for changes to occur in the form of decision-making.

(iii) Urbanization and Weakening of Social Unity

The progress in urbanization which has taken place recently is connected with changes in the structure of the economy and has led to changes in the social attitudes and value systems of the inhabitants of the villages. The deeply-rooted Hindu religious faith is still to be found in the villages in the form of religious celebrations or the rituals associated with them and practices are maintained in the traditional manner. However, the religious celebrations no longer play so important a part in the life of the village as they did in former years. Again, with the progress of

urbanization, the caste system, deeply imbued as it is with the Hindu view of the world, has become less strict in the social distinctions which it makes. The Government has negated caste discrimination in the Constitution, and it does not allow the traditional commensality rules to be observed at public functions in the village or in schools. Over a long period, this will probably have a considerable effect. The changes in the times have also inspired the members of the hitherto oppressed castes in the middle and lower strata of society with a desire to improve their social position. This desire may be augmented by an increase in the gap between the socio-economic stratification and the ritual rankings of the castes. As

M. N. Srinivas says, even today “it is considered proper to follow one’s traditional occupation,” but “this view does not obtain among many of the younger people who have been to school and who are urban in their outlook”.

We may thus say that in the modern Indian village both the vertical ties centered chiefly on the dominant castes, that is, village loyalty, and the horizontal links transcending the village which join members of a caste, that is, caste loyalty, have been weakened. M. N. Srinivas, who regards the latter as being more important than the former, takes the village to be the social unit which commands the loyalty of all the villagers, regardless of caste, but we may consider that the village has been losing its unity. D. Pocock and L. Dumont think that caste is fundamental, but that the cohesion of the castes is now generally weaker than before. In recent studies of the Indian village, attention has been paid not only to the village itself but also to problems in the surrounding region, and it would appear that some emphasis is being attached to the fact that the castes have wide horizontal connections. In fact, however, this is not necessarily the case, and the most important point to be noted in this connection is the fact that the village is no longer a small self-sufficient cosmos of its own. That is to say, the social changes which have taken place in the village are of such a character that they require some extension of the scope of village surveys and an examination of the question of the weakening of unity in the village community and in the castes must be carried out in a wider context.

5.6 Towards the Modernization of Village Society

The Indian village’s road to modernization is beset by many difficulties. In opening up this difficult road, India, like many of the underdeveloped and developing countries, has sought a solution in industrialization. However, whether this has been successful is by no means indisputable. The reason for this is that modern industry

does not absorb a large amount of surplus population from the villages. At the same time, efforts are being made to encourage cottage industry as well as modern industry, but there is no sign that cottage industry will be able to bring about modernization in the Indian village.

In conclusion it can be said that the Indian village will not be modernized unless some strong measures are taken in regard to agriculture itself. Further, Indian industrialization will not be able to proceed along the road of expansion and development unless there is a rise in the productivity of agriculture which will make possible an accumulation of capital and a rise in the purchasing power of the peasants.

5.7 The Rise of the City

An important concomitant of urbanization in India is that villages located outside the boundaries of a city get included in it over time. This phenomenon has been intensifying since the 1950s and is sure to intensify further. India is on the path of rapid urbanization, and the urban development authorities of all cities are planning to draw more and more villages into their nets. The causes and consequences of the phenomenon, therefore, require careful analysis.

How a village gets included within a city is usually a long drawn process. It is necessary to recall that in most parts of India a village is made up of, first, a residential settlement (gaon-than or abadi area) where houses and huts are huddled together, and second, agricultural fields, pasture (gauchar) land, water tanks and ponds, cart tracks, wasteland, and other open territory all around it. The two together constitute a territorial unit called the “revenue village” (mauza in most parts of India) with fixed boundaries recognized for local administration. Often it includes, besides the main settlement, one or more small subsidiary settlements, or “satellite villages”, as M. N. Srinivas called them. On the other hand, a mauza may not have any residential settlement, in which case it is called a “deserted village”.

In the case of a village located on the periphery of a city, one piece of land after another gets sold to individuals, business firms, property agents, institutions, government establishments, and others in the city. Why the urban buyers buy this land is more or less known. But why a villager should sell his land is a matter of investigation. What are the motivations? What are the compulsions? What does a villager do with the money he gets by selling land? Is he wise or stupid in selling land?

When most of the agricultural fields in a village are acquired by the urban people, they demand urban facilities : paved roads, underground drainage, piped water, regular electricity supply, security, etc. Pressures build up on the municipal corporation and on the state's politicians and bureaucrats to include the village within the city. Often the government, anticipating this development, works out a town planning scheme. The net result is inclusion of the entire mauza in the city.

5.8 Transformation of Villages into Towns

- Just as the village gets included within the city, the city people and their culture also migrate to the village and transform it into a town. This is a very complex process. It is well known that a settlement considered as a village at one census might become a town at a subsequent census. Since the 1961 Census, a settlement is normally considered a town if it satisfies three criteria : (i) a population of 5,000 or more, (ii) a population density of at least 400 per sq. km, and (iii) at least 75% of the male workers should be engaged in non-agricultural work. If it receives the state government's recognition it becomes a "statutory town"; otherwise the census of India may recognize it as a "census town". It has been discussed at length how these criteria have been applied differently in different states and at different censuses in the same state, making comparisons over space and time difficult. Recognition of a village as a statutory town is, moreover, a complex bureaucratic decision, often influenced by local political forces. Of the three criteria, that of a minimum population is the easiest to apply, if the satellite villages are not ignored. The criterion of population density should not also pose much of a problem because in any case most village settlements have high density and would have more or less the same density when they become towns, although this requires calculation of density only for the residential settlement of the village, main as well as subsidiary, and not for the mauza's entire territory.

5.9 Nature of Influence of Towns

Before entering into some special cases of Indian towns and their regions, it is worthwhile to make clear the related concepts of city region. Urban influence is of

varying nature. It may have its influence on agriculture, on industry, on administration and also on certain services like medical, cultural including educational, recreational, etc.

5.10 Towns and Agriculture

Much has already been discussed about town's influence over surrounding countryside. Everywhere and in every age towns people have owned rural properties. In India, 'zamindari' system has been in vogue for a long time. Formerly, in princely states of India there were landowners owning rural properties and used to live in the state capital town.

In modern times also rich people have lands and properties in the villages of their forefathers, but they themselves live in the neighboring town. People possess farm-houses in the mid of their agricultural farms to look after and supervise their farm operations and visit intermittently. It has become almost a status symbol of a few well-to-do urbanites to have properties and land in nearby villages. It is not an exaggeration, therefore, to state that "the country is very often the property of the town".

Town also depends on agricultural production. Dickinson while describing agricultural regions of Europe identified roughly concentric zones of various crops in relation to the town. There would be floriculture, market-gardening, rearing of dairy-cattle for milk, etc., and then cultivation of sugar beet and cereals.

Often some of the industries located in a town such as based on wool, sugarcane and sugar beet for wine, wood products, mats, baskets, 'bidi' (in India), flax (in Europe) for linen industry, products for dyeing obtained from plants, mulberry for silk industry and so many other products are rural based. A town actually acts as a market for the rural products based on local raw materials. Thus, a town, through middlemen, offers required supplies and the facilities for products meant for export. In this way a town exerts a very real control over the surrounding country.

5.11 Town is a Shopping Centre for Country People

Villagers come to town to do their shopping. They purchase goods of their choice. Large cities have goods collected from different parts of the world. Importance of extent of market lies in a region not by its large or small size. But it is the sale

which determines the significance. The evaluation of sales to the inhabitants of the town, and also to those outside the time, determines the strength of the area of influence.

Among towns there is found a hierarchy for performing central administrative functions within its regional limit. It has been seen in places like southern Germany where hierarchy is present in ascending in order as market town, township, country town, district city, state capital, provincial capital and regional capital.

The structure of the hierarchy varies from country to country. The town, however „serves as the regional center is equally significant of all administration, business, and legal affairs, medical and educational services. People from the countryside rely on their regional capital.

5.12 Summary

Urban settlements everywhere have grown to form clusters around a large city. Often these are constituted by country towns and villages and are attracted to fall within the ambit of a major city by virtue of mutually associated functions. Thus, a ‘city region’ is formed around a city and metropolis. The city region is linked socially and economically to its urban center. Actually, the city region is an area influenced by an urban center two dimensionally. Town acts both as centripetally as well as centrifugally. Goods and services flow both into and out of a city, and thus the region of city is economically interdependent. It is neither a sphere of influence, nor does it necessarily form a continuous zone. A city cannot sustain by itself, but it is linked by its surrounding countryside interdependently.

5.13 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) What is a village ?
- (ii) What is a town ?
- (iii) What is the structure of the Indian village ?
- (iv) What is the process that leads to the rise of the city ?
- (v) State the role of town as a business center.

(vi) How do towns benefit agriculture ?

G-B (10 Marks each)

(vii) Discuss the characteristics of a village society.

(viii) What are the socio-economic changes that took place in the village society ?

(ix) State the causes that lead to the transformation of the village to towns.

(x) State one difference between village, town, and city.

5.14 Suggested Readings

- (i) Fukutake, T. (1964). Change and Stagnation in Indian Village Society. *The Developing Economies*, 2(2), 125–146. doi : 10.1111/j.1746-1049.1964.tb01169.x
- (ii) Pani A, and Ghatak, I. (2018). Village Society – A Review. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews (IJRAR)*, Volume 5, Issue 3.
- (iii) Shah, A. M. (2012). The Village in the City, the City in the Village. *Economic and Political Weekly (EPW)*, Volume XLVII, No. 52.

Unit - 6 □ Religion : Its Functions

Structure

- 6.1 Objectives**
- 6.2 Introduction**
- 6.3 Why Sociologists study Religion?**
- 6.4 Religion Defined**
- 6.5 Religion among Primitive People**
- 6.6 Elements of Religion**
- 6.7 Religion as an Institution**
- 6.8 Functions of Religion**
 - 6.8.1 Religion as an Integrative Force**
 - 6.8.2 Creating a Moral Community**
 - 6.8.3 Religion as Social Control**
 - 6.8.4 Provides Rites of Passage**
 - 6.8.5 Religion as Emotional Support**
 - 6.8.6 Religion serves a means to provide answers to Ultimate Questions**
 - 6.8.7 Religion as a Source of Identity**
 - 6.8.8 Legitimizing Function of Religion**
 - 6.8.9 Psychologizing Religion**
 - 6.8.10 Religion acts as Psychotherapy**
 - 6.8.11 Religion as an Agent of Social Change**
 - 6.8.12 Religion as an Agent of De-politicization**
 - 6.8.13 Religion controls Sexuality**
- 6.9 Dysfunctions of Religion**
- 6.10 Summary**

6.11 Questions**6.12 Suggested Readings**

6.1 Objectives

- To define religion
- To understand the relation of religion with the primitive people
- To understand the elements of Religion
- To understand the role of religion as an institution
- To understand the functions of religion
- To understand the dysfunctions of religion

6.2 Introduction

Religion has always been with us. Throughout history, it has expressed the deepest questions human beings can ask, and it has taken a central place in the lives of virtually all civilizations and cultures. As we think all the way back to the dawn of human consciousness, we find religion everywhere we turn. In our day and age, rumors of religion's demise seem very premature – and perhaps there's no grain of truth in them at all. Religion persists and is often on the rise, even as scientific and non – religious perspectives have become prominent. We still find religion everywhere, on television, in film, in popular music, in our towns and neighbourhoods. We discover religion at the center of global issues and cultural conflict. We see religion in the lives of the people we know and love, and in ourselves, as we live out and wrestle with our own religious faith. Why does religion continue to thrive? There are many reasons, but one thing is certain: religious traditions are adaptable in important ways. For many, contemporary religion even has room for skepticism, science, and the secular, which allows it to keep going strong in our rapidly changing world.

From antiquity man has sought answers to questions concerning the mysteries of nature, such as why it rains, why volcanoes erupt, why accidents and incidents happens and questions about his own creation, his relationship to the supernatural, a satisfying philosophy of life, and life after death. In his quests, man has developed

certain beliefs about the supernatural and also rituals and ceremonies for appeasement and propitiation of the supernatural. These rituals based on beliefs, convictions, and the ceremonies and symbols accompanying prescribed roles and prescribed roles and prescribed patterns of behavior, together constitute religion. The religious beliefs, forms of worship, objects of worship, rituals, ceremonies of the people of the world are varies and most numerous, but most of them are basic in the profound influence that they exercise on the behaviour of individuals, groups and society as a whole in almost every aspect of life. It is found throughout the world because it offers answers to such ultimate questions as why we exist, why we succeed or fail and why we die.

People have believed in supernatural powers throughout history. Belief in supernatural powers or beings is, thus, the main basis of the phenomena of religion. The most widespread manifestation of this belief we find in the form of rituals. Rituals are the observations, in a prescribed manner, of certain actions that help to establish liaison between the performer and the supernatural power. All religions – primitive or modern – have this base of belief and rituals.

6.3 Why Sociologists Study Religion ?

As said above, religion is considered as a belief in some supernatural power. Sociologists are not interested in knowing what this supernatural power is or how it works. They are also not concerned with the truth or falsity of any given religion. Sociologists take an objective look at religion – its functions, social foundations and social consequences. Sociologists also regard religion as a non-natural knowledge or an explanatory system which believes in a unique truth and which believes itself to be in possession of it. Sociologists study religion as a system of ideas that have a great impact in directing human behaviour. He does not study religion per se, but the effects of religious beliefs and practices on the social and cultural systems, socialization process and personality development. For a sociologist, religion is a non-rational, collective and symbolic action which acts as a response to the human need for meaning. Sociologists have no access to divinity revealed truth but they themselves try to seek to reveal their own truth. More specifically, the sociologist is concerned with the myriad ways in which society and religion interact, with profound consequences for the individual. Religious beliefs have social consequences and it is these that sociology studies under the name sociology of religion.

6.4 Religion Defined

How to define or even explain religion is a very difficult task as it is so diverse in historical development so culturally varied, that all definitions developed so far often failed to encompass it adequately. In its simplest and purest form, religion is an emotional attitude towards the unknown and the uncontrolled. It is a universal phenomenon that exists in some form or the other everywhere but varies in character. At the one extreme, it is concerned exclusively with the demon world. At the other, it is social and personal and related with supernatural constructs – transmigration existence of God and soul and the origin of universe.

Pioneer sociologist Emile Durkheim defined religion as “...a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, uniting into a single moral community all those who adhere to beliefs and practices”. Anything that people in a society consider to be sacred and celebrate in recognized rites become religion. Religion thus rests on beliefs, sacred things, prescribed rites and officially consecrated individuals – priest – to celebrate those rites. Durkheim believed that everything can be sacred. Sacredness is not a property that is inherent in an object. It exists in the mind of the beholder. Thus, a tree, an animal, a pebble or a piece of wood may be considered sacred. In Durkheim’s view the world is divided into two distinct categories : (i) the sacred, supernatural, divine and spiritual and (ii) the profane, natural, human and material. For early anthropologist E. B. Tylor, the belief in supernatural power is religion. Functionalists like Kingsley Davis believe that religion is an attempt to transcend the tedium of everyday life; that is it, involves the belief in and response to some kind of beyond. It is any set of coherent answers to existential dilemmas like birth, sickness, ageing and death. It is human response to those things which concern us ultimately. It is a collective way of dealing with the unknown and unknowable aspects of human life – with the mysteries of life. It is also concerned with making of moral decisions. Paul Tillich says that religion is that which concerns man ultimately. In sociological terms, religion is simply a system of beliefs, practices, rituals and symbols that somehow related to our community’s orientation to the supernatural or the life beyond. Religion entails a system of beliefs, practices, rituals, a form of worship and symbols, obedience to divine commandments and a concern with transcendental realms that are beyond the rational and the empirical. Thus, religion can take many forms such as bathing in the Holy Ganges (Hindus), offering

prayers in the temple, church or mosque or performing some sacrificial rituals, participating in Holy Communion (Christians), or performing the Mitzvah ceremony (Jews).

6.5 Religion among the Primitive People

In the process of evolution, man came to believe that there are some powers outside him that control the forces of nature as well as his own well-being. He believed that these powers can be propitiated with gifts and other actions. Rituals and ceremonies developed to take care of the interests of these supernatural powers. Shamans, medicine men, and priests emerged to mediate between man and those powers he held in awe. Objects that represented or were associated with these powers were treated as sacred. Gradually, these beliefs, practices and their practitioners tended to become part of the tribal social structure.

Primitive religions have taken at least three major forms: animism, naturism and totemism. Animism is the belief that all things, animate and inanimate, are endowed with personal indwelling souls or spirits. This involves belief in spiritual beings such as ghosts, spirits and souls. For example, the Native Americans believed in the Great Spirit that exists in all objects and beings and spoke to them through animals and trees. Naturism is the belief in the personified forces of nature which control human destiny. Throughout history humans believed that gods or other supernatural beings controlled the forces of nature and once again, they sought to appease them for blessings. Not only thunder and lightning, wind, fire and mighty ocean but also dreadful diseases such as small pox are believed to be controlled by certain gods or goddesses. Finally, most tribal societies have a totem, an animal, plant or natural object that is set apart as sacred and towards which members of the community feel a special relationship. Totemism is a form of social organization and religious practice typically involving an intimate association between sibs and their totems, which are regarded as ancestors or as supernaturally connected with an ancestor, which are tabooed as food and which give the sibs their names. Animism, naturism and totemism have several elements in common. People believe that they can communicate with these powers or spirits and influence them to enhance the community's well-being. Attitude of the community involves veneration of ghosts, spirits and other supernatural beings. Rituals and ceremonies often involve magic and sacrifices. There are sacred objects, places and people that are taboo. Very often celebrations of the spirit involve magic, dance and ritual sacrifices.

James Frazer, British social anthropologist and classical scholar, analyzed primitive religions and a vast range of exotic beliefs and customs in terms of man's search for true knowledge and effective control of his environment and his conditions. He delineated the evolution of human psyche in three phases: magical, religious and scientific thought. Magical thought assumed that the universe is regulated by impersonal and unchanging laws and the magician like the modern day scientist used his knowledge in a quasi-technical manner to accomplish things. As the failures of magic became apparent, it was gradually discredited and people turned to religious thought. In this phase, supernatural beings were supposed to control the world and they began to venerate and propitiate them. Finally, recognizing the limits of his own powers and gradually applying logico-experimental methods, man arrived at the scientific stage.

6.6 Elements of Religion

All religions have certain elements in common, yet they differ in expression and manner. Most religions of the world have the following elements.

- (i) A set of beliefs and values regarding the ultimate power in the universe, life after death, in supernatural beings.
- (ii) A set of ceremonial ways, (rituals and behaviour) of expressing this belief including festivals, ceremonies, prayers, religious services, feasts, sacrifices, fasts, offerings and pilgrimages.
- (iii) Things considered sacred such as Gods, spirits, special persons or any object or symbol or thought defined as sacred, supernatural divine or ultimate.
- (iv) A group of community of believers, a congregation, who make religion a social existence as well as a personal experience, which includes meetings, discourses and devotional gatherings.
- (v) A form of organization that reinforces the sacred, unites the community of believers and carries the rituals.
- (vi) An expressive culture – particularly visual and performing arts – including dancing, singing, chanting, processions, mythical ecstasy, trance, alteration of psychological states through drugs and deprivation.

- (vii) Holy texts believed to be based on revelation and containing the tenets of faith and rules of conduct.
- (viii) A moral philosophy which unites the mundane and the supernatural in a mystical blend.

Each of the above of elements will vary in form, in observed, in the response they evoke from individuals and in influence according to the culture concerned – altogether these prescribed specific lines of action, attitudes and values desirable under varying conditions according to which man is exact to behave.

Religion developed slowly with evolution of human society in its more primitive forms. In its evolutionary development, the earliest people are said to be the pre-religious people – possessed no organization or special roles (no temple, church or priest or clergy), only a communal sharing in rituals and gave expression to religious symbols. As religion and society evolved, a sense of sacredness takes concrete form in objects and images that becomes sacred, whether these are persons, animals or natural objects, human artifacts or symbolic expressions. The sacred also becomes conveyed and expressed for the living in ritual, where behaviour gives objective form to mood and feeling. A division among the sacred and the profane eventually marks of religious activity.

6.7 Religion as an Institution

In viewing religion as an institution, sociologists evaluate its impact on human societies. As an institution, religion has operated to standardize the religious emotions, beliefs and practices and to spread and perpetuate them. It is a powerful instrument of social control and social integration. It is a strong bond of social unity through promoting of a community of thought. It deals with divine sanctions as well as with present and future rewards and punishments. Through this, it exercises a profound influence on one's behaviour. In viewing religion as a social institution, sociologists, have also evaluated its impact on individual and society as a whole. As an institution, religion is characterized by its universality, its rituals, its sacredness and its persistence. Religion can be viewed from both individual and societal points of view. The functions of social cohesion and social control are oriented towards the larger society while providing emotional and social support and other psychological explanations which are more oriented towards the individual.

Although religion, like other institutions, has changed, it continues to be a potent force, rather with more vigour in our lives throughout the modern neo-liberal risky world. The assertion that God is dead is not true for a large part of the world's population. Despite the incredible growth in the importance of science and empiricism since 19th century, which has caused many people to regard religion as a superstition, an irrational belief and religiosity and spirituality among people are increasing in some way or the other. At many times, religion persists in the face of scientific evidence. Even, the men who call themselves as scientists are not fully devoid of religious beliefs and take part in many religious rituals in the home as well as at the workplace. We often hear a doctor saying that he or she will do his/her best to save the life of the patient but it is ultimately the God who saves. This proves that religion has always been present and has also been a prominent institution.

In traditional societies the religious and non-religious spheres of life are not sharply differentiated. But in modern industrial societies, religion and society are not the same. The emergence of different modes of life experience leads to different meanings about life, producing a religious differentiation. Religion thus may still provide cohesion but that may be only for certain sub-groups of society.

6.8 Functions of Religion

Religion is a cultural universal because it fulfills several basic functions within human societies. It is a basic requirement of group life. In sociological terms, these include both manifest and latent functions. Among the manifest (open and stated) functions of religion are included defining the spiritual world and giving meaning to the divine. Religion provides an explanation for events that seem difficult to understand. By contrast, latent functions of religion are those which are unintended, covert or hidden. Functionalists suggest that religion is a requirement for society and individual both because it serves both manifest and latent functions. These functions are briefly discussed below.

6.8.1 Religion as an Integrative Force

Durkheim believed that the primary function of religion was to preserve and solidify society. It functions to reinforce the collective unity or social solidarity of a group. Sharing the same religion or religious interpretation of the meaning of life

unites people in a cohesive and building moral order. The social cohesion is developed through rituals such as reciting prayer in the honor of God, institutions of worship (church, temple, and mosque) and multitudes of observances and ceremonies practiced by different groups. The unifying rituals of different faiths are also observed by individuals on the most significant occasions such as birth, marriage and death. This integrative function of religion was particularly apparent in traditional, pre-industrial societies.

Durkheim was particularly concerned with a perplexing question, 'how can human societies be held together when they are generally composed of individuals and social groups with diverse interests and aspirations'. In his view, religious bonds often transcend these personal and diverse forces. It gives people certain ultimate values and ends to hold in common.

Although the integrative impact of religion has been emphasized here, it should be noted that religion is not the only integrative force – the feelings of nationalism or patriotism may also serve the same end. In contemporary industrialism societies, people are also bound together by patterns of consumption, ways of life, laws and other forces.

6.8.2 Creating a Moral Community

Religion provides a system of beliefs around which people may gather to belong to something greater than them in order to have their personal beliefs reinforced by the group and its rituals. Those who share a common ideology develop a collective identity and a sense of fellowship. Members of moral community also share a common life. This moral community gives rise to social community through the symbolism of the sacred that supports the more ordinary aspects of social life. Religion then legitimizes society. It provides sacred sanction for the social order and for its basic values and meanings.

6.8.3 Religion as Social Control

Frank E. Manual (1959) had said that 'religion was a mechanism which inspired terror, but terror for the preservation of society'. While conservatives have valued religion for its protective function, radicals have also often recognized that religion can be a support of the established order and have consequently been critical of religion. Friedrich Engles, a life-long close associate of Karl Marx, once noted that

religion could make the masses 'submissive to the behest of the masters it has pleased God to place over them'. Durkheim also emphasized that besides acting as an integrating force, religion also reinforces social control in oppressive society.

Religious beliefs can influence the conduct of those who believe in them. It keeps people 'in line' through folkways and mores. It provides a foundation for mores of society. Religious sanctions are sought for certain desirable patterns of behaviour to persist in society in the forms of mores. Thus, many taboos in various cultures have religious sanctions, e.g. the taboo against eating of pork in Jewish and Muslims and cow meat in Hindus.

6.8.4 Provides Rites of Passage

Religion helps us in performing ceremonies and rituals related to rites of passage – birth, marriage, death and other momentous events – which give meaning and a social significance to our life.

6.8.5 Religion as Emotional Support

Religion is a sense of comfort and solace to the individuals during times of personal and social crisis such as death of loved ones, serious injury. This is especially true when something senseless happens. It gives them emotional support and provides consolation, reconciliation and moral strength during trials, and defeats, personal losses, and unjust treatments. It provides a means whereby man can face the crisis and vicissitudes of life with strength and fortitude. The concepts of karma and transmigration among Hindus and Jesus Christ as son of God, and prayer among Christians seek to provide such fortitude, and strength. Thomas O'Dea (1970) writes, 'Men need emotional support in the face of uncertainty, consolation when confronted with disappointments, and anxiety'. It is often said that visiting places of worship and holy premises serves for outlets for releasing tension and stress.

Religion offers consolation to oppressed people also by giving them hope that they can achieve salvation and eternal happiness in the afterlife. Religion increases the 'God will provide' attitude.

6.8.6 Religion serves a means to provide answers to Ultimate Questions

All religions have certain notions and beliefs that provide answers to questions like why are we on earth, is there a supreme being, what happens to life after death. These beliefs are based on the faith that life has a purpose and there is someone or

something that controls the universe. It defines the spiritual world and gives meaning to the divine. Because of its beliefs concerning people's relationships to a beyond, religion provides an explanation for events that seem difficult to understand.

6.8.7 Religion as a Source of Identity

Religion gives individuals a sense of identity – a profound and positive self-identity. It enables them to cope effectively with the many doubts and indignation of everyday life. Religion may suggest people that they are not worthless or meaningless creatures and thus, helps them alleviating the frustrating experiences of life which sometimes force a person to commit suicide. According to Thomas Luckman (1983), 'the prime function of religion is to give personal meaning to life.'

In industrial societies, religion helps to integrate newcomers by providing a source of identity. For example, Bangladeshi immigrants in India, after settling in their new social environment, came to be identified as Indian Muslims. In a rapidly changing world, religious faith often provides an important sense of belonging.

6.8.8 Legitimizing Function of Religion

According to Max Weber (1930), religion may be used to explain, justify or rationalize the exercise of power. It reinforces the interests of those in power. Even in societies not as visibly ruled by religious dogma, religion legitimates the political sector. For example, India's traditional caste system defined the social structure of society. According to one theory, caste system is creation of the priesthood (Brahmins) – the uppermost stratum of this system, but it also served the interests of political rulers by granting legitimacy to social inequality. Marx has acknowledged that religion plays an important role in legitimizing the existing social structure. The values of religion reinforce other social institutions and the social order as a whole and as a consequence it perpetuates social inequality in society.

6.8.9 Psychologizing Religion

The notion of positive thinking serves as an example of psychologizing religion. It provides peace of mind, promises prosperity and success in life, as well as effective and happy human relations. It is thus a source of security and confidence, and also of happiness, and success in this world.

But at times religion can be debilitating and personally destructive. Persons

convinced of their own essential wickedness can suffer extreme personal difficulties. As Kingsley Davis (1949) noted, 'like other medicines, it (religion) can sometimes make worse the very thing it seeks to remedy. Innumerable are the psychoses and neuroses that have religious content.' But, in this role, religion is not always harmful. Many times, it serves as a liberating and integrating force for individuals. For instance, it helps in bringing change (sobriety) to seemingly hopeless alcoholics.

6.8.10 Religion acts as Psychotherapy

In modern world, religion has also become a supporting psychology – a form of psychotherapy. Now, God is conceived of as a humane and considerate God. Such a hopeful perception helps the sufferer in alleviating his/her personal and social crisis. A new vocation of religious practitioner has recently come up in the mental health field as a helping professional. It already existed in village India and other places in the form of shamans, priests and magicians.

6.8.11 Religion as an Agent of Social Change

While religion supports the status quo in its priestly function, it inspires great change in its prophetic function. It can enable individuals to transcend social forces; to act in ways other than those prescribed by the social order. Mahatma Gandhi, Jesus, Thomas More all died upholding spiritual beliefs that were not those of the social order in which they lived. Religion, in its prophetic function, provides individuals with an unshakable foundation of social criticism which later on become the basis for change. Many religious groups of the world protested against Vietnam, and Iraq, and an age-old Buddha statue in Afghanistan.

Generally, religion is regarded as an impediment in the path of social change but many religious groups, by criticizing existing rules of social morality and social injustice, and community or government actions, help in bringing about social change. In this regard, Max Weber's pioneering work on the relationship between economy and religion, *The Protestant Ethic, and Spirit of Capitalism* (1930) can be cited that how Protestant ethic had helped in the development of spirit of capitalism in certain European nations. Weber's major theoretical point to be noted here is that ideas can change history and in doing so can contribute to changes in the material context of life.

Despite establishing relationship between religious ethic and economy, Weber

argued that the effects of religion on society are unpredictable and varied. Sometimes it might have conservative effect, whereas in other cases it might contribute to social change. Thus, Buddhism militated against the development of capitalism in China, whereas in Northern Europe, Calvinism had the opposite effect.

Contrary to Weber, Marx has put forth a quite opposite thesis. He opined that religion impedes social change by encouraging oppressed people to focus on other worldly concerns rather than on their immediate poverty or exploitation. He said, 'Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the feelings of heartless world....It is the opiate of the people'. Whereas Marx had seen religion as a consequence of the economy, Weber believed that religion helped to shape a new economic system.

It should be noted that many religious leaders have acted in the forefront of many social and political movements. For example, Martin Luther King fought for civil rights of Blacks in America. Swami Dayanand worked aggressively for women education and widow remarriage in India.

6.8.12 Religion as an Agent of De-politicization

According to Bryan Wilson (1976), religion functions as an agent of de-politicization. Marxists suggest that by inducing a false consciousness among the disadvantages, religion lessens the possibility of a collective political action. In simpler terms, religion keeps people away from seeing their lives and societal conditions in political terms.

6.8.13 Religion controls Sexuality

According to B. Turner (1992), religion has the function of controlling the sexuality of the body, in order to secure the regular transmission of property via the family. In feudalism and now capitalism, religious control of sexuality is an important vehicle for the production of legitimate offspring.

In the end, it may be said that in spite of being regarded as superstition, religion is persisting for such a long time as a social institution because of its varied functions cited above that it performs for the welfare of both the individual and the society. At many times, even the so called educated people regard religious laws as superior to the man-made laws. In primitive and traditional societies, and even some sections of modern societies, despite all-round attack over it, religion is a pervasive matter, and religious beliefs, and rites play an important part in the activities of various kinds of

groups – from family to occupational groups. Though inhabitants and citizens of a modern society, many remain traditional in their religious and moral outlook. For some, this means that religious authority and principles override that of secular law.

6.9 Dysfunctions of Religion

In common parlance the functions of religion are more highlighted. Its dysfunctions or negative functions, which may be covert, are not much talked about but in some instances religious loyalties are seen as dysfunctional. They contribute to tension or even conflict between groups or nations. Millions of European Jews were either exterminated or killed by Nazis during Second World War. Besides this, history is replete with the examples of wars which were fought on the issues of religion. Even in modern times, nation such as Lebanon (Muslims versus Christians), Israel (Palestinians versus Jews), India (Hindus versus Muslims) and many others have been greatly affected by religion.

Generally, it is held that religion makes a unique and indispensable contribution to social integration. This proposition is based on the studies of religion in non-literate societies. How far this proposition is true in complex and changing societies is of question today. What are the unintended consequences of religion? What are the functional alternatives to religion in meeting social needs – the need of social integration? It is difficult to defend the proposition that religion alone supported social integration or social control in modern societies like America or Britain or even Indian society. It is often seen as a disintegrating force in some quarters. A small incident of the destruction of old structure of Babri Mosque has deepened the gulf between Muslims and Hindus in India.

Religion is not necessarily a beneficial or admirable force or social control. For instance, Hindu religion reinforces traditional patterns of behaviour that call for the subordination of the powerless. Subservient position of women in Hindu and many other religions is the outcome of this feeling.

Religion is a potent impediment to social change and progress. It supports the existing social order and encourages both the privileged and dispossessed to accept the status quo. The caste system and to some extent joint family system in Hindus are reinforced by the Hindu philosophy of religion. These two pillars of Hindu society have put many hindrances in the developmental process of the country.

6.10 Summary

Marx has strongly criticized religion. For Marx all that was fundamental in the science of society proceeded from the material and especially the economic sphere. For him therefore religion is, to be sure, superstition, but to stop at this point is to limit religion to merely abstract belief. It leaves the impression that religion may be dislodged simply by new, rational belief. Marx's sense of the matter is more profound. Merely changing beliefs is not enough. The transformation of an entire social order is required, for belief is deeply rooted in the social relations of men. Religion, writes Marx, is the self-consciousness and self-feeling of man who either has not yet found himself or has already lost himself. But man is no abstract being, squatting outside the world. Man is the world of man, the state, and society. This state, this society produces religion, a perverted world consciousness because they are a perverted world.

Religion is the compendium of that world, its encyclopedic, its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn completion, its universal ground for consolation and justification. It is the fantastic realization of the human essence because the human essence has no true reality. Marx believed, like Ludwig Feuerbach that what man gives to God in the form of worship he takes from himself. That is, man is persuaded through suffering or through false teaching to project what is his to a supernatural being. But he was convinced, unlike Feuerbach, that what is fundamental is not religious forms – against which Feuerbach had urged revolt-but the economic forms of existence. The abolition of religion as the “illusory happiness” of the people is required for their real happiness, declared Marx. But before religion can be abolished the conditions which nurture it must be done away with. “The demand to give up the illusions about its condition is the demand to give up a condition which needs illusion”.

Marx's criticism of religion is thus deeply connected with the criticism of right and the criticism of politics. As Marx put it... “The criticism of heaven transforms itself into the criticism of earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of law and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics”. Marx was an atheist as well as a great humanist. He had profound sympathy for all who look up to religion for salvation. This is amply clear from his following observation : “The criticism of religion ends with the teaching that man is the highest essence of man, hence with the categorical imperative to overthrow all relations in whom man is debased, enslaved abandoned...”]

6.11 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) Define religion.
- (ii) What are the elements of religion? Explain.
- (iii) What is the need to study religion?
- (iv) Differentiate between sacred and profane.
- (v) Write a note on religions of the primitive people.

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (vi) Discuss the functions of religion.
- (vii) What are the dysfunctions of religion?
- (viii) How does Marx criticize religion?
- (ix) Write a note on religion as an institution.

6.12 Suggested Readings

- (i) Abraham, M. Francis (2015) : Contemporary Sociology – An Introduction to Concepts and Theories (Second Edition), New Delhi : Oxford University Press.
- (ii) Rawat, H. K. (2018) : Contemporary Sociology, Jaipur : Rawat Publications.

Unit - 7 □ Family : Concept, Types and Functions

Structure

- 7.1 Objectives**
- 7.2 Introduction**
- 7.3 Family : Concept**
- 7.4 Family : Definition**
- 7.5 Family : Characteristics**
- 7.6 Family : Forms**
 - 7.6.1 Nuclear Family**
 - 7.6.2 Extended Family**
 - 7.6.3 Families Based on Descent, Inheritance and Residence**
- 7.7 Indian Joint Family**
- 7.8 Family : Functions**
- 7.9 Future of the Institution of Family**
- 7.10 Summary**
- 7.11 Questions**
- 7.12 Suggested Readings**

7.1 Objectives

- To understand family as a concept
- To understand the characteristics of family
- To understand the forms of family
- To understand the features of the Indian joint family
- To understand the functions of family
- To predict the future of the institution of family

7.2 Introduction

Family is one of the most important social institutions. Most of the world's population lives in family units; it is an important primary group in the society. Family is the most pervasive and universal social institution. It plays a vital role in the socialization of individuals. Family is regarded as the first society of human beings. It is known as the first school of citizenship. One is born in family, grows in it, works for it and dies in it. One develops emotional attachment to it. The parental care imparts to the child the first lesson in social responsibility and acceptance of self-discipline. Family is the backbone of social structure.

The difference between a living and a dead social system – of whatever size, be it the largest or the smallest – is the presence, or disappearance (due to death or migration), of its members.

A social system lives through its membership. Individuals who belong to it may die or withdraw; their replacement is a must if a system is to survive. Since a social system is a plurality of interacting individuals, the first functional pre-requisite is the presence of individuals in interaction. Since individuals have a limited life span compared to a social system – particularly a society or a community – the system must ensure their replacement when they die or move out.

Every social system has to attend to the question of recruitment of its membership, of ensuring continuing membership. For societies as a whole, this recruitment pre-requisite is fulfilled through the institution of marriage – persons of opposite genders are united for the purpose of sexual congress, necessary for the process of reproduction. The continual living together of mating partners and their progeny creates conditions for the small primary group called the family.

7.3 Family : Concept

Anthropologist George Murdock (1949) has observed that there are only two truly units of human organization – the family and the community. Philosophers and social analysts have also noted that society is a structure made of families and these have been observable throughout man's history. It is unlikely that any society has ever existed without some social arrangements that could be termed family. Even in most primitive societies, it existed in some or the other form. It has remained present in all cultures, despite variations in its composition, descent, and residence and authority patterns.

The family is the basic social institution from which the other institutions – political, economic, religious and educational – have grown as increasing cultural complexity made them necessary. It is the institution which links the individual to the large social structure and thus performs the mediating function in the large society. It is through the family that the society is able to elicit from the individual his/her necessary contribution. It grows out of biological needs such as procreation, protection of the expectant mother and the infant child and old and the sick that cannot support and live by themselves. Not only this, it also helps in the socialization of the young, the production and distribution of food and the exploitation of environment which is essential to permit the satisfaction of the more intimate biological needs which cannot take place without organized cooperative efforts.

Recruitment by birth as the principal mode of enlisting membership is common to all societies. It is this aspect of recruitment that has given prominence to the institution of the family. Apart from religion, family is the only institution that is universally found in all societies. It is the family towards which every individual seems to be oriented. The individual carries out assigned tasks as a member of the family.

While most individuals marry, it is not compulsory for them to do so. People can choose to remain bachelors/ spinsters. Widowers and widows of marriageable age and without children can also prefer widowhood to remarriage. Unmarried people still belong to the family to which they are born; only they will not have a family of their own. In many societies, ascetics who decide to remain celibate are treated with respect for their sacrifice; while some persons may become their disciples, they do not preach celibacy to all their followers. Those who renounce the world for higher religious goals also depend on the families in society for their sustenance. They return from their hermitages to the towns and villages to beg for alms.

It is in this sense that: family is the fundamental instrumental foundation of the larger social structure, in that all other institutions depend on its contributions. It is the family that performs the functions of reproduction of the young, physical maintenance of family members, social placement of the child, socialization and social control.

The family is regarded as universal in three different aspects :

- An arrangement to meet a universally defined biological need or drive;
- Understood as the smallest group consisting of people related through blood or marriage, who takes care of the children; this is found in all societies; and

- The family fulfills some universally applicable functions of society, such as replacement of members, socialization and social control.

It will be seen that in the first meaning, the emphasis is on the biological need for sex; in the second, the focus is on the group; while in the third, it is the functions that the family performs for the wider society that are regarded as crucial. In other words, family is universal because it provides a group setting where both the biological needs of the individuals and the functional requirements of society are fulfilled.

Family, understood as a group of people of both sexes, of different age groups, with some sexual relationships within the group permitted while others are tabooed, is universally present. But its uniqueness ends there. Each society has a distinctive family culture that is defined not by biology, but by the sociology of the society in question.

7.4 Family : Definition

What is meant by the term family? The term family has been defined in various ways in a both narrow and broad sense. In a narrow sense, Elliot and Merrill (1961) defined the family as ‘a biological social unit composed of husband, wife and children.’ Almost, in similar terms, Ogburn and Nimcoff (1950) stated, ‘the family is more or less a durable association of husband and wife with or without children or of a man and woman alone with children.’ However, in modern times, one of the most notable features of the Western society has been the increase in the single-parent family, i.e. a family where one parent, usually the mother resides with and takes responsibility for parenting her children. Not only this, there are instances of pairing in which unmarried people are living together or homosexual couple rearing children. Such people call their pairing as families.

In a broader sense, family has been defined by Burgess and Locke (1963) as ‘.... a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption, constituting a single household, interacting and intercommunicating with each other in their respective social role of husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister, creating and maintaining a common culture.’ Similarly, Oxford Dictionary of Sociology (1994) defined family as an intimate domestic group of people related to one another by bonds of blood, sexual mating or legal ties. According to MacIver and Page (1959), ‘the family is a group defined by a sex

relationship sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children.' In the two definitions cited above, the roles, functions and relationships between different members have also been taken into account besides the associational aspect of the family. Looking to the possibility of its polygamous character as found in many primitive and even modern societies, anthropologist Edward Westermarck defined family as 'a relation of one or more men to one or more women which is recognized by custom or law and involves certain rights and duties both in the case of parties entering the union and in the case of the children born of it'. This definition seems to be most exhaustive as it includes both its associational and institutional aspects.

Recently, Anderson and Sabatelli (1999) have defined family as 'an interdependent group of individuals who have a shared sense of history, experience, some degree of emotional bondage and devise strategies for meeting needs of individual members and the groups as a whole.' This definition locates the crucial roles and responsibilities of the family members as a linked entity.

Family can be studied as a group, a social system and a social institution. As a social group, it consists of spouses and their children with or without other nearest blood relatives. It is the primary social group in which early childhood socialization takes place. As a social system, it is composed of interdependent parts, it has a characteristic organization and pattern of functioning and it has sub-systems that are part of larger system. The family is also considered as a social institution because it is an area of human social life that is organized in discernible patterns. It helps in meeting our crucial societal goals and needs. As an institution, it places emphasis on household, marital, and kinship relationships, along with norms and values that govern inter, and intra-familial relationships.

7.5 Family : Characteristics

Every family is known to possess the following characteristics :

- (i) Family is a universal group, it is found in some form or the other in all types of societies, whether primitive or modern.
- (ii) A family is based on marriage, which results in a mating relationship between two adults of the opposite sex.
- (iii) Every family provides an individual with a name and hence it is a source of nomenclature.

- (iv) Family is the group through which descent or ancestry can be traced.
- (v) Family is the most important group in any individual's life.
- (vi) Family is the most basic and important group in the primary socialization of an individual.
- (vii) A family is generally limited in size, even large joint and extended families.
- (viii) The family is the most important group in a society; it is the nucleus of all institutions, groups and organizations.
- (ix) Family is based on emotions and sentiments. Mating, procreation, maternal and fraternal devotion, love and affection are the basis of family ties.
- (x) The family is a unit of emotional and economic cooperation.
- (xi) Each member of the family shares duties and responsibilities.
- (xii) Every family is made up of husband and wife, and/or one or more children, both natural and adopted.
- (xiii) Each family is made up of different social roles, like those of husband, wife, mother, father, children, brothers or sisters.

7.6 Family : Forms

Families throughout the world vary in many different ways. There are tremendous variations in family structures around the world. Variations in family structures include variations in accepted modes of mate selection (endogamy and exogamy), forms of marriage (monogamy and polygamy), rules of authority (patriarchal or matriarchal), rules of descent and inheritance (patrilineal or matrilineal and sometimes bilateral), rules of residence (patrilocal, matrilocal or neolocal) as we find in modern society. We here explain the important forms of family based on structure and marriage.

7.6.1 Nuclear Family

It is a unit generally composed of married couple (in the statuses of husband and wife) in the role of mother and father or parent and their unmarried dependent children, either natural or adopted, living together. It is called nuclear as it serves as the core or nucleus upon which larger family groups are built. It is also sometimes referred to as conjugal family. Such a type of family is relatively independent of the

wider kinship network because the social emphasis is placed primarily on the marital relationships. William Goode (1959) observed that spouses in the nuclear family have to rely heavily on each other for the companionship and support that might be provided by other relatives in an extended (joint) family system.

The term nuclear family is sometimes used for such families also which may and may not include husband and wife. They consist of any two or more persons related to one another by blood, marriage or adoption who share a common residence. Thus, a brother and sister or a single parent and child would be nuclear families but not strictly speaking conjugal families. In conjugal family the emphasis is primarily on conjugal bound, i.e. marital relationship.

In virtually all societies we can identify this type of family. In most traditional societies, including India, the nuclear family was part of a larger kinship network of some type. Anthropologist G. P. Murdock (1949) asserts that it is a universal human grouping. However, there are several categories of evidence against this position. Family units comprising step parents as a consequence of divorce or remarriage is known as reconstituted family. It is a form of nuclear family in which one or both parents have had children from a previous relationship.

7.6.2 Extended Family

When nucleus of the conjugal family is extended by the addition of other closely related kin (grandparents, aunts, uncles, nephews, brothers and their wives, cousin sisters, etc.) it is called an extended family. Giddens (1997) writes: 'when close relatives other than a married couple and their children live in the same household or in close and continuous relationship with one another, we speak of extended family.' As stated above, an extended family may include grandparents, brothers and their wives and children, sisters and their husbands, aunt and nephews. The term refers to a family system in which several generations live in one household. It consists of several individual families related by blood or marital ties. In most traditional societies, the extended family is the norms which go beyond the nuclear family unit. But, the old structure of extended family is crumbling and fast changing everywhere and in its place a modified extended family is gradually coming up.

The form of extended family differs from society to society. Indian joint family is also one of the forms of extended family. It is an extended form of consanguine family in which many blood relatives together with their mates and children reside. It is different from conjugal family which has a married couple as its core surrounded by a fringe of blood relatives, whereas the consanguine family has the group of

brothers and sisters at its core surrounded by a fringe of husband and wives. Generally, it is defined as, when two or more lineal or collateral nuclear families live together in one household, it is called joint family (in reality, joint families are an amalgam of what have been otherwise several families of orientation and procreation) (Majumdar 1956).

Families formed on the basis of marriage are of two types: monogamous family, in which one man marries one woman at one time, while polygamous family is formed by the concurrent marriage of one sex to two or more members of the opposite sex. Polygamous family is of two types: polygynous family, in which a man may be married to more than one woman at the time and polyandrous family, in which a woman may have two or more husbands simultaneously. This type of family is much less common.

7.6.3 Families Based on Descent, Inheritance and Residence

Norms of descent, inheritance, authority patterns and residence also decide the forms of family. The most common form of descent is patrilineal. In this type of descent, lineage is traced through father's kin: offspring owe a special allegiance and loyalty to father and his kin. It indicates that only the father's relatives are important in matter of property, inheritance and the establishment of emotional ties. Conversely, in societies which favour matrilineal descent, the mother's relatives assume the important role among offspring. This pattern of descent is not common, but they do exist as we find in Khasi and Garo tribes of North East India. When both sides of a person's family are regarded important, this system is referred to as bilateral descent. In this system, kinship lines are traced equally through the biological relatives of both the mother and the father and inheritance is passed on in equal proportions to children regardless of sex.

Now the question arises: who rules? Who has the power to make a decision? Societies vary the way the power within the family is distributed. Most societies are patriarchal, i.e. the men have the power and authority and are dominant. They dominate in all family decision making. Women hold low status in such societies. By contrast, in matriarchal societies, the authority rests with the females, especially wives and mothers. This system is rare and even in such society male members is seen exercising power through female members. The least common pattern of authority is the egalitarian model in which spouses are regarded as equals and decisions are equally taken by husband and wife. In modern times, the egalitarian family has begun to replace the patriarchal family as a social norm.

Norms of residence are very much different. When a married couple chooses its own place of residence or decides to establish a separate household, it is known as neolocal family. This type of residence pattern seems to be linked most closely with norms of monogamy and individualism. In many societies, the bride and groom live with groom's parents (the patrilocal family) or with wife's parents (matrilocal family). In such cultures it is felt that the new couples need emotional support and economic support of kinsfolk. Usually it is seen that the young couple begin their married life not as an independent household (neolocal residence) but with parents of either spouse and later on after sometime they end up an independent household of their own.

Sociologists also distinguish families of orientation and families of procreation. The family (usually nuclear) in which one is born and reared is termed as family of orientation. This is the family in which the most basic early childhood socialization occurs. Contrary to this, when a person marries, a new nuclear (or conjugal) family is formed and it is known as family of procreation. It is a family in which the person procreates after being married. This family consists of oneself and one's spouse, and children. Thus, a person becomes member of two different but overlapping nuclear families. Marriage is a dividing line between family of orientation and family of procreation in terms of the nature of roles one performs in two families.

7.7 Indian Joint Family

There are certain technical differences between the joint and the extended family. In Western society what is called joint family meant one uniting both father's and mother's lines. In this sense, Indian joint family is different from Western joint family. It is not only the extended form of nuclear family as is generally supposed, but it has other ingredients of jointness also. Co-residentiality, i.e. living together of nearest kin relatives with the conjugal family, is only one characteristic of Indian joint family and that too has lost much importance these days. What is meant by jointness that makes a family joint in Indian context, we start with much quoted definition of Irawati Karve (1953). She define the joint family as 'a group of people who generally live under one roof, who eat food cook at one hearth, who hold property in common, who participate in common family worship and who are related to each other as some particular type of kindred.' Karve has defined the family in historical context : the family that seems to have existed in Vedic and Epic period or in mediaeval times. This definition emphasizes on five characteristics of the joint

family; (i) common residence, (ii) common kitchen, (iii) common property and income, (iv) common worship, (v) some kind of kinship relations. If we apply these characteristics to the present Indian families, it would be very difficult to call a handful of families to be joint in the above sense.

According to I.P. Desai (1956), it is the relationship between the members of a household that determines the type of family. What distinguishes nuclear family from the joint family is the difference in the role, relations and the normative patterns of behaviour among different members. He defined it as under: 'we call that household joint family which has greater generation depth (i.e. three or more generations) than the nuclear family and the members of which are related to one another by property, income, mutual rights and obligations.' Desai thinks that when two nuclear families having kinship relations are living separately but function under one authority, it will be a joint family. For him, generational depth, rights and obligations and property relations are the main criteria for explaining joint family.

Some sociologists have given importance to commensality and fulfillment of obligations as the criteria of joint family, irrespective of common residence and common kitchen. It is the authority of the elder in matters of family and religion, joint investment of capital, joint enjoyment of profits, and of including birth, marriage and death expenses out of joint funds that determines a family to be joint. Thus, the main basis of joint family is the subordination of narrow individual interests to the larger interest of the family as a whole. It is the co-operative spirit among the members to help each other at the time of any calamity and their attendance at family functions and the observation of obligations or responsibilities towards are the members of the family rather than the facts of co-residence, commensality and the size of the group that keep the family joint. Due to the exigencies of modern times, it is not possible to place undue emphasis on common residence and common kitchen as dimensions of jointness. In its modern form, the nuclear families as the units of a joint family retain considerable autonomy and yet maintain connections with the other nuclear families of brothers and their parents to exchange gifts, goods and services. This type of family differs from a traditional joint family in that its members may live separately in the same household or in different parts of the city or in different cities in India or outside India and choose their occupations independently rather than following the traditional parental occupation. Yet it may be joint family if its members contribute their bit to the feelings of jointness by rendering financial and other kinds of help, performing various reciprocal obligations and following joint family norms. Physical jointness (common property,

purse, common land or business) has more or less weakened, but sentimental jointness still exists. This we can see at the observance of any family ritual – birth, marriage and death – when all members gather. When a joint family grows so large as to be intended to split apart, brothers start new joint families of their own. The Indian joint family has probably always gone through such cycles of formation and fission.

To conclude, it may be said that it is set of relationships and rights and obligations that make a family to be joint rather than its mere structure. Instead of large joint families, we will have only locally functioning effective small joint families of two generations and so. At the same time, even the majority of those nuclear families in which a man, his wife and unmarried children live separately, will continue to be joint with their primary kin like father or brother in terms of functioning (Ahuja, 1993). At the level of interaction, if the actions are oriented towards the husband, wife and children, it should be understood as nuclear family, but if they are oriented towards to a wider group of relatives (brothers, sisters, uncles, aunt and grandparents), then, it should be understood as a joint family. The basic elements of the traditional joint family may be summarized in the following points :

- (i) Responsibilities of members – duties and rights.
- (ii) Authority structure based on status.
- (iii) Affectional pattern – intimacy.
- (iv) Sentiments – mutuality of interest and mutual assistance.
- (v) Primary group controls.

The family has been one of the most important institutional pillars of Indian society. ‘If there is an “ism” that governs Indian society and its institutions, it is familism’ (Kakar and Kakar, 2007).

7.8 Family : Functions

From the fact that family is a universal social institution, it is clear that it has very important social functions.

(i) Procreation

Every society needs to replace its members. Although reproduction can take

place outside the marital union, it is only the family that can effectively nurture and socialize the human young to meet the needs of society.

(ii) Sexual Regulation

No society can allow unrestricted promiscuity. First, every society has to ensure that statuses and roles are defined so that individuals can function effectively in assigned positions. Second, by specifying that individuals marry within or outside certain social groups, society is establishing networks of relationships and forging useful alliances.

(iii) Economic Support

In the pre-industrial society, the family was the unit of production and consumption. Today as individuals pursue independent economic activities outside the home, the family may no longer be a significant unit of production. But the family is still responsible for maintenance of the human young, education, training and material support. In India, the family's support for children does not end when they turn eighteen; in the absence of productive employment many adults continue to depend on their parents.

(iv) Social Placement

Every individual is recognized as the member of a family and thus has an inherited status. Children inherit not only the family name and material assets but also a social standing. In fact, birth into a family determines a person's caste, class, religion, language and clan.

(v) Socialization

The family is the most important and effective agent of socialization. The human young is dependent on his or her parents for a long time. The child also spends the most formative years of his or her life in the family. The institution of family is responsible for initiating the child into the social circles, religious groups, language and caste. Thus the child gets socialized into the group's values, beliefs, standards and practices.

(vi) Emotional Security

This is one of the most important functions of the family. Food and shelter can be provided by other institutions such as the orphanage. Studies have shown that children who grew up in loving families tend to become mentally and physically healthier than those brought up in other institutions.

Many of these functions continue to be performed in large measure by the Indian family. But some of the functions such as education, apprenticeship for economic activities, training, recreation and religion have been taken over by schools, religious institutions and other community clubs.

7.9 Future of the Institution of Family

The existence of the twin institutions of marriage and family, which used to be pivot of all community life, seems to be in peril because of the changes in the attitude and norms of associational living. There have been loud claims that families are in decline and there have even been those who welcome the so-called demise of the family, because it is viewed as oppressive and bankrupt institutions. Scholars of Marxian leanings advocate that there is no need of marriage and stable traditional family. They regard these institutions as the outcome of patriarchal structures, which represent capitalism. Critics of modern family life suggest that a woman's inferior place in the home compound, female inequity in society at large and virtues of intimacy and emotional attachment, in fact, unveils a system of exploitation of wives by husbands and children by parents. Commenting on the modern family, Edmund Leach (1967) wrote, "The parents and children huddled together in their loveliness take too much out of each other. The parents fight; the children rebel." Leach further argues that the 'isolation and close-knit nature of contemporary family life inculcates hate which finds expression in conflict in the wider community.'

Since industrialization and its attendant harmful consequences and the disorganization of family life (breaking of family ties, open attitude about sex, increasing divorce rate, a general tendency for seeking personal happiness, mental and emotional disturbances, delinquent behaviour and illegitimate children) and the increasing tendency of living together without marriage after the advent of IT revolution in the mid-20th century, it had become much common to forecast pessimistic future of marriage and family. Whether the family is breaking up or adapting to the modern needs? Traditionalists affirm the idea of breaking up or declining or to use David Cooper's word 'dying'. Feminists and other critics of the conventional family have an interest in derogating it in some way or the other.

Some experts are concerned about the ultimate outcome of the profound changes that occurred after industrialization and IT revolution of the 20th century and are afraid that there will be a complete breakdown of the family. It is rather

premature to tell the demise of the family and not to expect that the family will adapt itself to the new situation. Nonetheless, it is but definite that the family is fast changing, and its format is crumbling and is being replaced by a new one.

In spite of the constant prediction of its demise, the family remains a significant institution. It is the only refuge in a brutal society. The family has become the sphere of personal life at a time when people are increasingly looking to themselves, outside of productive work, for meaning and purpose. Resilience and elasticity are the most potent characteristics of the institution of family which are keeping it alive. It is certain that there are changes underway, and possibly more to come, which will not only change the structure and functions of the family but also its meaning. The loss of the traditional functions was the basis for defining the family which used to be the source of emotions and sentiments. These are not found in an impersonal, competitive world of today, for making it a haven in a heartless world.

All societies develop myths about their present family systems, as well as about the past ones. It is a well-established tendency to glorify the past. How can we assume that the modern family system and the morals attached to it are really worse than the golden past, if we go deeply in the details of individual lives of 18th and 19th centuries? The traditional family as it was usually thought of in its purest form never existed. There are too many oppressive facets to families in the past to make them a model for today. The theme of bemoaning the rapid pace of modern change, as against the harmonious unaltered family behaviour of the past, is an old one. We cannot, however, prove that life was much more harmonious a century ago, or people were more contented in it. There is no doubt that the structure of the family and the norms of associational living are changing. The traditional expectation that the marriage will last for a lifetime has become an ideal in the past. In this regard, Anthony Giddens has suggested that terms like broken marriages and broken homes embody the traditional ideal and have unfortunate negative connotations, especially regarding children whose parents are separated or divorced. Thus, the changes in the family as discussed may be viewed from the point of reorganization of the family.

7.10 Summary

To conclude, it may be said that the future of the family and marriage is not bleak. Both institutions, which are rooted in the basic in emotions of love and

affection, will survive in some form or the other. Their structure may differ from place to place but the content (functions) shall keep the trinity of father, mother, and child together. The form of the new emerging family may be the neo-conventional family - a family with suits to the needs of the modern man. The social changes that have transformed earlier forms of marriage and family are mostly irreversible such as the modern woman would not like to return to the old domestic situation, confined to the four walls of the house. This was quite painful for them. The norms of family living, and sexual partnership have also undergone a sea change. Emotional communication between members of a conjugal family is becoming more and more central both in the personal and family domains. Because also undergone a sea change. Emotional communication between members of a conjugal family is becoming more and more central both in the personal and family domains. Because of the emphasis on the modern values of individual freedom, personal happiness, satisfaction and self- fulfillment both partners now do not want to live in a miserable marriage and thus there is every possibility of the steep increase in divorces in near future. This may be the cause of concern for those people who advocate for the old values of family stability. In reality, the family is not collapsing or dying as is generally said by the traditionalists; it is merely diversifying in its form and functions. Transitional families (neo-local, functionally joint, based on equality of sexes) are increasing and may become the order of the day.

7.11 Questions

G-A (5 marks each)

- (i) Define Family.
- (ii) What are the various forms of the family ?
- (iii) What is the future of the family ?
- (iv) Differentiate between nuclear family and joint family.

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (v) What are the characteristics of family ?
- (vi) Write a note on the functions of family.
- (vii) What is the structure and functions of the Indian Joint Family ?

7.12 Suggested Readings

- (i) Abraham, M. Francis (2015) : Contemporary Sociology – An Introduction to Concepts and Theories (Second Edition), New Delhi : Oxford University Press.
- (ii) Atal, Yogesh (2012) : Sociology – A Study of the Social Sphere, New Delhi : Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd.
- (iii) Dasgupta, Samir; Saha, Paulomi (2012) : An Introduction to Sociology, New Delhi : Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd.
- (iv) Rawat, H. K. (2018) : Contemporary Sociology, Jaipur : Rawat Publications.

Unit - 8 □ Gender : Types, Roles and Functions

Structure

- 8.1 Objectives**
- 8.2 Introduction**
- 8.3 Sex and Gender**
 - 8.3.1 Sex**
 - 8.3.2 Gender**
- 8.4 Deconstruction of Sex and Gender**
- 8.5 Gender Roles**
- 8.6 Gender Stereotypes**
 - 8.6.1 Stereotyping**
 - 8.6.2 Kinds of Gender Stereotypes**
 - 8.6.3 How gender stereotypes affect people?**
 - 8.6.4 How to fight gender stereotypes ?**
- 8.7 Summary**
- 8.8 Questions**
- 8.9 Suggested Readtngs**

8.1 Objectives

- To understand the distinction between sex and gender
- To understand the deconstruction of sex and gender
- To understand the gender roles
- To understand the idea of gender stereotypes

8.2 Introduction

When filling out a document such as a job application or school registration

form you are often asked to provide your name, address, phone number, birth date, and sex or gender. But have you ever been asked to provide your sex and your gender? As with most people, it may not have occurred to you that sex and gender are not the same. However, sociologists and most other social scientists view sex and gender as conceptually distinct. Sex refers to physical or physiological differences between males and females, including both primary sex characteristics (the reproductive system) and secondary characteristics such as height and muscularity. Gender is a term that refers to social or cultural distinctions associated with being male or female. Gender identity is the extent to which one identifies as being either masculine or feminine.

Concepts are terms used by social scientists as analytical categories to study society and social behaviour. Through the use of concepts social scientists develop categories that act as aids in the scientific investigation of behaviour in the society. In gender studies there are several such concepts that provide the framework in the study of behaviour. The concept of gender gives recognition to the fact that every known society distinguishes between women and men. Therefore, the concept of gender is a systematic way of understanding men and women socially and the patterning of relationships between them. The concept of patriarchy helps in the study of the male dominance in the society. The concept of gender helps to study the differences in behaviour between men and women and to analyze the basis of these differences as basically biological or as social constructions by the society. In feminist writings and in discourses on Gender Studies, these concepts are basic to our understanding of social differences between men and women in the society. A study of these concepts is useful as analytical categories.

8.3 Sex and Gender

The term “sex” and “gender” are concepts used by academicians, researchers and feminist writers to make a distinction between the biologically different “male” and “female” and between the socially different “man” and “woman”. Feminist sociologists suggest that there is a need to understand and distinguish between the two terms “sex” and “gender” in academic discourses and writings.

8.3.1 Sex

In a very broad way, “sex” refers to the biological and physiological differences between male and female sex. The term sex is a physical differentiation between the biological male and the biological female. Thus, when an infant is born, the infant

comes to be labeled “boy” or “girl” depending on their sex. The genital difference between male and female is the basis of such characterization. There is a biological difference between the sexes and most people are born (except for a few ambiguous cases) as one sex or another. However, it has been argued that having been born into one sex or another, individuals are then socialized according to specific gender expectations and roles. Biological males learn to take on masculine roles. They are socialized to think and act in masculine ways. Biological females learn to take on feminine roles. They are socialized to think and behave in feminine ways. As the feminist writer Simone de Beauvoir puts it “one is not born a man but becomes one”, “one is not born a woman but becomes one”.

At birth, besides the basic biological differences in the genitals and reproductive organs, there is not much difference between the male child and the female child. Society makes the differences between boy and girl through gender constructions. The biological difference between the sexes does to some extent explain certain psychological and socially constructed differences. This view is criticized by some feminist writers like Judith Butler.

Judith Butler argues that sex is natural and comes first. Gender is perceived as a secondary construct which is imposed over the top of this natural distinction. Viewed thus, Butler argues “sex” itself becomes a social category. This means that the distinction between “male” and “female” is a social distinction made by the society, that is, it is a social construction. It is a particular way of perceiving and dividing the differences between “male” and “female”. Butler explains that “sex” though seen as biological, is as much a product of society as is gender. So the term sex is also socially constructed.

The scientific, biological meaning and definition of sex is an important source of explanation to point out the basic differences in sex. Butler’s concern is that “biology” itself, as a scientific discipline, is a social system of representation and more important there are a number of differences between human beings, but only some become a basis for dividing human beings into distinct types. In other words, even if we accept that there are basic differences between the “sexes” there is no logical or rational reason for use. This is the basis for dividing human beings into two groups or sexes.

Judith Butler further explains “sex” is not just an analytical category. It is a normative category as well. It stipulates what men and women are. It also stipulates what men and women ought to be. It formulates rules to regulate the behaviour of men and women. Butler concludes that sex is also a social category. There are some feminist writers who do not agree with Butler and regard “sex” as basically biological in nature.

Much research in sociology assumes that each person has one sex, one sexuality and one gender. Sometimes sex and gender are used interchangeably. Sometimes sex means sexuality; it may refer to biology or physiology. A woman is assumed to be feminine female, a man a masculine male. Research variables polarize sex as males and females; sexuality is polarized as homosexual and hetero sexuals; gender is homosexual as and women these reflect conventionalize bodies that do not take into account transvestites, transsexuals, bisexuals and so on. In gender studies or women studies the four of concern is on the biological sex – man, woman, male female and the way in which biological differences have been socially gendered in different ways by the patriarchal society. When infants are categorized as a particular sex, they are subject to a range of gendered behaviour through gendered socialization. This brings us to the question what is gender?

8.3.2 Gender

The concept of gender in feminist writings and other sociological discourses became popular in the early 1970. In simple terms, gender explain the differences between men and women in social terms as men, and as what a man can do; as “woman”, and as what a woman can or cannot do. Therefore, gender is an analytical category that is socially constructed to differentiate the biological difference between men and women. The term gender is also used to describe the differences in behaviour between men and women which are described as “masculine” and “feminine”. Feminist writings focus on this aspect and claim that these differences are not biological but are social constructions of patriarchal society.

Some theorists suggest that the biological differences between men and women also result in their mental and physical differences. They argue that biologically, men are physically and mentally superior to women. Other theorists suggest that the biological difference between men and women are exaggerated. The differences are socially constructed by the patriarchal system of society by which men are described as superior to women. Therefore, women become subordinate to men in the society.

Ann Oakley in her book, “Sex, Gender and Society” (1972) explores the term gender. Oakley says that in the Western culture women play the roles of the “housewife” and “mother”. This is because women are made to play these roles because of their biology. The western culture also believes that any effort to change the traditional roles of men and women in the society can cause damage to the social fabric of the society. Oakley concludes that this view regarding the roles of men and women helps to support and maintain the patriarchal society.

Simone de Beauvoir in her book “The Second Sex” (1949) says that “one is not born, but rather becomes a woman”. She explains that gender differences in the

society make the man superior through his role as the bread winner. It gives him a position of power in the society and family. Gender differences are set in hierarchal opposition such that men are superior and women are subordinate. Women's position is that of the "other" and women are the continual outsiders. Civilization was masculine to its very depth.

Shulamith Firestone in her book, "The Dialectics of Sex" (1970) suggests that patriarchy exploits women's biological capacity to reproduce as their essential weakness. She explains that the only way for women to break away from this oppression is to use technological advances of free themselves from the burden of childbirth. She advocated breaking down the biological bond between mothers and children by establishing communes where monogamy and nuclear family do not exist. Few feminists accept Firestone's views mainly because both technology and its uses are still firmly in the hands of men. While cultural feminists question whether all the key differences between men and women are solely cultural and whether also biological, these feminists prefer to value and celebrate the mothering role as evidence of women's natural disposition towards nurturance and would not like to relinquish even if they could.

Ann Oakley says that there is a constant slippage between sex and gender; for example people are generally asked to declare their "gender" instead of sex on an application form. In feminist writings there are references to the close association of gender with the biological or natural as inevitable. Recent writings on sex and gender suggest that feminism has relied too much on the polarization of sex and gender distinctions, showing that the meanings attached to sex differences are themselves socially constructed and changeable. It is dependent on the way we understand them and attach different consequences to these biological facts within our own cultural historical context. At the same time there is an argument that biology does contribute to some behavioral characteristics.

Moira Gatens states that evidence points "that the male body and the female body have quite different social value and significance and cannot but help have a marked effect on male and female consciousness". Certain bodily events have huge significance especially if they occur only in one sex. She cites the example of menstruation. She points that masculinity is not valued, unless it is performed by biological male; hence the male body itself is imbued in our culture with the mythology of supremacy of being the human norm.

Judith Butler's theorization about gender introduces the notion of performativity,

an idea that gender is involuntarily performed within the dominant discourses of hetero-reality. Butler's conception is perhaps most radical as she asserts that all identity concepts are in fact that effects of institution practices, discourses with multiple and diffuse points of origin. She further states that sex/gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed gender. This approach questions the way we make the construction of gender identity. Individual do tend to challenge the way discourses establish and reinforce certain meanings and institutions such as that of compulsory heterosexuality.

It is difficult to accept a rigid distinction between sex and gender as either wholly biological or singularly cultural. There is a constant shift between conceptualizations of human beings as controlled by either predominantly biological or social forces. The debates on sex and gender will continue as same will argue in favour of biological differences while other feminist writers will favour the differences as socially constructed, supported by social institutions like religion, caste, family marriage and so on. The substantial shift in women's lives and expectations since the 1960s clearly explains that the category of feminine has been rather elastic. Women's roles and performances have changed drastically over the past few decades which have added new dimensions to the debates by feminists and other on sex / gender distinctions.

8.4 Deconstructing Sex and Gender

In rethinking gender categories it is necessary to look at sex and gender as conceptually distinct. Each is socially constructed in different ways. Gender is an overarching category – a major social status that organizes almost all areas of social life. Therefore, bodies are gendered and are built into major social institutions of the society such as economy, ideology, polity, family and so on.

For an individual, the components of gender are the sex category assigned at birth on the basis of the appearance of the genitalia. Each category provides a gender identity, gendered sexual orientation, marital and procreative status, a gendered personality structure, gender beliefs and attitudes, gender at work and family roles. All these social components of are supposed to be consistent and congruent with one's biology. The actual combination may or may not be congruent with each other and with the components of gender and sex, moreover, the components may not line up neatly on one side of the binary divide.

The need for official categorization in societies of infants into neat legal label “boy” or “girl” soon after birth are at the sometime subject to rather arbitrary sex assignment. Sex change surgery is not uncommon for infants with anomalous genitalia. Sociologists are aware of the varieties of biological and physiological sexes. The rationale given for categorization of the ambiguous as either female or male throws light on the practices that maintain the illusion of clear sex differences. Without such critical exploration, sex differences can easily be considered as natural of what actually is socially constructed.

8.5 Gender Roles

Gender roles are based on the different expectations that individuals, groups, and societies have of individuals based on their sex and based on each society’s values and beliefs about gender. Gender roles are the product of the interactions between individuals and their environments, and they give individuals cues about what sort of behavior is believed to be appropriate for what sex. Appropriate gender roles are defined according to a society’s beliefs about differences between the sexes.

Gender roles are the roles that men and women are expected to occupy based on their sex. Traditionally, many Western societies have believed that women are more nurturing than men. Therefore, the traditional view of the feminine gender role prescribes that women should behave in ways that are nurturing. One way that a woman might engage in the traditional feminine gender role would be to nurture her family by working full-time within the home rather than taking employment outside of the home. Men, on the other hand, are presumed by traditional views of gender roles to be leaders. The traditional view of the masculine gender role, therefore, suggests that men should be the heads of their households by providing financially for the family and making important family decisions. While these views remain dominant in many spheres of society, alternative perspectives on traditional beliefs about gender roles have gained increasing support in the twenty-first century.

Different disciplines offer a range of perspectives on gender roles. An ecological perspective on gender roles suggests that gender roles are created by the interactions between individuals, communities, and their environments. That is, while individual people play a role in constructing gender roles, so too do the physical and social environments within which people operate. A biological perspective on gender roles suggests that women have a natural affinity toward the feminine gender role and that men have a natural affinity toward the masculine gender role. The biological

perspective does not, however, suggest that one role holds any inherently greater value than another role. A sociological perspective toward gender roles suggests that masculine and feminine roles are learned and that masculine and feminine gender roles are not necessarily connected to males' and females' biological traits. Sociologists study the different meanings and values that masculine and feminine gender roles hold in society. Related to the sociological perspective, a feminist perspective on gender roles might assert that because gender roles are learned, they can also be unlearned, and that new and different roles can be created.

The feminist perspective points out that gender roles are not simply ideas about appropriate behavior for males and females but are also linked to the different levels of power that males and females hold in society. For example, maintaining economic control over themselves and their families is one way that men experience greater power in society than women. Because men are expected to be the primary breadwinners for their families, women often find themselves to be in poverty if their marriages dissolve. In this example, a feminist perspective would assert that men tend to hold more power in their marriages than women since men are less likely to lose power or social status if their marriages dissolve.

Gender roles can be linked to expectations of males and females in realms outside of the family as well, such as work. In the workplace, men and women are often expected to perform different tasks and occupy different roles based on their sex. Even in the early 21st century, many corporations operate from a perspective that favors traditional beliefs about gender roles by, for example, offering parental leave benefits only to mothers and denying such benefits to fathers. In addition, because the traditional perspective toward gender roles remains predominant in many corporations, the positions that women and men hold within corporations are often segregated by sex. Women are more likely to be expected to work as secretaries, and men are more likely to be expected to work as managers and executives. Also, men are presumed to be more ambitious and task-oriented in their work, while women are presumed to be more interested in and concerned about their relationships with others at work.

As these examples demonstrate, gender roles are sometimes created on the basis of stereotypes about gender. Gender stereotypes are oversimplified understandings of males and females and the differences between them. Individuals sometimes base their perceptions about appropriate gender roles upon gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes tend to include exaggerated or erroneous assertions about the nature of

males and females. For example, a common gender stereotype about males is that they are not emotional. Females, on the other hand, are commonly stereotyped as being irrational or overly emotional. Political movements such as the feminist movement continue to work to deconstruct gender stereotypes and offer alternative visions of gender roles that emphasize equality between women and men.

Finally, gender roles are often discussed in terms of an individual's gender role orientation, which is typically described as either traditional or nontraditional. A traditional gender role orientation emphasizes differences between men and women and assumes that each sex has a natural affinity to particular behaviors. Those who maintain a traditional gender role orientation are likely to be influenced by the rules and rituals of the generations that came before them, by their parents and grandparents. Individuals with nontraditional gender role orientations are more likely to believe that an individual's behavior is not or should not be determined solely by her sex. Individuals with nontraditional gender role orientations are more likely to believe in the value of egalitarian relationships between men and women and in the power of individual human beings to determine what roles they wish to occupy and the extent to which those roles are or should be associated with their sex.

8.6 Gender Stereotypes

Gender relates to a set of cultural expectations according to which men and women behave. Each culture assigns certain roles and standardized patterns of behavior to its members that allow them to organize their lives in a consistent and predictable way. In normative order, cultures and societies prescribe normative role behavior and ease-down interaction of individuals. Normative role behavior is collectivistic that delimits individual freedom and tie them to predetermined rights and duties as well as expectations. The socially constructed and culturally defined realities are closely associated with the development of stereotypes that are predetermined notions or images, which define various spheres of activities including gender.

8.6.1 Stereotyping

Stereotyping is the act of judging someone on the basis of one's perception of the group to which that person belongs. In other words, it is "the unconscious or conscious application of (accurate or inaccurate) knowledge of a group in judging a member of the group". A stereotype is a view that is held by one or more individuals

about a group to make overgeneralization of the characteristics of that group. Through stereotyping, people are categorized according to the characteristics they have in common, including gender, age, race, ethnicity, language, religion, and so on. In sociological discourse, stereotyping is closely associated with prejudicial judgment characterized by rigid and irrational generalization about an entire community of people. More specifically, gender stereotypes are deep-rooted perceptions of the characteristics of male and female, which support the continuity of specific gender roles.

Based on gendered division of labor and social roles, men and women are often represented stereotypically according to the traits they are assumed to possess by virtue of their biological make up. Several studies point to stereotyping on the basis of their sex-related characteristics. It is viewed that gender stereotypes are formed during the process of learning and communication in which sociocultural and interactional factors play the role of key socializing agents. The factors and agents also include family as a basic and primary source of gender socialization where social roles are assigned based on gender. Family as a foremost socializing agency transmits simplistic labels and deep-rooted messages considered specific for a feminine woman and a masculine man. In family, different role models are assigned to women and men according to what is traditionally attributed to each sex. Similarly, on the basis of a set of physical qualities and psychological characteristics defined by family, society labels tasks which are known as gender stereotypes.

8.6.2 Kinds of Gender Stereotypes

There are four basic kinds of gender stereotypes :

- Personality traits — For example, women are often expected to be accommodating and emotional, while men are usually expected to be self-confident and aggressive.
- Domestic behaviors — For example, some people expect that women will take care of the children, cook, and clean the home, while men take care of finances, work on the car, and do the home repairs.
- Occupations — Some people are quick to assume that teachers and nurses are women, and that pilots, doctors, and engineers are men.
- Physical appearance — For example, women are expected to be thin and graceful, while men are expected to be tall and muscular. Men and women are also expected to dress and groom in ways that are stereotypical

to their gender (men wearing pants and short hairstyles, women wearing dresses and make-up).

In many societies, masculine stereotypes is identified with competitiveness, aggressiveness, and independence, whereas feminine stereotypes revolve around a set of beliefs that define women as caring, altruistic, affective in interpersonal relationships, child friendly, emotionally expressive, sensitive and empathetic, and above all submissive and passive.

8.6.3 How gender stereotypes affect people ?

A gender stereotype is harmful when it limits women's and men's capacity to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives. Harmful stereotypes can be both hostile/negative (e.g., women are irrational) or seemingly benign (e.g., women are nurturing). For example, the fact that child care responsibilities often fall exclusively on women is based on the latter stereotype. Gender stereotyping is wrongful when it results in a violation or violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Example of wrongful gender stereotyping are the failure to criminalize marital rape based on societal perception of women as the sexual property of men, and the failure to effectively investigate, prosecute and sentence sexual violence against women based on, e.g., the stereotype that women should protect themselves from sexual violence by dressing and behaving modestly.

Gender stereotypes compounded and intersecting with other stereotypes have a disproportionate negative impact on certain groups of women, such as women from minority or indigenous groups, women with disabilities, women from lower caste groups or with lower economic status, migrant women, etc. Wrongful gender stereotyping is a frequent cause of discrimination against women and a contributing factor in violations of a vast array of rights such as the right to health, adequate standard of living, education, marriage and family relations, work, freedom of expression, freedom of movement, political participation and representation, effective remedy, and freedom from gender-based violence.

Gender stereotypes can affect people in the following ways :

- Hyper-femininity is the exaggeration of stereotyped behavior that's believed to be feminine. Hyper-feminine folks exaggerate the qualities they believe to be feminine. This may include being passive, naive, sexually inexperienced, soft, flirtatious, graceful, nurturing, and accepting.

- Hyper-masculinity is the exaggeration of stereotyped behavior that's believed to be masculine. Hyper-masculine folks exaggerate the qualities they believe to be masculine. They believe they're supposed to compete with other men and dominate feminine folks by being aggressive, worldly, sexually experienced, insensitive, physically imposing, ambitious, and demanding.
- These exaggerated gender stereotypes can make relationships between people difficult. Hyper-feminine folks are more likely to endure physical and emotional abuse from their partners. Hyper-masculine folks are more likely to be physically and emotionally abusive to their partners.

8.6.4 How to fight gender stereotypes ?

There are ways to challenge these stereotypes to help everyone — no matter their gender or gender identity — feel equal and valued as people.

- Point it out — Magazines, TV, film, and the Internet are full of negative gender stereotypes. Sometimes these stereotypes are hard for people to see unless they're pointed out. Be that person! Talk with friends and family members about the stereotypes you see and help others understand how sexism and gender stereotypes can be hurtful.
- Be a living example — Be a role model for your friends and family. Respect people regardless of their gender identity. Create a safe space for people to express themselves and their true qualities regardless of what society's gender stereotypes and expectations are.
- Speak up — If someone is making sexist jokes and comments, whether online or in person, challenge them.
- Give it a try — If you want to do something that's not normally associated with your gender, think about whether you'll be safe doing it. If you think you will, give it a try. People will learn from your example.

The International Human Rights law framework prohibits gender stereotypes and stereotyping which undermine the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. States have obligation to eliminate discrimination against women and men in all areas of their lives. This obligation requires States to take measures to address gender stereotypes both in public and private life as well as to refrain from stereotyping.

8.7 Summary

The sex / gender difference raises the issues of male – female; masculine and feminine, male associated with masculinity and female with femininity. With each construction the biological differences between men and women get translated into social terms and descriptions. Feminist writers argue that biological differences get heightened through social descriptions of masculinity and femininity.

Patters of differences by gender is seen when the character is either masculine or feminine. For example, pink and blue are gendered colors, former regarded as “feminine” and the latter as “masculine”. Further to be “strong” and “tough” is masculine. Being “weak” and “soft” are associated with feminine character. There are several other traits that are categorized as masculine and feminine. Masculinity and femininity are concepts which signify the social outcomes of being male or female the traits and characteristics which describe men and women give men advantage over women.

Masculinity is not valued unless performed by biological male. Hence the male body is imbued in our culture with certain traits that characterize maleness or masculinity; hence the human norm of male supremacy. Similarly femininity is performed by the biological female. The female body is in our culture is imbued with certain traits that characterize female or femininity. According to Judith Butler any theorization about gender introduces the notion or idea of performance of gender in terms of masculinity and femininity. Thus, performance of gender becomes involuntary as gender gets internalized through the socialization process within the dominant discourses of patriarchy gender is performed at different levels within the family and in the society. We socially enter into our gendered categories of masculine and feminine right from birth.

The concepts of masculinity and femininity are needed in feminist discourses and writings to explain the differences between men and women. Some argue that these differences are based in their biology while others reject this argument and emphasize that the differences are socially constructed. Therefore, the construction of men and masculinity will accrue exclusively to the bodies of males. The construction of women and femininity will accrue exclusively to the bodies of females. In contemporary writings there is a recognition that this social categorization of masculinity and femininity are blurring. There is a constant shift in the conceptualization of human beings as controlled by wholly biological or social forces. Women’s expectations have changed; women live and roles have broadened.

8.7 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) What do you mean by gender ?
- (ii) What are gender stereotypes ?
- (iii) What are the types of gender stereotypes ?
- (iv) What is the difference between sex and gender ?

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (v) What are gender roles ?
- (vi) How have gender roles transformed in the society overtime ?
- (vii) In what ways do stereotypes affect the society ?
- (viii) What measures must the society adopt to counter gender stereotype ?

8.8 Suggested Readings

- (i) Bhasin, Kamala (2000) : Understanding Gender, New Delhi: Kali for Women.
- (ii) Bhasin, Kamala (1993) : What is Patriarchy? New Delhi : Kali for Women.
- (iii) Blackstone, Amy (2003) : Gender Roles and Society, Human Ecology : An Encyclopedia of Children, Families Communities, and Environments; Pp 335-338.
- (iv) Hussain, Muhammas; Naz, Arab; Khan, Wasim; Daraz, Umar; Khan, Qaisar (2015) : Gender Stereotyping in Family : An Institutionalized and Normative Mechanism in Pakhtun Society of Pakistan, Sage Open; DOI : 10.1177/2158244015595258; Pp 1-11.
- (v) Oakley, Ann (1972) : Sex, Gender and Society, London : Harper Colophon Books.
- (vi) Pitcher, Jane; Whelahan (2005) : Fifty Key Concepts in Gender Studies, New Delhi : Sage Publication.

Unit - 9 □ Ethnic Groups and Their Distinctions

Structure

- 9.1 Objectives**
- 9.2 Introduction**
- 9.3 Etymology of Ethnicity**
- 9.4 Defining Ethnicity**
- 9.5 Racial classification of Indian people by different Anthropologists**
 - 9.5.1 Classification of Sir Herbert Hope Risley (1915)**
 - 9.5.2 Classification of B.S. Guha (1937)**
- 9.6 Manifestations of Ethnic Identity in India**
- 9.7 Types of Ethnic Groups**
- 9.8 Ethnic Unrest in India**
- 9.9 Summary**
- 9.10 Questions**
- 9.11 Suggested Readings**

9.1 Objectives

- To define ethnicity
- To understand racial classification of Indian people by different anthropologists
- To understand the manifestations of ethnic identity in India
- To understand the types of ethnic groups
- To learn about ethnic unrest in India

9.2 Introduction

In sociology, ethnicity is a concept referring to a shared culture and a way of life. This can be reflected in language, religion, material culture such as clothing and

cuisine, and cultural products such as music and art. Ethnicity is often a major source of social cohesion as well as social conflict. Ethnicity, unlike race, is not based on biological traits, except in the case of ethnic groups that recognize certain traits as requirements for membership. In other words, the cultural elements that define a particular ethnic group are taught, not inherited. This means that the boundaries between ethnic groups are, to some degree, fluid, allowing for individuals to move between groups. Because ethnic groups are self-defined, it is important to remember that no single aspect of group identity (language, religion, etc.) can be used to sort people into one group or another.

Ethnic diversity is one of the social complexities found in most contemporary societies. Historically it is the legacy of conquests that brought diverse peoples under the rule of a dominant group. Ethnicity refers to the differentiation of groups of people who have shared cultural meanings, memories, and descent produced through social interaction. Ethnicity is considered to be shared characteristics such as culture, language, religion, and traditions, which contribute to a person or group's identity.

An ethnic group is a group of people united on the basis of some shared experience or some common physical or socio-cultural attributes. For e.g. race, culture, language, religion, region, nationality, heritage. Ethnic group is defined as a segment of a larger society which is seen by others to be different in some combination of the following characteristics – language, religion, race and ancestral homeland with its related culture; the members of the ethnic group also perceive themselves in that way and they participate in shared activities built around their (real or mythical) common origin or culture. Weber (1997) defines ethnic groups as those groups which entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical types or customs or both. This subjective belief is important for the propagation of group formation. Furthermore, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relation exists.

Ethnicity involves a feeling of consciousness among the members of an ethnic group of the existence of such shared characteristics. It also involves the process of mobilization of people along some common point of reference for presenting a united front to articulate their socio-economic or political interests. Ethnicity, thus, involves the process of interaction between two or more groups. Barthes (1969) says that the issue of the identification of social boundary is intrinsic to the concept of ethnicity. Each ethnic group draws a boundary to identify its own members and to distinguish the “we” group from other ethnic groups.

9.3 Etymology of Ethnicity

It is widely known, 'ethnicity' and 'ethnic' are derived from Greek. At the time of Homer (between 750 and 650 BC) the term *ethnos* was applied to various large, undifferentiated groups (warriors as well as bees and birds) and meant something like 'throng' or 'swarm'. Aristotle (384–322 BC) used the term to denote alien or 'barbarous' groups as distinct from Hellenic civilization. In the Greek text of the New Testament ethnicity refers to non-Christian or non-Jewish populations. The adjective 'ethnikos' accordingly meant 'pagan', 'heathen', or 'barbarian'.

The modern academic usage of the term 'ethnic' began in the early 19th century. In the 1830s and 1840s, scientific 'ethnological' societies devoted to the study of the origin, characteristics and progress of the world's different 'peoples' were founded in Europe and the USA. The term ethnic was applied to indicate differences in religion, behaviour, life-style or phenotype. The word 'race' first entered Western languages between the 13th and 15th centuries and had a variety of meanings. Before the Enlightenment it was sometimes used to refer to a family line or lineage, particularly of noble families. Later it meant a class of people or the people of a land, but it was not until the late 18th century that 'race' began to acquire the meaning of one of the great subdivisions of mankind. During the 18th and 19th centuries, however, the ideas of people, race, nation, and class were still merged and the terms frequently used interchangeably.

Well into the twentieth century, 'ethnic group' was mostly employed for populations in the 'developed' parts of the world (Europe and the USA) and differentiated by the aforementioned criteria, while the majority populations in each country were considered 'nations'. The indigenous inhabitants of Africa, the Americas, Asia and Australia were, in contrast, generally referred to as 'tribes'. From the 19th-century evolutionist perspective, their forms of social organization were considered relics of earlier stages of development. A similar view was represented by the modernization theory that dominated the debates on development up to the 1960s. 'Tribal' loyalties in the developing countries were held to be hindrances to societal integration and nation building. As a response to the mounting critique of the 19th-century evolutionary concepts, the term tribe has largely fallen into disuse in the social sciences and been replaced by 'ethnic group' or 'ethnie'.

This complex history of usage is still reflected in recent academic discourse. Many authors employ 'ethnic group' merely to describe forms of socio-cultural

differentiation within existing states. Others consider the ‘ethnie’ or ethnic group to be a forerunner of the nation or the nation as a special variant of the ‘ethnie’, with nation characterized by its ideological reference to a bygone, existing or desired state. ‘Ethnie’ or ‘ethnic group’, then, would refer to any grouping that distinguishes itself from others by cultural criteria and symbols (such as language, beliefs, norms or history). Authors like Francis (1947), Rothschild (1981), Connor (1984) or Brass (1991) do not make a systematic distinction between ‘ethnie’ and ‘nation’, but instead consider them as largely synonymous. Francis (1947), for example, employs ‘ethnic group’ to denote a minority within a state, e.g. French Canadians in Canada, as well as to refer to the French in France or the Irish in Ireland.

Modern genetics tend not to speak of ‘races’ because there ‘has always been so much interbreeding between human populations that it would be meaningless to talk of fixed boundaries between races’ and ‘the distribution of hereditary physical traits does not follow clear boundaries’. However, in a number of cases people’s actions are informed by the belief that systematic differences in the personality of members of different ‘races’ are linked to hereditary characteristics, and that phenotypic features play a crucial role in differentiating between social groups.

9.4 Defining Ethnicity

The conceptual differences sketched above notwithstanding, most scholars would probably agree that the term ethnicity should be employed for a sub-class of us / them distinctions people make. Thus, the question arises as to what features make distinctions ‘ethnic’. Frederic Barth’s classic definition states ethnicity as: “A categorical ascription is an ethnic ascription when it classifies a person in terms of his basic, most general identity, presumptively determined by his origin and background”. Barth sees ethnicity as a special form of social categorization, and links it – as Max Weber long before him – to the idea of common descent. Max Weber used the term ethnic group to connote those human collectivities which ‘entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization or migration’ (Weber, 1968). Thus, Weber states that ethnic groupings are aggregations of people who share a ‘subjective belief in their community of descent’. Weber also points out that this belief normally rests on the idea of cultural and/or phenotypic similarity. However, Barth’s ‘basic, most general identity’ is too vague to be of much help. Beyond this, his definition implies that each human being has only one ‘primary’ group identity.

Likewise, much more recent commentators such as Horowitz (1985), who deployed the term in an ascriptive sense, saw the core features of ethnicity as common origin, skin colour, appearance, religion and/or language. Schermerhorn, in his seminal work *Comparative Ethnic Relations*, defined the term ethnic group as ‘a collectivity within a larger society [who] have real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of their peoplehood’ (Schermerhorn, 1970). Clarifying the term ‘symbolic elements’, he says that these can include ‘kinship patterns, physical contiguity (as in localism or sectionalism), religious affiliation, language or dialect forms, tribal affiliation, nationality, phenotypical features, or any combination of these’.

Geertz (1996) avers that ethnicity is based on the primordial ties of blood, race, language, religion or tradition and such “attachments seem to flow from a sense of natural affinity than from social interaction”. However, many sociologists do not agree with Geertz’s views on ethnicity that it is based on primordial loyalty and is immutable. Writing on ethnicity in South Asia, Phadnis and Ganguly (2001) posit that ethnicity is a dynamic and fluid concept. Its basis is not pre-determined but keeps on changing depending on the circumstances existing at a particular time. A person’s identity is multi-faced and keeps on flitting from one to another depending on the circumstances. For instance, ethnicity based on religion at one time may give way to another like region or language whenever there is a change of interest or circumstances.

Another important concept is that of ethno-nationalism. Ethno-nationalism is on rise in recent years due to large-scale trans-national migrations in the current era of unprecedented globalization. According to Anthony Smith (1993) “ethnic nationalism...unlike the territorial or civic versions of nationalism...conceives of the nation as a genealogical and vernacular cultural community. Whereas civic or territorial conceptions of the nation regard it as a community of shared culture, common laws and territorial citizenship, ethnic concepts of the nation focus on the genealogy of its members, however fictive; on popular mobilization of the “folk”; on native history and customs; and on the vernacular culture...”.

9.5 Racial classification of Indian People by different Anthropologists

India’s present-day population is a conglomeration of people belonging to

different racial groups with different ethnic backgrounds. The people entered India from different parts of the world at different time periods adopting themselves. India has been a meeting point of different races and tribes from times immemorial. Almost all the major races of the world are found in India. As a result, India has a varied population and diversified ethnic composition. Different Anthropologists classify racial composition of Indian people based on their works. Some of the notable classifications are Sir Herbert Hope Risley (1915) and B.S. Guha (1937).

9.5.1 Classification of Sir Herbert Hope Risley (1915)

Sir Herbert Hope Risley tried to classify the Indian population on the basis of anthropometric measurements. He had developed a clear-cut idea about the racial elements of India when he directed the operation of Census for India in 1901. Later, he took the help of anthropometry to affirm his assumptions and published the results in 1915 under the title 'The People of India'. He identified three principal racial types in India i.e. The Dravidian, the Indo-Aryan and the Mongoloid. On the whole, Risley distinguished seven different 'physical types' in the Indian population in the following way :

(i) The Dravidian

The stature of these people is short or below medium. The complexion is dark, approaching to black. The hair is similarly dark and plentiful with an occasional tendency to curl. The eye colour is also dark. The head is long and the nose is very broad, sometimes depressed at the root. The people of Dravidian type are distributed in the region from Ceylon to the valley of the Ganges covering the southern part of India, which especially includes the Western Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh (Hyderabad), Central India, and Chotonagpur. The best example of this type is the Paniyans of Malabar (South India) and the Santals of the Chottanagpur. Risley believed these people as original inhabitants of India who are found to be modified at present by the infiltration of the Aryans, the Scythians and the Mongoloids.

(ii) The Indo-Aryan

This type is the most close to the traditional Aryans who colonized India. The people are tall statured with fair complexion, dark eyes, and plentiful hair on face and body. They also possess predominant longhead (dolichocephalic), narrow and long (leptorrhine) nose. The type is confined to Punjab, Rajasthan, and Kashmir where the members are known as the Kashmiri Brahmins, Rajputs, Jats, and the Khattris.

(iii) The Mongoloid

The most important characteristic features of this type are broad-head, dark complexion with yellowish eyes and scanty hair on face and body. The stature is usually short or below medium. The nose shows a wide range of variation, from fine to broad. The face is typically flat where the eyes are oblique with epicanthic fold. The people of this type are found along the Himalayan region, especially in the regions namely North East Frontier, Nepal and Burma. The best examples are the Kanets of Lahul and Kulu Valleys, Lepchas of Darjeeling and Sikkim, the Limbus, the Murmis and the Gurungs of Nepal, and the Bodo of Assam.

(iv) The Aryo-Dravidian

This type is known as the Hindustani type. Generally the heads of the people are long with a tendency towards medium. The complexion varies from light brown to black. The nose is usually medium, although the broad nose is not uncommon. But in this case, the broad nose is always broader than the nose of Indo-Aryans. In stature, the people are shorter than the Indo-Aryans who usually show a below average height; i.e. the height ranges from 159cm to 166cm. Thus, the Aryo-Dravidians is differentiated from the Indo-Aryans. The type is considered as an intermixture of the Aryans and the Dravidians in varying proportions. The people of this type are found in Uttar Pradesh, in some parts of Rajasthan and in Bihar.

(v) The Mongolo-Dravidian

This type is known as the Bengalian type characterized by broad and round heads with a tendency towards medium dark complexion and plentiful hair on face. The nose is usually medium with a tendency towards flatness. The stature is also medium but sometimes short. Such people are found in Bengal and Orissa. The notable representatives of this type are the Bengali Brahmins and Bengali Kayasthas. According to Risley this type is not only an admixture of the Mongolians and the Dravidians, some blood strains of Indo-Aryan type are also mixed with it.

(vi) The Scytho-Dravidian

The people of this type possess medium to broad head, low to medium stature, fair complexion, and a moderately fine nose, which is not conspicuously long. The hair is scanty on face and body. It is held that the type has been evolved by the intermixture of two distinct racial strains—the Scythians and the Dravidians. Typical example of this type is found in Western India comprising the Maratha Brahmins, the Kunbis and the Coorgs, who are distributed in the tracts of Madhya Pradesh,

Maharashtra-Gujrat border region upto the Coorg. The Scythian element is more prominent in higher social groups of these regions while the Dravidian features predominate among the lower social groups in the region.

(vii) The Turko-Iranian

This type is characterized by broad heads and fine to medium nose, which is long and prominent. The stature is fairly tall and the average height of the males varies from 162cm to 172cm. Although the eyes are dark in colour, grey eyes are not uncommon. Complexion of the people is generally fair; plentiful hair is found on face and body. The type includes the inhabitants of Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Northwest Frontier Provinces (now in Pakistan) who are represented by the Balochis, Brahai, Afghans and some other people of NWFP. In the view of Risley, this type has been formed probably by the fusion of Turki and Persian elements in which the former's features predominate.

Risley's classification faced a considerable criticism from different authorities, especially in respect of the Dravidians, the Scytho-Dravidians and the Mongolo-Dravidians. Besides, the Indo-Aryans is distributed only in Punjab, Rajputana and the Kashmir Valley according to Risley. But the speakers of Aryan languages actually occupy a vast area in Indian subcontinent, which has not been reflected in his classification. If he had measured the people of Kashmir alone, then he should have placed them in a separate group as they possessed absolutely different physical features. Further, Risley had given much importance in Scythian elements when he discussed about broad-headed people as the Scytho-Dravidian type. In fact, the Scythian invaders stayed so short that they hardly get any opportunity to spread any remarkable influence among ethnic elements of Bombay Presidency where Risley conducted his study. Risley also stated that the broad-headed elements in Bengal have been influenced by the Mongolian people. But it is difficult to confirm that the brachycephalic elements in Bengal and Gujrat have been derived from the Mongolian element. Although all Mongolian people are brachycephals but the epicanthic fold as a typical Mongolian feature is found only among some people living in Darjeeling and neighbouring districts. This feature is totally absent among the people of other parts of Bengal.

9.5.2 Classification of B.S. Guha (1937)

The racial classification of Dr. B. S. Guha's is based on anthropometric measurements, which were collected during his investigations from 1930 to 1933.

Guha traced six major racial strains and nine sub-types among the modern Indian population.

(i) The Negrito

These people are considered as the first comers and the true autochthones of India. They are characterized by dark skin colour, short stature, and frizzly hair with long or short spirals. The head is small, medium, long or broad with bulbous forehead. The nose is flat and broad. The lips are everted and thick. The best representatives of this type are the Kadars, the Irulas, the Puniyans, etc. of South India. Such type of characters is also visible among the tribes living in the Rajmahal Hills. In respect of the head form and hair form, the Indian Negrito strain resembles more to the Melanesian Pygmies than to the Andamanese or African Pygmies.

(ii) The Proto-Australoid

This group is considered as the second oldest racial group in India characterized by dolichocephalic head, broad and flat nose (platyrrhine nose) which is depressed at the root. They are further short in height, dark brown to nearly black in skin colour. The hair is wavy or curly. Supraorbital ridges are prominent. These features are found among almost all the tribes of the Central and Southern India. The best examples are the Oraons, the Santals, and the Mundas of Chottanagpur region; the Chenchus, the Kurumbas, the Yeruvas and the Badagas of Southern India; and the Bhils, Kols of Central and Western India.

(iii) The Mongoloid

This type of people is distinguished by scanty growth of hair on face and body. The eyes are obliquely set and show the presence of epicanthic fold. The face is flat with prominent cheekbones and hair is straight. This group can be divided into two sub-groups, such as Palaeo-Mongoloid and the Tibeto-Mongoloid. The former one is further sub-divided as long headed and broad-headed. In Palaeo-Mongoloid group, especially the longheaded type possesses long head, medium stature, and medium nose. Their cheekbones are prominent and skin colour varies from dark to light brown. The face is short and flat. They are the inhabitants of the sub-Himalayan region; the concentration is most remarkable in Assam and Burma Frontier. The SemaNagas of Assam and the Limbus of Nepal are the best examples. The other sub-division of palaeo-Mongoloid is the broad-headed type who possesses broad head with round face, dark skin colour and medium nose. The eyes are obliquely set and epicanthic fold is more prominent than that of the long-headed type. This type has

been identified among the hill tribes of Chittagung, e.g. the chakmas, the Maghs, etc. Second sub-division of Mongoloid is the Tibeto-Mongoloids who show no further divisions. Their physical features are characterized by broad and massive head, tall stature, long and flat face, and medium to long nose. The eyes are oblique with marked epicanthic fold. Hair on body and face is almost absent. The skin colour is light brown. The best examples are the Tibetans of Bhutan and Sikkim.

(iv) The Mediterranean

This group is divided into three distinct racial types, these are :

(a) Palaeo-Mediterranean

The people are characterized by long head with bulbous forehead, projected with high vault. They also show medium stature, small and broad nose, narrow face and pointed chin. The hair on face and body is scanty. The skin colour is dark. These people probably introduced megalithic culture to India. The Dravidian speaking people of South India exhibit the main concentration of this type. The Tamil Brahmins of Madura, Nairs of Cochin, and Telugu Brahmins are the examples.

(b) The Mediterranean

The features include long head with arched forehead, narrow nose, medium to tall stature and light skin colour. Their chin is well developed, hair colour is dark, eye colour is brownish to dark and the hair on face and body is plentiful. These people live in the regions like Uttar Pradesh, Bombay, Bengal, Malabar, etc. The true types are the Numbudiri Brahmins of Cochin, Brahmins of Allahabad and Bengali Brahmins. It may be assumed that probably this type was responsible for the building up of Indus Valley civilization.

(c) The Oriental

These people resemble the Mediterranean in almost all physical features except the nose, which is long and convex in this case. The best examples are the Punjabi Chattris, the Benia of Rajputana, and the Pathans.

(v) The Western Brachycephals

This racial group is divided into three types, which are :

(a) The Alpenoid

This type shows broad head, medium stature, prominent nose and rounded face.

The hair on face and body is abundant and the skin colour is light. This type is found among the Bania of Gujarat, the Kathi of Kathiawar and the Kayasthas of Bengal.

(b) The Dinaric :

This type is characterized by broad head. The nose is very long and often convex. The face is long and stature in general is very tall. The skin colour is dark; eye and hair colours are also dark. The representative populations are found in Bengal, Orissa and Coorg. The Brahmins of Bengal and Mysore are the best examples. Both the Alpino and the Dinaric people entered into India through Baluchistan, Sind, Gujarat, and Maharashtra. They penetrated Ceylon from Kannada. The presence of this type has been noted in the Indus Valley site, Tinnevalley and Hyderabad.

(c) The Armenoid

This type shows a resemblance with the Dinarics in physical characters. Only difference is that, among the Dinarics the shape of occiput is much developed and the nose is very prominent. The Parsis of Bombay exhibit typical Armenoid characteristics. The Bengali Vaidyas and Kayasthas sometimes show the features of this type.

(vi) The Nordics

The people are characterized by long head, arched forehead. The nose is straight and high bridged. All are tall statured with strong jaw and robust body built. The eye colour is blue or grey. The body colour is fair which reddish. This element is scattered in different parts of Northern India, especially in the Punjab and Rajputana. The Kho of chitral, the Red Kaffirs, and the Khatash are some other representatives of this type. The Nordics came from the north, probably from Southeast Russia and Southwest Siberia, thereafter penetrated into India through Central Asia.

9.6 Manifestations of Ethnic Identity in India

Ethnicity is a social-psychological process which gives an individual a sense of belonging and identity. It is, of course, one of a number of social phenomena which produce a sense of identity. Ethnic identity can be defined as a manner in which persons, on account of their ethnic origin, locate themselves psychologically in relation to one or more social systems, and in which they perceive others as locating them in relation to those systems. By ethnic origin is meant either that a person has

been socialized in an ethnic group or that his or her ancestors, real or symbolic, have been members of the group. The social systems may be one's ethnic community or society at large, or other ethnic communities and other societies or groups, or a combination of all these. The articulation of ethnic identity and assertion in India primarily takes the following forms :

(i) Linguistic Ethnicity

Language has always formed the basis of asserting ethnic identity in India. This was well evident during the Dravidian Organization movement in the state of Tamil Nadu in South India in 1940s and 1950s when violent protest broke out against the adoption of Hindi as the national language by the government of India. The movement gave the call for the secession of Tamil Nadu from the union of India on the basis of identity centered on Tamil language. Because of intense linguistic feelings, many states were carved out based on languages by the State Reorganization Act of 1956. Recently, linguistic identity was again on display in the state of Maharashtra in Central India, where in the name of Marathi pride, there were concerted attacks on the helpless and poor Hindi-speaking North Indian immigrants from the states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

(ii) Religious Assertions and Communalism :

This is probably the most difficult and intricate socio-political issue that the Indian state has to grapple with when it comes to nation-building, especially the communal tension between the Hindus and the Muslims. Mutual distrust between the two communities is very high. The recent surge in Hindu nationalism has further intensified the feeling of cultural assertiveness on both sides. Post-independent India is replete with gory incidents of Hindu-Muslim riots.

(iii) Tribal Movements

This is not unique to post-independent India. The British period was full of incidents when tribes rose in revolt against the officials, the landlords and the money-lenders when they were forcibly evicted from their traditional land. Even in independent India, the tribes constitute the most neglected lot. Their lack of development and displacement from forests and traditional lands has caused huge disaffection among them. This has led to the resurgence of tribal identity movements in different parts of the country. An important dimension of this is what is called the "ethno-ecological" movement in which the tribes are not only fighting against their displacement but also against the ecological destruction of their natural habitats. The growing menace of Maoist violence in India in the tribal dominated regions of the

country, where the tribes are engaged in armed rebellion against the state, is a direct consequence of their oppression, displacement, poverty and anger against their cultural erosion under the onslaught of the dominant mainstream culture. This entails the transformation of ethnic groups into nationalities and their demand for autonomous governance or even secession as sovereign nation states.

(iv) Ethno-Nationalism

The secessionist movement in Kashmir, the Khalistan movement by Sikhs in Punjab in 1970s and 1980s for a separate homeland and the Naga movement in North-East India are examples of feelings of ethno-nationalism.

(v) Regionalism

Regionalism centers around three main factors: i) fear of being assimilated into the dominant culture and, hence, to preserve one's language and culture by demanding an autonomous state, ii) the skewed economic development of India where certain groups feel that they have been left behind despite being rich in resources in their regions and iii) nativistic tendencies – “sons of the soil” concept in which regional identity becomes the source of ethnic strife. Examples include the erstwhile Jharkhand movement in the state of Bihar and Telangana movement in the state of Andhra Pradesh, the attack on South Indians in Mumbai in 1960s and the simmering movement in the north-eastern state of Assam to expel the immigrants especially from the states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, which often taken the ugly turn of sanguinary strife between the natives and the immigrants.

(vi) Casteism

A rather inconclusive debate rages as to whether caste can be considered an ethnic group. A large chunk of that debate centers on the relation between caste and race. Scholars such as Berreman (1963) contend that caste is quite akin to race in its attributes and have highlighted the striking parallels between the two; others such as Dumont (1961) hold that the caste system, indigenous to India, has several unique features of its own which prevent it from being subsumed within the larger rubric of race. Beteille (1992) says that many American social anthropologists while working on racial segregation in the southern states of the United States in 1930s found it useful to speak of a caste system in representing the cleavages between blacks and whites in rural and urban communities there. They found strong similarities between caste system and stratification based on race. In fact, Myrdal (1944) employed similar terms and categories in his classic study of the American Negro.

9.7 Types of Ethnic Groups

What follows is not a complete classification of types of ethnic groups. It uses as criteria of classification locus of group organization, degree and nature of self-awareness in ethnic organization, structural location in interethnic relations and the generational factor. According to these criteria we can distinguish the following types of ethnic groups: primary and secondary ethnic groups, folk-community and nationality-community ethnic groups, dominant majority and subordinate minority ethnic groups, immigrant or young and established or old ethnic groups.

(i) Primary and Secondary Ethnic Groups

This distinction refers to the place of origin where the group's culture emerged as a distinct entity. Primary ethnic groups are those which exist in the same place in which historically they have been formed. They are indigenous groups. Examples are the French in France, Germans in Germany, etc., and also Native Indians in the Americas, Andalusians in Spain, etc. Secondary ethnic groups are those which have their origin in society different from the one in which they currently exist, as for example, the Italians, Germans, etc. in Canada or the United States. They are, as it were, transplanted groups which share their cultural and historical background with the society from which they emigrated, but which do not depend any more on the original society for their existence.

(ii) Folk-community and Nationality-community Ethnic Groups

The distinction between the folk community and nationality as types of ethnic groups was originally drawn by IhorZielyk (1975). The basic principle of distinction here is cultural self-awareness. Nationality groups are those which are culturally highly self-aware. That is, their members share an image of themselves as a collectivity united by a distinct culture rather than by their kin or clan. An essential part of this image is a conception of history of the group as legacy. Organizational life of the ethnic community articulates this image in its normative systems. An ethnic group which is a folk community is one whose members are predominantly of peasant background. The community is little differentiated in social status. The character of social relationships among the members of the community is determined by kinship and close family friendships. The center of social organization is the religious institution, the church, around which develop other organizations and which exerts a pervasive influence on the whole community.

(iii) Majority and Minority Ethnic Groups

Sociologically, the concepts of majority and minority refer not to numbers but to power. Simply stated, the distinction is between those groups which have or have not power in society. Often the concept of ethnicity is confused with that of minority and all ethnic groups are seen as minorities. By this, the majority groups become ethnicity less and it becomes difficult to understand what culture of the general society is all about. Majority ethnic groups are those who determine the character of the society's basic institutions, especially the main political, economic, and cultural institutions. They determine the character of the norms of society as a whole, including the legal system. Their culture becomes the culture of the total society into which the minority ethnic groups assimilate. The minority groups may preserve their institutions and culture in larger or smaller degree or they may influence the character of the dominant institutions in larger or smaller degrees, but usually, the framework for intergroup processes is provided by the institutions deriving from the culture of the majority groups. The majority groups, because of their position of power, usually are at the top of the ethnic stratification system, and the status of other ethnic groups is assessed in relation to them. Much of the dynamics of interethnic relations derives from the structure of dominance and subordination involved in the majority-minority ethnic group relations.

(iv) “Young” and “Old” Ethnic Groups

A common confusion in the discourse on ethnicity is that of ethnicity and immigration. Ethnicity often is erroneously identified with immigrants, but immigrants make up only one type of ethnic groups. We can distinguish between ‘young’ groups, i.e., those made up predominantly of the first - the immigrant - generation, and whose second generation is either small in size or young in age. The ‘old’ groups are those already established in the larger society, i.e. they have at least a high proportion of adult second and adult third or consecutive generations. By this distinction, it is incorrect and misleading to speak of all ethnic groups as if they were immigrants. Members of the old, established ethnic groups usually do not like to be confused with immigrants. The issues which these two types of ethnic groups pose are different. The concerns of the young groups can be characterized as essentially the problems of adjustment to society at large, whereas those of the old groups, as interests of persistence. Among the old ethnic groups in Canada one can include the British, French, German, Scandinavian groups, Dutch, Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Jewish, Doukhobors, Mennonites, Indians, the Inuit, Blacks, except for those from the West Indies, Chinese, Japanese and others. Among the relatively young groups,

one can include the Greeks, Portuguese, various Latin American groups, East Indians, except for the Sikhs, and others.

9.8 Ethnic Unrest in India

India has been a witness to rising ethnic tensions and conflicts in recent years. Many sociologists have, quite rightly, highlighted the problems encountered in the process of nation-building as a consequence of increasing ethnic problems. Kothari (1988) asserts that ethnic upsurges and “assertions of cultures” in India are the consequences of excesses of modernization and the homogenizing trend of modern states and of their technological/educational imperatives. In his words, ethnicity “is a response-including reaction – to the excesses of the modern project of shaping the whole humanity (and its natural resource base)...” Such views are also echoed by scholars like Pandey (1990) and Oberoi (1994) who consider recent surge in ethnic assertions a consequence of modernity and that traditional India was free from such fixed identities. However, the noted scholar and Dalit activist Gail Omvedt (1990) criticizes such a romanticized view of traditional India. She holds that traditional India was not characterized by multiculturalism but by hierarchy which pervaded every aspect of social life.

Some of the critical factors responsible for inflamed ethnicity in India are :

- India is a plural society. It is characterized by a large diversity in its population with multitudes of castes and several religious, linguistic, cultural and racial groups living here. Because of intense competition for scarce economic resources and the heightened consciousness among people of different groups to preserve their age-old cultures, India has always been vulnerable to assertions of ethnic identities.
- Lopsided economic development of the country because of which some groups feel that they have been marginalized and completely left behind in the process of development. This makes them highly susceptible to the politics of ethnicity.
- Representative parliamentary democracy in India where different ethnic groups (castes, religious groups, linguistic groups etc.) compete for political power by stressing on horizontal solidarity and consolidation of shared interests.

- Increasing politicization of caste and religion. Caste and religious identities are often whipped up by political leaders to mobilize people for their vested interests and petty political mileages.
- Fear among minorities (both linguistic and religious) that they might get assimilated into the dominant culture leading to the dilution of their cultural heritage. Hence, there is an increasing stress on ethnic identity to forge horizontal solidarity. Such feelings have also increased because of the process of globalization and cultural homogenization occurring everywhere.
- Intense feeling of alienation among the tribes of India because of faulty development policies, leading to forced displacement from their age-old inhabited land and forest, reducing them to abject poverty and destitute.

9.9 Summary

Ethnicity relates to ascriptive identities like caste, language, religion, and region. India has a cultural, economic and social heterogeneity. The complex ethnic plurality is visible with ethnic groups varying in size, culture and consciousness and no clear demarcation is present between different groups. Ethnic groups that use ethnicity to make demands in the political arena for alteration in their status, in their economic well-being are engaged very often in a form of interest group politics. The system is highly segmented and heterogeneous. However, emergence of ethnicity all around primarily on cultural grounds has put the boundary of nation state under severe stress. Usually the quest for larger identity is emphasized as it also serves some political purposes. But at the same time, this emphasis on a large identity like nation ignores the reality of plural identities and their possible interplay and thus reverts back to the nation where religion, language become static categories of ethnic attributes.

9.10 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) Define ethnicity.
- (ii) Define ethnic group.
- (iii) What is ethnic diversity ?

- (iv) What is ethno-nationalism ?
- (v) Give the racial classification of ethnic people according to various anthropologists.
- (vi) What is the etymological meaning of ethnicity?

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (vii) On what factors does ethnicity rest?
- (viii) What is the etymological meaning of ethnicity?
- (ix) Write a note on ethnic unrest in India.
- (x) What are the types of ethnic groups?
- (xi) Discuss the factors on which ethnic identity in India develops.

9.11 Suggested Readings

- (i) Ali, Ershad (2019) : Ethnic Composition of Indian Population.
- (ii) Gabbert, Wolfgang (2006) : Concepts of Ethnicity : Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies; Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 85–103.
- (iii) Isajiw, Wsevolod W. (1992); Definition And Dimensions Of Ethnicity : A Theoretical Framework : Challenges of Measuring an Ethnic World : Science, politics and reality : Proceedings of the Joint Canada-United States Conference on the Measurement of Ethnicity, Statistics Canada and U.S. Bureau of the Census; Washington, D.C. : U.S. Government Printing Office; pp. 407-27, 1993.
- (iv) Priya, Arya (2016) : Ethnicity in Post-Independent India: A Sociological Perspective on Its Causes and Manifestations : IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS); Volume 21, Issue 1, Ver. 5; pp. 56-61.
- (v) Ratcliffe, Peter (2014) : Ethnic Group : Sociopedia.isa : DOI : 10.1177/205684601421.

MODULE - 03

KINSHIP AND MARRIAGE

Unit - 10 □ Kinship and Marriage : Meaning and Types

Structure

- 10.1 Objectives**
- 10.2 Introduction**
- 10.3 Definition of Kinship**
- 10.4 Types of Kinship**
 - 10.4.1 Consanguineous Kinship**
 - 10.4.2 Affinal Kinship**
 - 10.4.3 Fictive Kinship**
- 10.5 Kinship Network**
- 10.6 Marriage**
- 10.7 Definition of Marriage**
- 10.8 Characteristics of Marriage**
- 10.9 Forms of Marriage**
- 10.10 Summary**
- 10.11 Questions**
- 10.12 Suggested Readings**

10.1 Objectives

- To learn the definition and meaning of the kinship
- To learn the definition and meaning of the marriage
- To learn the various forms of kinship
- To learn about the kinship network
- To learn the various forms of marriage
- To develop an overall understanding about kinship and marriage and their relationship.

10.2 Introduction

Kinship system represents one of the basic social institutions. Kinship is universal in nature and in most societies it plays a significant role in the process of socialization of individuals and the maintenance of group solidarity. It is supremely important in the primitive societies and extends its influence on almost all their activities- social, economic, political, and religious, etc. In the “pre-writing” societies that anthropologists have traditionally focused on, the status of individuals, the place in which they must live, such as, in some cases, their trade, are determined by membership in a kinship group. In other words, all social relations are conceived in the mode of kinship relations. In industrial societies, on the other hand, family relationships do not occupy such a predominant place. But eventually, it now appears that they continue to play an essential role in the lives of individuals.

10.3 Definition of Kinship

The conception of ‘kinship’ is very much important in cultural anthropology. In simple societies, the kinship relations are so extensive, fundamental and influential that in effect they in themselves constitute the ‘social system’. But in more complex societies kinship normally forms a fairly small part of the totality of the social relation which makes up the social system. Sociologist does not attach much importance for it except in their study of the sociology of kinship. Anthropologists, on the contrary, give more importance to this concept because kinship and family constitute the focal points in anthropological investigations.

Kinship is basically culturally defined relationships between individuals who are commonly thought of as having family ties. Although usually thought of in terms of biology, much of kinship is actually culturally constructed.

Kinship is the relationship by the bond of blood, marriage and includes kindred ones. It represents one of the basic social institutions. Kinship is universal and in most societies plays a significant role in the socialization of individuals and the maintenance of group solidarity. It is very important in primitive societies and extends its influence on almost all their activities. According to Robin Fox, in his book ‘Kinship and Marriage’, “Kinship is simply the relations between ‘kin’ that is persons related by real, putative or fictive consanguinity”. Abercrombie and others in ‘The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology’ mentioned that “The social relationships

deriving from blood ties (real and supposed) and marriage are collectively referred to as kinship". In simple words, the bond of blood or marriage which binds people together in group is called kinship. Michel Verdon in his paper "Kinship, Marriage, and the Family: An Operational Approach" (1981,) regard these "anthropological" concepts (residence, descent, kinship, and so on) as "secondary" or "derivative" concepts. As, he reasoned, that they are derived from a more implicit, more fundamental notion of group. This is not to deny that, prior to their utilization for anthropological analysis, these notions were rooted in empirical and cultural experience. Certainly, "kinship" and "marriage" refer to something "out there" which has received diverse interpretation on different cultural surroundings. But the manner in which these commonsense notions, borrowed from the everyday language, have been redefined as "scientific concepts" for the comparative analysis of socio-cultural systems has been, he believe, directly determined by the analysts' representation of what groups are.

A.R. Radcliffe Brown defines kinship as a system of dynamic relations between person and person in a community, the behaviour of any two persons in any of these relations being regulated in some way and to a greater or less extent by social usage. He assumed that, by definition, individuals are unique, idiosyncratic, and autonomous, and that their relations, or the very existence of sociability, were problematic, for a group or a society to exist, these unique and independent individuals must interact, and their interaction presupposes some standardization or patterning of behaviour (Radcliffe-Brown 1957). Like most functionalists, Radcliffe-Brown postulated that individual behaviour must be somewhat constrained or regulated (i.e., share a common element by reducing its idiosyncratic nature) for interpersonal relationships to take place and that this regulation is achieved through the action of "binding" or coercive mental representations- namely, norms, values, rights, duties, beliefs, and soon.

Against this undifferentiated background of interpersonal ties, Radcliffe-Brown also sought a formula to conceptualise the discreteness of the corporate grouping which constitute society's internal subdivisions. Individual within a group interact, but they also formed groups with diverging loyalties which unites subsets of individuals but divide them from other subsets. In order to reconcile these two levels of interpersonal and group ties, he resorted to the Durkheimian distinction between solidarity and its jural expression. The standardization of behaviour found in interpersonal relationships is concretely expressed in specific rights and duties (Radcliffe-Brown [1935] 1952), and the rights and duties pertaining to the reciprocal

relations in a given relationship from identifiable “roles” a group may therefore be represented as a ‘bounded’ and interconnected set of social relations, which are crystallized in terms of roles. Against this general notion of group, kinship is presented as a fact of nature, a physiological fact, that is the fact of consanguinity, selectively emphasized by society and endowed by the latter with a set of norms or jural sanctions which make it binding on individuals. Once made binding or normative through “social recognition” or “institutional arrangement,” kinship then operates to constrain and regulate behaviour in interpersonal relationships. By the same token, it also serves to define statuses, thereby functioning to give “kinship statuses”-bearers membership in the group. For Brown, kinship came to be represented both a) as a rule of group membership (often known as “descent” in this instance), and b) as a regulator of behaviour. The main challenge to the structural-functionalist model came from Levi-Strauss, who elaborated his model from the initial intuition that kinship statuses ought to be treated like symbols, not to be defined “substantively” with reference to themselves, but only through their relation to other statuses (Levi-Strauss 1945). A man, for instance, is not a “father” when studied with reference to himself, but only in relation to his child(ren). This notion was later extended to groups and Levi-Strauss postulated that groups gain their identity and reality only in relations to other groups, through exchange. Such an idea ran counter to all the established dogmas, if only because it appeared to do away with the elements of behaviour and their jural expression so crucial to the structural-functionalist credo. It provided a new concept of group which strove to be operational, in that a knowledge of the rules specifying the relation between groups should allow the analyst to infer the type of social structure. This innovation reverberated throughout his conceptualization of kinship, marriage and the family. Marriage, to Levi-Strauss, came to represent the main expression of the principle of exchange upon which social life rests because of alliance that it creates between exchanging units, an alliance which actually defines the very identity of these units or groups. Kinship is therefore a simply by-product of alliance and is geared at the outset to the maintenance and furtherance of alliance. As a result, the structural-functionalist “elementary family” lost its unique status of irreducible kinship group, to be replaced by the structuralist “atom of kinship”, which included the mother’s brother as a necessary representation of the principle of exchange. However, Levi-Strauss’s model has not completely served its links with the behavioural and normative dimensions. Whereas Radcliffe-Brown located his mechanism in society at large, Levi-Strauss placed it in man’s mind. Like Radcliffe-Brown, Levi-Strauss need the mind and rules shared by the group because he is addressing himself to the same fundamental problem, namely, the regulation of interpersonal behaviour.

10.4 Types of Kinship

The phenomenon of kinship can be classified as :

- Consanguineous kinship
- Affinal kinship and
- Fictive kinship.

10.4.1 Consanguineous Kinship

Relation by the bond blood is called consanguineous kinship such as parents and their children and between children of same parents. The son, daughter, brother, sister, paternal uncle etc. are consanguineous kin. Each of these is related through blood.

10.4.2 Affinal Kinship

Kinship due to marriage is called affinal kinship, as opposed to consanguinity. New relations are created when marriage takes place. Not only man establishes relationship with the girl and the members of her but also family members of both the man and the woman get bound among themselves. Kinship includes Agnates (sapindas, sagotras); cognates (from mother's side) and bandhus (atamabandhus, pitrubandhus, and matrubandhus).

10.4.3 Fictive Kinship

Fictive kinships are belonged to those patterned on kin-like relations that are neither purely based upon blood nor marriage ties, in contrast to true kinship ties. The term fictive kinship has in the past been used to refer to those kinship ties that are fictive, in the sense of non-real. It is used to refer as chosen kin, fictive kin or voluntary kin. It includes god parents, informally adopted children, and close family friends etc.

This emphasise the basic biological fact on which kinship system depends. Men and women indulge in sexual interaction and as a result bear children. This lead to blood ties between the individuals and the special terms are used to recognize this relationship, mother, father, and child. The relationship based on blood ties is called “consanguineous kinship”, and the relatives of this kind are called “consanguineous

kin". On the contrary, the desire for reproduction gives rise to another kind of binding relationship. "This kind of bond, which arises out of a socially or legally defined marital relationship, is called affinal relationship", and the relatives relate themselves as "affinal kin". The affinal kins, husband and wife, are not related to one another through the bond of blood ties but through the marital ties.

Additionally, kinship has got various ramifications. On the basis of nearness or distance, kins are classified into : (a) primary kins, (b) secondary kins, and (c) tertiary kins.

Primary Kins. Every individual who belongs to a nuclear family finds his primary kins within the family. There are eight primary kins : husband-wife, father-son, mother-son, father-daughter, mother-daughter, younger brother-elder brother, younger sister-elder sister, and brother-sister. **(b) Secondary Kins.** Outside the nuclear family the individual can have more or less thirty three types of secondary kins relatives, for example: Mother's brother, brother's wife, sister's husband, father's brother etc. **(c) Tertiary Kins.** Tertiary kins refer to the secondary kins of our primary kins, such as wife's brother's son, sister's husband's brother, and so on. Anthropologists have spoken almost of 151 tertiary kins. **Descent.** When a man died, he leaves something behind: a status or position in society, certain goods, lands, money, or something else. All these assets must pass to someone else, and all societies have developed specific rules about such transmission. Descent is the principle that governing the transmission of kinship: inheritance, that is transfer of property, and succession, that is transfer of functions, tends to follow the principle of descent. In other words, descent refers to the social recognition of the biological relationship that exists between the individuals. The rules of descent refer to the set of principles by which an individual traces his descent. There are three basic rules of descent :

(a) patrilineal descent, (b) matrilineal descent, and (c) bilateral descent.

(a) Patrilineal Descent. According to this rule, descent is traced through the father's or male line. Here the descent criterion is restricted to males, and only descendants of a common ancestor in the male line will be recognised as kin. these are known as agnatic or patrilineal kin.

(b) Matrilineal Descent. Here the descent of the individual is traced through the mother or female line exclusively. The descendants are called here uterine or matrilineal kin. These two modes of tracing the descent are called unilineal, that, they select one line only either the male or the female. These principles or rules are not necessarily mutually exclusive within a society.

(c) Bilateral Descent. This is a rule in which the descent is traced through both of these lines, the female line and also the male line for certain or other purposes. What is important here is that almost all kinship systems recognise 'bilateral' relationships, that is, relationships to both maternal and paternal kins. For example, some societies like the 'Yako' of Nigeria utilise matrilineal descent for some purposes and patrilineal descent for others. There exists a system of 'double unilineal descent' which is also known as 'double descent'. Lineage. "A lineage is a unilineal descent group in which membership may rest on patrilineal descent [patrilineage] or on matrilineal descent [matrilineage]". A lineage, thus, consists of descendants in only one line, either the father's or the mother's.

These descendants knew their exact genealogical relationships and who recognise obligations to one another. A lineage is thus relatively smaller and more localised than the broad category of kinship groupings.

Clan or Sib. "A clan is a unilineal descent group, the members of which may claim either patrilineal descent [patrician] or matrilineal descent [matrician] from a founder, but do not know the genealogicalities with the ancestor or ancestress" (Abercrombie and others : 66). 'A clan is a named unilineal descent group: that is, a body of persons claiming common descent from an ancestor (often mythical) and recruiting the children of either male or female members, but not both (Duncan Mitchell : 30). The ancestor or mythical ancestor, through whom the descent is claimed, may be human or non human like, animal, plant or even inanimate object. The "Gotra" group of Hindus represents a clan these clans are larger groups and are geographically more dispersed. The clans may have a common totemic name and common ritual taboos against eating or performing such things.

Phratry. "A Phratry is a grouping of clans which are related by traditions of common descent" (Abercrombie and others : 219). Mythical ancestors are common in clans and phratries. The Phratry is larger than the clan and includes people scattered over relatively large areas among whom it not possible to trace relationship without bringing in a mythical common ancestor.

Moieties. "Where the descent groups of a society are organized into two main divisions, these are known as moieties [halves]" (Abercrombie and others : 66). The term 'moieties' refers to the bisection of a tribe into two complementary social groups. Some scholars would restrict the term 'moiety' to 'exogamous' social divisions, while others use the term to mean any dual organization.

10.5 Kinship Network

Human societies are not, however, simply groups of nuclear families with tenuous links to each other. The incest taboo forces each person to create links outside his/her family of origin, and because of this, a network of strong links is created in every society. There is an expansion of elementary kinship links. Thus, every individual belongs at least to two nuclear families :

- Family of orientation and
- Family of procreation

Family of orientation is the one in which person was born and family of procreation, which he founded when he married. Kinship system arises from this universal reality of each individual belonging to two nuclear families. If people married within their nuclear family, there would be no kinship system. The principal of nuclear family and the incest taboo indicates that each person has a precise and particular relationship on the one hand and, on the other hand, that he must extend his relationships beyond this limited circle. The phenomenon of expansion gives rise to an increasingly complex network of relationships. Several “levels” of kinship can therefore be distinguished that combine in a virtual network of relationships that are called “kinship system” according to which individuals are attached to one another by a highly complex network of links with numerous branches.

According to Murdock, there are several levels of kinship. The nuclear family that is almost universal in character, gives rise to a set of eight characteristic relationships :

- (i) The husband-wife relationship
- (ii) The father-son relationship
- (iii) The mother-daughter relationship
- (iv) The mother-son relationship
- (v) The father-daughter relationship
- (vi) The relationship between elder and younger brother
- (vii) The relationship between elder and younger sister
- (viii) The brother sister relationship.

All these relationships are encountered in families with children in any society. But as any individual is not restricted to that family and must establish a second nuclear family, the family of procreation, that individual serves as a link between the family of origin and this new family.

10.6 Marriage

The term kinship, in the broad sense, includes relatives on the one hand and affinity on the other. Two individuals are related when one is descended from another (e.g., a father and daughter) or when both are descended from a common ancestor (e.g., brothers and sisters, cousins). In the latter case, the relationship may be real, fictional or mythical (as for members of a tribe). This extended meaning of kinship does not distinguish between relation and affinity. Marriage is a fundamental social institution studied by anthropologists because it is usually through the marital union that alliances are forged between groups and social solidarity is built up.

Unlike an animal, a human child depends on adults for an extremely long period. This prolonged dependency explains the need for family organization. In all human societies, marriage is an institution of vital importance. Put simply, we can say that marriage is the union between a man and a woman to give children born of this woman a legitimate status. Depending on the society, a marriage may be monogamous or polygamous; in the latter case there is polygynous marriage and, much more rarely, polyandrous marriage. These concepts are not always adequate: in many societies, for example, polygyny is tolerated, even promoted, but it is nevertheless uncommon and it therefore becomes difficult to consider them polygamous societies.

Marriage is one of the universal social institutions. It is established by the human society to control and regulate the sex life of man. It is closely connected with the institution of family. In fact, family and marriage are complementary to each other. As Gillin & Gillin have said, "Marriage is a socially approved way of establishing a family of procreation". As Westermarck has remarked, "Marriage is rooted in the family rather than the family in the marriage". Marriage is an institution of society which can have very different implications in different cultures. Its purposes, functions, and forms may differ from society to society, but it is present everywhere as an institution.

10.7 Definition of Marriage

In almost all societies, marriage is understood as a legally and socially recognized sexual relationship. Depending on the society, marriage may religious or civil sanction. Westermarck (1891) defines marriage 'as a relation of one or more men to one or more women, which is recognized by custom or law, and involves rights and duties both in the case of the parties entering the union and in the case of children born of it'.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Sociology (1994) defines it as, 'Marriage is traditionally conceived to be legally recognized relationship, between an adult male and female, that carries certain rights and obligations.' According to Anthony Giddens (1997) states, 'marriage can be defined as a socially recognized relationship and approved sexual union between an adult male and female that carries certain rights and obligations.'

1. Michel Verdon in his paper "Kinship, Marriage, and the Family: An Operational Approach" (1981,) defines "...marriage must be defined with reference to group formation, a task which requires first the identification of the activities in which 'married groups' are involved. The activity which has been almost universally acknowledged is the sexual one." Radcliffe-Brown (1935, 1952), structural-functionalist, conceptualized groups in terms of corporations which are differentiated from others and also internally organized in so far as the interaction of members is regulated, kinship came to be represented both (a) as a rule for group membership, and (b) as a regulator of behaviour. The family operated to generate kinship, to manufacture the glue which organizes these simple societies where on the basis of kinship ties, the family came to take a dominant position in structural-functional thinking; as a result, marriage was given a derivative importance, being completely subsumed under the family. For the structural-functionalists, marriage derives its significance from the unique position of the family, and it is defined in a teleological manner, with the family as its purpose. Since the latter institution serves for social placement, marriage appears as a means of legitimizing children. To Levi-Strauss (1945, 1949), again notwithstanding Radcliffe-Brown, marriage came to represent the main expression of the principle of exchange upon which social life rests because of the alliance that it creates between exchanging units, an alliance which actually defines the very identity of these units or groups. From this equation, Levi-Strauss inverted the common assumption that the purpose of marriage is to found

a family through the procreation of children, contending instead that the creation of families or the production of children is only accomplished for the purpose of marriage! If groups derive their reality and identity through exchange, they must keep the exchange going, and the only solution is to procreate. Consequently, groups reproduce themselves physically only with a mind to break even in the eternal game of exchange, which requires a bilateral gifts. Kinship is therefore a simple by-product of alliance and is geared at the outset to the maintenance and furtherance of the alliance. However, Levi-Strauss's model has not completely served its links with the behavioural and normative dimensions. Whereas Radcliffe-Brown located his mechanism in society at large, Levi-Strauss placed it in man's mind.

Like Radcliffe-Brown, Levi-Strauss need the mind and rules shared by the group because he is addressing himself to the same fundamental problem, namely, the regulation of interpersonal behaviour.

10.8 Characteristics of Marriage

(i) Universality

Marriage is more or less a universal institution. It is found among the preliterate as well as literate peoples. It is enforced as a social rule in certain societies. Examples: In Japan, celibacy is publicly condemned. In Kerala, unmarried individuals are called 'half' persons. Among the Hindus, marriage is a sacrament which is regarded roughly as obligatory.

(ii) Relationship between Man and Woman.

Marriage is a union of a man and woman. It indicates relationship between one or more men to one or more women. Who should marry to whom? Why should one marry?- are the questions which represent social rules regarding marriage which differ significantly from place and time.

(iii) Marriage as enduring bond.

Marriage indicates a long lasting bond between the husband and wife. Hence it is not coextensive with sex life. It sanctioned the sexual intercourse within a society or it help to exclude any other sexual relationships which are son sanctioned by the society or custom. Marital relationship does not obtained solely on the basis of sexual satisfaction of the partners or the marital bond may endure without practicing sexual activities.

(iv) Marriage as social approval.

A union of man and woman becomes a marital bond only when the society gives its approval. When marriage is given the hallmark of social sanction, it becomes a legal contract.

(v) Marriage as a civil or religious ceremony.

Marriage gets its social recognition through some ceremony. This ceremony may have its own rites, rituals, customs, standardization etc. it means marriage has to be concluded in a public and solemn manner. Sometimes it receives as a sacrament the blessings of religion. Marriage among the Hindus regarded as both a civil performance and a ritual performance.

(vi) Marriage as mutual obligation.

Marriage imposes certain amount of rights and duties on both the partners. And both of these partners are required to support each other to upbringing their children and to survive the family.

10.9 Forms of Marriage

Every society has certain forms of pairing arrangements to which we call marriage but remaining single or pairing without marriage (living together) is fast emerging as an acceptable form of lifestyle in the modern world. The trend towards maintaining an unmarried lifestyle is related to the growing economic independence of young people.

The main forms of marriage are :

(i) Monogamy

It is a form marriage in which one man is married to one woman at a time. It allows one wife to have one husband till death and only divorce separates them apart. This form of marriage is the universally recognized form and is the predominant event in societies where other forms exist. This is the most widespread form of marriage found among the primitives as well as the civilized societies. It is practiced among the tribes such as kadars, Santals, the Khasis, the Canella, the Hopi, the Iroquois, the Andaman Islanders etc. Monogamy seems to be relatively superior to other forms of marriage in reference to its universal practicability. Since there is one-to-one ratio in almost all the societies, only monogamy can provide marital opportunity and satisfaction to all the individuals. This form is more economically

better suited as hypothetically, no one with ordinary income can think of practicing marriage other than monogamy. This type of marriage promotes comparatively better understanding of the actual conditions between the husband and wife. Because no form of marriage other than monogamy fail to produces the highest type of emotion and affectional relation between the partners. This form relatively more able to contribute to stable family and sexual life as there is no scope for sexual jealousy and sexual competitiveness. Moreover, since the husband and wife have better understanding, they can give greater attention to the upbringing and proper socialization of their children and there is a vital possibility of enjoying prestigious status of women.

(ii) Polygamy

Some cultures allow an individual to have more than one spouse at the same time. Having more than one marriage partner at a time is known as polygamy. It was practiced in most of the societies of the world but now the trend is towards monogamy. However, as anthropologist George Murdock (1959) found, 80% of societies had some type of polygamy.

There are three basic forms of polygamy :

(a) Polygyny

It refers to plurality of wives or having more than one wife at the same time. In many societies, having several wives is a mark of prestige, distinction and status. It is very common among Muslims in Africa and in Middle East and Asia, the Eskimo tribes, Crow Indians, African Negroes, the Nagas, Gonds etc. Polygyny is of two types: First, Sororal Polygyny. It is a type of marriage in which the wives are invariably the sisters. It is often calls as 'sororate'. The Latin word 'soror' stands for sister. When several sisters are simultaneously, or potentially the spouses of the same man, the practice is calls sororate. It is usually observed among the tribes which pay a high bride price. The death of the wife or her childlessness is compensated by supplying a new spouse who is generally the younger sister of the deceased woman. Second, Non-Sororal Polygyny as the term indicates is a type of marriage in which the wives are not related as sister. For social, economic, political and other reasons, both the types of marriage practiced by certain group of people.

(b) Polyandry

It is a type of marriage in which a woman can have several husbands (plurality of husband) or two or more husbands simultaneously. It is very rare form of

marriage. Wherever it is practiced, the co-husbands are usually brothers, either blood brothers or clan brothers and are of the same generation. The Todas (South India) and Khasa (North India) are the famous examples of polyandry. The polyandry is of two types: First, Fraternal Polyandry. When several brothers share the same wife, the practice can be called 'adelphic' or 'fraternal' polyandry. This practice of being mate, actual or potential, to one's husband's brother is called 'levirate'. It is prevalent among the Todas. Second, Non-Fraternal Polyandry. In this type of marriage the husbands need not have any close relationship prior to the marriage. The wife goes to spend some times with each husband. So long as a woman lives with one of her husbands, the others have no claim over her. Nair polyandry was of this type. No universal generalization can be made with regards to the causes of polyandry. However factors like scarcity of women or property, the desire to keep the property intact, heavy bride price, poverty and the sterility of men, etc. are favourable to propagate polyandry.

(iii) Group Marriage

It is one more type of polygamy, in which several or many men marry to several or many women. It is practiced in some indigenous societies. Theoretically group marriage means the marriage of two or more women with two or more men. But this arrangement is practically rare. Here the husbands are common husbands and wives are common wives. Children are regarded as children of the entire group as a whole. Children call men of such a group their fathers and all the women are their mothers. Some of the tribals in Australia, in India, Tibet etc. are believed to have practiced group marriage. Rules of Marriage. No society gives absolute freedom for its members to select their life partners. Even in societies where 'free marital choice' is allowed, the selection is not absolute but relative. Rules regarding who should marry to whom- always govern such a selection. Endogamy and exogamy are the two prime rules that condition marital choice.

Endogamy is a rule of marriage in which the life partners are to be selected within the group. It is marriage that performed within the group. And the group may be caste, class, tribe, race, village, religious group etc. Thus, in this way we have respectively caste endogamy, sub-caste endogamy, class endogamy, tribe endogamy, race endogamy, village endogamy, religious endogamy and so on. For example, in caste endogamy, marriage has to take place within the caste group. Brahmin has to marry a Brahmin. Endogamy prohibits marriage outside the group. Even today intercaste marriage is not encouraged. Endogamy as a rule of marriage has its own advantages. It contributes to the group unity and solidarity. It keeps women happier

within their group. It helps to preserve the property within the group. It also safeguards the purity of the nature of group. Finally, it helps to keep under secret the strength and weakness of the group. It has its disadvantages also such as by limiting the choice of life partners, it often gives scope for certain evil practices like Polygyny, dowry system, bride price etc. it may also make its followers to develop hatred and contempt for other groups. The modern civilized people are more in favoured of exogamy than endogamy.

Exogamy is almost the opposite of endogamy. It is a rule of marriage in which an individual has to marry outside his own groups. It actually prohibits marrying within the same group. The rule insists that the so-called blood relatives shall neither have marital connection nor sexual contact among themselves. Near relatives are not supposed to marry among themselves. But the degree of nearness may differ from community to community. Like marriage of cousins is allowed among Muslims. Exogamy assumes various forms in India such as Gotra Exogamy, where the Hindu practices of one-marrying outside one's own Gotra. Pravara Exogamy, where those who belongs to the same pravara (uttering the name of a common saint at religious functions) cannot marry among themselves. Village Exogamy, where many Indian tribes (Naga, Garo, Munda etc.) have the practice of marrying outside their village Pinda Exogamy, those who belong to the same 'pinda' or 'sapinda' cannot marry within themselves.

10.10 Summary

Kinship ties are connections between individuals, established either through marriage or through the lines of descent that connect blood relatives (mothers, fathers, siblings, offspring, etc.). Marriage may be defined as a socially acknowledged and approved sexual union between two adult individuals.

10.11 Questions

Model Questions (5 Marks each)

- (i) What do you mean by kinship ? Discuss the conceptual meaning of kinship.
- (ii) Explain in brief the various types of kinship.
- (iii) What is marriage ? Discuss the various forms of marriage.
- (iv) What are the basic types of marriage found in society ?

- (v) What is the basis of kinship network ?
- (vi) What is monogamy ?

G-A (10 Marks each)

- (vii) Explain in brief about your understanding of marriage.
- (viii) Briefly elucidate the key characteristics of kinship.
- (ix) Briefly discuss about kinship network.
- (x) Explain in brief the salient features of marriage.

10.12 Suggested Readings

- (i) Al-Haj, Majid. (1995), Kinship and Modernization in Developing Societies : The Emergence of Instrumentalized Kinship, Journal of Comparative Family Studies, AUTUMN, Vol 26, No 3, pp. 311-328, University of Toronto Press.
- (ii) Deliege, Robert (2011). Anthropology of the Family and Kinship, PHI Learning Limited, New Delhi.
- (iii) Ganesh, Kamala. (2013). New Wine in Old Bottles ? Family and Kinship Studies in the Bombay School, Sociological Bulletin, May-August, Vol 62, No 2, pp. 288-310, Sage Publications, Inc.
- (iv) Goode William, J. (1998). The Family, Prentice Hall, New Delhi.
- (v) Haralambos, M. (1998). Sociology : Themes and Perspectives, OUP.
- (vi) Jayaram, N. (1998). Introductory Sociology, Macmillan India.
- (vii) Kibria, Nazli. (2006). Globalization and the Family, International Journal of Sociology of the Family, Vol 32, No 2 (Autumn).
- (viii) Madan, T. N. (2016). Family and Kinship : A Study of the Pandits of Rural Kashmir, Oxford University Press.
- (ix) Ogburn, William F. (1935). Recent Changes in Marriage, American Journal of Sociology, Vol 41, No 3, November, pp. 285-298, The University of Chicago Press.
- (x) Oommen, T. K. & Venugopal, C.N. (1993). Sociology, Eastern Book Co.

- (xi) Rao, C.N. (Ed.). *Sociology : Principles of Sociology with an Introduction to Sociological Thought*, S. Chand, New Delhi.
- (xii) Robert Parke, Jr. and Paul C, Glick. (1967). *Prospective Changes in Marriage and the Family*, *The Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol 29, No 2, May, pp. 249-256, National Council on Family Relations.
- (xiii) Romney, A. Kimball and Metzger, Duane. (1956), *On the Processes of Change in Kinship Terminology*, *American Anthropologist*, Jan, Vol 58, No 3, pp. 551-554, Wiley.
- (xiv) Trautmann, Thomas R. (2000), *India and the Study of Kinship Terminologies*, *L'Homme*, Apr-Sep., No 154/155, pp. 559-571, EHESS.
- (xv) Uberio, Patricia (Ed.). (1994). *Family, Kinship and Marriage in India*, Oxford University Press.
- (xvi) Verdon, Michel. (1981). *Kinship, Marriage, and the Family : An Operational Approach*, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol 86, No 4, January.

Unit - 11 □ Changes in Kinship and Marriage : Nature and Factors

Structure

11.1 Objectives

11.2 Introduction

11.3 Changes in Kinship

11.4 Nature of Changes in Kinship

11.5 Factors of Changes in Kinship

11.5.1 Modernization and Kinship System

11.5.2 Changes in the study of kinship Terminology

11.6 Changes in Marriage

11.7 Nature of changes in Marriage

11.8 Factors of changes in Marriage

11.9 Summary

11.10 Questions

11.11 Suggested Readings

11.1 Objectives

- To learn the nature of changes that happen in kinship system
- To learn about the factors that are responsible for the changes in kinship system
- To learn about the nature of changes of marriage that happen in recent times
- To learn the factors that are solely responsible for the changes that occurred in marriage system
- To develop a comparative understanding of the changes in both kinship system and marriage system

11.2 Introduction

The process of change in the social structure is an inevitable universal social reality. The changes in the last few decades are so rapid and far reaching that many thinkers look upon this as a new era in human history. The very processes of industrialisation, urbanisation, and secularisation have brought about many socio-psychological changes in the attitudes and values of the people. The most striking one is the emancipation of women from their relatively traditional bound ethos challenging the institution of kinship, family and marriage.

11.3 Changes in Kinship System

The distinction between sociology and anthropology in the West and their convergence and unification in Indian academia is reflected in the way family and kinship are taught and researched. In the history of the field in Euro-American academia, family and kinship were studied within separate disciplines. Family was a staple of sociology and kinship was a core constituent of social/cultural anthropology.

Developing as it did in the wake of social transformations following the Industrial Revolution, sociology was not only seized of the unfolding changes in family structure and function, but the dominant Parsonian framework placed the nuclear family of the West as the best adapted model for the emerging new society. Kinship, on the other hand, was an important focus for anthropologists, because in the kind of societies they studied, kinship was a central organising principle, often encompassing and expressing the entire gamut of social relations.

Sociology of family, considered a soft option (Barnes 1980 : 297), was a popular subject where common sense, public discourse, and sociology blended into a continuum. They shared common assumptions of the harmonious and consensual nuclear family, with a functional division of labour, which was a cushion for the individual against the harsh external world (see, for instance, Dube 1997, Ganesh and Risseuw 1998 : 11-12). In contrast, anthropology of kinship was seen to be a hard sub discipline - kinship algebra in the famous words of Bronislaw Malinowski (1930:19), referring to the pre-occupation with kinship terminology. The work of Claude Lévi-Strauss was particularly influential in raising empirically grounded technical discussions to a sophisticated level of abstraction, where kinship was considered to code eternal principles fundamental to human survival. It became a highly specialised field with its own esoteric jargon, supping at the table of high theory.

The 1970s and early 1980s saw a crisis in kinship studies, mainly over the issue of whether there can at all exist a cross-culturally applicable definition of kinship based on marriage and procreation. The supposed universality of biology in determining kinship was questioned. The widely discussed demise of kinship was followed by a renewal (Varto 2010 : 83-84), but within the canvas of anthropology. While the other three components of the anthropological quadrivium - economics, politics, and religion - have, through the 1970s, seen considerable convergences between sociology and anthropology (Barnes 1980 : 297), what Michael G. Peletz termed the anthropological romance of kinship (1995 : 344), continued. Anthropology did not let go of kinship. A review of the field till the late 20th century (ibid. : 366-67) shows how kinship in the sense of terminology and as a symbolic system has waned as a staple theme, but anthropological studies of kinship in terms of social relations among variably situated actors, within broader economic and political contexts, and in terms of historical transformations, have got strengthened.

In contrast, in India, most scholars have written on family and kinship as a composite field. In Indian universities, wherever they have been taught as a separate course, they have been merged into a unity (Patel 2005 : 22). More commonly though, they are condensed into one or two topics and incorporated within courses like Sociology of Indian Society, Sociology of Gender, Sociology of Ageing and other appropriate courses. This reflects the dominant approach in Indian academia of keeping sociology and social and cultural anthropology together as one discipline, or at least as siblings in a joint family. G.S. Ghurye's own inclinations to fuse the two - given that he was sent to England by the University of Bombay to study sociology but chose to shift to anthropology under W. H. R. Rivers - no doubt played a role. But subsequent generations of influential scholars have also written extensively endorsing this position, which has widespread acceptance in India.

Kinship is a structural system of relationship in which individuals are bound to one another by complex interlocking and ramifying ties. Radcliffe Brown insisted on the study of a kinship system as a field of rights and obligations and saw it as a part of the social structure. Man does not live alone in society. From birth till death he is surrounded by a number of people. Some of these people are his relatives, some are friends and some are neighbours while all others are strangers and unknown to him. He is bound to all those people who are related to him either on the basis of blood or marriage. The relations based on blood or marriage may be closed or

distant. The bond of blood or marriage which binds people together in a group is called kinship.

11.4 Nature of Changes in Kinship System

One of the most important areas of social science is the study of the family as the basic social unit for reproduction, residence and economic life in nearly all societies. But family structures and family relationships (kinship system) do have different forms in different parts of the world. The phenomenon of kinship system is so dynamic in nature especially in reference to its nature of changes. Kinship system is changing all the time. The changes in important structural parts such as the forms of marriage, the rule of residence, the rule of descent and the types and composition of kin groups are usually slow i.e. they usually emerge clearly in the course of generations rather than days.

According to Johnson, the faces behind such changes are of many inter-related kind- discovery, development or depletion of resources and the development and the spread of new methods of production, the growth of new patterns in the relationship of men in their productive activities, changes in the internal ordering of societies is so far as the use of force concerned and in the relation of one society to another in this respect, changes in the size, age and sex composition of population. These various factors do not necessarily move kinship structure in the same direction, some factors reinforce others, and some neutralized others. Any changes that take place in kinship structure are, therefore, the resultant of many other social changes.

Changes in the kinship system : In earlier times, says Bruner (1955 : p. 849) in his recent study of kinship system among the Mandan-Hidatsa, both the Mandan-Hidatsa and the South-eastern tribes had a pure Crow type lineage system. After acculturative influence an American generational type kinship system is found among the two groups. In the Southeast the orderly and progressive shift in kinship type was characterized as a process of slow modification of the existing system due to adaptive responses to changing conditions. In Lone Hill, the lack of intermediate variations in kinship patterns suggests a rapid process of change caused by early socialization in those families in which there has been white intermarriage. Drawing upon the work of Spoehr (1947), the Schmitts (nd), Gough (1952), and Eggan (1941, 1950), as well as upon an analysis of his own material, Bruner (p. 845) concludes that there are two distinct processes involved in kinship change. The first process consists of the slow modification of a kinship system as evidenced by an orderly and

progressive shift in type. The second process is a more radical change evidenced by an abrupt jump from one type of kinship system to another. The second process he illustrates with material from Lone Hill. One gathers from the context of the article that Bruner equates his material with that of Spoehr, etc., in that he sees both cases as involving a change in kinship system. This equation is not precisely correct. Spoehr's Southeast material illustrates an orderly and progressive change in kinship system due to the adaptive responses of the system to changing conditions. Bruner's material, however, illustrates some individuals using an American type kinship system rather than a Crow type system due to early socialization in those families in which there has been white intermarriage. It is clear from the Mandan-Hidatsa material that there are two systems present and that individuals adjust to alternate kinship systems (p. 847). In cases such as the Southeast, where progressive changes in systems are involved, there need not be two systems present at any given point in time. Gough (p. 86) says, for example, that; analysis of the processes of change in a kinship system over a period of time fails to reveal discontinuity. The Nayar system has, over a period of two hundred years, changed from a very extreme form of matriliney into a system with only a weak tendency to matriliney; but the later system developed imperceptibly out of the earlier; Both individual and system change or adaptation may take place within the same society (Spoehr p. 198; Bruner p. 845), but the two types should be kept conceptually separate. In terms of a structural model of a changing system, an explanation of process within the scope of present research methodology means the description of changing social usages (and associated terminology) through time and the relation of this description to the particular adaptation of a society to its natural and social environments.

11.5 Factors of Changes in Kinship System

Changes are taking place in kinship patterns due to the phenomenon of mobility under vocational or professional pressure and movements of groups due to expediency of commerce. Kinship patterns are changing and so is the case with affinity.

In the past kinship was confined to caste, and the phenomenon of inter-caste marriage were discouraged. But at present time, inter-caste marriages are taking place. The number of inter-caste marriages is also increasing day to day. Due to the inter-caste marriages changes have taken place in affinal kinship. Thus the belong kins to different castes.

In traditional societies, the concept of residence was very crucial. Considerably,

there were no marriages at too far distant places. But, comparatively, today the concept of distance has no meaning. Thus, one can have kinship at various places and in any castes. Thus, the phenomenon of kinship network is increasing not only in individual level but in terms of area also.

As far as matrilineal society concern, the kinship relation is also undergoing change. If we consider the institution of Nayar families, it stands today radically altered. It retains only some of the superficial aspects of the matrilineal type of family system. The situation in rural Malabar is that in majority of Veedas (the dwelling place of small family) the practices of visiting husbands are still prevalent. Husbands do not only visit for a night as they used to, but stay for a longer period, at times, extending two or three days. Many husbands have been assigned important roles in the management of their wives' Vedas. The wives also go periodically to their husband's Vedas, either in the village or in the urban areas where the husbands gone for employment. Then they come in contact with the husband's lineage kin in their Tarwads. The standardisation of behavioural pattern towards the husband's close maternal kins is unknown in old Tarwad organization, is in the process of evolution on the lines of the one prevalent in the Tarwad. The changes that have taken place in matrilocality and matriliney are, however, not uniform in different regions. M. S. A. Rao has observed, as a whole the changes that have come about are neither uniform nor wholesale. They exhibit different shades of intentionalities in different regions. They are rapid in Travancore and slow in Malabar. Cochin occupies the middle position.

We can conclude the discussion by mentioning the words of H.M. Johnson, "Kinship systems are changing all the times. The changes in important structural parts such as the form of marriage, the rule of residence, the rule of descent and the types and composition of kin groups are usually slow; that is, they usually emerge clearly in the course of generations rather than days or even years".

As far as matrilineal society concern, the kinship relation is also undergoing change. If we consider the institution of Nayar families, it stands today radically altered. It retains only some of the superficial aspects of the matrilineal type of family system. The situation in rural Malabar is that in majority of Veedas (the dwelling place of small family) the practices of visiting husbands are still prevalent. Husbands do not only visit for a night as they used to, but stay for a longer period, at times, extending two or three days. Many husbands have been assigned important roles in the management of their wives' Vedas. The wives also go periodically to their husband's Vedas, either in the village or in the urban areas where the husbands

gone for employment. Then they come in contact with the husband's lineage kin in their Tarwads. The standardisation of behavioural pattern towards the husband's close maternal kins is unknown in old Tarwad organization, is in the process of evolution on the lines of the one prevalent in the Tarwad.

The changes that have taken place in matrilocality and matriliney are, however, not uniform in different regions. M. S. A. Rao has observed, as a whole the changes that have come about are neither uniform nor wholesale. They exhibit different shades of intentionalities in different regions. They are rapid in Travancore and slow in Malabar. Cochin occupies the middle position.

We can conclude the discussion by mentioning the words of H. M. Johnson, "Kinship systems are changing all the times. The changes in important structural parts such as the form of marriage, the rule of residence, the rule of descent and the types and composition of kin groups are usually slow; that is, they usually emerge clearly in the course of generations rather than days or even years".

11.5.1 Modernization and Kinship System

Majid Al-Haj, in his study *Kinship and Modernization in Developing Societies: The Emergence of Instrumentalized Kinship* (1955) stated that the effect of modernization on kinship structure and the extended family in developing societies is a controversial issue. For a long time this field of research was dominated by the convergence approach which postulates that countries are industrialized, they increasingly resemble highly developed societies in their family, kinship ties and other basic institutional arrangements (Bernard, Mogney and Smith 1986 : 151). The social forces of modernization affect every known society, thus creating a remarkable phenomenon in the development of similar patterns of family behavior and values among much of the world's population, even if the family systems in different areas of the world move from very different starting points (Goode 1970 : 1). This argument is based on the conception that in the wake of a conspicuous modernization process, family-oriented traditional values are confronted with different Western hierarchies of values, which stress achieved rather than ascriptive elements, universalist rather than particularistic orientation and individualism rather than familism (see Madigan and Almonte 1977 : 797). Modernization and kinship systems are inimical to each other in many respects. Therefore, kinship structure is either a victim or a barrier of modernization (Inkeles and Smith 1974), since extended kinship relationships cannot be adapted to modern industrialized society. The need for social and geographical mobility necessitates the creation of a conjugal family independent of

kinship ties (Levy 1965). One of the main characteristics of this nuclear-conjugal family is the remoteness from affinal and blood relatives, including the extraction of mutual economic aid (Goode 1970 : 8). Therefore, all the relatively modern nations are non-kinship oriented (Levy 1965).

11.5.2 Changes in the study of kinship Terminology

Thomas R. Trautmann, in his study *India and the Study of Kinship Terminologies* (2000) mentioned that Kinship as an anthropological object, and anthropology as the observing subject of kinship, was mutually constituted in the middle of the nineteenth century. The constituting of kinship was not a creation from nothing, like divine creation; rather, in the manner of human creations, it came about as a gathering together into a new configuration of elements that had previously existed in a dispersed state. From the law, from ethnographies of missionaries, explorers and philosophical travellers, from the Classics and the Bible were drawn a variety of existing concepts - of patriarchy and matriarchy, forbidden degrees of marriage, rules of inheritance, and so forth - as material for the making of the new thing, kinship. The inventors of kinship - Lewis H. Morgan, J. F. McLennan, Henry Maine, Johann J. Bachofen, NumaD. Fustel de Coulanges - were thrown together through the making of this new object, collaborating in its production without really intending to, or even being aware that they were doing so (Trautmann 1987).

In many ways the decisive contribution was that of L. H. Morgan, in his master work, *The Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family* (Morgan 1871), which conceptualized kinship as existing in the form of a limited number of systems that, as such, could be rigorously compared ; for by doing so he conceived an object for anthropology that was complex and required extensive study, creating at the same time an important part of the *raison* for a special discipline devoted to its study. Kinship terminologies were central to this conception of kinship, and thus to the creation of anthropology itself. Constituting kinship terminologies as objects of comparative study involved giving fully conscious recognition and formal expression to the terms we have learned as young children and which we use readily and without reflection.

Because, the kinship terminology, like language itself, is both lodged in unconscious knowledge and yet fully available to consciousness for articulation in speech, because it is at once quotidian and occult, it takes a special effort to call into consciousness the relations of reciprocity among the terms that bind them together into a logically organized set. The formal recognition of kinship terminology as a

self-contained system did not come about by way of first lessons in one's own kinship terminology during childhood, nor through adult self-reflection, but by comparison with other terminologies and the apprehension of their difference. Let us briefly trace this moment of emergence. Morgan held that kinship terminologies are aspects of language that, because they are logically-ordered and hence more resistant to change, are more conservative than both the vocabulary and the grammar of a language, constituting for this reason 'a new instrument for ethnology', more powerful than the comparison of vocabularies and grammars in uncovering historic relations among peoples. Thus, in a paper called 'System of Consanguinity of the Red Race' delivered before the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1859, he wrote: "Language changes its vocabulary, not only, but also modifies its grammatical structure in the progress of ages ; thus eluding the inquiries which philologists have pressed it to answer ; but a system of relationships once matured, and brought into operation, is, in the nature of things, more unchangeable than language - not in the names employed as a vocabulary of relationships, for these are mutable, but in the ideas which underlie the system itself." Morgan found the new anthropological object, which we call kinship terminology, deep in the heart of language. To understand the conditions under which it rose to consciousness we have to consider the role kinship terms had within the project of what we should like to call linguistic ethnology.

In the eighteenth century, the European preoccupation with the intersection of languages and nations issued in a project of linguistic ethnology whereby the relations among nations were to be uncovered by determining the relations among languages, arranging them in a tree resembling an anthropological diagram of segmentary lineages. The method employed a simple-seeming tool: the vocabulary list, juxtaposing columns of words from various peoples whose historical relations would be revealed by the similarities of words across the rows. This device seems simple but in fact rested upon a rather complex theory about history and language, to the effect that there are certain words every language must have at the moment of its creation, and that these are the most durable and conservative core of the lexicon of a language. Kinship terms regularly feature in the list of words that make up the core vocabulary. Thus Leibniz, believing that nothing would throw greater light on the origins of nations than the collation of languages, called for the collection of Pater Nosters and glossaries, and drew up a vocabulary list for the purpose which seems to have served as a model for subsequent lists of this kind, the *Desiderata circalinguas populorum* (Leibniz 1768). Leibniz's list includes the

propinquitates, aetatesy, among whom we find the kinship terms pater mater, avus, filius, filia, frater, soror, patruus, maritus and uxor; other sub-lists are words for numbers, parts of the body, necessities, naturalia, and actions. Here the words of the kinship vocabulary remain a series within a series, having no special virtue of their own and being interchangeable with others of the series; so that the conceptualization and use of them is part and parcel of the more general program of linguistic ethnology.

So long as kinship terms constituted items in a vocabulary list, however (and they remain so in Campbell), they were captives of an epistemology according to which words are the names of things, in a world of discrete object-types having comparable names in all languages. But once it was grasped that the things of kinship might be categorized under the names of kinship in very different ways from one society to another, one reached the threshold of the anthropological conception of kinship terminology as a system having a logic of its own, comparable to but different from other such terminologies and their logics; so that now the words of kinship were no longer in series with words for feet, nose and teeth, but constituted a bounded set to be compared with other such sets. This breakthrough understanding came about when Morgan confronted the strangeness of the Iroquois terminology, in which 'the father's brother is equally a father', and the mother's sister a mother, implicitly comparing his own kinship terminology - in which the father's brother is an uncle, and the mother's sister an aunt - with that of the Iroquois. An essential step in achieving this new sense of kinship consisting of systems that can be closely compared was to abandon the comparison of vocabulary items, i.e. the lexicon of kinship, in favor of examining the semantic patterning of the kinship set. Morgan tended to believe that similarity of semantic patterning indicated historical relationship even where the vocabulary of kinship is completely different, i.e. across language families. In this way, he believed, kinship could show historical relationships between languages whose vocabularies had so changed over time that they were no longer recognizably alike.

Thus, kinship terminology was central to the consolidation of kinship as anthropological object. Because this object was a system or structure, all analysis of this anthropological object necessarily has an incipiently structural, if not a fully-blown structuralist, character; and it is to structural analysis that we owe most of the great advances in our knowledge of kinship. Lewis H. Morgan him-self, though the overall shape of his interpretation is evolutionist, clearly delimited the structure of

terminologies we call Iroquois, Crow, Omaha and Eskimo, providing in fact most of the tools of kinship analysis in use ever since. It is not an accident that the two golden ages of the study of kinship, and especially of the study of kinship terminology, had this structural or structuralist aspect – the first following W. H. R. Rivers's revival of Morgan (1914), and the second following the publication of Lévi-Strauss' great masterwork, *Les structures élémentaires de la parenté* (1949), fittingly dedicated to Morgan, and of Murdock's *Social Structure* (1949).

Critiques of kinship as anthropological object have often had the analysis of kinship terminology in mind, as when Malinowski complained of 'kinship algebra' or (so as not to malign algebra, presumably) 'the bastard algebra of kinship'. Kinship terminology is no longer automatically included in what anthropologists call kinship, even tacitly. Nevertheless, it remains part of the invaluable ethnographic record which anthropology has made of worlds that have vanished. And some recent works, including the publication of the 1993 *Maison Suger* conference on kinship terminologies organized by Maurice Godelier (Godelier, Trautmann & Tjon Sie Fat 1998), and Francis Zimmerman's book (1-993) that appeared the same year, *Enquete sur la parenté*, suggest that a revival of the study of kinship terminologies is in progress.

11.6 Changes in Marriage

In recent times marriage has seemingly become less popular, more fragile and less of an exclusive setting for having children. We will discuss recent changes in marriage and marriage related issues such as cohabitation, divorce and re-marriage patterns. Robert Parke, JR. and Paul C. Glick in their study *Prospective Changes in Marriage and the Family* (1967) stated that there (in recent trends in marriage and family statistics) is a "...continued decline in the rate of teen-age marriage and rise in the average age of women at first marriage; reductions in the relative frequency of widowhood due to increasing similarity in the age of husbands and wives, as well as to improvements in survival rates; reductions in the relative frequency of divorce and separation due to rising incomes; and some continued decline in; the average size of households and families and major increases in the proportions of unmarried individuals who maintain their own households." They reviewed that in reference to recent trends in marriage and family statistics provides a basis for the following expectations, if one keeps in mind the foregoing qualifications :

- (i) Persons now in their late twenties and their early thirties are more likely to marry at some time in their lives than any other group on record.
- (ii) The rate of teen-age marriage, which is now on the decline, will continue to go down for a while, and then level off.
- (iii) The relative oversupply of young women will tend to produce a further rise in the next ten years in the age at which women marry for the first time.
- (iv) The compression of marriages into a narrow age range will cause marriage and household formation to be somewhat more responsive than before to changes in the number of past births from which the marrying population comes.
- (v) Over and above any general decline in mortality, the declines in the difference between the ages of the husband and wife will reduce the frequency of widowhood and increase the proportion of couples who survive jointly to retirement age.
- (vi) Declines in the relative frequency of divorce and separation should result to the extent that there are reductions in poverty and general improvements in the socio economic status of the population.
- (vii) The small average size of modern families (in terms of related persons sharing the same living quarters) will not change very much, but the average number of adult members may come very close to a minimum size. Greater changes are likely to develop only if there are major changes in the average number of children in the home.
- (viii) Nearly all married couples now maintain their own households. In addition, there is a good prospect that within the next 20 years five out of every six aged individuals not in institutions will keep house on their own, and more than half the adult individuals of other ages will do so.

In closing, it is acknowledged that here and there the observations presented have gone a step or two beyond the projections. Furthermore, the future patterns could actually veer off in new directions not anticipated in the projections. However, there is reason to expect that further development of the program for preparing marriage and family projections, and improvements in the data available, will make it possible to reduce the area of uncertainty and to provide prompt corrections of future readings so as to bring them in line with current developments.

11.7 Nature of Changes in Marriage

The central theme of our understanding towards the nature of changes in marriage is one of diversity. We try to document varieties of diversity in men's, women's and children's experiences of family and marriage- over time, across cultures and especially today. We describe a variety of perspectives that provide different lenses on the question of why people marry and the consequences of those choices for parents, the children, and the society at large. We also present evidence suggestive of continuing and potentially increasing diversity of those experiences and consequences into the future.

The changes in the marriage system may be analysed in following areas.

(i) Changes in the Aims of Marriage

The main objective of Hindu marriage was Dharma. Although Karma or sex was one of the aims of Hindu Marriage, it was the least desirable aim. In recent times, the order of aims of marriage has undergone change as, sex has become primary and Dharma has become least important aim to marriage.

(ii) Change in the Process of Mate Selection

As far as the selection of the bride and bridegroom concerned it was the prerogative of the parents or the guardians. This tradition of selecting the marriage partner for son or daughter continued till the end of 19th century. In the post-independent India, the tendency of selecting one's own partner has remarkably increased. At present, the younger generation is not very much in favour of parental choice in matter of selection of marriage partners.

(iii) Changes in the Rules of Endogamy and Exogamy

There have been considerable visible evidences of change in the matter of rules of endogamy and exogamy. The rules of Varna, caste, and sub-caste are endogamy while Gotra and Pravara are categorised as exogamy have been banned by legislations. Now one do not find any sort of restriction in cross-cousin marriages and the number of incidences are gradually increasing under such circumstances such as the Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Act (1964), the Special Marriage Act (1954), the Hindu Marriage Act (1955) etc.

(iv) The Age at Marriage

In course of time, the child marriage became the taboo of marriage in India. In

the 20th century, the Child Marriage Restraint Act, popularly known as Sharada Act prescribed the minimum age of marriage at 14 years for girls and 18 years for boys. Thereafter, the Indian Parliament raised the age of marriage 18 for the girls and 21 for the boys and any case that come below the prescribed age has been made a cognisable offence.

(v) Changes in the Rites of Marriage

Conventionally, Hindu marriage is a religious sacrament and the Hindu marriage can take place only through the performance of certain rights and rituals. But now the situation is being changed as marriage is monitored and performed strictly by the civil courts. As a result, the sacred nature of rites and rituals has been gradually diminished to a considerable extent.

(vi) Change in the Stability of Marriage

In the orthodox Hindu society, the concept of divorce is less considerable phenomenon. The hindrance on divorce made the institution of family and marriage stable and enduring. But due to the enactment of marriage and family legislations and many other inter-related factors the divorce rate in India has been steadily increasing.

11.8 Factors of Changes in Marriage

Factors that are supposed to be responsible for the changes in marriage are as following:

(i) Second Demographic Transition

Family forms are becoming increasingly diverse. Some demographers have characterised the dramatic changes in family structure and behaviour over the past forty years as the “second demographic transition” (Lesthaeghe 1995). These changes includes delays in marriage and increases in divorce, non-marital childbearing, and cohabitation. These changes have not occurred equally for all groups, however. The retreat from marriage and increases in non-marital childbearing are concentrated among racial and ethnic minorities and the less educated, and these differences in marriage outcomes have contributed to the increase in inequality over the last thirty years (McLanahan 2004)

(ii) Spending Less of Being Married

There has been considerable debate about whether individuals are tending forgo

marriage altogether, or whether due to increase in the age of marriage and in the likelihood of divorce they are just spending less of their life cycle being married. Data clearly shows that both men and women remain single for a longer period of time. In the 2005 the median age of marriage in the United State was 27 for men and 25 for women. The age at marriage has increase substantially since the 1950s, when half of women married during their teen years. At the end of 19th century, the age of marriage was closer to what is today; in 1890 the median age of marriage was 22 for women and 26 for men.

(iii) Marriage Delayed/Avoided

The continuing debate sheds some light on the question of whether marriage is delayed or avoided. The figure shows that the proportion of white and black women who were ever married by age 45-50 by educational level over time. The top panel shows that marriage propensities have increased for white women. Since 1950s, the likelihood of ever marrying remain almost constant for those with less than a high school education, but this likelihood increased for white women with more education (by about 6% for women with some college.)

In contrast the lower panel shows that marriage propensities decreased substantially over time for black women of all educational level. The decline was largest for black women less than a college education (from 96% to 62%), but there were still a 10-point decline in marriage probabilities for black women with some college. As several studies on this issue trying to emphasize that over and time the phenomenon of marriage has become increasingly selective of those with higher socio-economical status.

(iv) Increasing Divorce Rates

The increase in divorce rate is another factor contributing to the decline in marriage. The substantial increase began in the late 1960s, but aggregate divorce rates have been fairly flat since 1980, with a small decline in recent years.

Divorce propensities also reflect the divide between high and low socio-economic groups. The likelihood of divorce has fallen slightly for non-Hispanic whites but has continued to rise for black (Bramlett and Mosher 2002). It also shows that remarriage rates have fallen over time. Again remarriage rates have fallen faster for black than for whites (Bramlett and Mosher 2002).

(v) Non-marital Childbirth

The delay in marriage has not been matched by a similar delay in fertility,

especially for black women and those with lower education. Essentially marriage and childbearing are less closely connected now than in the past, resulting in an increasing number of births outside of marriage. This behaviour has been the focus of much debate by policy makers and pundits alike. In 2005, almost 7 in 10 black children and about 1 in 4 white non-Hispanic children were born to non-married parents. The reason rise in non-marital childbearing began in 1960s, and the percentage of births that are non-marital has almost quadrupled since 1970.

(vi) Non-marital Cohabitation

Another change in family structure has been the rise of non-marital cohabitation. Estimates based on the 2000 U.S. census show that there are nearly 5.5 million cohabiting couples in the U.S. today, which represents a more than 1000 percent increase since 1970. It is estimated that about 40% of cohabiting households including children (Fields and Casper 2001; Simmons and O'Connell 2003). Indeed, evidence from the National Survey of Family Growth estimates that 40% of non-marital births to unmarried cohabiting couples (Chandra.et al. 2005).

(vii) Diverse Life Course

Individuals are experiences diversity across the life course. Today many men and women spent their life course in various family structures, moving back and forth between being single, cohabiting, married, remarriage, divorced and widowed.

(viii) Impact of Social Change

Overall the trends and changes described to highlight the considerable diversities in experiences of marriage and indicate that there remain many unanswered questions about contemporary marriage and family life. This mix of reviews and of theory and the literature, and empirical data gives our readers both breadth and depth into the multitude of issues and perspectives that mark contemporary research on marriage and family. Thorton also describes social changes in the western world, including industrialization, increasing wages for women, and the development of the birth control pill, that have contributed to the decline in marriage.

(ix) Single-Parent Family

Over the past forty years the parent of all children living in single-parent households has increased gradually. Although there is considerable diversity in the prevalence and experiences of single-parent families across different social, ethnic and educational groups, and there is also diversity in the route through which the current phenomenon occurs. The studies shows that children who live in single-

parent household have worse outcomes than those who living with two biological married parents, though there is less consensus about the mechanisms that lead to these outcomes.

(x) Single-Mother Family

This further leads to the phenomenon of single-mother family household. Comparatively there is a considerable different and diverse outcome for children living in two family types that have never had a structure transition: stable married-biological parent and stable single-mother families.

(xi) Step-Parent Family

Now considerably the next question comes of step-parent families, especially with the view of comparative outcomes for adolescents in step-parent families with those in single-parent families. Here the major emphasis goes on whether the step-parent family is formed through cohabitation or through marriage and whether step-parent family is preceded by a divorce or by a non-marital birth.

11.9 Summary

We can conclude that the future of marriage, both in terms of the ontological meaning that marriage has and the practical knowledge that could have in people's lives, become dynamic. Steven Nock accounts that as marriage has become less universal, it has also become more selective of individuals with higher education and other socially valued characteristics. According to him, as marriage rates decline, "the symbolic importance of marriage increases".

11.10 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) What is divorce ?
- (ii) What is cohabitation ?
- (iii) What are rites of marriage ?
- (iv) When did Hindu Marriage Act passed ?
- (v) Mention some functional changes of kinship system.

- (vi) Point out some structural changes in present kinship system.
- (vii) Evaluate the contemporary status of marriage system.

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (viii) Discuss the major factors of changes in kinship system.
- (ix) Explain in detail the nature of changes that taken place in kinship system.
- (x) Explain the factors that solely responsible for changes in marriage system.
- (xi) What are the factors of changes in marriage system ?
- (xii) What are the changes occurred in the nature of marriage system ?

11.11 Suggested Readings

- (i) Al-Haj, Majid. (1995), Kinship and Modernization in Developing Societies : The Emergence of Instrumentalized Kinship, Journal of Comparative Family Studies, AUTUMN, Vol 26, No 3, pp. 311-328, University of Toronto Press.
- (ii) Deliege, Robert (2011). Anthropology of the Family and Kinship, PHI Learning Limited, New Delhi.
- (iii) Ganesh, Kamala. (2013). New Wine in Old Bottles ? Family and Kinship Studies in the Bombay School, Sociological Bulletin, May-August, Vol 62, No 2, pp. 288-310, Sage Publications, Inc.
- (iv) Goode William, J. (1998). The Family, Prentice Hall, New Delhi.
- (v) Haralambos, M. (1998). Sociology : Themes and Perspectives, OUP.
- (vi) Jayaram, N. (1998). Introductory Sociology, Macmillan India.
- (vii) Kibria, Nazli. (2006). Globalization and the Family, International Journal of Sociology of the Family, Vol 32, No 2 (Autumn).
- (viii) Madan, T. N. (2016). Family and Kinship : A Study of the Pandits of Rural Kashmir, Oxford University Press.
- (ix) Ogburn, William F. (1935). Recent Changes in Marriage, American Journal of Sociology, Vol 41, No 3, November, pp. 285-298, The University of Chicago Press.
- (x) Oommen, T. K. & Venugopal, C. N. (1993). Sociology, Eastern Book Co.

- (xi) Rao, C. N. (Ed.). *Sociology : Principles of Sociology with an Introduction to Sociological Thought*, S. Chand, New Delhi.
- (xii) Robert Parke, Jr. and Paul C, Glick. (1967). *Prospective Changes in Marriage and the Family*, *The Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol 29, No 2, May, pp. 249-256, National Council on Family Relations.
- (xiii) Romney, A. Kimball and Metzger, Duane. (1956), *On the Processes of Change in Kinship Terminology*, *American Anthropologist*, Jan, Vol 58, No 3, pp. 551-554, Wiley.
- (xiv) Trautmann, Thomas R. (2000), *India and the Study of Kinship Terminologies*, *L'Homme*, Apr-Sep., No 154/155, pp. 559-571, EHESS.
- (xv) Uberio, Patricia (Ed.). (1994). *Family, Kinship and Marriage in India*, Oxford University Press.
- (xvi) Verdon, Michel. (1981). *Kinship, Marriage, and the Family : An Operational Approach*, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol 86, No 4, January.

Unit - 12 □ Relevance of Marriage Family and Kinship Today

Structure

12.1 Objectives

12.2 Introduction

12.3 Importance of Family in Modern Society

12.4 Importance of Kinship in Contemporary Society

12.5 Relevance of Kinship in Modernizing Societies

12.6 Structure and Function of Kinship

12.7 Relevance of Marriage in Recent time

12.8 Summary

12.9 Questions

12.10 Suggested Readings

12.1 Objectives

- To learn about the role of family in our society
- To learn about the necessity of kinship ties in our changing scenario
- To learn about the present condition of marriage in contemporary society
- To develop a worldview about the present necessity and importance of social institutions in human society in general.

12.2 Introduction

Life has changed so much for most of us in the modern world. With the advancement of technology, changing cultural norms, new priorities and forms of communication fuelled by the internet, it's natural to wonder what the importance of

family is. Is it a dying institution that has no place in modern life? Well, of course not. Family just as relevant as it ever was if not more. No matter how much life changes in the future, it will probably continue to be needed in one form or another.

12.3 Importance of Family in Modern Society

The traditional definition of “family” entitled one man and one woman who were married, and their children. A grand-parent might live with and be a part of the family, too. In the 1950s, the ideal family was a father, a mother, and two offspring. The current definition is somewhat open and inclusive. A family might be two parents of any gender, married or not. Some people even have a family with more than three parents. The child may have been born to one of the parents, both parents, or adopted. As modern family puts pressure on all of us, the benefits of living in a family are more important than ever such as :

(i) Family Meet Basic Needs

The basic social unit called the family is tasked with meeting the basic needs of those family members who can't provide for themselves. This includes minors, the elderly and disabled, or simply those who can't afford to live by themselves. Basic needs such as food, water, shelter, and clean air are accessible when one or more members can provide things for the whole family.

(ii) Financial Security

A well-functioning family provides financial security for everyone living in the household. First, members who can work contribute at least a part of their earnings to help the family meet everyone's needs and wants. On the other hand, the family combines resources to pay bills and manage their money to ensure that financial necessities are always taken care of.

(iii) Built-in Support System

When family members are under stress, someone close to them is most likely to see the symptoms that they are struggling with. People may hide their problems from others, but their family most often already understands. In such a situation, all close members may not support economically but can physiologically and psychologically.

(iv) Provides Support when one is Ill

Family potentially helps solve all these problems and can make sure that food, water, rest, and medical care is provided. Society may not have physiologically to do anything to take care of a person's basic needs because a family already has that covered.

(v) Community Benefits

The community benefits when the family relieves it of the burden of supporting members of that family. Healthy family produce people who make positive contributions to the community too. It is basically the process of socialization of that family of their members that solely responsible for a better or worst society as a whole.

Significance of Family in Globalizing World: The idea of globalization is a central paradigm of our time, informing the work of a wide range of groups and interests, from scholars to economic development workers to human rights activists. In a much-cited passage, social theorist Anthony Giddens (1990) defines globalization as intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice-versa. For some, the primary feature of globalization is, deterritorialization; (Scholte :2000). On the one hand, as exemplified by the McDonaldization thesis, globalization is associated with cultural homogenization, and the dominance of a commodity-driven, Western-imposed world culture. In reviewing theories of globalization, Kibria, in her study. *Globalization and the Family* (2006), was struck by the fact that the family is relatively invisible and very much a secondary focus of concern in these discussions. For the most part, the family is understood as a recipient of globalization—a sphere that is acted on by globalizing forces. To put it in positivist terms, globalization in this scheme is the independent variable and the family is the dependent variable. She discussed globalization and family as separate and distinct rather than as deeply intertwined features of the social world. For her the family is quite often the shock absorber of globalization. Whether it through a strategy of labor migration by mothers or the redefinition of household boundaries, families respond to the economic and other dislocations of globalization in a variety of ways, striving to ensure the survival of members. These strategies are not simply

responses to globalization but also constitute it, shaping its emerging scope and character. As a critical mediating structure of globalization, she mentioned, the family is also the site of sense making; a place where family members, through their interactions with each other, give meaning to the changes taking shape around them. The family is, thus, an integral part of the cultural dynamics of globalization.

Andrews notes the critical role played by children in how families cope with the dislocations of war and conflict. Children serve as cultural nodes for these families, serving to maintain a sense of cultural continuity and tradition for them. Srinivas, on the other hand give emphasis on packaged food consumption among middle class Indian families in Bangalore, India and in Boston, United States and describes how food consumption in these families is grounded in a larger project of asserting and maintaining authentic Indian-ness in the face of the cultural challenges of globalization. Menjivar, Thai and territorialization in Eckstein all offer the opportunity to reflect on the dynamics of de- relation to the family. Menjivar describes the complex diversity of family forms that emerge among Guatemalan and Salvadoran immigrants in response to U.S. immigration laws and the environment created by them. In a study of Vietnamese immigrant men, Thai explores the question of what motivates these men to remit money to family members in Vietnam. All these scholars are nothing but trying to affirm the value and importance of a renewed focus on family in globalization studies.

12.4 Importance of Kinship in Contemporary Society

Why kinship is so important? Because, in all human societies, biological relationships are basic categories that allow humans to identify and order their social relations. Everywhere, indeed, individuals are sired by their fathers and are born of their mothers. Therefore, these basic biological relationships offer us ready-made categories to differentiate ourselves from each other. While all animals, too, result from a male and a female, the key point here is that human societies consciously recognize and explicitly use these categories to define their biological relationships.

As a result of this uniqueness, some contrast biological relationships with social relationships and affirm that only the latter concern the ethnologist. For example, Southwold explain that if a term in a native language means “biological father”, it

is applied very often, and simultaneously, to a number of other individuals, such as the father's brothers (Southwold 1977). According to these authors, it is as if these social relations had nothing to do with biological relationships. Gellner corrected this view by showing that social relationships studied under the level of kinship relationships derived directly from biological relationships (Gellner, 1988). It is biological relationships that provide the material basis upon which human societies have built their system kinship.

People consider such relationships in different ways. For Americans, kinship is primarily a relationship of blood and this consanguinity cannot be altered: it creates a certain consubstantiality, a mystical identity that cannot be terminated (Schneider). When purely fictitious kinship ties are established, they do not contradict the biological relationships but take it as a model. In the Peruvian Altiplano, each individual is assigned a number of godfathers and godmothers. These are often ritually connected people who can bring one prestige or simply expand one's network of social relations. A relationship of comradeship (*compadrazgo*) develops between the godparents and the parents of the child. Such a relationship does not in any way eliminate the existing social distance. Yet, a marriage relationship is impossible between a person and the child of his/her godparents. It is considered "the greatest insult that one can offer to God" (Christinat, 1989).

12.5 Relevance of Kinship in Modernizing Societies

Majid Al-Haj, in his study *Kinship and Modernization in Developing Societies: The Emergence of Instrumentalized Kinship* (1955) stated that recent evidence from developing societies in the Third World suggests the need for a serious reconsideration of the aforementioned convergence approach. Studies conducted in these societies indicate that despite the modernization process they experienced in different fields, some of the so-called traditional systems have continued to exist. In several societies the kinship system has been reconstructed and has adapted to the changing environment (Ekong 1986; Al-Haj 1989). Furthermore, radical modernization has strengthened, rather than weakened, the traditional system. In many cases kinship groups have become vitally important for social and political recruitment (see Talmon-Gerber 1966; Ramu 1986).

The study of kinship in rural India indicates that the kinship system has been

well integrated in the modern system (Ishwaran 1965). The introduction of a modern political system in Indian villages, based on elections rather than inheritance, opened the way for groups that hitherto had been placed at the periphery to compete for control of the power system (Ishwaran, 1965). The vitality of the kinship structure is also evident in Indian urban areas (see Ramu 1986). Based on a study conducted on entrepreneurship in an Indian city, Ramu indicated that the most successful entrepreneurs were those who were able to restructure their family and kinship networks effectively and use them as a resource for economic success (Ramu 1986 : 176). The kinship group is reported to have a significant role in Bengali society in terms of social and religious activities (Aziz 1979). The effect of the kinship group even extends beyond the village, whether through marriages with other lineages or with kinsmen distantly related. With a wider circle of kinsmen, a family can enhance its social and economic power (Aziz 1979 : 127). Evidence from Jamaica and Guyana also indicates a strong kinship continuity. In these societies kinship has constituted the major bond for sustaining human relations between the different classes and racial groups (Smith 1988 : 184).

The integration of the kinship structure in the development process is noticeable in Middle Eastern societies. Based on a wide review of several studies conducted on parallel cousin marriages (FBD), Holy (1989) indicates that this type of marriage still exists and manifests the continuity of kinship ties. A study conducted on adolescence in a Moroccan town points out that Moroccan families are closely tied in large networks.

The penetration of technology in many developing societies has ultimately increased, rather than weakened, the kinship effect. An interesting example is given by Mogeey and Bachmann (1986), who examined the effect of introducing a modern irrigation system on the kinship structure in Senegal. They concluded that exchanges between children and parents, on the one hand, and between parents or children and in-laws and uncles, on the other, have increased as a result of the innovation (Mogeey and Bachmann 1986 : 240). The urbanization process experienced by many developing countries, which was usually coupled with a rapid process of geographic movement from rural areas to urban centers, has not resulted in the disappearance of kinship ties. On the contrary, in many cases the kinship system was reconstructed and kin relationships were reshaped in order to meet the new needs that arose from the

processes of movement, settlement and adjustment to the new setting (Abu-Lughod 1961; Goldscheider 1987 : 683). Despite the disruption of the kinship structure as a result of internal and international migration, there is salient evidence that in many cases the kinship system was eventually revived in the place of destination (see, for example, Lomnitz and Peretz-Lizaur 1984; Schuster 1987). This occurred either by the recreation of the kinship group in the place of destination or through close contacts with distant relatives, including the continuity of economic and social exchange.

Based on a study of a shanty town and upper-class households in Mexico City, Lomnitz and Peretz-Lizaur (1984) reported that the kinship group was recreated in the shanty town right after migration by a chain movement of relatives who sought to join their families. The upper class in Mexico City has established even stronger relationships and norms of cooperation and developed an intense social, ritual and economic exchange (Lomnitz& Peretz-Lizaur 1984 : 191). Kinship networks have proved to be vitally important in the absorption of traditional Jewish immigrants in Israel (Talmon- Gerber 1966 : 97). The reconstruction of the kinship group helped the new immigrants to adapt to the new environment, socially as well as economically (Talmon-Gerber 1966). The reconstruction of the original community and the kinship group was indicated by Abu-Lughod (1961) as an important feature of the settlement and adjustment of rural migrants to Cairo. Migrants from particular villages concentrated within small subsections of the city, forming social networks and sharing not only a common past but also a similar and often simultaneous history of adaptation to the city (Abu-Lughod 1961 : 25).

The recreation of the kinship structure is also obvious among immigrants moving from developing to Western countries, whether through voluntary or involuntary migration. A study conducted by Sweet (1980) to trace Druze immigrants from a Lebanese village to a Canadian city indicated considerable continuity. The Lebanese village continued to flourish in a Western Canadian city in both ideology and practice. By recreating the previous structure of kinship and community, immigrants enhanced their economic and social security (Sweet 1980 : 50).

Several studies have shown a considerable continuity of the kinship network among the Vietnamese refugees in the U.S., despite the disruption of the kinship system as a result of the war and the exodus (Haines 1988; Dunning and Greenbaum

1982). The intrinsic structure of the Vietnamese kinship provided useful strategic resources for dealing with the new needs and for facilitating the resettlement and the adjustment of the refugees (Haines 1988 : 11). After the process of resettlement, the kinship group was redefined the Vietnamese refugees to include family members and other members of the community bound by actual or even fictive relationships (Haines et al. 1981).

A similar phenomenon can be found among the Palestinian refugees in Arab countries. Kinship and original community were preserved in many cases by camp and non-camp refugees, who continued to be community oriented and family oriented, despite the displacement and movement they had experienced. Outside this life style, Palestinian refugees may feel isolated and without a frame of reference which may give meaning to their existence (Barakat 1973 : 151). In his study of the Palestinian community in Kuwait, Ghabra (1987) indicated that networks based on kinship and hometown have been created among the Palestinians and have become vital to diaspora survival. Through reciprocal relationships and intensive contact, these networks play important social, political and economic tasks (Ghabra 1987).

The reformation of the kinship structure among the Palestinian internal refugees in Israel is of special interest : a new relationship began to emerge between the community of origin and the kinship group. Kinship affiliation was replaced by affiliation with the community of origin (for example, refugees who came from the village of Mear are called Meari, attached to the community of origin rather than the kinship name). Thus the relationship among persons who belonged to the same original village became similar to the kinship group solidarity. The redefinition of the kinship group in a broader way was aimed at creating a wider social group, which has been used by the refugees for competition over the local political and economic resources. In addition, it has become a major unit in the marriage market and expanded the pool of mate selection (Al-Haj 1986, 1988b). Apart from voluntary factors, the continuity of the kinship structure in developing societies may be interpreted in the light of socio-economic constraints imposed by the wider society, or the failure of the formal systems to deal with rising needs that accompany the development process (Schuster 1987; Goode 1970:130). It may also be the result of explicit or implicit encouragement by the state or the ambiguity of the criteria used for the allocation of resources and promotion in the socio-economic ladder (see, for

example, Pena 1984; Schaefer and Davis 1989; Khuri 1976). Pena (1984) indicated in his study of a region in southern Mexico that "the political process- the distribution of power, the upholding of order- is not carried out exclusively by impersonal state apparatuses. Instead the state resorts to personal links to manifest itself. Thus kinship becomes overwhelmingly important : Property and citizenship rights are transmitted by kinship (Pena 1984 : 205). In this sense, kinship is used for tactical means for the mobilization of power and the promotion of personal interests (Pena 1984; Bloch 1971).

Similar examples can be found elsewhere in other developing societies. In Moroccan society, for example, informal connections still play a major role in the allocation of resources and in competition in the labor market. In this case relatives are the best means to achieve the desired connections (Schaefer and Davis 1989). Family relationships are sometimes enhanced legally by the state, which provides a solid basis for kinship solidarity. For example, the Indian inheritance law and income tax structure clearly favor family partnerships and therefore allow the joint family to maintain economic cooperation and social solidarity, despite the political and socio-economic changes (Ramu 1986 : 181).

In some cases, even if no formal policy exists regarding kinship and other informal systems, the failure of the state apparatus to meet the rising needs of its citizens paves the way for large networks to fill the gap. Therefore, kinship groups are used to solve problems that go beyond the capacity of the single family (see Goode 1970). A good example can be derived from Zambian society, where the absence of an adequate state welfare system increased the importance of the kinship group as a source of services and social security (Schuster 1987 : 365, 382).

It should be mentioned that along with the continuity of the structure and functioning of the kinship system in developing societies, there have been significant changes in its characteristics and the basis of its organization. Many students of kinship in contemporary developing societies have suggested a pragmatic approach for an understanding of the complexity of change and continuity in the kinship structure (see ??? 1986; Bernard et al. 1986). Some referred to kinship as a pragmatic association rather than a traditional group (Cohen 1970). Others spoke about modified kinship to indicate the adaptability of kinship to changing circumstances (Chekki 1974).

12.6 Structure and Function of Kinship

There is an internal logic to kinship terminologies. The kin terms tend to be semantic categories first of all; from a limited vocabulary, they can identify dozens, even hundreds of subjects. Some of these categories are very broad; for example, the maternal uncle, the most significant ally, is named by a term that can apply to many individuals, that is, all men of one's mother's generation who belongs to one's group. They thus rely on rules of extension that ultimately stem from the principle of structural unity of siblings. All members of a group fall into the same category: thus, all the brothers of an uncle are my uncle. The terms are, therefore, united in a relationship of interdependence and this is why we speak of the "internal structure" of a terminology.

Often, traditional societies cannot conceive of social relationships outside the family; everyone around them must therefore be classified in one way or another. Thus, anthropologists themselves are assigned a kinship term, often "brother" or "sister" by members of their generation, or "uncle" or "aunt" by the children. A kinship terminology thus shapes the world of a population. It reflects the world, but it also organizes it because, as Jamous puts it, kinship terms are not just a manner of speaking they are also a manner of behaviour. Additionally, all terminologies are not necessarily meaningful and their peculiarities do not necessarily reveal the basic elements of social structure. In some cases, two individuals can be designated by the same term and the same term can cover extremely diverse persons.

12.7 Relevance of Marriage in Recent time

The current trends indicate that marriage in the future will be less central as the defining event in the life of adults than it is in the present. Marriage will increasingly compete with cohabitation as an alternative form of intimate family life, and increasing number of adults will live alone. The overall number of adults who are currently married will decline. Here we will explain, in view of the account, how these trends may elevate the importance of marriage, family and kinship in present day.

(i) Marriage as Social Institution

Marriage is a socially recognized institution because conventional expectations are associated with it, such as customary ways to be a good husband or wife. Society expects husbands and wives to do things differently from when they were not married. A kind of informally formal responsibilities and obligations in voluntarily are fall upon both of these partners. By getting married, partners announce to each other's that they are ready to accept the obligations and responsibilities to be faithful. It is comparatively more difficult for a married than for an unmarried person to break such promises because they are parts of our laws, religion, rituals, and definitions of morality. Marriage should look like :

- Marriage is a free choice that builds on love.
- Marriage presumes individual maturity and independence.
- Marriage generally presumes hetero-sexuality, even in a regime permitting same-sex marriage.
- Men must provide support; working is not optional for husband, even if it is for wives.
- Married partners are sexually faithful to each other.
- Parenthood – married spouses are presumed to become parents.

Society itself enforces these ideals both formally and informally. The core of any social institution is agreement among members of society about the norms that govern people in acting that role. In marriage, this means that the institution consists of various beliefs and norms about what a married man or woman should and should not do.

(ii) Symbolic Importance of Marriage

Steven L. Nock notes that to the extent that fewer individuals are married at any point in time, the symbolic importance of marriage increases. The symbol of marriage has potentially important significance in the labour market. If marriage implies valuable traits about individuals, then these who are married may enjoy benefits that their unmarried counterparts do not.

(iii) Marriage serves as Kind of Sorting

As long as the alternatives to marriage (e.g., cohabitation, singleness etc.) grow in popularity, then marriage increasingly serves to sorting individuals based on the personal attributes associated with various living arrangements. We may conclude that men and women who marry each other likely to benefit by this.

(iv) Marriage as kind of Signal

Through the eyes of economic signalling theory, marriage can distinguishes the married from the other. By considering marriage as a sign of otherwise unknowable personal traits, we learn how it becomes matter to employers, the state, and others. If we consider, marriage as a social institution, offers a framework to identify the content of marital signal. This content, when perceived by others, is the value of marriage. The outcome is that, that is why the married people are treated differently than their unmarried counterparts.

(v) Marriage as Distinctive Status

Marriage rates have been declining for several decades and for many reasons such as later age of marriage, high unwed birth rates, increasing events of cohabitation, high divorce rates etc. Regardless of the reasons marriage is delayed, disrupted or foregone, the result is that being marries is an increasingly distinctive status because a growing fraction of people are not.

(vi) Marriage as Beneficial Factor

Marriage has been argued to produce benefits for individuals in at least three basic ways (Becker 1981; Becker, Landes, and Michael 1977).

First, there are wholly external factors that influence the value of marriage regardless of the particular individuals involved. These have their source completely outside the particular relationship of two people. Every married couple enjoys such benefits like, state assign different obligations on the basis of marital status. Secondly, there are marriage-specific benefits and possible costs that develop in a relationship over time. One obvious example is the division of tasks that arises in most married households. To the extent that marriage contributes to the development of such specialization, efficiencies arise. Finally, there are partner-specific benefits that depend on the particular individual and her/his spouse for their value. For

example, sensitivities, tastes, habits, and hobbies are developed over the course of time in a marriage. These unique partner specific features of the relationship depend on the particular combination of personalities involved.

(vii) Marriage as Distinct Relationship

Marriage generates benefits in various ways that cohabitation cannot. While often similar in terms of the ongoing relationship, the crucial distinctiveness is in its methodological ways of how people enter and exit into a relationship. Importantly, the two differ in reference to whether entry and exit are governed by rituals, rules, and social recognition or not.

(viii) Marriage as Public Act

Virtually all marriages are formed through a public act involving the mutual exchange of promises before an official authorized to conduct marriages. Entry into a marriage requires a license and some form of procedures. At present, marriages begin with a public ceremony of some type. The costly marriage ceremony has been shown to be an indicator of conformity to conventional marriage and social norms (Kalmijn 2004). The ceremony itself is very crucial as after the wedding, there will be little question about the new status of the couple: they are husband and wife. To all, the practicing of this ritual is significant in making a social and legal recognition of change of status.

(ix) Marriage as kind of Identity

Beyond its public significance, rituals contribute to the creation of an identity or a sense of presence with something larger than the individual (Durkheim 1915; Gluckman&Gluckman 1977). Wedding ceremonies, anniversaries, or other ceremonies teach individuals that “this is the way our family is” (Wolin & Bennett 1984). To the extent the collective sense of identity is important to individuals, an incentive to maintain it is created.

(x) Divorce as Legal Domestic Regulation

Nevertheless, the rate of divorce is too high at present, divorce is the most obvious legal distinction between marriage and cohabitation. It is also the most important differences by itself. In law, divorce is the most crucial component of regulation of domestic relations. Divorce laws are a legal form of insurance that

safeguards the interests of children and the adults involved (Scott 2000). By getting married, each partner consents to important limits on their future behaviours and claims on some sort of property. There are rules about property distribution, claims on retirement benefits and the value of less tangible property such as professional degrees. There are also rules about future support requiring the valuation of compensatory payments, 'spouse support' etc. This cannot be said about the cohabitational events.

12.8 Summary

We can conclude that if comparable social norms emerge, then cohabitation would be indistinguishable from marriage. In that case marriage would become less important. The current evident shows that the legal changes are happening much slower than the behavioural changes. A tendency to cohabiting is growing more popular, while legal effort to regulate it is developing much slower. And there is little to suggest that social norms are developing about cohabiting relationships. For the foreseeable future, therefore, we should expect to see marriage grow in importance of the increase in cohabitation.

12.9 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) What is family of procreation ?
- (ii) What is family of orientation ?
- (iii) What are community benefits of family ?
- (iv) What is socialization ?
- (v) Do you think there is any justification of getting conventional marriage in modern times ?
- (vi) Point out the interconnectedness of family and marriage.
- (vii) Explain your opinion about the validity of family importance in such ever-changing human society.

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (viii) Evaluate your conceptual clarity about the necessity of maintaining kinship ties in such a diverse life course.
- (ix) Why marriage is still important to maintain social solidarity ?
- (x) Explain briefly about the importance of kinship ties in modern society.
- (xi) What is the relationship between marriage and kinship system ?

12.10 Suggested Readings

- (i) Al-Haj, Majid. (1995), Kinship and Modernization in Developing Societies : The Emergence of Instrumentalized Kinship, Journal of Comparative Family Studies, AUTUMN, Vol 26, No 3, pp. 311-328, University of Toronto Press.
- (ii) Deliege, Robert (2011). Anthropology of the Family and Kinship, PHI Learning Limited, New Delhi.
- (iii) Ganesh, Kamala. (2013). New Wine in Old Bottles ? Family and Kinship Studies in the Bombay School, Sociological Bulletin, May-August, Vol 62, No 2, pp. 288-310, Sage Publications, Inc.
- (iv) Goode William, J. (1998). The Family, Prentice Hall, New Delhi.
- (v) Haralambos, M. (1998). Sociology: Themes and Perspectives, OUP.
- (vi) Jayaram, N. (1998). Introductory Sociology, Macmillan India.
- (vii) Kibria, Nazli. (2006). Globalization and the Family, International Journal of Sociology of the Family, Vol 32, No 2 (Autumn).
- (viii) Madan, T. N. (2016). Family and Kinship : A Study of the Pandits of Rural Kashmir, Oxford University Press.
- (ix) Ogburn, William F. (1935). Recent Changes in Marriage, American Journal of Sociology, Vol 41, No 3, November, pp. 285-298, The University of Chicago Press.
- (x) Oommen, T. K. & Venugopal, C.N. (1993). Sociology, Eastern Book Co.

- (xi) Rao, C. N. (Ed.). *Sociology : Principles of Sociology with an Introduction to Sociological Thought*, S. Chand, New Delhi.
- (xii) Robert Parke, Jr. and Paul C, Glick. (1967). *Prospective Changes in Marriage and the Family*, *The Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol 29, No 2, May, pp. 249-256, National Council on Family Relations.
- (xiii) Romney, A. Kimball and Metzger, Duane. (1956), *On the Processes of Change in Kinship Terminology*, *American Anthropologist*, Jan, Vol 58, No 3, pp. 551-554, Wiley.
- (xiv) Trautmann, Thomas R. (2000), *India and the Study of Kinship Terminologies*, *L'Homme*, Apr-Sep., No 154/155, pp. 559-571, EHESS.
- (xv) Uberio, Patricia (Ed.). (1994). *Family, Kinship and Marriage in India*, Oxford University Press.
- (xvi) Verdon, Michel. (1981). *Kinship, Marriage, and the Family : An Operational Approach*, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol 86, No 4, January.

MODULE - 04

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN INDIA

Unit - 13 □ Varna, Caste and Jati : Changing Dimensions

Structure

- 13.1 Objectives**
- 13.2 Introduction**
- 13.3 Essential Features of Varna**
- 13.4 Varna and Social Organisation**
- 13.5 Essential Features of Caste**
- 13.6 Theories of the origin of Caste**
- 13.7 Merits and Demerits of Castes**
- 13.8 Caste Relations and Village unity**
- 13.9 Dominant Caste**
- 13.10 Caste and Varna**
- 13.11 Caste system and its changing dimension**
- 13.12 Summary**
- 13.13 Questions**
- 13.14 Suggested Readings**

13.1 Objectives

- To understand the caste system, its meaning and characteristics
- To identify the difference between jati and varna and caste and class
- To explain the jajmani system and the dominant caste

13.2 Introduction

Varna and Caste, both are the foundation of ancient Hindu social structure as well as the major forms of social stratification in ancient Indian society. As Dube

(2001: 5 – 6) has observed that Indian history has experienced a long encounter between Aryans and non-Aryans (earlier inhabitants of the land). Aryans were basically racist as they regarded themselves superior and maintained distance from the earlier inhabitants of India. Aryans were divided into three groups – the Rajanya (Warriors and the aristocracy), the Brahman (priests) and the Vaishya (Cultivators). Shudras were the fourth varna who were outside the Aryan group.

The word ‘Caste’ is of the Spanish and Portuguese origin. The Spanish word ‘Caste’ means lineage or race. The word ‘Caste’ is derived from the Latin word ‘Castus’ which means pure. The term caste was not used in Indian situation till the 17th century. It was first used by the Portuguese to denote Indian situation of endogamous groups which in Sanskrit were called ‘Jatis’ (Rao 2004 : 190 ; Bhattacharyya 2014 : 338). Ghurye (2000 : 176) has mentioned that, “Later on the word Jati is specialized to denote caste, which in a group, the membership of which is acquired by birth. The word Jati etymologically means ‘something into which one is born’. It is occasionally used by good ancient authorities as equivalent to Varna.”

The villagers throughout India, maintain their primary identity as the members of a particular group to which their parents and other relatives belong. Each person is a member of this group by virtue of his birth into it and he will marry within it. The people of each endogenous group follow certain types of behaviour and they have a specialized occupation. According to their occupation the group is ranked in the local hierarchy. Members of one group keep distance from those of other group especially lower groups. The term ‘Jati’ is used for the endogenous group. This word is very common in several languages of northern India. By definition, Jati is an endogenous, hereditary social group. Each member of a Jati is expected to act according as his Jati attributes and enjoys the Status of his Jati in the social hierarchy of a village locality in India. Everyone is a member of his village and of his Jati (Mandelbaum 1989 : 13–15).

13.3 Essential Features of Varna

An Indian carries several identities such as religion, place of residence, family name, jati, gotra, kula, varna and so on. According to Dube (2001 : 48), “In the Hindu social system, Varna is only a reference category : it is not a functioning unit of social structure, and only refers broadly to the ascribed status of different Jatis. It is also a classificatory device. Several Jatis with similar ascribed ritual status are clustered together in four groups namely Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Sudra and

hierarchically ranked. These four groups are four Varnas. Varna categories have limited uses in social system. They provide a rough and ready indicator of ascribed status, specialized functions in some areas of social life and expectations of standards of behaviour and conduct.

Hindu mythological stories narrate that the Brahman has been born from the mouth of the creator, the Kshatriya from the arms, the Vaishya from the thighs and the Sudra from the feet. This is a symbolic representation of the rank and functions of the four Varnas. The head, the arms, the thighs and the feet are ranked as descending order in a human body. The Brahmins enjoy highest position and the functions of acquiring and disseminating knowledge and performing sacrifices are associated with them. The Kshatriyas are in second position in Varna hierarchy and their assigned functions are military, administration and government. The Vaishyas are in third position in Varna - ladder and are involved in agriculture, trade and commerce. Finally the Sudras, ranked the lowest, serve all the dwijas or higher three castes through their crafts and labour (ibid : 50 – 51).

Another point of view believes that the word 'Varna' denotes the Aryans and the Non-Aryans referring to their fair and dark complexion respectively as the word 'Varna' means colour. Later these two classes have come to be regularly described as Varnas. Four different colours are assigned to the four classes by which their members are distinguished. The colour associated with the Brahmins is white, with the Kshatriyas is red, with the Vaishyas is yellow and black is with the Sudras. Some sociologists believe that colour distinction is associated with race while others opined that the colour has a ritual significance not racial. In vedic period Varna was not in hierarchical order. It was the division of labour in society. In Brahmanic period (230 B.C to 700 A.D.), the four Varnas were arranged hierarchically with the Brahmins are at the top and the Sudras are at the bottom. It is to be mentioned here that only two Varnas are mentioned in the Rigveda – Aryavarna and Dasavarna. In Rigveda, the description of the division of society is found into three orders namely Brahma (priests), Kshatra (warriors) and Vis (common people). There is no mention of fourth group or Sudras (Ahuja 2006 : 232 – 233).

13.4 Varna and Social Organisation

The first three categories of Varna system namely Brahman, Kshatriya and Vaishya belong to upper three levels in varna hierarchy and are considered as 'Dwija' or 'twice-born' group. In addition to biological birth they are believed to have been

born second time after initiation ceremony or Upanayan which permits them to wear the sacred thread. They are now entitled to go through the sacred books. But the fourth groups, the Sudras, are neither entitled to the initiation rites, nor twice-born status (ibid : 6; Kuppuswamy 1984 : 173).

The philosophic doctrine of ancient India identified three 'gunas' or inherent qualities of human beings. These 'gunas' were 'satta', 'rajas' and 'tamas'. 'Satta' was characterized by noble thoughts and deeds, goodness and virtue, truth and wisdom while 'rajas' was characterized by high-living and luxury, passion, and some indulgence, pride, and Valour. The last 'guna', 'tamas' was characterized by coarseness and dullness, over-indulgence without taste, the capacity to carryout heavy work without much imagination. 'Satta' qualities were attached with brahmans, 'rajas' were attached with Kshatriyas and vaishyas, and the last quality 'tamas' were attached with sudras (Dube 2001 : 51).

Kuppuswamy (1984 : 171-172) has mentioned that the entire Hindu social organization is based on two fundamental concept – one is natural endowment of man and the other is nurture and upbringing of man. Natural endowment fixes the position of man in society namely Varna dharma. Dharma indicates duties. Each varna has its separate duties and distinctive ways of life. The dharma of men of high birth is not same for the men of low birth. The dharma of the student is not same for the old man (Kar 2009 : 132). Men have to perform 'Ashrama Dharma' during their phase of upbringing 'Ashrama Dharma' refers to four stages of life – 'Brahmacharya' or student stage – men acquire knowledge and prepare themselves for future duties; 'Gruhastha Ashrama' or householder stage – men fulfil their economic obligations towards their families and enjoy married life; 'Vanprastha Ashram'- by giving up their household duties men enjoy retired life into a forest hermitage; 'Sanyasa Ashrama'- is the last stage of life when men devote themselves fully to achieve ultimate aim of 'moksha' or liberation. In second stage of ashrama dharma, people take occupation according to their jati within Varna structure. Varna dharma and Ashram dharma are jointly mentioned as 'Varna Ashrama Vyavastha' which is recognised as the foundation of Indian social organization (Kuppuswamy 1984 : 172).

In short, it can be said that upper three varnas – Brahman, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas – are the elites of society. **Brahmans devote themselves to study, teaching and the performance of** sacrificial rites and constitute the intellectual elite. The rulers and warriors of olden days, the Kshatriyas, are statesmen the and politician modern **of times. These groups may be called as political elite. Vaishyas**

may be recognized as economic elite. The fourth group or Sudras comprises the working class (Kuppuswamy 1984 : 172). But the fourth group are not involved in non-polluting occupations. Society needs various functions from priesthood to scavenging. Outside the four-fold vertical varna structure, a group of people live in society who are known as 'Antyaja'. Their ethnic status is very low and their occupations are so degraded and polluting that any physical contact with them is prohibited for the twice-born and the Shudra. These 'Antyajas' are also known as 'Avarna' and 'Pancham' as they do not belong to four-fold varna structure (Dube 2001 : 6, 49; Kuppuswamy 1984 : 175).

The untouchables comprise a number of distinct groups who form the strata of Hindu society and are mentioned as untouchables by the higher caste lowest Hindus throughout centuries. They are called differently in different parts of the country – such as outcastes, untouchables, pariahs, panchamas, avarnas, antyajas, atishudras, namashudras etc. Their social disabilities are specific, severe and numerous. Their touch, shadow and even voice are considered by the caste Hindus to be polluting. They are forbidden to keep certain animals, to use certain metals for ornaments, are obliged to wear a particular type of dress and are forced to live dirty and unhygienic in the outskirts of villages and towns. They are prohibited to enter any public places like schools, temples etc. and to use any sources of drinking water. As they are illiterate, all public services including police and military forces are closed to them. Naturally they are born as untouchables, live as untouchables and also die as untouchables. This situation has been continued till 1950. The Indian constitution adopted in 1950 has totally abolished untouchability (Keer 2005 : 1–2).

The caste system is one of the basic pillars of Indian social structure. Castes are also found in some other parts of the world such as Ancient Egypt, Rome, Japan, Burma, Persia. At present, some countries Burma, Somali, have such systems resembling caste system. But caste system in India has some specific characteristics which are not common in other parts of the world (Rao 2004 : 189).

13.5 Essential Features of Caste

Main characteristics of caste system are as follows –

(i) Segmental Division of Society

The caste group is not a homogeneous group. The membership of any caste

group is determined by birth and the status of any person depends on his luck of being born in that particular caste group. In other words, in a caste-based society, a person enjoys ascribed status. A caste group has its own council i.e. 'Caste Panchayat' which controls the conducts and guides the morals of its members. According to Ghurye (ibid : 3) it is not clear as to how does the caste-panchayat manage their affairs but in the case of Brahmins of Southern India, an epigraphic record shows that if any occasion arises then a special meeting of the members of the caste is convened. Some of the offences dealt with are : (a) eating, drinking or having similar dealings with those persons where such social intercourse is forbidden; (b) keeping a woman of another caste as concubine; (c) adultery with a married woman; (d) fornication ; (e) refusing to maintain a wife ; (f) non-payment of debt ; (g) petty assault ; (h) breaches of the customs of the trade peculiar to the caste ; (i) encroaching on another's clientele, and raising or lowering prices ; (j) killing cow or other forbidden animals ; (k) insulting a Brahmin ; (l) defying the customs of the caste regarding feasts, etc. during marriage and other ceremonies. It is to be noted here that some of the offences in the above list are usually dealt by the state in its Judicial capacity. Hence, caste is such a group with separate arrangement which tries to show justice to its members.

The punishments which are decided in caste-council are as follows: (a) out-casting (either temporary or permanent); (b) fines ; (c) feasts to be given to the caste men; (d) Corporal punishment (e) sometimes religious expiation. In caste-bound society, caste-feeling supersedes community-feeling and people owe moral allegiances to their castes first. Further, each caste has its own way of life, customs, traditions, practices and rituals, informal rules, regulations and procedures. Many of the castes have their special deities. The customs related to marriage and death vary widely among different castes. Caste-feelings and cultural differences among the castes bring out the segmental division of society (ibid : 4-5 ; Rao 2004 : 191).

(ii) Hierarchy

One of the principal characteristics of the caste-group is a hierarchical order in social scale, Normally Brahmin varna group stands in upper positions than the castes of other varna categories. But there is no uniformity regarding the hierarchical position amongst the caste groups. It varies from region to region and even from locality to locality. In Bisipara village, the washer men are ranked among the clean caste groups, but in a neighbouring territory, in the same district of Orissa, they are regarded as untouchable (Ghurye 2000 : 6 ; Mandelbaum 1989 : 330).

(iii) Restrictions on Feeding and Social Intercourse

There are minute rules regarding the acceptance of food and drink from other castes. But there are great diversity in this matter all over India. In Hindustan proper, castes are divided into five groups; first, the twice-born castes; second, those castes who are allowed to provide 'Pakka' food to twice-born castes; third, those castes who are not allowed to provide any kind of food except water; fourth, castes of this group are not untouchable but twice-born castes do not accept water from this group; fifth, all untouchable castes belong to this group (Ghurye 2000 : 7).

The position of untouchable caste is varied from one place to another. The rules are more rigid in South India than North India. "In the Maratha country, the shadow of an untouchable is sufficient, if it falls on a member of a higher caste to pollute him" (Ghurye 2000 : 9). In Madras, especially in Malabar, certain castes always maintain a stated distance between themselves and the other higher castes. Similarly in Kerala, a Tiyan maintains a distance of thirty-six steps between himself and a Brahmin while a Pulyan has to maintain a distance of ninety-six paces. Rules are also varied in respect of caste hierarchy. In Bengal, castes are divided into two main groups – the Brahmins and the Shudras. Further the Shudras are divided into four main sub-groups. The fourth group is 'Asprishya – Shudras.' People belonging to this group are so impure as to pollute even the Ganges water. Hence their contact must always be avoided. Low caste-men are not allowed to draw water from the wells used by the higher castes. Certain low caste-men are not allowed to enter the courtyard of the great temples. They are compelled to live by themselves on the outskirts of villages (ibid : 8–10).

(iv) Civil and Religious Disabilities and Privileges of the Different Sections

Segregation of castes in villages are the mark of civil privileges and disabilities and it has prevailed in a definite form. In Maratha, Telugu, Kanarese regions, only the impure castes are segregated and live on the outskirts of villages. In some parts of Gujrat, castes have distinct quarters of the town or village. Different quarters are occupied by separate castes in the Tamil and Malayalam or sometimes the village is divided into three parts – (a) occupied by the Brahmins or the dominant castes of the village (b) allotted to the Shudras and (c) reserved for the Panchams or untouchables.

In southern India certain parts of the town or village are inaccessible to certain castes. Ghurye (2000 : 11) has maintained that, "It is recorded that under the rule of the Marathas and the Peshwas, the Mahars and the Mangs were not allowed within the gates of Poona after 3 p.m. and before 9 a.m. because before nine and after three

their bodies cast too long a shadow, which falling on a member of the higher castes—especially Brahmin – defiles him. “Further he has mentioned (ibid : 11 – 15) lots of examples, all over India, where untouchables are debarred from their natural rights. On the other hand, there are some instances where lower castes also protest the entry of higher castes especially Brahmins in their quarters. For example, Paraiyant, who are not allowed to enter the Brahmin quarters, will not allow Brahmins to pass through their street. Similarly, Brahmins in Mysore cannot pass through the Holeya (Untouchables) quarters of a village.

(v) Lack of Unrestricted Choice of Occupation

Occupations are hereditary in caste-ridden society. Some occupations are regarded superior and sacred and some occupations are considered as degrading and inferior. Each caste has its own specific occupations and caste members are expected to continue the same occupations. Priesthood, teaching etc. are prestigious professions and the Brahmins involve themselves in these occupations. No non-Brahmin is allowed to be a priest. No caste allows its members to be a priest. No caste allows its members to accept any degrading or impure tasks. Ghurye (ibid : 16) has opined that “It was not only the moral restraint and the social check of one’s caste-fellows that acted as a restraint on the choice of one’s occupations, but also the restrictions put by other castes, which did not allow members other than those of their own castes to follow their callings.” Some occupations are considered degrading such as washing clothes, barbering, pottery etc. Some occupations are considered as impure such as shoe-making, curing hides, scavenging etc. Some occupations are open to all caste such as agriculture, trade, labouring in the field, doing military service etc.

(vi) Restrictions on Marriage

Caste groups are divided into different sub-caste groups and each of these sub-caste groups is an endogamous group. Endogamy is such a rule of marriage when a man has to marry a woman within his own group. Some sociologists believe that endogamy is the essence of the caste system. Exception of this rule of endogamy is seen in some places of India. In some parts of Punjab (Specially in hills) Hyper gamy is practised; i.e. a boy from upper caste can marry a girl from lower caste. Inter-caste marriage is allowed in some of the artisan castes of Malabar. But there are lots of examples where endogamy is strictly maintained specially amongst the Brahmins (ibid : 18).

13.6 Theories of the Origin of Caste

Sociologists are not in consensus regarding the question of the origin of caste. Scholars have established their theories regarding it. One of these theories is occupational theory. According to this theory, the castes have originated in different occupations. Where any particular group follows hereditary occupation then it evolves into a caste in course of time. Further, this theory is connected with the idea of purity and impurity. People who perform pure or better and respectable tasks are regarded as superior. People who are engaged in impure or low grade occupations are considered inferior (Rao 2004 : 195–196). Several sociologists have criticised occupational theory. This theory on the one hand cannot explain the differences in social status of various castes who follow some occupation and also ignores the racial and religious factors in the formation of caste system, on the other. Further, some sociologists believe that, the status of castes depends on the degree of purity of blood and the extent of isolation maintained by the groups, not on the superiority or the inferiority of occupations. In fact, it is wrong to consider occupation as the only factor of the birth of caste system (ibid : 196).

Another theory of the origin of caste system is racial theory. The main argument of this theory is that racial differences are the main cause of the emergence of caste system. This theory has been presented by eminent anthropologists. Ghurye (2000 : 172) has mentioned that the Aryans, who have come to India from outside, are fair complexioned with prominent noses. They have defeated the original inhabitants of India or natives. These natives are dark in complexion with snub nose. The Aryans do not allow non-Aryans to participate in their religious activities and also keep distance from any type of social communication. As a result, caste system has gradually been emerged.

The racial theory has also been criticized. This theory cannot explain the practice of untouchability. According to racial theory, Brahminical influence plays a vital role in the emergence of caste system. But the Brahminical influence is not uniformly found in all the places. Further it is very much dominant in few areas while it is virtually absent in a few other areas. Racial theory highlights on racial factor only and ignores other important factors (Rao : 2004 : 197).

The functional theory of social stratification states that any form of stratification has its own function in society. As a form of social stratification caste fulfils certain functions. British ethnographer Hutton (1961, cited in Ahuja 2006 : 283-284) has

mentioned the functions of caste from three points view : (i) from the point of view of an individual, (ii) from the point of view of caste as a unit, (iii) from the point of view of society at large. Caste provides an individual a fixed social status in society. One's choice in marriage, selection of friends, food-habits, family-customs, rituals, practices are determined by caste. Caste also provides occupational and social security. In the time of crisis and difficulties, members of a caste always support their fellows. Each caste has its own culture i.e. its own norms, values, beliefs, practices, way of life etc. which it wants to preserve and to transmit to the next generation. Caste also transmits the specialized skills, knowledge, those are closely associated with the hereditary occupations of the caste.

Caste is the basis of Hindu social organisation. The main functions of the caste towards the society are – (a) Caste provides the basis of social order. In traditional Indian society, members always try to identify themselves with caste system. Caste system has provided a mutual support. Further caste system is also an established system of division of labour. Different tasks of society are assigned to different castes. Max Weber (1968, cited in Ritzer 2000 : 231) has focused on property, power and prestige as three bases of social stratification. Prestige differences generate status group in society. Society ascribe honour on some people, either propertied or property less, and these people form status group. The caste group in India is an example of status group.

13.7 Merits and Demerits of Castes

Several sociologists have mentioned that Indian caste-system has its own merits and demerits, Rao (2004 : 210 – 213) has pointed out following merits and demerits of caste system –

On the basis of division of occupation, caste represents the harmonious division of society. As occupations are hereditary in caste-based society, each caste provides necessary training and guidance for its members to continue caste-based occupation. Occupational skills and knowledge are imparted to younger generation in an informal manner. People get occupational security in caste-based society. Members of a caste support each-other in times of crises. Castes have specific ways of lives. The new born babies of the castes are socialized in accordance with caste rules, practices and customs. The customs, practices, rituals, ceremonies, festivals in Hindu society varied and are preserved through the practices of different castes. Caste

regulates its members' socio-economic as well as moral life. Some noble qualities such as mutual co-operation, sacrifice service etc. are encouraged by caste group.

Along with these merits, caste system also has some demerits. Perhaps the most disgusting demerit of caste is untouchability. It is unjust and inhuman. Caste system encourages caste members to be more loyal to their caste than nation. Thus it prevents to develop national consciousness among the people. Sometimes members of different castes are involved in conflict with the members of other castes. Caste-conflict may hamper social unity and progress. Castes put limitations on occupational choice. Talents of low-caste people are suppressed by caste system. Development of individual personality is curbed by caste system. Finally, domination of the upper castes encourages lower caste people to get converted into other religions like Islam or Christianity.

13.8 Caste Relations and Village Unity

Indian villages all through the periods in history have maintained unity and it is believed that the fabric of village life consists of caste and kin groups (Doshi and Jain 2004 : 79). In traditional Indian villages caste system has always played an important role in village social system and in economic system as well. Village economic system is regulated through jajmani system which is based on caste relations. It is also an inter-familial relationship. In traditional India, each caste has a specific occupation. Members of a village exchange services between themselves. Originally the term jajmani refers to the client for whom a Brahmin priest performs rituals but later this term has been used to refer a patron or a recipient of specialized services or goods. Generally, a high caste, land owing family receives goods / services from various castes like carpenters blacksmiths, washer men, barbers, sweepers etc. Servicing castes are paid in cash or kind (grain fodder, milk or milk products clothes etc.). Servicing castes receive extra payment or gift in any ceremonial occasions of jajman's house and time of harvest or receive loan or donation from jajmans if they are in needs (Ahuja 2006: 322 – 324; Mandelbaum 1989: 161 – 169)

13.9 Dominant Caste

M. N. Srinivas, a renowned sociologist, has studied Rampura Village which is not far away from the city Mysore in the state of Karnataka. Another concept of caste that is 'dominant caste' has emerged from his study. Srinivas (1976, cited in Doshi

and Jain 2004 : 72) has defined the concept of dominant caste in 1955 as – a caste that occupies a high position in caste hierarchy and also wields economic and political power. According to him, even in the traditional society, the caste which has acquired economic and political power is also able to improve its ritual status. He (ibid :73) has revised his definition in 1966 and has stated that, to be a dominant caste, it should own a sizeable amount of the arable land locally available, must have strength in numbers and should occupy a high place in the local hierarchy.

On the basis of the above definition, some characteristics of the dominant caste are found. Firstly, size of land indicates class position. Larger amount of land and adequate irrigation facilities increase agricultural income. Larger land owning caste provides jobs to landless or marginal peasants. Like Srinivas, Y. Singh (1994, cited in Doshi and Jain 2004 : 74) has mentioned that superior economic status is the basic determinant of dominant caste. Brahmins and Okkaliga are dominant castes in the South Indian villages. Rajputs in Uttar Pradesh and Gujrat control major portion of the land and the degree of dominance of those castes in respective villages are high. It has been found that Lingayat and Okkaliga in Mysore villages; Reddy and Kamma in Andhra Pradesh; Gounder, Padayachi and Mudaliar in Tamilnadu; Nayar in Kerala; Maratha in Maharashtra; Patidar in Gujratl Rajput, Jat, Giyar, Ahir are dominant castes in North India. These castes have also acquired the benefits of modern education and hold different jobs in urban areas. With strong economic position they have also captured political power in Panchayati Raj system.

Second, high rank in caste hierarchy is a mark of dominance. Traditionally, it has been found that land-owing castes belong to higher position in caste-ladder and they capture political power too. But the situation has been changing as the reservations in favour of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, woman have put new attribute to the concept of dominance (Doshi and Jain 2004 : 75). Third, the numerical strength of a caste becomes an important factor of dominance because number of votes select a candidate in election. Sometimes dominance of one caste extends to other villages (ibid : 75).

A number of criticisms are linked with the idea of dominant caste at least as posed by Srinivas. Land reforms, such as land ceiling and abolition of Jamindari and Jagirdari, have ceased the 'land-holding' to be a determinant factor of dominant-caste. Now-a-days political power is more important determinant factor than land-holding. Thus, numerical support becomes more important than land-holding and numerical strength of a caste takes place in size of land-holding. But some sociologists hold that some castes (like Lodha or Pasi) are numerically largest caste

in a village but not a dominant caste. Authority and importance are attached with some upper castes in Indian social system. However, after a long period of independence and due to several changes in society, some politically dominant groups have started to exercise influence on the villagers (ibid : 76 – 79).

13.10 Caste and Varna

Varna and Caste – both are important systems in traditional Hindu social structure. But very often one is used interchangeably to mean the other. Though there are some similarities between Varna and Caste, such as both the systems are hierarchical in nature and consist of social division of labour, the distinction between the two is also very important in sociology. The main differences between the two are noted below :

- (a) The hierarchical base of Varna model is same in all over India. There is no variation between one region and another. But caste-hierarchy is not same in all parts of India. One clean occupation may be unclean in another part of India. In fact caste position varies from one region to another (Srinivas 1998 : 3).
- (b) There are only four varnas viz. Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. Untouchables are excluded from Varna model. They are regarded as ‘Pancham’ (or Fifth) in varna model. But castes are innumerable. It is difficult to say the exact number of castes in existing India. It is estimated that there are more than 4,000 castes and sub-castes in India. Untouchables are an integral part of the caste system. They perform certain essential tasks in village. They are village servants, messengers, sweepers and beat drum at village festivals (ibid : 3 – 4; Rao 2004 : 216).
- (c) Caste system is based on birth i.e.; membership of caste is determined on the basis of the birth of a person. Varna system is based on occupations. Membership in the varna system is based on one’s “guna” which indicates profession. So varna system is open system while caste system is closed system. In other words, varnasystem is less rigid and caste-system is more rigid. In the RigVeda, only two varnas have been mentioned – Aryavarna and Dasavarna and there is a description of the division of society into three orders – Brahma, Kshatra and vis. There are no restrictions regarding matrimonial alliances or commensal or any type of social relations. Society

has passed from the Vedic age to the Brahminial age and varnas are arranged hierarchically (Rao 2004 : 217 ; Ahuja 2006 : 233).

- (d) According to Karve (1961, cited in Pramanick 1994 : 30 – 31), there are two basic groups in Hindu social structure – Varna and Jati. Jati organisation did exist in India before the advent of the Aryans while varna organisation was associated with the Aryans. Later, varna and caste were interwoven together and formed an elaborate ranking system. Each varna has a number of castes hierarchically arranged. As caste structure differs in regard to internal rank differentiation from one region to another, then it exists micro-structure of Indian society. On the other hand, the varna model has the appearance of a macro-structural phenomenon (Singh 1996 : 162). Further Varna system has the sanction of the religion. Lord Krishna says in Bhagavadgita (Chapter XIV, Sloka 13, cited in Rao 2004 : 217) that He himself had created the four varnas. On the contrary, caste system does not have the sanction of religion (Rao 2004 : 217)
- (e) Kothari (1995 : 11-12) has opined that varna has a neat and logical structure. In contrast, jati is characteristically ambiguous and has several meanings those indicate various aspects – doctrinal, territorial, economic and occupational, ritual and associational – federal (political). It is difficult to describe caste by any single set of attributes.

13.11 Caste System and its Changing Dimension

The caste system, as it exists in India, has been developed through centuries. Scholars have divided Indian history into four periods. These four periods are – ancient period, medieval period, British period and post-independence period (Ahuja 2006 : 269).

Ancient period of Indian history includes Vedic period, Brahminical period, Maurya period, post Maurya period, period of Harsh Vardhana. In Rig-Vedic period varna group was prominent and it was not hereditary but flexible. There are some scholars who believe that caste system was developed in Rig-Vedic period and was not flexible. The end of Rig-Vedic period is popularly known as Brahminical period. The hierarchical system of four varnas was firmly established and caste distinctions become prominent in this stage. In Maurya period, caste system was not allowed to develop as a rigid institution. In post-Maurya period and in Gupta period, Brahminism as well as caste rigidity got its strength (ibid : 269-273).

Medieval period consists of Rajput period (700 – 1200 AD) and Islamic period (1200 – 1757 AD). In Rajput period Indian social system remained unchanged with its rigid caste system. In Islamic period, caste rigidity was continued. Muslim rulers tried to convert people to Islam. Some saints like Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanyadev preached Bhakti cult which denounced caste system. A good number of people accepted them but caste system itself remained rigid (ibid : 273–275). In India, British era was started from 1774 A.D. when Warren Hastings was appointed the first Governor General of India. Some legislative measures were taken by the British Government. They transferred the judicial powers of the caste councils to the civil and the criminal courts. Further some acts like caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850, Widow Remarriage Act of 1856, the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1860, the special Marriage Act of 1872 attacked the caste system. Some social reformers in British period also attacked caste-system. The Brahmo Samaj Movement founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1820 and developed by Devendranath Tagore and Keshav Chandra Sen advocated universal brotherhood of men. They were against caste divisions. Likewise, Prarthana Sabha movement in 1849 in Maharashtra raised voice against caste barriers. The Arya Samaj founded by Swami Dayananda Saraswati in 1875 protested caste restrictions. The Ramakrishna Mission, synthesizer of all religions, believed in the abolition of caste system (Rao 2004 : 201 ; Ahuja 2006 : 276).

With the advent of British rule, new industries, occupations, employment opportunities salary-based service system have been established in India. As a result, traditional caste-based occupation came to be changed. New industries destroyed the old crafts and household industries. New communication system helped trade and commerce. Jajmani system i.e., interdependence of different castes started to be declined. Industrialization led to urbanization which released the commensal taboos. In post – independence period, besides industrialization and urbanization, some important factors such as modern education, new laws, growth of market economy, socio-religious reform movements played vital role for relaxation of caste rigidity (Rao 2004: 203 205; Ahuja 2006: 279 – 282).

13.12 Summary

Caste is a special form of social stratification found in India. It is characterized by its segmental division, hierarchy, endogamy, fixity on occupation, cultural difference, concept of purity and pollution, ascribed status and absence of vertical

mobility. Caste is religious in nature while class is economic. The dependence among the castes have been given the name of 'Jajmani System', under which each group within a village is expected to give certain standardised services to the other castes. The concept of dominant caste given by M.N. Srinivas is that caste which is not only numerically higher but also has a greater political and economic hold over other castes.

13.13 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) What do you mean by 'stratification'?
- (ii) Define Caste and Varna?
- (iii) What do you mean by 'Four-Varna'?
- (iv) What is 'Avarna'?
- (v) Write a note on 'Varna-Ashrama Vyavastha'
- (vi) What do you mean by Jajmani system'?
- (vii) Write a note on dominant caste.
- (viii) Differentiate between Caste and Varna.
- (ix) How do sociologists explain the origin of caste?
- (x) Explain the Hindu social structure in ancient India.

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (xi) Discuss the features of Varna.
- (xii) Explain the merits and demerits of caste-system.
- (xiii) Explain the functional approach of caste system.
- (xiv) Describe the features of caste system.
- (xv) Write a note on changing dimensions of caste-system.

13.14 Suggested Readings

- (i) Ahuja, Ram. (2006) : Indian Social System, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.

- (ii) Bhattacharyya, D. C (2014): Sociology, Kolkata: Vijaya Publishing House.
- (iii) Dosi, S. L. and Jain, P. C. (2004): Rural Sociology, Jaipur : Rawat Publicaitons.
- (iv) Dube, S. C. (2001) : Indian Society, New Delhi : National Book Trust, India.
- (v) Ghurye, G. S. (2000) : Caste and Race in India, Bombay : Popular Prakashan.
- (vi) Hutton, J. H. (1961) : Caste in India : Its Nature, Function and Origin, Bombay : Oxford University Press.
- (vii) Kar, P. B. (2009) : Sociology : The Discipline And Its Dimensions, Kolkata : New Central Book Agency (P) Ltd.
- (viii) Karve, I. (1961) : Hindu Society : An Interpretation, Poona.
- (ix) Keer, Dhananjay (2005) : Dr. Ambedkar : Life and Mission, Mumbai : Popular Prakashan.
- (x) Kothari, Rajni (1995) : "Introduction" in Rajni Kothari (ed.) Caste in Indian Politics, Hyderabad (AP) : Orient Longman. PP 3-26.
- (xi) Kuppuswamy, B. (1984) : Social Change in India, Ghaziabad (UP) : Vani Educational Books.
- (xii) Mandelbaum, David G. (1989) : Society in India, Bombay : Popular Prakashan.
- (xiii) Pramanick Swapan. (1994) : Sociology of G.S. Ghurey, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (xiv) Rao, C. N. Shankar (2004) : Sociology of Indian Society, New Delhi : S. Chand and Company Ltd.
- (xv) Ritzer, George (2000) : Classical Sociological Theory, New Delhi : Mcgraw Hill.
- (xvi) Singh, Yogendra (1994) (1996) : Modernization of Indian Tradition, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (xvii) Srinivas, M. N. (1976) : The Remembered Village, Delhi : Oxford University Press. (1998) : Social Change in Modern India. Hyderabad (A.P.) : Orient Longman.
- (xviii) Weber, Max. (1968) : Economy and Society 3 Vols. Totowa, N. J : Bedminister Press.

Unit - 14 □ Bourgeoisie, Working Class and Middle Classes

Structure

- 14.1 Objectives**
- 14.2 Introduction**
- 14.3 The Concept of Class**
- 14.4 Class : Marxian Concept**
- 14.5 Class : Weber's analysis**
- 14.6 Emergence of Indian Bourgeoisie**
- 14.7 Working class in India**
- 14.8 Condition of the Workers**
- 14.9 Middle Class**
- 14.10 Summary**
- 14.11 Questions**
- 14.12 Suggested Readings**

14.1 Objectives

- To understand concepts like Bourgeoisie, Working class and Middle class
- To understand class structure that is prevalent today
- To assess the implications of class structure in everyday life

14.2 Introduction

For Marx, the analysis of social class, class structures and changes in those structures are key to understanding capitalism and other social systems or modes of production. In the Communist Manifesto Marx and Engels comment that the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. (Bottomore, p. 75)

Analysis of class divisions and struggles is especially important in developing an understanding of the nature of capitalism. For Marx, classes are defined and structured by the relations concerning (i) work and labour and (ii) ownership or possession of property and the means of production. These economic factors more fully govern social relationships in capitalism than they did in earlier societies. While earlier societies contained various strata or groupings which might be considered classes, these may have been strata or elites that were not based solely on economic factors – e.g., priesthood, knights, or military elite. 2.1

14.3 The Concept of Class

Societies are divided into various hierarchical groups. One of these hierarchical groups is class which is different from caste. Bourgeoisie, working class and middle class are such categories which belong to social class. Social class is a category or group of persons having a definite status in society. The relative position of the class in social scale arises from the degree of prestige attached to the status. Thus the prestige of ruling class is superior to that of non-ruling class. Power, wealth etc. are important criteria for the enjoyment of higher prestige in society. More specifically, an individual's class is not given at birth; it is some part achieved. Class depends on economic differences between groups or individuals that is inequalities in the possession of material resources. In other words, wealth denotes class position. It is not established by religious provisions unlike castes in Indian society. In class-based society, mobility is more flexible than other types of stratification system. There are no formal restrictions on intermarriage between people of different classes (Gisbert 2004 : 367; Giddens 2001 : 282-283).

Generally it is believed that caste and class are polar opposite to each other. Caste is considered a feature of a traditional society like India which is a system based on ascription. In contrast, class is considered a feature of industrially advanced achievement-based western society. In class-based society, an individual has freedom to move up in the social hierarchy (Sharma 2002 : 55). Caste and class – are two phenomena of social stratification which offer many features common in respect of origin, development and function. Some scholars like MacIver and Page (2006 : 348 – 349) do not define class strictly in the economic sense. They have included 'status' with class and call it social class. According to them a portion of a community differs from the rest on the basis of social status. Social intercourse is limited by the distinctions between higher and lower. Occupational distinctions, income level,

distinctions of birth, race and education are associated with social status. They have also mentioned that the identification of social class with economic division is sociologically inadequate.

Sharma (2002 : 80) has opined that caste and class are not polar opposites. In fact both are inseparable parts of India's social formation. Beteille's (cited in Kuppuswamy1984 : 348) study has revealed that class hierarchy is positively correlated with caste hierarchy. Landowners are largely Brahmins. The tenants are the middle caste non-Brahmins and the agricultural labourers are the lower castes, the Harijans. As village economy is based on agriculture, the ownership of land gives rise to an agrarian class structure. Landowners mainly belong to upper class; middle class consists of the tenants who take the land on lease for cultivation from the landlords; lower class comprises of landless labourers who are employed on a daily wage basis by the landlords or the tenants. Besides, there are artisans and service castes in the traditional villages. They have formed middle class or lower middle class. After independence the class structure in villages has been greatly modified by legislation and market forces. The land tenure legislation has provided security to the tenant. As a result non-Brahmin tenants have become powerful. Further the land-ceilings in1961 is a severe blow to the landowners (Kuppuswamy1984 : 348 – 349).

Modern formation of agrarian class structure was a result of British rule in India. Pre-British India did not experience the private ownership on arable land (Desai 1982 : 9). The British introduced a different type of economic and administrative system in India. Land came under private ownership. New social classes namely 'Zamindars', 'tenants', 'intermediaries' were grew. New land revenue system gradually led to the commercialization of agriculture (ibid : 38-43). New social classes as industrialists and proletariats were also emerged during British rule (ibid: 175). Focused on Europe, during Middle Ages feudal lords or landed gentry were at the top of class-structure and serfs were at the bottom level. Between these two classes, there were soldiers, artisans and so on. Artisans plied their trade for the others. The artisans and the small tradesmen became powerful in towns during eleventh century. These towns were not controlled by the land lords. These townsmen organised themselves under guilds. There were also lawyers, doctors, financiers (mostly Jews) who constituted high class in towns. The bourgeoisie of the 18th and the 19th centuries were the direct successor of the town's workers and artisans. These bourgeoisie fought for political rights and succeeded in the French Revolution (1789). In England, the bourgeoisie gained similar position of respectability through a series of parliamentary reforms. But simultaneously a powerful change took place in England and Europe which caused the emergence of two distinct classes in

society. That powerful change was 'Industrial Revolution' and the two distinct classes were the 'Bourgeoisie' and the 'Proletariat' (Gisbert2004 : 370).

14.4 Class : Marxian Concept

The words 'Bourgeoisie' and 'Proletariat' are frequently used by the German thinkers Marx and Engels (cited in Mclellan1980 : 44-45). Marx's famous work The Communist Manifesto is divided into four sections. The first section depicts a history of class-based society where the victory of proletariats over the bourgeoisie is inevitable. The second section describes the position of communists among the proletariats, rejects the objections of bourgeoisie against communists and then characterises the communist revolution, the measures to be taken by the victorious proletariats and the nature of future communist society. The third section contains the criticisms against other types of socialism, reactionaries, petty-bourgeois and utopian socialists. The fourth section describes the communist tactics towards oppositions and finishes with an appeal to unite proletariats. The entire book has described the struggle of oppressed against their oppressors. Marx and Engels (cited in *ibid*) have opined that the class antagonism has been simplified in present age. Two hostile camps are now facing each other – bourgeoisie and proletariat. The bourgeoisie is originated in feudal society; is helped by the market economy and modern industry; imposes its domination on society. Bourgeoisie needs continuous improvement of technologies of means of production for its survival. Marx and Engels (cited in *ibid*

: 46) have described the revolutionary nature of the proletariat. They have to go through several stages. Their first aim is to restore the vanished status of workmen in the middle ages. They will begin to form trade unions as they grow in number and finally their class struggle will become political struggle. The lower strata of the middle class – the small trades' people, shopkeepers, retired tradesmen, handicraftsmen, peasants – all these sink gradually into proletariat. Proletariats are organised themselves as a class for the fight against bourgeoisie.

Class of proletariat becomes a means of revolution. Like proletariats bourgeoisie also form class by force of circumstances. Their class is an organised power to oppress others. In capitalist society, bourgeoisie are the owners of means of production, employers of proletariats or wage labourers. In contrast proletariats have no means of production and they live by selling their labour (*ibid* : 48). Marx (cited in *ibid* : 179-181) has also used the term 'class' to refer petty- bourgeoisie and

peasants. He has also noticed the advent of new middle class who are constantly growing in number for increased use of machinery and the multiplication of service industries. There are some other groups in society such as farm-labourers, intelligentsia and so on. Marx has applied the term proletariat to the industrial workers in capitalist society, but sometimes he says that proletariat comprises the vast majority of people in capitalist society. Another intermediate group is found in society. This group is intelligentsia. Marx (cited in *ibid*) has referred them as the 'ideological representatives and spokesmen' of the bourgeoisie. These intelligentsia are also the paid wage-labourers of the bourgeoisie though they are different from that of the proletariats. Thus class-structure is a complex system. Lower middle-class, middle-class, upper-middle-class are separate class. Similarly, industrial capitalists, finance capitalists, business capitalists form different classes. There is also a group of people in society who have actually no historical role to play. They have no definite trade, no home. All types of criminals, vagabonds are included in this group. This group is called lumpen proletariats.

14.5 Class : Weber's Analysis

Like Marx, Weber (cited in Haralambos 2005 : 44-45) defines class in terms of economic criterion. According to him class refers to a group of individuals who share similar position in a market economy i.e. they receive similar economic rewards. In other words, similar class situation shares similar life chances. It means one's economic position creates chances of obtaining desirable goods from market such as good quality housing and other things. Weber also argues that the major class division is between those who own the forces of production and those who do not. Thus, those have enough property, are able to enjoy better life-chances. Various skills and services in a given society have different market values. In capitalist society, managers, administrators and professionals are paid relatively high salaries due to the demand of their services. Weber distinguishes class groupings in capitalist society in following ways :

- (i) The propertied upper class,
- (ii) The property less white-collar workers,
- (iii) The petty bourgeoisie,
- (iv) The manual working class.

Weber (*ibid*) differs from Marxian concept of class in following ways : - firstly,

he has added skill of the property less people in the formation of class. Thus ownership of property and skill of the people are significant in the formation of class. Secondly, he does not support the polarization of class. According to him white collar 'middle-class' expands rather than contracts. Rational bureaucratic administration includes large numbers of administrators and clerical staff. Thirdly he rejects the Marxian view of proletarian revolution. Finally, Weber does not believe that political power is derived from economic power. He argues that class forms one possible basis of power and the distribution of power in society is not necessarily linked to the distribution of class inequalities.

14.6 Emergence of Indian Bourgeoisie

Emergence of Indian Bourgeoisie was not alike with the emergence of European Bourgeoisie. When Industrial Revolution took place in England and other countries in Europe, India served to quicken the process of Industrial Revolution to its master country. At the same time the traditional economic pattern of India was disintegrating. Industrial Revolution had two aspects – technical and social. The technical aspects indicated the introduction of machinery and social aspects indicated the emergence of capitalism that is the emergence of bourgeoisie and proletariat. But the development of capitalism in India was a belated process (Sen 1997 : 1–3). The establishment of railways in India during the middle of 19th century, created a condition for the growth of modern industries in India. Cotton mills, a few jute mills and coal mines were the main industries between the years of 1850 and 1855. During 1880, it was estimated that there were 56 cotton mills and 56 coal mines in India. The number of cotton mills increased to 144 in 1894 – 95. The number of coal mines were 123 and jute mills were 29 in the same year. The 'Swadeshi' movement in 1905 gave an impetus to the expansion of Indian industries. In 1913-14, the number of cotton mills rose to 264 and jute mills to 64. Some new industries were established during the years between 1890 and 1914. Those new industries were petroleum, manganese, mica and saltpetre, rice mills, timber mills, engineering and railway workshops, iron and brass industries and so on. Import of foreign goods declined during the war of 1914-18. Indian Industries developed during this phase to meet the demands of war requirements. But above all the rate of growth of Indian industries was insufficient in spite of above development. But that industrialization played a significant role in the life of the Indians. Industrialization made the Indian economy more unified and organized. It gave an impetus for the development of new social classes including bourgeoisie and proletariat (Desai 1982 : 103–124).

The rise and development of the Indian bourgeoisie were related with the expansion of trade, commerce, industry and banking in India. It is to be noted here that the Europeans were also engaged in trade, industry and banking in India. They formed their own organisations either separately or with the Indians according to the nature of economic enterprise. The first European Chamber of Commerce was established at Calcutta in 1834 and at Bombay and Madras in 1836. The first Indian Chamber of Commerce, 'The Bengal National Chamber of Commerce' was started in 1887. The Indian Merchants' Chamber was founded in Bombay in 1907. The Marwari Chamber of Commerce was started at Calcutta in 1900 and the South Indian Chamber of Commerce at Madras in 1909. All these organisations aimed to protect the interests of Indian businessmen. The conflict of interests between the Indian and the European commercial classes was the main cause for the formation of separate organisations of the Indian Commercial classes. The Europeans got favour of the British government in the sphere of trade while the Indian businessmen faced undue restrictions on them. For instance, the British businessmen occupied favourable position in coasted shipping in the country. With the establishment of modern industries, a group of Indian industrialists emerged in society. Like the British businessmen, the British industrialists also got favour of the British government. After 1880, a good number of modern industries developed in India and the industrial bourgeoisie grew in strength. They were conscious regarding their position. They founded a number of organizations to protect their interests and put their demands. The Bombay Mill owners' Association was founded in 1875 and was followed by the Indian Tea Association in 1881; the Indian Jute Mills Association in 1884; the Ahmedabad Mill owners' Association in 1891; the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in 1927; the Employers Federation of Southern India in 1920; the All-India Organization of Industrial Employers in 1933; the Employers' Federation of India in 1933 and so on. Thus during the period of British rule, a new class that was the class of modern commercial, industrial and financial bourgeoisie was developed in India (ibid : 200-206).

14.7 Working class in India

In Europe, capitalism developed over the ruins of feudalism; but India had different experience. The British established modern industries in India and introduction of railways was an important event in the process of formation of modern capitalist state. Modern working class in India emerged with the introduction

of railways. Hundreds of workers were engaged in railway building. Along with railways, coal mining industry was quickly expanded. Railways and shipping lines were the effective means of communication. A number of mercantile enterprises grew to import manufactured goods and to export raw materials. As some new materials needed initial processing before export, enterprises like packing houses, cotton pressing and ginning establishment, rice mills, flour mills etc. were developed. All these industries helped to bring up Indian working class. Meanwhile plantation farming also developed intensively. Contract labourers were engaged in these plantation forms. Their condition was slightly better than slaves. But they were also a part of Indian work-force. Jute industries in Bengal and cotton industries in Maharashtra (Bombay) flourished. Thousands of workers were employed in those industries who increased the numerical strength of Indian work-force. Gradually, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras became the main areas of British investments and these cities also became the centres where Indian labourers developed as an organized class (Sen 1997 : 21-24).

In Europe, the artisans and craftsmen were dispossessed of their profession when large scale industries were established, because they could not compete with large manufacturing enterprises. Those artisans and craftsmen were absorbed as labourers in those modern industries. But in India, traditional handicrafts and cottage industries were destroyed in colonial interest. But unlike Europe, modern industries did not grow up in India. Dispossessed artisans and craftsmen were compelled to depend on agriculture as agricultural labourers. A small number of them entered into railways and other industries as industrial workers. But there was a gap of two or three generations that separated destruction of traditional cottage industries and partial replacement by modern industries. Those dispossessed artisans and handicraftsmen lost their age-old technical skill when they entered in the modern industries. They were unskilled and tied with various superstitious habits and customs of agricultural life. They were the subjects of caste-group, racialism and religious superstition of Indian social life. All these factors caused a positive hindrance to develop modern outlook and political consciousness among the Indian workers (ibid : 25 – 27). According to Sen (ibid : 27) not only among Indian workers, these characteristics were common among the workers of colonies and semi-colonies. Further they were severely exploited by the British and Indian bourgeoisie. British recruited workers from among the ruined craftsmen and the poorest strata in the villages. They fixed wages in rural standards which were much below the cost of labour. Indian bourgeoisie exploited their religious beliefs. Indian bourgeoisie

preached reformist ideology, propagated superstitious ideas in the name of Indian tradition and tried to keep Indian working class off the revolutionary struggle.

India is a country of diversity. Industrial workers have come from various background of language, culture, religious beliefs, social customs and so on. Mass migration among workers and their settlement in different environment have arisen certain peculiar problems in the formation of the Indian working class and its movement. Migration of workers is a reflection of the growth of capitalism in the country. This migration is an indicator of the process of forming a stable labour market. Some middlemen become active in labour recruitment process in India. They are called by varieties of names in different parts of the country such as jobber, sirdar, mistri, mukaddam, choudhri and so on. The role of these middlemen are very important regarding the context of labour supply in industries. The managerial functions in majority of the industries are performed by the Europeans. Under these circumstances, some sort of communication gap arises between the employers and the labourers. European employers have to depend on these jobbers or middlemen. Sometimes these jobbers manipulate the situation by creating artificial scarcity. On the other hand, the labourers are also exploited by these jobbers. They can hardly avoid the 'dasturi' (commissions) of the jobbers. Workers are often indebted to the jobbers to avoid starvation. It is another source for the jobbers to squeeze workers in terms of interest. Further religions and caste heterogeneity is typical among the Indian proletariats. Uneven development of capitalism in India causes concentration of workers in certain places. Calcutta, Bombay, Ahmedabad, Kanpur, Madras and a few other places are the centres where proletariats are concentrated (Sen 1997: 28-31; Basu 1993: 44-67).

14.8 Condition of the Workers

Workers maintain their livelihoods by selling their labour. The Capitalists increase their profits by exploiting the workers. To achieve their goals, capitalists depend on certain devices. At first they lengthen the working day. Secondly, they reduce the wages at subsistence level. Further the machines reduce the demand of skilled labourer and hence its price. Thirdly, capitalists make profit by recruiting women, teenagers and children in cheap rate. These groups are more obedient and less capable of resistance. These are the general trends which are applicable to all countries wherever the factory system exists. Naturally India is also included in these trends. Unlike Europe, the first generation of Indian factory workers appear from the

distressed and dispossessed section of the village people. It can be said that probably the hungriest sections of the people have come in industry. It is also found that majority of the workers belong to the lower castes. Obviously, a good number of them are Tanti or weavers who are totally robbed of their hereditary means of livelihood. Considerable number of workers are also distressed Muslims. Some female workers are included among the industrial workers. Majority of them are widow (Basu 1993: 37-39).

In Bengal coal mines, Bauris (very low social rank), Santhals (a tribe) and other people of lower caste rank joined in labour force. It was also true in case of immigrant labourers in the coalfields. Another interesting feature of jute mill in Bengal was that Bengali workers were gradually replaced by the workers of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Orissa. Bilaspuri and Madrasi were also found among workers in Bengal. Not only the cases of jute-mills, other industries of Bengal like cotton mills, paper-mills, docks, pottery-works were dominated by the immigrant workers. Different views came out to explain this situation. One view said that Bengal demanded more agricultural labourers due to its high fertility. Agricultural wages were relatively attractive and such Bengalis were reluctant to undergo the hardship of factory work. Another view opined that Bengalis were not able to work long hours in the factories as they were physically weak. Some scholars explained that mill-owners preferred non-Bengali workers as non-Bengali workers were more submissive than the Bengalis. Bengali workers, coming from peasant stock, had a tradition of protest like Indigo rebellion (1860), Pabna rising (1873) and so. They were conscious and prone to protest against injustice and exploitation (ibid : 40-43).

2. Generally, it is assumed that Indian working class is primarily agriculturist. Majority of them work as agricultural labourers; they do not have own land. Sometimes they leave mill for a period of time, go back to village and live on their savings which they have earned in mills. Indian factory workers are simply village people. It is found difficult for them to adjust strict discipline of factory works. Workers have to adjust with long hours of strenuous works. They find for escape from factory environment and enjoy by occasional visits to their village home. It is a general trend among Indian factory workers that they are pushed from the villages not are pulled from the towns. Further they are irregular of their attendance, take frequent intervals of leave. This attitude may be explained as a reaction to the extreme hardship and monotony of their working condition (ibid 43-46). Fifteen to sixteen hours working at a stretch is very common practice during the early phase of industrialization in India.

Official report of the Indian Factory Labour Commission (which was appointed in 1908) has revealed the above picture. Condition was worse in the ginning factories. Workers had to work seventeen and eighteen hours a day. Sometimes workers have to work twenty to twenty-two hours in a day in rice mills and flour mills. In printing presses men work twenty-two hours a day for seven consecutive days (Sen 1997: 35-36).

Wage statistics reveal a great disparity in wages of different categories of the workers even belonging to the same industry. Children and women are exploited much more than the male workers. Several studies have revealed that the workers are very poorly paid. Majority of the mill-authorities pay weekly or fortnightly. Monthly payment is also made by some mills. Long interval between payments often causes them immense hardship. Workers hardly enjoy their full earnings of the period they worked for. It is a common practice that a portion of the wages are withheld; that as they are paid on the pay day not the wages earned upto that day but upto some previous date. As a result, Indian factory workers have to bear a huge burden of debt. Workers have to borrow money to meet any extra expenditure like marriage, funeral or the time of prolonged illness. Further the housing condition of the workers are very poor. The workers who have come from the villages are compelled to live in slums near by the mills which are not fit for human habitation. These overcrowded dwellings are very harmful for the workers' health. Many of the workers suffer from various diseases. In course of time, some mill owners (obviously large mill owners) have realised building coolie lines will be profitable in the sense that they will demand best labour. But coolie lines are insufficient to meet the demand and workers have to pay for these coolie lines. To the mill owners, workers are just means of production. Mill owners ignore the measures for the safety of the workers. Workers of different factories including mines face horrible accidents which cause the loss of their body-parts even lives (Basu 1993: 64-77). It is found that in all sorts of terms (wages, working hours, housing and other conditions of service). Indian workers have reached in extreme point of terrible condition (Sen 1997: 43).

Inhuman condition of the workers needed legal safeguard in favour of themselves. But the Factory Acts which were implemented in first phase were helpful to the employers. For example, The Employers' and Workers' (Disputes) Act was passed in 1860. It was implemented first in Bombay and then rest of the country. This Act empowered the employers to fine or imprison the workers on charges of insubordination. Colonial interests were important for the enactment of Indian Factories Acts (ibid : 43-46). The hard condition of life led the workers towards working class movement though class consciousness among the workers developed

much later than the intelligentsia, educated middle class and the bourgeoisie (Desai 1982 : 208). According to Sen (1977 : 66) the Indian working class movement might be divided into four phases. The first phase (1850 – 1900) was the commencement of the working class movement; the second phase (1901-1914) was the formative process of the trade unions; the third phase (1915-1947) was the phase of developing consciousness, organized trade union and political movement of the working class. During this phase workers along with economic struggles, marched forward with the political perspectives of national liberation. Fourth phase began after independence. Independent India accepted socialist orientation for the common good of all. Some legal safeguards were taken for the benefit of the labourers. Some of these legal safeguards were prohibition of child labour, the fixing and implementation of a minimum wage, equal pay for equal work, provisions for sanitation, health and safety at work and so on (Bremar,1999 : 29-30).

14.9 Middle Class

Historically, the bourgeoisie comprises the middle-class because they stand in middle that is between the land-owning class and the working class. With the industrial revolution, the bourgeoisie becomes the industrialist and the ruling class of great financiers. A new class emerges between the bourgeoisie and working class. This new class is known as middle-class who are identified by Marx as petty bourgeoisie. The small traders, independent small businessman, the self-employed professional, independent artisan – all these groups are known as middle-class. Within the enterprise, a new group emerges between the employers and workers. They are socially marked as salaried employees and establish their social character in their own consciousness. Some scholars have identified this group as ‘new middle class’. Nineteenth and twentieth century have experienced the tremendous growth of salaried employees. Rapid growth of capitalism, expansion of big business, continuous economic development, expansion of bureaucratic activities, rise of modern ‘service state’ cause the rapid growth of salaried employees that is middle-class. This middle-class has become a topic of scholarly discussion. German left-wing writers have regarded these salaried employees as simply a “white-collar proletariat” whose tendency is towards the adoption of working-class attitudes. Some sociologists conceive this middle-class as a factor of social solidarity who act as a balancing group between the employers and workers. Some scholars believe that these middle-class people will be crushed between the capitalist class and the industrial proletariat.

Another group of scholars has assumed that the future world will be a world of bureaucracy as the number of salaried employees increases rapidly (Bell 1974: 69-72).

A group of persons appeared in Indian society with the introduction of English. There was a basic difference between the emergence of new middle class in Western Europe and the emergence of new middle class in India (Kuppuswamy 1984: 362). During 17th century a group of persons emerged as a commercial middle-class. They served Europeans. Some of them were petty clerks, some of them were interpreters while others were Cashiers. Another group of persons namely contractors travelled one part of the country to another to make purchases for the European trading companies. Culturally, these group of Persons were quasi-westernized. They required specialized training, professional skill in trade and commerce, education, rational-managerial administration for modern business and so on. Perhaps these commercial middlemen were probably the earliest groups to come in contact with the western cultural pattern. This cultural pattern of westernization continued to expand in India throughout the 18th Century. In the early part of 19th century new generation of middle-class professional groups and groups of social reformers emerged. Western education contributed to the growth of this class. A group of people were involved in writing poems, novels, drama and so on. They followed models and ideologies of the English literature. All these people belonged to middle class (Singh 2004 : 88- 90).

education. They were known as intelligentsia. Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his group were the first group of Indian intelligentsias. They followed modern as well as western rationalism, democratic doctrines and spirit. In the first decades of 19th Century, the number of educated Indians was small. The British government established many schools, colleges, universities and also private schools were established. As a result, a big class of educated Indians emerged in the second half of 19th century. They joined in various clerical and teaching posts. Simultaneously, they increased the body of Indian intelligentsia. Further, English education caused the emergence of some other persons like lawyers, doctors, technicians, professors, journalists, state servants, clerks and so on. All these persons constituted middle-class. These middle-class as well as intelligentsia played important role to form a modern nation. They organised various progressive social and religious reform movements in the country. A group of political elites emerged among these middle-class. They brought ideas of nationalism and freedom. They were the pioneers to spread the ideas of nationalism among the wider sections of Indians. Further great

scientists, poets, historians, philosophers, economists, sociologists emerged among these middle-class. They were the makers of modern India. Outstanding members of Indian intelligentsia founded the first national political organization of the Indian people in 1885. These groups of Indian intelligentsias were backed up by the Indian bourgeoisie. Thus, the important political organization “Indian National Congress” was formed and the elites of the intelligentsia became its first leaders (Desai 1982: 196-199; Singh 2004: 81).

The intelligentsia organized and led the all types of progressive movements in India. They studied the history of peasant movements and the movements of trade unions in other countries. Then they organized and led the peasants and workers of India. It should be mentioned here that the Indian national movement (in all its phases) was led by the intelligentsia though ideology, methodology and programme were different. During the liberal phase, the nationalist movement was led by liberal intellectuals like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, S. Banerjee and others. During its militant phase, the movement was guided by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Aurobindo Ghose and others. Even the terrorist activities were initiated and led by educated middle-class youths. When nationalist movement turned into mass movement in 20th century, then its credit also went to these English educated Indian intelligentsia (Desai 1982: 197-198). The democratic liberalism and rationalism transformed the cultural pattern of individuals in India. But there were regional variations. The middle class emerged in Bengal, Bombay and Madras provinces at first during British period. There were also communal variations. The Hindu and Christian converts accepted new education and become the members of new middle class at first. Muslims were late in taking up to modern education and stood behind which was one of the chief sources of communal trouble in India. Similarly, among the Hindus, upper castes were the first group of English educated persons. As a result, lower castes failed to raise their status as middle-class. The non-Brahmin leaders realised that by virtue of their education Brahmins monopolized administrative services. So, they claimed reservation of admissions to schools and colleges and also for employment in the administrative services (Kuppuswamy 1984: 362).

After independence India has accepted reservation for some backward groups. The significant feature is that after more than a century since the emergence of the middle-class in India, middle-class is largely composed of administrative, professional and the clerical people. Finally, a large number of women have entered into the middle-class occupations such as teachers, nurses, telephone operators, sales assistants and others (ibid: 363-364).

14.10 Summary

The working class, which is the product of capitalist relations of production, came into being with the industrial revolution and subsequent industrialisation in England in particular and Europe in general. In this relation of production, unlike other epochs, they did not own anything except the labour, which they sold for survival. At the other spectrum, there were capitalists who not only owned all the means of production but also appropriated all the surplus generated out of these relations of production. The working class at the conceptual level seems to be fairly simple, but if one tries to define it, the problem magnifies. The reason is that this is not a homogeneous entity. Rather it is a complex, contradictory and constantly changing entity. Another reason is that the concept of 'class-consciousness', is very slippery with regard to the working class. The consequence of this is that it is often proclaimed that either the working class is shrinking in size or everybody except a few at the top are working class. However, the fact is that working class is a distinct entity, with characteristics of its own. In India, the situation is much more complex because of several reasons like (a) the forced intrusion of British capital in India (b) simultaneous existence of multiple relations of production and (c) never ending identification of working mass with primordial features such as caste, religion and other ethnic divisions of the society.

The coming into being and consolidation of the working class in the world as well as in India, has been affected by local and international events of both economic and political nature. So, for carrying out further studies on the working class, these peculiarities have to be taken into account.

14.11 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) What do you mean by bourgeoisie?
- (ii) Who are proletariats?
- (iii) Define middle-class.
- (iv) What do you mean by 'new middle-class'?
- (v) Discuss the roll of 'jobbers' in Indian industries.

- (vi) Write a note on exploitation of Indian workers.
- (vii) Describe the Weber's view on class.
- (viii) Describe the role of intelligentsia in Indian society.
- (ix) 'Indian workers are primarily agriculturist' – explain the view.

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (x) Write a note on the emergence of bourgeoisie and proletariat.
- (xi) How do Marx and Engels explain bourgeoisie, proletariat, and middle class?
- (xii) Write a note on Indian bourgeoisie.
- (xiii) Write a note on Indian middle class.
- (xiv) Write a note on Indian working class.

14.12 Suggested Readings

- (i) Basu, Deepika. (1993) : The working Class in Bengal; Formative Years, Calcutta : K. P. Bagchi and Company.
- (ii) Bell, Daniel. (1974): The Coming of Post-Industrial Society : A Venture in Social Forecasting, New Delhi : Arnold Heineman Publishers.
- (iii) Desai, A.R. (1982) : Social Background of Indian Nationalism, Bombay : Popular Prakashan.
- (iv) Giddens, Anthony. (2001) : Sociology, Cambridge : Polity.
- (v) Gisbert, Pascual. (2004) : Fundamentals of Sociology, Bombay : Orient Longman.
- (vi) Haralambos, M. with Heald, R. M. (1981) : Sociology : Themes and Perspective, New Delhi : Oxford University Press.
- (vii) Kuppaswamy, B. (1984) : Social Change in India, Ghaziabad (U.P) : Vani Educational Books.
- (viii) MacIver, R.M. and Page, Charles H. (2006) : Society : An Introductory Analysis, Delhi : Macmillan India Ltd.
- (ix) Marx, K and Engeles, F. (1935) : Selected Works, Moscow : Several Reprints.

- (x) McLellan, David. (1980) : The Thought of Karl Marx, London : Macmillan Press Ltd.
- (xi) Sen, Sukomal. (1997) : Working Class of India : History of Emergence and Movement 1830 – 1990 (with a overview 1995), Calcutta : K. P. Bagchi and company.
- (xii) Sharma, K. L. (2002) : Social Stratification and Mobility, Jaipur : Rawat Publications.
- (xiii) Weber, Max. (1958) : The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, New York : Charles Scribner's Sons.

Unit - 15 □ Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Classes

Structure

15.1 Objectives

15.2 Introduction

15.3 Scheduled Castes: Concept

15.4 Problems of Scheduled Castes

15.5 Abolition of Untouchability and Welfare Measures

15.6 Scheduled Tribes

15.6.1 Tribes : Definition

15.6.2 Tribes : Racial Connotation

15.6.3 Distribution of Tribes

15.6.4 Tribe : Broad Characteristics

15.6.5 Tribe and Caste

15.6.6 Scheduled Tribe

15.7 Problems of Scheduled Tribes

15.8 Welfare Programme

15.9 Approaches

15.10 Other Backward Classes

15.10.1 Other Backward Classes : Basic Concept

15.10.2 Kaka Kalelkar Commission

15.10.3 Mandal Commission

15.11 Summary

15.12 Questions

15.13 Suggested Readings

15.1 Objectives

- To understand the concepts of Scheduled Castes, Tribes and Other Backward Classes
- To examine their present day condition and status in society
- To learn about the reservation policies initiated by Government of India
- To assess the implications and challenges faced by them in everyday life

15.2 Introduction

Scheduled castes are those castes/races in the country that suffer from extreme social, educational and economic backwardness arising out of age-old practice of untouchability and certain others on account of lack of infrastructure facilities and geographical isolation, and who need special consideration for safeguarding their interests and for their accelerated socio-economic development. These communities were notified as Scheduled Castes as per provisions contained in Clause 1 of Article 341 of the Constitution.

15.3 Scheduled Castes : Concept

The term 'Scheduled Castes' denotes some castes who belong to the lowest rung in caste ladder. Caste group is the most basic form of Hindu social structure. It is closely connected with the Hindu Philosophy. Caste membership is acquired through birth. One's food habit, dress, occupation, education, family, marriage, morals, manners – everything is regulated by caste rules. Notion of purity and pollution pervades over all aspects of Hindu social life including food, dress, occupation and so on. Each caste occupies a particular rank in the hierarchy of castes. Some castes are superior in terms of their occupations and life-style while others are inferior. There are untouchable castes at the bottom in caste ladder. These groups are associated with unclean occupations such as scavenging and so on and are believed to be polluting. Further, the Hindu society is divided on the basis of 'varna' category. Varna group is divided into four on the basis of division of labour in society. These untouchables are outside of four fold varna group as their occupations are so lower

graded that they are not included in varna group. They are also untouchable by higher caste-Hindus. Mahatma Gandhi, through his weekly 'The Harijan' and his 'Harijan Sevak Sangh' and other organisations has tried to designate these untouchable groups as 'Harijan', meaning 'Children of God'. Men belonging to these groups are often described as 'Dalit'. Some scholars have mentioned that these untouchables are also known as 'broken men' or 'outcastes.' Untouchables are described by the British as 'depressed classes.' Census of 1931 has classified them as exterior caste.' The term 'Scheduled Caste' is coined by the Simon Commission in 1935. This commission has prescribed thirteen tests for including a caste in the scheduled list. Some main tests are :

- Whether the caste pollutes high castes by its touch or proximity.
- Whether the caste is denied entry into temples.
- Whether the caste is denied use of public places like schools, wells etc.
- Whether the caste is prohibited priestly service by the Brahmins.
- Whether the caste is refused by the servicing castes like barbers, washermen, tailors etc.
- Whether the caste is refused by the caste Hindus to accept water.
- Whether a well-educated member of the caste gets equal treatment from the high caste-men in ordinary social intercourse.

The constitution of the Republic of India has accepted the term 'Scheduled Castes' to denote these people of the lowest strata in society. Some important castes are included in Scheduled Caste list. Some of these Scheduled Castes are – Chuhra, Bhangi, Chamar, Dom, Pasi, Raigar, Mochi, Rajbanshi, Shanan, Thiyan, Paraiyan, Dosadh, Kori and so on. (Sharma 2008: 185 – 187; Dube 2001: 49; Ghurye 2000: 306 – 307; Ahuja 2006 : 364–365).

'Dharma' and 'Karma' – these two notions are invariably associated with the Hindu-Caste organisation. Here 'dharma' refers to duty. It is obligatory for each caste, higher or lower, to perform his hereditary occupation and to follow the norms associated with his caste in relation to other castes. The theory of 'Karma' makes a man to believe that his caste position (that is birth in higher or lower strata) depends on his good or bad deeds of his previous birth. Therefore, he cannot go against his

ascribed position. He can improve his future by performing his 'dharma' i.e. his assigned duties under the caste system. These two notions have made the caste system stagnant. The Brahmans, who belong to top rank in caste-hierarchy, are the rule-makers and prescribers of norms. The prescribed rules and norms for untouchable groups are generally very cruel and humiliating. They have to live on the outskirts of towns and villages (Sharma 2008 : 185–186). Restrictions are imposed on lowest groups of people since the later Vedic age though types of restrictions are varied from time to time and place to place. In some parts of South India, untouchables are not allowed to enter cities when their shadows become long as their shadows may pollute the upper caste people. They are forbidden to use public wells, to enter temples. There are separate drinking water wells for them in the villages. Some exterior castes like Adi-Dravidas are not allowed to wear ornaments of gold and silver; not allowed to cover upper portion of the bodies; not allowed to use umbrellas and sandals; not allowed to have their hair cropped; not allowed to use other than earthen ware vessels in their houses. Further, women are not allowed to use flowers or saffron paste. Violation of these prohibition has led to violent reaction of upper castes against Harijan. Huts, granaries, property of the Harijans have been destroyed. Further the position of depressed castes is not same in all states. In Madhya Pradesh, the same caste has different social rights and disabilities in different districts. Discrimination against depressed castes becomes strong when depressed castes are numerically small. When they are numerically strong then they face comparatively less restrictions. (Ahuja 2006 : 366–367; Srinivas 1998 : 15–16).

15.4 Problems of Scheduled Castes

For centuries scheduled castes have been suffering from various social, religious, economic, political and other disabilities. They are socially deprived in many ways: (i) In caste hierarchy scheduled castes have occupied lowest status. They are considered as 'low' and untouchable. Probably two reasons have made them untouchable. First, they are engaged in lowest kinds of occupations such as scavenging, leather work, removal of the carrion etc. Second, they are beef-eater which is a crime to caste-Hindus. Hence, their touch is considered to be polluting for the caste-Hindus. (ii) From the ancient times, people of exterior castes are forbidden from education. Sanskrit education is denied to them. Public schools and other

educational institutions were closed for them for a long time. Even today majority of them are not literate. (iii) For a long time, the untouchable castes are not allowed to use public places such as temples, hostels, hotels, schools, hospitals, lecture halls and so on. They are denied to avail civic facilities like village wells and ponds. They are forced to live on outskirts of the towns and villages. In South India, restrictions are imposed on building pattern of houses, types of dress and patterns of their ornament (Rao 2003: 640).

Harijans have suffered religiously - (i) they are forbidden to listen or chant the Vedic mantras which are considered to be purer. They are permitted to use the Upanishadic mantras (ii) The Brahmins refuse to perform their priestly services in favour of Harijans. Harijans are not allowed to enter temples in many places (ibid: 605). Harijans are economically exploited by the caste Hindus - (i) For a long time they are the low-paid workers and some of them continue to suffer as bonded labourers (ii) For centuries Harijans have no right of property ownership. It means they are not allowed to have land and business of their own. Recently, Harijans have got property rights. But propertied people are less among them. Majority of them are land-less labourer. (iii) Harijans have limited choice of occupation. Traditionally are they forced to engage in inferior occupations such as curing hides, removing the human wastes, sweeping, scavenging, oil grinding, tanning, shoe-making, leather-works, carrying the dead animals and so on (ibid). Harijans have political disabilities too. In traditional India, they are prohibited to hold public posts. Normally they do not participate in any political matters in traditional India. During the British period they have acquired voting rights for the first time. After independence they have got equal political opportunities with caste Hindus (ibid).

15.5 Abolition of Untouchability and Welfare Measures

For centuries, people of depressed classes have faced a great problem i.e. untouchability. Though religious leaders of different ages have tried to remove untouchability still it continues to date. In ancient times Mahavira and Lord Buddha preached against untouchability. Later many thinkers as well as social reformers like Kabirdas, Sant Tukaram, Ramdas, Tulsidas, Guru Nanak, Sri Chaitanya have advocated for removal of caste distinctions and untouchability. During the British rule in the 19th and 20th centuries, a number of social reformers like Iswara Chandra Vidya

Sagar, Jyoti Rao Phule, political leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, B.R. Ambedkar, religious leaders like Swami Vivekananda have played important roles for the removal of untouchability. Finally, after independence, the Constitution of India has abolished untouchability. Article 17 of the Constitution of India states that “untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of untouchability shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law” (Rao 2003: 606).

Further the constitution of India has prescribed protection and safeguards for the Scheduled Castes along with Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes. Some important measures in favour of people of backward sections are: religious institutions of public character are open to all sections of people; all Indian citizens including Scheduled Castes can move freely; removal of restrictions on access to shops, restaurants, wells, tanks, roads etc.; Scheduled Castes are given rights of property, rights of admission to educational institutions. The constitution has also permitted the state to make 15 percent reservation for Scheduled Castes in services and educational institutions; to set-up separate departments and advisory councils to promote their welfare and safeguard their interests; to arrange special representation in the Lok Sabha and the VidhanSabhas. Special attention has been given in the Five-year plans for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes. Some centrally sponsored schemes are launched for the welfare of the people of backward sections. These are : (i) coaching and training for various competitive examinations in order to improve the representation of them in various services; (ii) post-matric scholarship for providing financial assistance for higher education; (iii) construction of hostels for providing residential facilities to Schedule Caste boys and girls studying in schools, colleges and universities; (iv) financial assistance to reputed social science research institutions for research in development and problems of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes; (v) providing text books to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes, students of medical and engineering courses; and (vi) scholarships and passage grants for higher education in abroad (Ahuja 2006 : 369-371). During the sixth Five-year plan (1980 – 1985), a comprehensive three-pronged strategy has been evolved for the development of the Scheduled Castes. This is a combination of three scheme : (i) Special Component Plans (SCPs) of the central ministries and state governments; (ii) Special Central Assistance (SCA) for Scheduled Castes of the states and (iii) Scheduled Caste Development Corporations (SCDCs) in the states (ibid: 373).

Untouchability is so deep-rooted in Indian society that it is still continuing. Several studies have revealed that scheduled caste students are segregated from the caste Hindus. They have separate benches in class rooms, separate rooms in hostels (Ahuja 2006 : 368). Further the reports of the National Commission on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes show that the number of crimes against scheduled castes have increased in every year. Women are the victims of rape by upper caste men. Men are exploited by upper castes by usurping their lands, giving them low wages, using them as bonded labour and so on. Governments (both Central and States) have taken several measures to protect the people of weaker sections such as helping the scheduled castes in getting possession of lands belonging to them or allotted to them; the police have been instructed to take quick action for the cases against scheduled castes; Special Scheduled Caste cells have been set-up for the welfare of scheduled castes and so on (Ahuja 2009 : 170-171).

Article 46 of the constitution of India has provided special care for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. But several studies have revealed that there is a well-recognised hierarchy among the scheduled castes based on degrees of defilement and pollution. They are aware of their separate identity, and at the same time they are conscious regarding their common status of scheduled castes. They have elites within their ranks. These elites are educated, economically better-off and become the members of the parliament, state assemblies, panchayets. They are aware of the welfare measures taken by the governments and enjoy those facilities. These elite groups are not the victims of ill-treatment and atrocities by the upper castes. Several states in India like Bihar, Maharashtra have experienced caste-riots. Scholars have opined that these caste contradictions are due to inherent class contradictions in the caste system (Sharma 2008 : 190-192).

15.6 Scheduled Tribes

15.6.1 Tribes : Definition

Tribes are very important social category in Indian society. But the term 'tribe' is not defined in the constitution of India. In fact, no satisfactory definition is found anywhere. A number of groups are still in primitive stage in social development and are referred as primitives, adivasis, aboriginals, jungle people, original inhabitants of India and so on. The term 'tribe' is used by the colonial administrators and is

accepted by all which denotes early settlers of our country. They are also identified as Asura, Rakhasa, Non-Aryans and so on. Dictionary defines 'Tribe is a group of people in primitive stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding them as having a common ancestor. "Tribes are a simple homogeneous group with their distinctive cultural traits. They do not belong to the Varna or Caste model. Indian constitution has mentioned some groups of people as 'Weaker Section' because in various ways those people are unable to compete with stronger sections of the Indians. Some of these groups of 'weaker section' are tribes (Rao 2004 : 342 – 343); Manna et al 2018: 57 – 65; Rao 2003 : 616).

15.6.2 Tribes : Racial Connotation

Some anthropologists have opined that six major racial elements are found in Indian – population. These are Negrito, Proto-Australoid, Mongoloid, Mediterranean, Western Brachycephals, and Nordic. The first three are the older residents in India and are confined to small pockets. Kadar, Irula, Paniyan of South-India, Onge and Andamanese of Andaman Islands belong to the Negrito characteristics. Some people of Negrito traits are found in western coast of India. Perhaps they have come with the Arab traders. Majority of the tribes in middle of Indian belong to the group of Proto-Australoid. They are described by the Indo-Aryans as Anas, Dasa, Dasyee and Nishad – all are derogatory terms. Tribes in the Himalayan region and north-east of India are of Mongoloid stock. Mongoloid features are also found in the non-tribal population of the eastern states of Assam, West-Bengal, Manipur and Tripura. Other three races have arrived later. The Nordics (Indo-Aryans) make profound impact in Indian society. They are 'racists' in the sense that they regard themselves superior. Though Indian society has become diverse with the assimilation of different ethnic culture, some earlier inhabitants of India refuse to be absorbed in the main stream and have chosen to move to inaccessible forests and hills. Their isolation continues for centuries (Dube 2001 : 2–7).

15.6.3 Distribution of Tribes

The tribes of India are spread all over the country. From the point of view of geographical distribution of tribes, India is divided into four major zones – namely, the Himalayan Region, Middle India, Western India and Southern India. Details are given below.

	Name of the Zones	Name of the States	Name of the major tribes
1.	The Himalayan Region	Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Terai of Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura	Bhot, Gujjar, Gaddi, Tharus, Mizo, Garo, Khasi, Nagas, Mao, Tripuri
2.	Middle India Region	West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa	Santhal, Munda, Oraon, Ho, Khand, Gond
3.	Western India Region	Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujrat, Maharashtra	Meena, Garasia, Bhil, Dubla, Dhodia, Koli, Mahadeo, Kokna
4.	Southern India Region	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Kerala, Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Gond, Koya, Konda, Dova, Naikada, Marati, Irula, Toda, Pulayan, Paniyan

[Source : Ahuja 1999 : 275]

15.6.4 Tribe : Broad Characteristics

Pramanick (1994 : 55) and Ahuja (1999 : 276) have mentioned some broad characteristics of the tribal communities :

- (i) they live in relatively isolated areas;
- (ii) they maintain a separate identity in terms of their cultural ethos such as language, institutions, beliefs, customs etc.;
- (iii) they have their own social as well as political organization;
- (iv) their social organization is non-hierarchic and undifferentiated;
- (v) they have a low-level of techno-economic development; and
- (vi) they practice endogamy.

Further they are economically backward. The main source of their livelihood are agriculture and gathering of forest products. They do not cultivate for profit. Main

portion of their earnings are spent in social or religious ceremonies. They are exploited by forest contractors and money lenders.

15.6.5 Tribe and Caste

Several scholars have discussed the relationship between tribe and caste on the basis of different criteria. On the basis of religion, it is said that tribes are basically animists. The main characteristics of animism is the belief in spirit. All objects, animate or inanimate, are inhabited by spirits. Men can be possessed or influenced by spirits and magic. On the other hand, the religion of caste group is Hinduism. The main characteristics of Hinduism are – dharma, bhakti, karma and rebirth. But the Hindus especially the lower caste Hindus believe in spirits, ghosts, magic and so on. Similarly tribal groups also worship Hindu gods and goddesses, celebrate Hindu festivals and fairs, practice Hindu customs and rituals. Though tribes live in isolated regions, some of them live in plains. Caste Hindus live in plains but some lower caste people live in fringe areas and are isolated from higher caste Hindus. It is said that the tribes are less civilized than caste groups. But economic backwardness is also found among caste groups. Thus, the difference between tribe and caste is not very clear (Ahuja 1999: 277–278).

Bose (1996 : 180) has opined that “Culture, Flows from a politically and economically dominant group to a subservient one. In social matters too, the former occupies a higher status in contrast to the latter. “For ages, tribes remain undisturbed in their own habitations i.e, in forests and hills. Situation has changed during British rule. Tribes are uprooted from their natural habitations and have become the part of one political union. Tribe-Caste interaction and acculturation have changed their original culture. A good number of tribes have accepted Hindu religion. But all of them are not fully incorporated in the Hindu social structure. Some tribes like Bhils and Bhumij have been incorporated in the Hindu social order and have accepted caste structure. Some tribal groups like Santhals, Oraon, Munda, Gonds have adopted the ethos, symbols and world-view of Hindus but not included themselves in the caste frame. Some tribes (tribes of Arunachal Pradesh) are indifferent towards Hindu social order while some tribes (Miozo, Naga) have negative views regarding Hindu social structure. Bulk of the tribal population have connected themselves with Hindus, a sizeable portion of them have accepted Christianity, a few of them are attached with Buddhism and Muslims (Ahuja 1999 : 275).

15.6.6 Scheduled Tribe

In post-independent India, Government has taken certain special measures for the upliftment of the people of backward section. Obviously, tribes are included in this backward section. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the chairman of the drafting committee of the Indian constitution, prefers the term of 'Scheduled Tribe'. Though the constitution has not defined tribe, but the Article 366(25) of the Constitution says that "Scheduled Tribes are the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities which the Indian President may specify by public notification under Article 342 (1)" (Rao 2004 : 373). According to Pramanick (1994 : 68) 'backwardness' is the only criteria in scheduling the names of some tribes in the constitution. He has mentioned three reasons to support his view: (a) the words "parts of or groups within tribes" indicate that not only the tribes are regarded as units, even parts of them may be included or excluded from the schedule; (b) some communities who are traditionally regarded as tribe may be left out of the schedule; and (c) some communities who are not regarded as tribe may be included in the schedule. For example, the Muslim inhabitants of Lackshadweep and all the native inhabitants of the Kinnaur of Himachal Pradesh have been classified as scheduled tribes.

15.7 Problems of Scheduled Tribes

Rao (2004 : 356–358) has specified some problems which are faced by the tribes or scheduled tribes of India. One of these problems is geographic isolation. They live in unapproachable physical areas such as hills, deep valleys, dense forests. Developmental projects undertaken by the Government remain out of reach of the tribes. Tribes have their own culture which is an obstacle of assimilation into mainstream. Some tribes such as Konds in Orissa maintain their traditional language, dress and housing pattern even after adopting Hinduism (Pramanick 1994 : 75). Botia women (in Uttar Pradesh) had high status and enjoyed considerable freedom in their own tribal culture. But after adoption of Hinduism (or process of sanskritization) their (Botia women) position has declined (Rao 2004 : 357). Tribes are economically poorest people in India. Majority of them belong to below poverty line. They are exploited by the Zamindars, landlords, money lenders forest contractors,

police and so on. They are emotionally attached to the forests. But their natural rights of use of forest have been restricted. A sizeable portion of land of tribal areas has been legally transferred to non-tribals. Tribal literacy rate is very low. Due to illiteracy and ignorance, tribals are not aware of modern concept of health and sanitation. They are often reluctant to avail modern medicine. As a result, good number of them become victims of diseases. In short tribals have faced several problems such as indebtedness, bondage, unemployment, poverty, exploitation and so on.

Several uprisings of the tribals have also taken place in different periods of time. Scholars have classified these movements into four groups – (i) Reactionary, (ii) conservative, (iii) revisionary, (iv) Revolutionary. After independence tribal movements may be classified into three groups. These are : (a) movements due to exploitation of outsiders; (b) movements due to economic deprivation; (c) movements due to separatist tendencies. Scholars believe, among these movements, separatist movements in North-East India (e.g. Naga revolution from 1948 to 1972) are a threat in national integration (Ahuja 1999 : 282–284; Pramanick 1994 : 80).

15.8 Welfare Programme

It has been found that scheduled tribes are backward in every sphere of life. After independence several measures are taken to improve the condition of the scheduled tribes. ‘Panchseel’ or five principles are initiated in the interests of the tribes. These are – (i) encouraging tribal’s own traditional arts and culture, (ii) respecting tribals rights on land and forest, (iii) avoiding over administering of the tribal areas, (iv) training for tribal leaders for administrative and developmental activities and (v) Judging results on the basis of the quality of human character evolved not on the basis of money spent (Ahuja 1999 : 289). The constitution of India prescribes protection and safeguards for scheduled tribes along with other weaker sections. The main safeguards are abolition of untouchability, protection from social injustice and various forms of exploitation, removal of restrictions on access to public like roads, public tanks etc., giving them rights to enter religious places, rights to take admission in educational institutions and so on. Further, constitution has assured their representation in the parliament and state legislative assembly; set up separate departments and advisory councils; promoted their welfare

and safeguard their interests; permitted reservation for them in service. A commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes has been set up for the interests of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This commission has been renamed as National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This commission consists of a chairman and eleven members (Ahuja 2009 : 158)

State governments have separate departments to look after the welfare measures for tribes. Welfare for tribes has been given special attention in five-year plans. In five-years plans, some special programme has been taken for the tribes. The aim of those programmes are : (1) to increase the productivity in agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry, cottage and small-scale industries, (2) rehabilitation of the bonded labour, (3) education and training programmes and special developmental programmes for women and children (Ahuja 1999: 289). Some important schemes for scheduled tribes are : (a) coaching and training for various competitive examinations like IAS, IPS etc. ; (b) launching vocational training and education facilities in tribal areas; (c) Construction of hotels for providing residential facilities to scheduled tribe girls who are studying in schools, colleges and universities; (d) financial assistance to reputed social science research institutions for research in development and problems of scheduled tribes; (e) providing post-matric scholarship to scheduled tribe students for their higher education; (f) providing text-books to scheduled tribe students of medical or engineering courses; (g) scholarships and passage grants for higher education abroad and so on. Further 7.5% seats are reserved for scheduled tribes in service and educational institutions. This limit has been exceeded in some states in North-Eastern region. In government services, some facilities are given to scheduled tribes such as relaxation of age limit, relaxation in standards of suitability, relaxation of the qualification and experience in promotion along with special quotas (ibid : 159–160)

15.9 Approaches

Scholars have used several approaches to study tribal communities. The anthropological approach believes the ultimate integration of the tribes into the mainstream of Indian life as a desirable goal but it insists on ease and caution in planning for the tribes though, Verrier Elwin has advocated keeping tribals in isolation. Social service approach and religious approach indicate the views of social

workers and missionaries respectively. These approaches try to bring integration by a spirit of service and religious faith respectively. The political approach refers to the emergence of various complicating factors such as new consciousness and solidarity among the tribes spread of national political parties and their cumulative impact on the behaviour pattern of the tribes etc. After independence, tribal problems have become politicized and political elites have become very active regarding tribal problems (Pramanick 1994 : 74; Ahuja 1999 : 282–292). Referring on MLA's public speech Pramanick (1994 : 63) has opined that the government of India has provided various welfare programmes and the financial assistance schemes to the tribes. These programmes have created a vested interest among the tribes to retain their tribal identity.

15.10 Other Backward Classes

15.10.1 Other Backward Classes : Basic Concept

The term 'Backward Classes' is used to refer the weaker sections of society, especially scheduled castes (SCs), scheduled tribes (STs) and other backward classes (OBCs). There are some groups of people who are above the untouchables and below the twice-born castes ritually, socially, culturally and economically. Some social thinkers believe that these groups belong to the 'Shudra' varna in four-fold varna division in society. They are also a lower rung in caste hierarchy and comprises the 'Other Backward Classes'. They form the intermediate agricultural and functionary (clean) castes. In India, the higher castes have traditionally large landholdings, the lower castes work as land-less agricultural labourers. In terms of actual cultivation, the intermediate castes are the principal agricultural castes. They cultivate land as tenants. On the basis of caste rank and economic status, this group of people are highly differentiated. The well-off OBCs are known as 'upper backward and the poor OBCs are known as 'lower or most backward'. They need special protection and help for their upliftment. Generally, it is perceived that the backward classes are backward in terms of education, government services, professions, business and so on but there is no all-India index of backwardness. Both central government and state government can appoint commissions to investigate the conditions of the backward classes (Sharma 2008 : 212-213).

15.10.2 Kaka Kalelkar Commission

The President of India has appointed a Backward Classes Commission in January, 1953, under the chairmanship of Kaka Kalelkar. The commission has taken two years to complete its work and has prepared a list of 2,399 castes and communities. The commission has determined the backwardness on the basis of (i) low social position in the caste hierarchy, (ii) lack of educational progress, (iii) inadequate representation in government service and (iv) inadequate representation in the field of trade, commerce and industry. It is to be noted here the caste is taken as the key factor in making a list of backward classes. But the government of India has rejected the recommendation of the commission and the state governments are asked to conduct surveys to identify the members of the backward classes and then to provide them with reasonable facilities. The states are further advised to determine backward classes by using economic scale rather than going by castes. A number of states have classified backward groups on the basis of occupation and income. In 1966, the government of Andhra Pradesh has decided to use 'family' for classifying backward groups. As states are left free to decide their own backward groups, several castes and groups in different states even belonging to economically and socially upper strata have become active for their inclusion in the category of backward classes. Dominant castes are also able to strike a political bargain for being classified as backward classes (ibid: 215-218).

15.10.3 Mandal Commission

In 1977, the Government of India have appointed a Backward Classes Commission under the chairmanship of B. P. Mandal, a Member of Parliament. The terms of reference of the Mandal Commission are :

- to determine the criteria for backward classes;
- to recommend steps to be taken for the advancement of the backward classes;
- to examine the desirability or making provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of backward classes; and
- to present a report and recommendations of their investigation of backwardness.

The Mandal Commission has used three indicators for identifying a specific caste or class as backward. These indicators are social, educational and economic.

The commission has observed that in India, the caste group is also an indicator of class. According to the Mandal Commission report, the backward classes, including the non-Hindu castes and excluding the SCs and STs, constitute 52 percent of India's population. The commission has recommended reservation of 27 percent of jobs and educational facilities for these 52 percent people. The commission has suggested following steps – “(1) The reservation of 27 per cent jobs be made for those who do not qualify on the basis of merit. (2) The reservation of 27 per cent be made for promotions at all levels. (3) The reserved quota, if unfilled, should be carried forward for a period of three years and de-reserved thereafter. (4) Age relaxation for the backward classes should be the same as it is in the case of the SCs and the STs. (5) A roster system should be prepared for the backward classes on the pattern of the one done for the SCs and the STs (6) The principle of reservation should be made applicable to all the public sector undertakings, banks, private undertakings, receiving grants from the central and state governments, universities and colleges, (7) The government should make the necessary legal provisions for implementing these recommendations.” (Sharma 2008; 221-222).

In August, 1990, the Government of India have declared the acceptance of the recommendation of Mandal Commission and have invited country-wide agitation and criticism. Being afraid of unemployed, several numbers of youths have protested the government's decision through self-immolations. Several scholars have criticized the recommendations of Mandal Commission. The main arguments against the report of Mandal Commission are given below :

- (i) 'Backwardness' is defined on the basis of caste only. Special provisions should be made for all poor irrespective of castes. Mandal commission has ignored class.
- (ii) The criteria used by Mandal Commission to determine social, educational and economic backwardness are whimsical and politically motivated, not scientific.
- (iii) Commission has used the data of 1931 census as the listing of castes in census are discontinued after 1931. But industrialization, urbanization, educational growth, land reform (after independence) has altered the social, educational and economic status of various castes.
- (iv) Further, there is also a methodological fallacy. Sampling procedure used for field survey was defective. (Sharma 2008 : 221-222; Ahuja 2009 : 173-180).

The report of Mandal Commission has been referred to the Supreme Court. The court has accepted the 27 percent reservation, though it has given certain directions for change in this policy. Some of these directions are – creamy layer of backward classes should be excluded, armed forces and sensitive higher civilian posts should not be included in reservation, reservation is made only for original appointments not for promotion, reservation quota should not go beyond 50 percent and so on. Further the Supreme Court has given same additional directions to the central government regarding inclusion and exclusion of the backward classes. Finally, it is to be stated that the reservation policy is abused in many ways. As a result, social scientists are divided regarding the question of reservation. Reservation policy has led to the emergence of the elite class among the backward sections of people. These elites are more concerned regarding the benefits of reservation (Ahuja 2009 : 182-183).

15.11 Summary

India is the hub of tribal population in the world. The tribal world in India remained comparatively placid till the advent of the British. The colonial system bore harshly on the tribal communities who were formed out of isolation and relatively intact social mechanism of control, they revolted more often than not and much more brutally than to the rest of the community counting Indian peasants. Colonial rule differs basically from pre-modern forms of administration in one important respect. Before the attainment of Independence, the great debate about the future of Indian tribes centred round the dual concepts of isolation and assimilation. The British government broadly followed the model of indirect rule in its colonies, dependencies and protectorates. Since Independence several plans and programmes have been implemented for overall upliftment of the Scheduled Tribes but the achievements so far made by them in the field of economy are not encouraging. In order to understand their present wretched condition, we should look back to the historical past and follow it up in a sequential order.

After Independence, the Government realized that the backwardness of the tribal group would have an adverse effect on Indian society. Developmental strategies were therefore formulated intending to bring the tribals closer to the mainstream of society, so that they eventually became a part of it. In addition, a closer look into the geographical and cultural matrix of West Bengal shows that the colonial parameters

for categorization and definition of tribes based on characteristics for instance primitive traits, distinct culture, backwardness, geographical isolation, etc., have in most cases either served their purposes or have become redundant with the passage of time.

During the pre-independence period tribals subsiding in forests, hills and even on the plains were secluded from the mainstream of national life. Their status was unsatisfactory due to the policy of ignorance and exploitation followed by the administration. The architects of the Indian constitution gave special emphasis regarding the tribal problems, keeping in view the nation's commitment to equality and social justice as cherished in the Preamble of the Constitution.

The Indian Government took various extensive welfare schemes for securing the comforts of the tribal people and their socio-economic upliftment. Embedded in the Indian Constitution are several articles that have the object of promoting and safeguarding the comforts of the Scheduled Tribes. As the problems of the tribals are unique, it is essential that they are actively involved in both the planning and implementation of welfare programmes which the government undertakes for their benefit. Both total and sectoral evaluation should be undertaken in this respect. We must always remember that though the Government policies and programmes have helped to advance the standard of living of STs, one third of the tribals are still backward. Tribal communities linger to be vulnerable till date, not only for the reason that they are poor, and illiterate in comparison to the general inhabitants but also because they are to convey and deal with the residual society. A little step in bureaucratic programmes can do little to offset the pauperisation, exploitation and crumbling of tribal communities.

As a result of this, the tribals continue to suffer from a number of problems and issues which require immediate attention of the Government. Violation of civil and political rights, land estrangement, dislodgment and false hearing for repossessing minor forest produce are only some of these. As India's flourishing economy necessitates more resources, the indigenous peoples are continued to be seized, ensuing a robust sagacity of isolation amid them and further exacerbating social skirmishes. The laws meant at shielding indigenous peoples from frequent inadequacies but their execution is far-flung from pleasing. India has an elongated past of indigenous people fighting their rights.

15.12 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) What is meant by 'Harijan'?
- (ii) Define tribes.
- (iii) What do you mean by Scheduled Tribes?
- (iv) Who are other backward classes?
- (v) What do you mean by scheduled caste?
- (vi) Mention the geographical location of tribes in India.
- (vii) Discuss the relationship between tribe and caste.
- (viii) Write a note on reservation policy regarding other backward classes.
- (ix) What do you know about Kaka Kalelkar Commission?

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (x) Mention the characteristic of tribes.
- (xi) Mention some approaches for the study of tribal community.
- (xii) Mention the problems of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and other backward classes.
- (xiii) Mention the welfare measures in favour of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and other backward classes.
- (xiv) Write a note on Mandal Commission.

15.13 Suggested Readings

- (i) Ahuja, Ram. (1999) : Society in India : Concepts, Theories and Recent Trends, Jaipur : Rawat Publications.
- (ii) Ahuja, Ram. (2006) : Indian Social System, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (iii) Ahuja, Ram. (2009) : Social Problems in India, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (iv) Bose, Nirmal Kumar. (1996) : The Structure of Hindu Society, Hyderabad : Orient Longman

- (v) Dube, S. C. (2001) : Indian Society, New Delhi : National Book Trust, India.
- (vi) Ghurye, G.S. (2000) : Caste and Race in India, Bombay : Popular Prakashan.
- (vii) Manna, Samita. (2018) : “Bias-Free Motherhood from Male-Female Differences : A study on Few Tribes in Paschim Midnapore, West Bengal”.
- (viii) Samita Manna, Soumyajit Patra and Sujit Roy (eds) Sociology of Motherhood and Beyond : Roots and Rejuvenaation, Kolkata : Levant Books. PP 57-66
- (ix) Pramanick Swapan. (1994) : Sociology of G.S. Ghurey, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (x) Sharma, K. L. (2008) : Indian Social Structure and Change, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (xi) Srinivas, M. N. (1998) : Social Change in Modern India. Hyderabad (A.P.) : Orient Longman.
- (xii) Rao, C. N. Shankar (2003) : Sociology : Primary Principles, New Delhi : S. Chand and Company Ltd.
- (xiii) Rao, C. N. Shankar (2004) : Sociology of Indian Society, New Delhi : S. Chand and Company Ltd.

Unit - 16 □ Religious Minorities and Ethnic Groups : Issues and Problems

Structure

- 16.1 Objectives**
- 16.2 Introduction**
- 16.3 Definition**
- 16.4 Features**
- 16.5 Ethnic group**
- 16.6 Muslims**
- 16.7 Christians in India**
- 16.8 Anglo – Indians**
- 16.9 Sikhism**
- 16.10 Buddhism**
- 16.11 Jainism**
- 16.12 Other Religions and Ethnic Groups**
- 16.13 Welfare measures for the Minorities**
- 16.14 Summary**
- 16.15 Questions**
- 16.16 Suggested Readings**

16.1 Objectives

- Understand the difference between religious minority community and ethnicity.
- Define a majority group (dominant group).

- Define a minority group (subordinate group)
- To understand other Religions and Ethnic Groups
- To learn about the welfare measures for the Minorities

16.2 Introduction

India—like many other countries in the world—is home to a diverse set of religious and ethnic groups. On most days and in most places, members of these diverse groups enjoy their basic civil and political rights, and freedom to pursue their beliefs. But unfortunately, that is not always the case. Tensions do exist, and for varying reasons, sometimes these tensions devolve into violence. Tensions may be aggravated by struggles over access to limited resources, particularly land, or by political rivalries. Sometimes localized incidents—street fights, local crime—can escalate.

16.3 Definition

The people of a given society are categorized on the basis of several factors such as race, religion, language, cultural traits and so on. Indian society is also composed of different types of people. Different types of racial, religious, ethnic groups have brought diversity in India. Religion is a system of beliefs, practices, rituals and symbols which entails some forms of worship or obedience to divine power. Religion unites those people who share common beliefs, rituals and practices. There are eleven world religions. Eight major religions are found in India – Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism and Judaism. Among these, Hinduism is the dominant religion in India and all other religions are considered as minority groups in India. Tribes have close affinity with the Hindus. A sizeable portion of the tribes have converted into Christianity and some of them have accepted Islam. Majority of them preferred to retain their tribal identity. Each major religion is further divided into several sub-groups. The census of 1961 has listed seven religious categories in India. These are – Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs and other religions. The census of 2011 has followed the same pattern. Details are given below :

Sl. No.	Religion	Population in percentage
1.	Hinduism	79.80
2.	Islam	14.23
3.	Christianity	2.30
4.	Sikhism	1.72
5.	Buddhism	0.70
6.	Jainism	0.37
7.	Zoroastrianism	Not counted
8.	Religion not specified	0.9

The above list shows that the majority of Indian population belong to the Hinduism. Five religions (Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism) together constitute only 19.32% people. In other words, a group of people numerically large is dominating while others are small in number. The constitution of India has used the term minority in articles – 29 to 30 and 350A – 350B. Article 30 has mentioned two categories of minority – religious and linguistic. But no definition is given in constitution. Dictionary meaning of the word is smaller number or a part. Generally, it means a small group of people who differ from majority others in terms of race, religion, language and so on. (Abraham 2009: 135; Dube 2001 : 1; Sharma 2008 : 13; www.wikipedia.org 16.07.19, 13: 30; www.google.com, 26.07.19; 11:30).

The term ‘minority group’ is widely used in social world. But the term is frequently used in a non-literal way-which indicates group’s subordinate position within society. They may be numerically majority or minority. In the United States, blacks are minority in numerically and sociologically. But in South Africa, blacks are majority but they are being suffered by discrimination and unequal treatment by a small group of whites. Minority groups have a feeling of inequality because of their distinct physical or cultural characteristics. In India, the government have distinguished between ‘minorities’ and ‘weaker sections.’ Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains and Zoroastrians are religious minorities. Dalits, tribes, backward classes are weaker sections. Traditional rules of caste system maintain distance between castes. For centuries lower castes are forced to do menial and unclean works. They are

denied civil rights. Thus, minority groups experience disadvantage. Their culture, language, religious beliefs are separate from dominant groups. The National Commission for Minorities Act 1992 describes minorities as a community notified by Central Government. – Section 2(7). In October 1993, the government of India have declared Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis (Zoroastrian) as minorities. Jains have appealed to the Supreme Court for similar recognition. But Supreme Court has not issued any direction. In a later ruling, another bench of Supreme Court has declared Jains as minority (Bal Vidya case 2006) (Abraham 2009: 136; Giddens 2001, 248; www.google.com, 26.07.19; 11:30).

16.4 Features

Scholars have mentioned some features of minority groups. These are :

- Minority groups are suffering from discrimination and they remain subordinate;
- The physical and cultural traits of minority groups keep them apart from dominant groups;
- They share a collective identity and common burden;
- Generally, they are eager to marry within their own group;
- They share social rules which are imposed on them (www.wikipedia.org, 16.07.19, 13 : 30).

16.5 Ethnic Group

Ethnic group is also a category of people who are identified with a distinct cultural tradition, Ethnic groups are distinguished from each other on the basis of religion, language, history of ancestry (real or imagined). In India, Punjabis, Muslims, Christians and Andamanese tribes are separate groups. Simultaneously they are also religious group, lingual group, caste, tribe and so on. But ethnicity emphasises on culture. Here is to be mentioned that Muslims are the largest religious minority in India (Abraham 2009 : 135, Giddens 2001 : 246; www.wikipedia.org. 16.07.19, 13 : 30). The term ethnocentrism is related with ethnicity. Ethnocentrism

is a tendency of man to consider his culture superior to all others. The man judges other cultures in terms of his own culture or values. Ethnocentrism is found everywhere though it varies in degree of intensity. A man becomes ethnocentric because of his habits. A man has specific way of living in respect of food consumption, forms of recreation, pattern of worship, economic activities and so on. The habits of others may seem odd, inferior or undesirable to him. An individual becomes ethnocentric because of lack of understanding of situation of others. A custom which is common to the Indians may be seen with curiosity, surprise and even horror in United States. Similarly, rituals of one regions group may be curious to another religious group. One may become ethnocentric due to his personal inadequacies. He may use ethnocentrism as a defence against his inadequacies. Some individuals may have feelings of either superiority or inferiority which make them ethnocentric and less tolerant of others. Ethnocentrism has some effects – (i) it promotes loyalty to the group though sometimes it becomes blind loyalty to the members of the group; (ii) it makes greater conformity within the group; (iii) it causes resistance to change and strengthens the status quo; (iv) it resists assimilation of groups or individuals and (v) also resists to develop inter-cultural relationships (Chitambar 2002 : 101-102).

16.6 Muslims

In the second decade of the eighth century, Muslims came to India and settled here. They practised their religion freely. A large number of local Hindu population were converted to Islam. The Islamic message of equality attracted a large number of Hindus of oppressed castes. The earliest Muslim preachers were close to Hindu masses. They maintained simple style of living and had attitude of tolerance towards Hindus. The converts of new faith could not give up their ancestral beliefs and practices, their occupational hierarchy and their caste consciousness (Dube 2001: 21

– 22; Momin 1977 : 242 – 243). After the death of Prophet Muhammad, the Muslims are divided into two groups – Shias and Sunnis. The cause of this division is a dispute of searching spiritual head of Islam. There are no racial or occupational factors as found in Hindu caste-based society. Caste system among Hindus is characterized by certain basic features such as endogamy, occupational specialization,

status hierarchy, belief in purity and pollution and so on. Indian Muslims are also affected by the features of caste. They have some distinctive characteristics. They bear the traits of both Islamic great tradition and the local or little traditions of the places where they live in. The concept of society in Islam is based on equality. The Quran does not allow any kind of inequality in its social order. But Hindu social structure is based on caste system which is absolutely a hierarchical division of society. As most of the Indian Muslims are converted, they have accepted caste in their new social structure. In most parts of India, the Muslim society is characterized on the basis of some occupation specific endogamous jatis. Beside the division of Shia and Sunni, Indian Muslims are also divided into three other groups – Ashraf, Azlab and Arzal. Saiyeds, Sheikhs, Pathans and a few others belong to the Ashraf group who are regarded as noble-born. Momins (weavers), Mansooris (cotton cleaners), Ibrahims (barbers) etc. belong to the Azlab groups who are considered as low-born. Arzals are regarded the lowest of all. They are like untouchables among Hindus. They are not allowed to enter mosques, to use public graveyards. All these groups prefer endogamy (Ahuja 2006 : 147; Momin: 1977 : 243; Chatterjee 2019 : 139). According to Mandelbaum (1989 : 550), the Muslims of the bottom level are engaged in scavenging, sweeping and other menial tasks. They are generally Hindu converts who maintain their former occupations, poverty and disabilities. They are treated same way as their untouchable Hindu counterparts.

The socio-political scenario of India had been changed after a century of immigration of Arab traders. India came under Muslim rule for centuries. Some Muslim rulers like Akbar tried to build bridges between the various communities of India while some of them did discriminatory practices by imposing additional taxes like Jijyah (poll tax), Kharaj (tax on land and property) and so on. Above all, considerable interchanges were found between the Hindus and the Muslims in the fields of art, architecture, philosophy and religion. In India, Islam got some distinctive characteristics that might be called ‘Indo-Islamic’ tradition. The impression of syncretism was present in the style of art, music, literature, and architecture. (Dube 2001 : 25; Momin 1977 : 244). But this view was criticized by some sociologists. According to these sociologists, Hindu and Islam – both cultures are opposite to each other and syncretism was not possible. Muslims were always eager to maintain their separate identities. They were primarily Muslims and then Indians. Thus, they were

‘Muslim Indians’ not Indian Muslims. India came under British rule in the middle of eighteenth century. Muslims lost their centuries-old political domination and became frustrated. The relationship between Hindus and Muslims came under strain when the British adopted the policy of ‘divide and rule’ after the ‘first war of Independence’ in 1857. As a result, India experienced a number of communal riots before and after independence (Ahuja 2009 : 122; Pramanick 1994 : 195-197). In 1947, India was divided into two parts - India and Pakistan. This situation was simultaneously a victory and defeat for the Muslims. The Muslims who remained in India were stigmatized as disloyal to this country. A psychological gap between the Muslims and the other communities was created in India. A feeling of insecurity among the Indian Muslims had emerged which was reflected in their political posture (Kothari 1995 : 234).

Partition of the country has brought distrust between the Hindus and the Muslims. Communal violence has created a feeling of insecurity among the religious minorities and ethnic groups. Several events after independence have created tension among the minority groups. All religious minority groups are protected by the Constitution of India which provides justice, tolerance, equality and freedom. But sometimes religious fundamentalism becomes strong and brings intolerance among different religious groups and also causes communalism. Communalism is an ideology which states that society is divided into religious communities whose interests differ and are opposed to each other. The antagonism practised by the people of one community against the people of other community is called communalism. Communalism may be practised several ways such as political communalism, religious communalism, economic communalism (Ahuja 2009 : 119-120). Oommen (cited in Ahuja 2009 : 121) has suggested six dimension of communalism namely assimilationist, welfarist, retreatist, retaliatory, separatist and secessionist. The last one is that communalism when a religious community wants a separate political identity on the basis of their religion and demands separate state. A militant section of muslims demand independent Kashmir, a section of Sikhs demand independent Khalistan. Separatist group wants separate territorial state within country to maintain their own cultural specifically. Retaliatory communalism attempts to harm, hurt or injure the members of other religious communities. These three categories of communalism create social as well as political problems. They are also harmful to national unity.

Muslims have emerged as the largest religious minority group in India. Census 2011 shows that 172 million Muslims live in India. It is 14.23% of total Indian population. They are majority in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and Lakshadweep. There are some states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Assam and Kerala where Muslims live in high concentration (www.wikipedia.org 16.07.19 : 13 : 39). In the early 1980s, a committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Gopal Singh was set up by the Ministry of Home Affairs to enquire into social and economic conditions of the Indian minorities. The committee found Muslims as backward. After two decades, again a committee was set up under the chairmanship of Justice Rajinder Sachar to enquire into the socio-economic conditions of Muslims. According to Sachar Committee Report Muslims in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam and West Bengal were the poorest sections of the population along with Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes. Muslims lag behind the national average poverty ratio. They are identified as backward in terms of education, health, income, physical quality of life and low representation in public services. According to census of 2011, West Bengal has 27.01% Muslim population. It has high share of population in the district of Murshidabad (66.26%). Muslims of West Bengal are divided into two constitutional categories – General Muslims and OBC Muslims. OBC Muslims are categorized into two groups – ‘Category – A’ and ‘Category – B’. ‘Category – A’ indicates ‘More Backward’ sections and ‘Category – B’ recommends those people who are relatively backward. As per the notification No. 6309 – BCW/MR – 84 / 10 dated on 24-09-2010, total 116 groups of Muslim communities have been declared as OBCs. Among these groups 74 are declared as ‘More Backward’ (Chatterjee 2019: 134-136).

16.7 Christians in India

Indian society is very old and has been enriched by different cultures and religions. Both Christianity and Islam have great impact on the texture of Indian society and are considered as organic parts of it not as alien elements. Christianity is the third largest religion in India. According to the census of 2011 2.3% people of India are Christians. They are majority in three states of north-east India namely Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya. There are a good number of Christians in Kerala and Goa. It is believed that St Thomas (A. D. 50) and St. Barthomomew (the same period) have brought Christianity in India. A sizeable number of people in

Kerala, Malabar, Kalyan (near Bombay), Punjab have accepted Christianity. In sixteenth century, with the arrival of Portuguese, Christianity has got an impetus of its success (Dube 2001 : 17-18; www.wikipedia.org. 16.07.19, 13 : 30).

The Portuguese were very conscious regarding their position. To protect their nobility, they avoided inferior castes. They attempted to convert kings and upper caste Hindus. Goa had become a Christian settlement with many churches and clergymen. De Menzes, Archbishop of Goa, tried to remove Hindu influence on the early Christians of Malabar. But Roberto de Nobili, the Italian Jesuit, landed in Goa in 1605 lived like a Hindu ascetic. He dressed in saffron robes and maintained the rules of ritual purity in his food and social contacts. He communicated with the people of remote areas in regional dialects. He was a master in the language of Sanskrit and discussed with the Brahmins in that language. To facilitate the rapid spread of Christianity, Nobili was keen to convert from the top of Hindus. Further he avoided the Christians of lower caste origins. By the end of seventeenth century a good number of Christian people were found in India. Thus, India experienced with Christianity long before the arrival of the British. The later development of Christianity in India was found with the association of the Church with foreign powers – the Portuguese, the Dutch, the British and the French (ibid: 19 – 20). Srinivas (1998: 50) has mentioned that though India was known to European Christian missionaries long before the advent of the British in India, the entry of the European missionaries during the early period of the rule of the East India Company was not allowed. This was changed in 1813 when the British parliament permitted them to enter the country under a new system of licensing. As a result, the entire sub-continent became open to missionary activities without any hindrance.

During British rule mass conversion to Christianity took place in several pockets in India. Major portions of the tribes of the north-eastern states of India converted to Christianity. A sizeable portion of tribes in Chotanagpur accepted Christianity. Christianity flourished in Kerala and TamilNadu. They were the saviours to the members of depressed castes (Dube 2001 : 20; Ahuja 2009 : 163; Sharma 2008 : 13). But the deep-rooted beliefs could not be eradicated merely through the act of conversions. New converts had to continue their jati-occupations for the maintenance of their livelihood. They had to keep contact with their neighbours. As a result, new converts were the victims of the Hindu caste rigidity. Even in late twentieth century

the Bishops of TamilNadu admitted in their annual meeting that “the Scheduled Caste Christians, even after conversion, continue to suffer from extreme social, educational and economic backwardness arising out of the traditional practice of untouchability.” (Dube 2001 : 60). In South India, Christians from untouchable castes were segregated both in their settlements and in the Church. Their colonies were situated at distance from main settlement and no civic amenities were provided. Any procession (marriage or funeral) of low caste Christians was not allowed to pass through the main settlement. They had to receive holy sacraments during baptism, confirmation and marriage at last. High castes converts identified themselves as Brahman Christians or Nayar Christians. The sufferings of Scheduled Caste Christians continued. A sizeable portion of Indian Christians were socially discriminated. Nadars of TamilNadu were untouchable and suffered for centuries. European missionaries extended their humanitarian activities among these Nadars and the first Nadar conversions were made in the early 19th century. A good number of Nadars were converted into Christianity. As a defiled caste, Nadars suffered from severe social disabilities. They saw Christian missionaries as their protectors. With the help of missionaries Nadars were able to improve their economic condition. Gradually after a long struggle they were also able to improve their social condition (Kothari 1995: 101). Thus, converts have acquired higher socio-economic status than non-converts (Sharma 2002 : 178). Though missionaries were the protectors of exterior castes yet a distance emerged between the mainstream of Indian population and European missionaries. Perhaps the association of missionaries with European rulers caused that distance from the mainstream of Indian society (Dube 2001: 20). Further converts were also unable to mingle with mainstream. After independence, the government of India launched several measures for minorities and weaker sections. These were an impetus for the tribes including converts to retain their own ethnic identities (Sharma 2002: 178).

16.8 Anglo – Indians

A new ethnic group namely Anglo-Indian has emerged out of the bond of Europeans and Indians. Anglo-Indians are racially mixed community, born out of the relationships between European fathers and Indian mothers. It is estimated that this community has taken shape with the Portuguese invasion in India i.e., from 1493

A.D. and followed by Dutch and English invasion in India. In the middle of nineteenth century, Anglo-Indians have been formed as a community of mixed blood; in other words, Anglo-Indians are Eurasians. They live in different parts of India and a good number of people belonging to this group live in Kolkata (Sen 2017: 160).

The Anglo-Indian community always supported British during colonial period but the British considered them as indigenous people. When the leaders of this community realized that the British would not accept them as members of their own folk, then they started to demand for a home land. Migration was common among this group. After independence, mass exodus took place in different times and 1970s was that decade of last mass exodus from India to other countries specially Australia, Canada and United Kingdom (ibid : 159–160). Anglo-Indians have emerged as an ethnic minority in India during the last three decades of Indian freedom struggle against the British and the first three decades after independence. Sen (ibid) has mentioned them as a docile community. From the very beginning Anglo-Indians are willing to connect themselves with the British. India is a multi-cultural society. Anglo-Indians have been living with the other communities (majority or minority) in India for a long time, but they seem to be ignorant of cultural practices of their neighbours. There are lots of evidence which show that they follow British social and cultural life-style. They are not eager to follow non-Anglo-Indians cultural pattern. Further, throughout their existence in India, they are also indifferent towards Indian culture, history, politics and so on. They put little efforts to understand the religious and philosophical traditions of India. All these factors are again significant markers to maintain them marginal – ethnic identity.

16.9 Sikhism

Sikhism has developed in North India as a distinct religion in fifteenth century. Sikhism has taken elements both from Hinduism and Islam. Guru Nanak (1469 – 1539), the preacher of Sikhism, advocates some disciplines for each individual to reach the final goal. Nanak has discarded the external practices and observances of traditional forms of religion. He strongly rejects fasting (Vrata), superstitions, idol worship and so on. According to census of 2011, 20.8 million Sikhs live in India. They are majority in the state of Punjab which is believed their spiritual home. There

are also significant number of Sikhs in neighbouring states of Chandigarh, Delhi and Hariyana.

Sikhism is a synthesizing religion which emphasizes equalitarianism. But casteism is present in Sikhism. Lower-caste members who have adopted Sikhism are known as Mazhabis. They live in separate hamlets. They are not addressed with the common honorific title 'Sardar'. But they can join in prayer in Gurudwaras (Sikh temple) and the Langar (serving of food to all in the temple precinct). Their touch is not considered polluting. But majority of them are still endogamous group. The Jat, the Kshatriya, the Brahman and the artisan castes practice endogamy and maintain their separate identity. Here is to be noted that girls of lower jatis may be accepted by the higher jatis but they are not eager to marry their own girls to the males of lower jatis. Perhaps gender imbalance is the main cause of such practice. (Dube 2001 : 17-32; Bhattacharyya 1989 : 17; www.wikipedia.org. 16.07.19: 13: 30).

16.10 Buddhism

Buddhism was preached by Gautama Buddha during 6th – 5th century B.C. (Thapar 1996: 39). Buddha taught for 45 years through conversions, lectures and parables. His method of teaching was unique. Accompanied by his disciples he moved around cities and villages and preached his doctrines. He taught four noble truths. These truths are – (i) existence of sorrow; (ii) cause of sorrow; (iii) sorrow can be ceased (iv) there is way to attain bliss and desires. Further he advised five moral code of conduct – “(i) to abstain from killing; (ii) to abstain from stealing; (iii) to abstain from sensual misconduct; (iv) to abstain from lying and (v) to abstain from intoxication.” He was against the institution of caste. He was frequently asked regarding the purity of castes and always replied that all castes were equally pure. Social distinctions were based on types of work in society but position could not be an indicator of purity or impurity. Buddha was in favour of the equality of all before the law and he showed greater liberty towards women than the Hindu tradition. He permitted women to become nuns. He preached his doctrine in simple language. It was economic. No money is required to be spent to be honest and virtuous. Above all the personality of Buddha was also responsible for the spread of Buddhism. Buddhist Sanghas were helpful to spread Buddhism. In the early days of Buddhism, Buddhist

monks led a holy life. The Buddhist monasteries were the centres of education. Further Buddhism received royal patronage under Asoka, Kanishka, and Harsha. These kings played important role in the spread of Buddhism. As a result, not only in India, Buddhism became popular in countries outside India. These countries were Ceylon, Burma, Tibet, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Champa, China, Japan, Siam and some other states in central Asia.

In India the people who were tired of the complicated rituals of Hinduism, welcomed Buddhism. Specially Vaishyas and the Sudras faced pride of the Brahmins. The practice of Hinduism became costly. People had to spend lots of money to perform several rituals in Hinduism. To perform this religion (Buddhism) no priest or any intermediary is required. Their division of Buddhism were based on doctrinal differences, not on the gradation of society. Here is to be noted that Buddhism was divided into two parts – Mahayana and Hinayana (Mahajan 2017 : 140-147; Dube 2001 : 32; Thapar 1996 25; www.wikipedia.org. 16.07.19: 13 : 30).

In course of time Buddhism gradually declined in India though a large number of Buddhists live in other Asian countries. One important cause of the decline of Buddhism was the decline of Buddhist monasteries or Sanghas. Monks and nuns became corrupted and lost respect from common people. Buddhism also lost royal patronage. The Gupta rulers were the patrons of Brahminic Hinduism. The new Brahminism also incorporated the good points of Buddhism. During the time from eighth century to twelfth century Buddhism could not achieve royal patronage. Muslim invasion also began to take place. Buddhism further lost its foothold during Muslim period (Mahajan 2017 : 149-150). Buddhism flourished in India when the Hindu society had lost its former glory. But with the revival of Vedic Hinduism, spread of Islam and Christianity, Buddhism lost its hold in India and confined only to a few pockets. It was revived by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Dr. Ambedkar was a member of Mahars of Maharashtra. The Mahars were untouchables due to their defiled works and faced severe discrimination. Ambedkar was highly educated. His education enabled him to talk in modern political terms and also won him the respect and administration of his caste. He fought against social discrimination through political channel. He found in 'Buddhism' ways which offered release from Hindu concepts and a high moral standard but had no political overtones. With his thousands of followers, he accepted Buddhism. They were popularly known as neo-Buddhist.

Now-a-days around 8.5 million Buddhist live in India. A significant number of Buddhists live in Maharashtra. They are neo-Buddhist (Kothari : 37-48).

16.11 Jainism

Another important religion in India is Jainism which is contemporary of Buddhism. Its followers are now numerically small. There are two main sects among Jains – Digamber and (Unclothed) and Shwetamber (white robed). Untouchability is not practised among them and inter-dining is allowed but they have a good number of endogamous jatis. The founder of Jainism is Rishabha who is succeeded by twenty-three ‘Tirthankars’ or Prophet of Jainism. Parsvanath is the twenty-third Tirthankara. He has criticized the Vedas, Vedic gods and castes. His main teachings are – truth, non-violence, non-stealing and non-accumulation. Mahavira is the last Tirthankara. He does not believe in the existence of God. He has advocated for right faith, right knowledge and right actions. Jainism puts stress on non-violence. At present Jains are mainly concentrated in Gujrat, Karnatak, Maharashtra and Rajasthan (Mahajan 2017 : 132-134; Dube 2001 : 32-33; www.wikipedia.org. 16.07.19 : 13 : 30).

The preachers of both religions were prince. They had no connection with priestly families. Both the religions put stress on right conduct and right knowledge, not on religious ceremonies. They opposed castes, animal sacrifice and emphasized on ‘Karma’ i.e., the cumulative effect of one’s actions in former life. They taught in the language of common people. People of lower strata in terms of castes attracted and adopted Buddhism and Jainism. Both of the religion opposed Brahmanical orthodoxy. In early stages Buddhism became popular among the emergent commercial classes. Jainism was also popular among them. Non-violence was the central focus of Buddhist and Jaina religions. Finally both religions found their earliest supporters amongst the republican tribes (Mahajan 2017: 151; Thapar 1996 : 25, 48).

16.12 Other Religions and Ethnic Groups

There is another small community in India namely ‘Parsi’ who have played an important role in India’s industrial development. They have arrived in western coast of India in eighth century from Persia. They have adopted the life style of the

mercantile communities for their religious rites. Hereditary priests marry among themselves. According to census 2001, Parsis comprises 0.006% population in India. They have high concentration near Mumbai.

Jewish faith is also present in India. They are very small in number and have concentrated only in two settlements – Cochin (in Kerala) and Maharashtra. Cochin Jews are divided into two groups – white Jews and black Jews. Their relationship is like caste relationship among the Hindus. White Jews do not marry or dine with black Jews. They enjoy some – privileges. Another settlement of the Jews is in Maharashtra. These groups are known as ‘Bene Israel’ (Hebrew term) which means sons of Israel. For centuries in the Konkan villages, they are called ‘Shanwar Telis’ for oil-pressing is their main occupation. They are treated like Hindu Telis but they observe some Jewish dietary regulations and festivals. They have white and black divisions; prohibition on inter-marriage and inter-dinning. But all of them worship in same synagogues. Many of them have migrated to Bombay as jati-like restrictions are less there (Dube 2001 : 33-34; Kar 2009 : 153).

16.13 Welfare Measures for the Minorities

For centuries India is a multi-religious country. After independence, the government of India have decided to protect the interests of minorities and recognize their rights to conserve their religions and cultures. Article 14 of the constitution of India ensures equality of all citizens of India. Article 15 says that, “The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth or any of them.” Further, Article 29 and 30 of the constitution of India protects the rights of minorities. The National Commission for Minorities has been set-up under the act in 1993. The main functions of the commission are :

- (i) to evaluate the progress of minorities;
- (ii) monitoring the usefulness of safeguards provided by “constitution and laws enacted by the Parliament and other states legislatures;
- (iii) to recommend for the implementation of safeguards provided by the constitution and laws;
- (iv) to look into the complaints of minorities regarding deprivation of rights and

- safeguards and take up such matters to the appropriate authorities;
- (v) to conduct studies for the evaluation of the condition of the minorities;
 - (vi) to suggest appropriate measures for the safe-guard of minorities;
 - (vii) to prepare on any matter related to the minorities and so on.

16.14 Summary

Independent India has accepted socialist ideology i.e. the view of common good for all. People of all categories such as religious, racial, lingual, ethnic groups are accepted in India with their usual specialities. Further Indian Constitution has made special provisions for weaker sections of the people namely scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other Backward Classes. Religious minorities also enjoy the right to their beliefs and practices in India.

16.15 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) What do you mean by minority group?
- (ii) Is there any similarity between Jainism and Buddhism?
- (iii) Write a note on Anglo-Indians as an ethnic minority group.
- (iv) What is communalism?
- (v) What do you know about Jews?
- (vi) Write a note on Parsis?
- (vii) Write a note on Indian Christians.
- (viii) Write a note on Buddhists as a religious minority group.
- (ix) What do you know about Jains as a religious minority group?

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (x) Mention the features of minority group.
- (xi) Write a note on Sikhs as a religious minority group.

- (xii) Differentiate between religious minority group and Ethnic minority group?
- (xiii) How does untouchability enter into minority groups?
- (xiv) Write a note on largest religious minority group in India.
- (xv) Mention the welfare measures for minority groups.

16.16 Suggested Readings

- (i) Abraham, Francis. (2009) : Contemporary Sociology : An Introduction to Concepts and Theories, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- (ii) Ahuja, Ram. (2006) : Indian Social System, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (iii) Ahuja, Ram. (2009) : Social Problems in India, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (iv) Chatterjee, Rajib (2019) : “Reservation Among the Muslims of West Bengal : Some Observation”, Anthropos India, January – June, Vol 5 No.1, PP133-147.
- (v) Chitambar, J. B (2002) : Introductory Rural Sociology, New Delhi : New Age International (P) Limited Publishers.
- (vi) Dube, S. C. (2001) : Indian Society, New Delhi : National Book Trust, India.
- (vii) Giddens, Anthony. (2001) : Sociology, UK : Polity.
- (viii) Hardgrave, Robert L. (1995): “Political Participation and Primordial Solidarity : The Nadars of Tamil Nadu” in Rajni Kothari(ed.) Castein Indian Politics, Hyderabad : Orient Longman. PP 96-120
- (ix) Mahajan, V. D. (2017) : Ancient India, New Delhi : S. Chand and Co. Ltd.
- (x) Mandelbaum, David G. (1989) : Society in India, Bombay : Popular Prakashan.
- (xi) Momin, A. R. (1977) : “The Indo-Islamic Tradition”, Sociological Bulletin, September, Vol 26 No 2, PP 242-257
- (xii) Oommen, T. K. (1989) : The Hindustan Times, August 8, Delhi
- (xiii) Ray, Niharranjan (1989): “The Cocept of Sahaj in Guru Nanak’s Theology and its Antecedents” in N. N. Bhattacharyy (ed.) Medieval Bhakti Movements

- in India, New Delhi : Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., PP 17-35.
- (xiv) Roy, Ramashray. (1995) : “Caste and Political Recruitment in Bihar” in Rajni
- (xv) Kothari(ed.) Caste in Indian Politics, Hyderabad : Orient Longman. PP 215-244
- (xvi) Sen, Sudarshana. (2017) : “Experiences in Doing Ethnography : Studies on Anglo-Indian Women in Kolkata”, Sociological Bulletin, August, Vol. 66 Issue 2, PP 158-173.
- (xvii) Sharma, K. L. (2002) : Social Stratification and Mobility, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (xviii) Sharma, K. L. (2008) : Indian Social Structure and Change, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (xix) Thapar, Romila (1996) : Ancient Indian Social History : Some Interpretation, Hyderabad : Orient Longman.
- (xx) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fundamentalism>.

MODULE - 05
SOCIAL CHANGE

Unit - 17 □ Social Mobility

Structure

- 17.1 Objectives**
- 17.2 Introduction**
- 17.3 Social Mobility: Meaning and Definition**
- 17.4 Social Mobility and Social Types**
- 17.5 Features and Types of Social Mobility**
 - 17.5.1 Horizontal Mobility, Vertical Mobility and Lateral Mobility**
 - 17.5.2 Inter-generational Mobility and Intra-generational Mobility**
 - 17.5.3 Causes of Vertical Mobility**
 - 17.5.4 Structural Mobility and Circulation Mobility**
 - 17.5.5 Sponsored Mobility and Contest Mobility**
- 17.6 Obstacles and Effects of Social Mobility**
- 17.7 Studies on Social Mobility**
- 17.8 Social Mobility and Women**
- 17.9 Caste Mobility**
- 17.10 Summary**
- 17.11 Questions**
- 17.12 Suggested Readings**

17.1 Objectives

- Assess how different factors facilitate social mobility
- To understand social mobility and social types
- To understand the features and types of social mobility
- To understand the obstacles and Effects of Social Mobility
- To make a review on the studies on Social Mobility

- To understand the impact of social Mobility on Women
- To understand the idea of caste mobility

17.2 Introduction

Mobility stands for shift, change and movement. The change may be of a place or from one position to another. Further, change is value free i.e. it cannot be said that change is for good or bad. When we prefix 'social' along with mobility it would imply that people or individual occupying a social position, move to another position or status.

In the social ladder this movement may be upward or downward or it may be inter-generational or intra-generational. In short, social mobility stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.

17.3 Social Mobility : Meaning and Definition

The study of mobility is an indispensable part of the study of social stratification. Social stratification indicates the inequalities between men in terms of property, power and prestige. In other words, society is divided into different strata on the basis of property, power and prestige. People of upper strata enjoy much honour in society. Mobility tells us the movement of people from one stratum to another. Thus, social mobility is the upward or downward movement of a person or a group of persons from one social position to another. As a result, an individual or a group may gain or lose wealth, power and prestige. For example, a poor man may become rich, a peon may become officer, a petty business man may become business tycoon and so on (Tumin 2003 : 132; Rao 2004 : 233; Abraham 2009 : 132). Thus, social mobility indicates a change in socio-economic position. A person's class status is determined originally by the class status of his parents. If that person gets different amount of education from that of his parents or moves into a different occupational group, or maintains a different style of life then he will be socially mobile. Mobility may occur collectively by a group of persons. Several sociologists, anthropologists have mentioned that some backward sections of people (castes and tribes) acquire mobility by imitating the customs, rituals and symbols of higher castes. This process is popularly known as 'sanskritization' which is an upward cultural mobility by a group of persons. (Bhattacharyya 2014 : 317). Further, mobility may take place without changing one's status or prestige. It is a movement within same level. In

short, social mobility is a movement of a man or a group of men within same level of social strata or different levels of social strata (Kar 2009 : 144).

17.4 Social Mobility and Social Types

Based on the ease or difficulty of upward movement, society is divided into two parts – open society and closed society. There are some societies where the chance of mobility is very little, status is hereditary i.e., ascribed on the basis of birth. These types of societies are closed societies. For example, feudal societies are rigidly divided into three estates – peasants, clergy and aristocracy. In the Hindu caste system, caste membership is hereditary and in caste-based society, it is virtually impossible for a man to succeed by his own efforts. Here, in closed system, one's position is inherited and permanent. Closed systems are organized to perpetuate privilege and inequality. Structural barriers are created by customs or law, enforced by coercion to ensure the access to the higher classes or castes. In India, educational system in caste-based society, is segregated along caste lines which prohibits lower-level children from general education. Their (lower-level children) skills are curbed which in turn perpetuates their disadvantageous position.

This barrier is legitimized by prevailing socio-cultural ideas and beliefs. Theories of genetic inferiority claim the existence of biological differences among the people. Members of certain groups acquire certain qualities at birth. Aristocracies usually claim the right to rule on the basis of a combination of biological (acquired by birth) and social (acquired through training) disparities. In medieval estate system, rulers sometimes declare divine support for their power. All these ideologies support the continuation of stable patterns of inequality. Closed systems are generally found in stable agricultural societies and tend to be threatened by the process of industrialization (Abraham 2009 : 132; Rothman 2011 : 222 – 223).

In contrast, class-based society permits movement of people from one strata to another strata easily. This type of society is called open society. It is ideally admitted that in completely open society, there is no formal or ideological barriers in social mobility. On the basis of his or her own ability and efforts one can change his or her position in society. In other words, there is no necessary link between the class level occupied by parent and the ultimate class position of child. In all types of industrial societies, more openness is found than agricultural societies. Urbanization, industrialization, information technology increase opportunities for social mobility. In the early stages of industrialization, the most profound transformation is the shift from agriculture to manufacturing. Rural people are able to move to urban areas.

Many property less rural farm workers have got a chance to improve their economic as well as social conditions by joining in relatively better-paid factories. Industrial systems tend towards openness. Formal education is an important factor for achieving occupational success (Rothman 2011 : 223).

Sociologists are interested to study open societies. High moral and political values are attached to open societies. Majority of the western societies are open societies where the opportunity to succeed depends on one's talent. It is also a mark of good society. A society is deemed to be fair when achievement is based on merit, not on advantage of one's origin, skin-colour, religion, sex or any other such characteristics. All western societies officially approve equality of opportunity for all. But it does not mean the equality of situation or outcome. The equality of situation refers to the condition in which everyone receives equal amounts of the good things of life, irrespective of their talent, fitness and performance. It is possible that equal opportunity may lead to in equal situation in the same society at the same time. Natural talent and ability may cause inequality of situation or outcome even by receiving equal opportunity. Equal situation can be achieved by altering the reward structure through socialist ideology "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." In modern welfare states, inequality is reduced by securing funds through taxation which are redistributed to the poor people (Tumin 2003 : 133).

It is to be noted here that no society is absolutely closed system or open system. Compared to the estate and caste system, class system is relatively open. Social mobility is desirable, approved and possible easily in class-based society. Mobility is neither approved, nor desirable and also impossible for a person in caste-based society. If it occurs (though occurs rarely) then the unit of mobility is whole caste or sub-caste. But in case of open society, an individual or a family is able to acquire new status (Rothman 2011 : 223; Tumin 2003 : 47; Kar 2009 : 144). Sociologists are interested to study social mobility because the amount of mobility in a society is connected to a number of other social features such as the degree of political freedom; the level of economic productivity; the amount of violence in social relations; the rates of various kinds of criminal acts; the changes in the role of the school system; the quality of the networks of personal associations including friendship, community groups and even marriage patterns and so on.

All these features in a society vary in accordance with the amount of mobility in the social system. Further some groups experience rapid social mobility while others do not. As a result, former groups are more beneficial than latter groups. And due to relative deprivation latter groups may show high rates of personality disorder

and other pathologies. This situation may bring serious and costly disorders in society. Because of these possible influences of mobility, sociologists are keen to study social mobility (Tumin 2003 : 133-134).

17.5 Features and Types of Social Mobility

17.5.1 Horizontal Mobility, Vertical Mobility and Lateral Mobility

The movement can occur in any of three following directions – from lower to higher, from higher to lower or between two positions at the same level. The first two types of movement are known as vertical mobility while the third one is horizontal mobility. The opposite of vertical mobility is horizontal mobility. When a person moves from one occupation to another occupation but his status or income or prestige remains same then it is a horizontal mobility. In other words, it is an occupational change within same strata. For example, a person quits his job as an electrician and becomes a machinist. Both of these occupations need same amount of training, pay-level about the same, carry the same amount of prestige in connectivity. This type of occupational movement does not lead to the change in status or income. It is a horizontal mobility within a stratum. Sometimes individual or a group of persons move from one social group to another social group in same rank then it is a horizontal mobility. For example, movement of an individual or a group from the Baptist to the Methodist religion group; from citizenship of one country to another country; from one family to another family (through marriage) in same income level or same social strata or from one family to another family (through divorce or remarriage) in same economic level or social prestige and so on.

In contrast first two types of movement are the example of vertical social mobility. But in first case, it is upward vertical social mobility and in second case, it is downward vertical social mobility. Lateral mobility as mentioned by Giddens (2009: 463) is often combined with vertical mobility. Lateral mobility is a geographical movement between towns or regions. For example, a person who is working in a company in Kolkata, is transferred to its another branch of Mumbai. Lateral mobility takes place here. If he is transferred on promotion to a higher position in the Mumbai branch then lateral mobility is associated with upward vertical mobility (Bhattacharyya 2014: 317).

17.5.2 Inter-generational Mobility and Intra-generational Mobility

Vertical mobility is further divided into inter-generational vertical mobility and

intra-generational vertical mobility. Intergenerational vertical mobility involves a comparison between a parent's class position and his child's class position. If child's class position is higher than his parent's class position then it is inter-generational upward vertical mobility. For example, if the son of a blacksmith becomes an engineer. If child's class position is lower than his parent's class position then it is an intergenerational downward vertical mobility. If the son of a professional man involves in any lower graded job, then it will be intergenerational downward vertical mobility. In contrast, intra-generational vertical mobility refers to an individual's occupational changes or position in the course of his own life time. An individual may change his status through his own talent. If his status increases then it will be intra-generational upward vertical mobility. If a man fails to maintain his career which he has begun first and loses his position then it will be intra-generational downward vertical mobility (Abraham 2009 : 133; Tumin 2003 : 41).

Bhattacharyya (2014 : 318) has opined that industrial societies are marked with rapid changes in occupational structure. Intergenerational upward movement is more prevalent than intergenerational downward movement in both developed and developing societies. But the studies of social mobility in the United States, Great Britain and other western countries have revealed that social mobility has occurred in limited range. Though there are fairly high levels of intergenerational mobility, majority of them are short-range mobility. It means mobility is between occupational positions quite close to one another. 'Long-range' mobility is not common. Downward mobility is less common than upward mobility, but it occurs both intra generationally and inter generationally.

Like upward mobility downward mobility is also a widespread phenomenon. This type of mobility is often associated with psychological problems and anxieties when individuals become unable to sustain their previous life-style. When middle-aged persons lose their jobs, then it is different for them to find jobs in some level. They obtain work at lower level of income than before. During economic crisis (inflation), a general downturn in the average real earnings of people in middle level white collar jobs may occur. In such condition, people may not support the life-style aspirations they once did. Sometimes companies trim their work-forces. Further downward mobility is common in divorced or separated women with children (Giddens 2009 : 466).

Rothman (2011 : 224) has opined that intergenerational mobility focuses on formal education and divides the process into three stages. The first stage indicates a connection between social class origins and educational attainments. There are some factors which influence educational success. The second stage is a link

between social origins, educational attainments and first job in labour market. The third stage indicates social origins in educational qualification, first job and their involvement in later job. This process is known as 'status attainment model' which has begun in 1960s and establishes the impact of parental class location on their children's accomplishment. First group researchers regarding this issue have established empirical relationships among the basic variables in the process. Next generation researchers have added cognitive (ability measures) and social psychological factors (mobility aspirations) to the process. Contemporary researchers have focussed on the institution arrangements that influence progress through educational systems and careers. Rothman (ibid) has admitted that 'status attainment model' is an oversimplification but, he opines, it is a useful starting point for understanding intergenerational continuity and mobility. Rothman (ibid) has presented 'status attainment model' through a diagram.

“The model shows that in the first stage of the process, parental social class origins directly influence children's aspirations, academic ability, and level of educational attainment. Academic ability and aspirations have an independent impact on educational progress. In the second stage, social origins and years of education are directly correlated with the level of the first job. The third stage focuses on the second generation's later jobs, which are correlated with social origins, levels of education, and the level of the earlier job.”

17.5.3 Causes of Vertical Mobility

It has been found that vertical mobility is present in all types of societies in different forms. Kar (2009 : 145) has opined that vertical mobility is an inherent trait of all stratified societies. Different types of causes are associated with vertical mobility. Some of these causes are explained here.

- (i) There are some societies where upper positions are filled for a definite period. After the expiry of the term, new persons are recruited in those posts. If those posts are open to people of all strata, then there is a chance of vertical mobility.
- (ii) People belonging to different social strata carry specific criteria. Some people of lower strata have a tendency to emulate the ways of life of those people who belong to upper strata. After certain period of time, the people of lower strata can manage the membership of upper strata. One of such examples is the process of sanskritization in the Hindu caste-based society.
- (iii) Low birth rate among people of upper strata is generally found. In such a

situation, a 'social vacuum' may be created. People of lower strata can get chance for upward movement because vacant posts are filled with those people.

- (iv) Sometimes people are unable to perform the functions of their social stratum. This may be caused by the dissimilarity between parents and children in terms of capacity. As a result, down-ward movement is found. Sometimes persons undergo profound changes in course of their lives owing to physical or mental sickness, some accidents and so on. Such people may lose their ability to perform according to their family status.
- (v) Another cause of vertical mobility is continuous change in the environment especially socio-cultural environment. Changes in socio-cultural environment may create favourable conditions for some people or can create unfavourable conditions for some people. A popular singer may be rejected. Changes in attitude or awareness or public tastes may flourish certain types of businesses or may cause opposite result. In such cases one businessman may get opportunity for upward movement or one may skid from his position. So, it can be said that dynamism in socio-cultural life is sufficient to produce vertical mobility within any group (Kar 2009 : 145).

17.5.4 Structural Mobility and Circulation Mobility

Another point of view has divided social mobility into two parts – structural mobility and circulation mobility. These types of mobility arise due to changes in the division of labour and labour supply. These changes bring new opportunities to some people who did not have such opportunities before. Structural mobility is referred as forced mobility. This type of mobility has occurred by forcefully. The structural changes in the economic system of production and distribution. Shifts in the economic system may close opportunities for some and may open it to others. Structural mobility also takes place when changes occur in the number of people in particular categories; for example, the changed ratio of blue to white collar jobs. Such changes may come from a number of sources including economic expansion and growth that make manual labour obsolete; differences in birth rates between levels of workers (for example the professional group may not have enough children to replace itself); changes in death rates and rates of immigration affect the number of people seeking jobs and available for jobs. Further expansion of high-skilled technical based upper middle-class occupations create new opportunities for upward mobility for the better-educated children of lower middle-class or working-class people. This type of mobility is also referred to as structural mobility. On the other

hand, circulation mobility is also referred as true mobility. Some kinds of opportunities are opened to some kinds of people who did not have such opportunities before, in a particular social system. Major factors here are laws which reduce discrimination against members of racial, religious and sex groups. New educational opportunities and skills, new attitudes make some people able to take such jobs which were barred to their ancestors because of prejudice or lack of opportunities. Circulation mobility encourages people to acquire the higher position and to enjoy the higher prestige and pay (Tumin 2003 : 138 – 139; Rothman 2011 : 226).

17.5.5 Sponsored Mobility and Contest Mobility

Social mobility is further divided into sponsored mobility and contested mobility. Sponsored mobility is a form of mobility where the positions of elites are filled by the persons of established elites' groups or their agents. In other words, these elite posts are not open to all. Individual ability or efforts are not considered here. One's family background is more vital here. In contrast, in the case of contest mobility, elite positions are open to all and can be achieved by individual's ability and efforts. In case of sponsored mobility, schools and higher educational institutions play important role in selection process. Certain types of schools have limited seats with high fees. Sons and daughters of former pupils are preferred for admission. Students of these schools get greater opportunities when they try to get job. Along with their qualifications three other factors are very crucial here. These factors are – (I) Schools or other higher educational institutions perhaps have a common background among those who are selected and those who select; (II) family background and (III) personal contacts. In case of contest mobility, these three factors do not work. (Bhattacharyya 2014 : 319-320).

Sponsored mobility and contest mobility – both systems are found in western industrial societies. According to Bhattacharyya (ibid: 320) these two forms of mobility are very important because they indicate the restrictions in mobility in open societies. Professional and high administrative posts are filled by the people of upper strata. Majority of the businessmen in Britain and in the United States are the sons of businessmen. Thus, levels of mobility are low compared to ideals of opportunity. In all societies, people remain close to the level of their own families. Some people experience vertical mobility but this is due to the result of changes in the occupational structure, not because of high level of equality of opportunity. It has also been found that intra-generational mobility is generally achieved through promotion at work and this increasingly depends on educational qualifications. Intergenerational mobility is mainly achieved through educational qualification. Thus, education becomes the main route of upward social Mobility.

Further, marriage may become a route of mobility. People may achieve upward mobility through marrying a partner from a higher social class. It is mainly women who achieve upward vertical mobility through marriage. But this type of marriages is not common. Generally, people like to marry within their own social class. A small number of people find sports or other entertainment as a route for upward mobility (ibid: 321).

17.6 Obstacles and Effects of Social Mobility

A number of obstacles to social mobility in industrial societies are also present. Some of these obstacles are discussed below – (i) The socio-economic system is shaped like a pyramid; i.e., the number of posts at top rank is very few. So only a few persons can hold the posts of higher rank. (ii) Studies have revealed that class membership of an individual is established through heredity. Persons who belong to the top ranks, have come from professional or affluent family backgrounds. Wealthy people hardly begin with nothing. (iii) Studies in America has also revealed that white-collar parents are more affluent than blue-collar parents. They can provide their children with better education and other needs. As a result, children of upper strata are able to achieve similar level jobs. On the other hand lower graded manual workers are less able to facilitate the mobility of their children (Rothman 2011 : 226). This situation is true in case of many countries including India. Children coming from lower strata face a number of obstacles to success in education. It means that they do not do as well as their ability. The chances of upward mobility are thus restricted. Wealthy people can provide their children best available education and this leads them towards good jobs. (iv) Upper middle-class elite jobs are another obstacle. Judges and top civil servants are recruited almost from people who have gone through very expensive schooling and then elite Universities. Children of poor families cannot afford such schooling and are denied the chance of getting these elite jobs. (v) Women face much obstacle in achieving upward mobility because of several factors which make hindrance to compete in the labour market on equal terms with men (Bhattacharyya 2014 : 321).

Effects of Social Mobility – Finally it is to be stated that vertical mobility heightens the consciousness of the differences. There are some people who belong to the lower strata have a strong desire to improve their condition while the people belonging to the upper strata, bear a feeling of sinking the social hierarchy. Intensive vertical mobility facilitates an increase of the intellectual progress, open mindedness, versatility of behaviour and so on. On the other hand, it also facilitates an increase

in mental strain, superficially, scepticism and so on. Vertical mobility may diminish intimacy in relationships, may increase social isolation, loneliness and restlessness, spirit of individualism antagonism and so on (Bhattacharyya 2014 : 324).

17.7 Studies on Social Mobility

The amount of vertical mobility in a society is an indicator of the degree of its 'open-ness' where talented individuals of lower strata can move up the socio-economic ladder. In this respect social mobility is an important political issue, especially for those states who have accepted liberal vision of equality of opportunity for all citizens. A good number of studies on social mobility have been carried on in several countries. An important study of America has revealed that majority of the subjects of upward mobility are men. So, lack of gender balance is found in this field. Upward occupational mobility is common though downward movement is also present both within the careers of individuals and intergenerational. Downward mobility is much less common than upward mobility. It has been found that white-collar and professional jobs have grown much more rapidly than blue-collar jobs. The sons of blue-collar workers have got a chance to move into white-collar positions. Education and training are two important factors for upward social mobility in industrial societies. As a whole, upward social mobility maintains social stability as well as integration (Giddens 2009 : 463-464).

Another study of social mobility has analysed data from nine industrialized societies – Britain, France, West Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Japan, Denmark, Italy, and the United States. This study has focused on mobility of men from blue-collar to white-collar jobs. It has been found that total vertical mobility across the blue-collar or white-collar line is thirty percent in the United States while in other countries, it varies between twenty-seven and thirty one percent. The conclusion of this study is that all the industrialized countries experience similar changes in respect of the expansion of white-collar jobs. Some social scientists argue regarding this study that significant differences between the countries may come out if more attention is given to downward social mobility (ibid : 465).

Most studies of social mobility have focussed on objective dimensions of mobility – that is how much mobility exists in which directions and for what parts of the population. Another study has focussed on different approach – that is subjective feelings about changing class positions. Both the positive and negative views have come out from this study. Some people have opined that social mobility produces a sense of disequilibrium and isolation while others have expressed an

optimistic view regarding graded process of adaption to a new class (ibid : 465-466). A number of studies regarding social mobility have also been done in Britain. Britain is not an open society. Studies have shown that majority of the mobility are upward mobility and are concentrated at the middle levels of the class structure. Mobility among men is higher than that of women. Further, mobility among men is higher than the mobility in the previous period. The main reason for this is that the occupational system had become more egalitarian. It has also been found from the studies that two-thirds of the sons of unskilled or semi-skilled manual workers keep themselves in manual occupations. Despite higher rates of absolute social mobility, relative chances for mobility among different segments of the population in Britain remain highly unequal. The occupational structure in Britain has been changed. Number of blue-collar occupations are decreased. Later studies (studies in 1980s) have shown that about a third of people in higher white-collar or professional jobs are from blue-collar backgrounds. Both intragenerational and intergenerational mobility are found here. Again, the sale is still biased against women (Giddens 2009 : 466-467).

17.8 Social Mobility and Women

Sociologists are also interested to study mobility among women. In higher education, females are out-numbering males. Naturally some questions may arise here – Are long-standing gender-inequalities in society relaxed? Are the chances of mobility of women guided by the family and social background? It has been found that both for male and female family background and class of origin play important role. Individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds have a greater tendency to remain there. As a whole, women are experiencing much greater opportunity than their counterparts in the previous generation. Middle class women, as like as their male peers, go to universities and absorb in jobs after graduation. This trend indicates greater equality and heightens women's self-esteem. Though women's chances of entering good careers are improving some obstacles are still prevalent. Male managers and employers have a belief that 'women are not really interested in careers'. After marriage, women may leave work force. Domestic works and child-care activities are great obstacles in women's career. Men are less interested to share domestic works and child-care (ibid : 468-469).

Tumin (2003: 146) has mentioned that in majority of the family's wives earn less than their husbands. Three factors play important role here – (a) direct discrimination against women, (b) lack of equal opportunity for married women, (c) norms force women to take account of non-income aspects of their jobs. These

inferences are supported by the fact that the earnings of single women are greater than married women. But number of children have no influence on the occupational status of women. There is a popular belief that the physical attractiveness of women helps them to secure high standing job. But studies have shown that this is not true in the marriages of women of higher social rank. Educational level is more influential than physical attractiveness or social origin. It has also been found that education and first job become important in determining final job. If women have achieved educational parity with men, they still remain in lower occupational and income levels. Further sometimes women may achieve upward mobility through marriage but women experience downward mobility resulting from breakdown of families through death of husband, divorce or abandonment (Rothman 2011: 227). Bhattacharyya (2014: 319) has remarked that “As compared with men, women have far poorer chances of upward mobility but greater chances of downward mobility.”

17.9 Caste Mobility

In India, caste system is a social reality. A caste system is such a system where individual's rank, right obligation are ascribed on the basis of birth into a particular group. Generally, it is believed that caste-system is a closed system where vertical mobility is strictly restricted. But it is not so rigid as is generally assumed. Vertical mobility is also found in caste-based societies. Generally, it is believed that traditional caste-based Indian society is relatively static which is excluded from social mobility. But in reality, mobility is found in different ways. One of these ways is mobility through warfare. It is an age-old practice (Bhattacharyya 2014 : 322; Ahuja 1999 : 58).

In ancient India, rulers were Kshatriyas. But there were some rulers of peasants who after capturing territory established a kingdom. These peasant conquerors claimed Kshatriya status and rose from their caste-rank into Kshatriya-rank. Kolenda (1997, cited in Ahuja 1999 : 58) has opined that before the British rule, the most effective way to rise in the caste-system was by the acquisition of territory either through conquest of land or through capturing of empty land. Shivaji's caste rank (Maratha) was considered as Sudra. But he established his own empire and went through a religious rite of transition into Kshatriyahood. Along with Shivaji's rise in Varna status, his caste members (Marathas) also claimed Kshatriya rank (Ahuja 1999: 58). Caste-groups also raise their caste-rank by serving Hindu or non-Hindu rulers. For example, Patidars of Gujrat, a peasant group of Sudra varna, supported the Maratha descendants of Shivaji, the Gaekwads, who ruled Central Gujrat.

Gradually they established their small regimes by claiming as Kshatriyas. Another example of rise in caste through service to rulers is that of Kayasthas. Kayasthas were a low caste group in the twelfth century. They were professional letter writers before the invention of printing, copied the writings and kept records. They made themselves useful to the Moghuls and then to the British rulers. In nineteenth century, the Kayasthas in Northern India are considered as twice-born categories though they still remain in Sudra category in East Bengal. Here, the unit of mobility is not caste or Jati but the family, or a group of families. This type of upward mobility may lead to the formation of a new Jati or caste (Ahuja 1999 : 58-59).

During British rule, Jati identity was recorded in census (from 1891 to 1931). Many caste-groups tried to improve their caste-rank by registering themselves as members of the twice-born varnas. Claimant groups offered evidence from myths and history. District committees were set-up to evaluate the claims. Some of those claims were sustained while majority of those claims were rejected (ibid:59). Singh (2004 : 54) mentioned that, some castes continuously attempted to claim higher caste position in censuses between 1911 and 1931. If in one census, a caste group claimed the status of Vaishya, in next census, its claim would be the status of Kshatriya and in next it would be Brahmin. These claims were so irksome to the administration that at the 1941 census and there after the column of caste was eliminated from the census schedule. Caste mobility also occurred through the process of sanskritization and westernization. A low caste was able to improve its caste rank through the process of sanskritization. Low caste members adopted the customs, rituals, rites and beliefs of and higher caste in locality and after a generation or two they claimed the status of that higher caste.

Thus, it was obviously an upward vertical mobility as well as cultured mobility. During British rule in India, some factors such as industrialization, occupational mobility, developed means of communication, western technology, modern education, giving up evil customs and social practices played important role to make sanskritization possible. Along with sanskritization the process of westernization also made social mobility possible. Westernization helped to change One's ideology, values, cultures and so on (Ahuja 1999 : 60-61). Sometimes several castes like Mahars of Maharashtra, Nadars of Tamilnadu have used politics for ameliorating their social condition (Ahuja 1999 : 61).

17.10 Summary

Thus, social mobility is the movement of individuals, families, households, or

other categories of people within or between social strata in a society. It is a change in social status relative to one's current social location within a given society. This movement occurs between layers or tiers in an open system of social stratification. Open stratification systems are those in which at least some value is given to achieve status characteristics in a society. The movement can be in a downward or upward direction. Markers for social mobility, such as education and class, are used to predict, discuss, and learn more about an individual or a group's mobility in society.

17.11 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) Define Social Mobility.
- (ii) What do you mean by horizontal mobility?
- (iii) What is vertical mobility?
- (iv) How do you explain 'status attainment model'?
- (v) What is structural mobility?
- (vi) Mention different types of social mobility.
- (vii) Write a note on Gender Mobility.
- (viii) Explain inter-generational mobility and intra-generational mobility.
- (ix) Write an essay on caste mobility.

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (x) Explain closed society and open society.
- (xi) Mention the causes of vertical mobility?
- (xii) Differentiate between horizontal mobility and vertical mobility?
- (xiii) How does mobility bring changes in society?
- (xiv) Write a note on studies of social mobility.

17.12 Suggested Readings

- (i) Abraham, M Francis. (2009) : Contemporary Sociology : An Introduction to Concepts and Theories, New Delhi : Oxford University Press

- (ii) Ahuja, Ram. (1999): Society in India : Concepts, Theories and Recent Trends, Jaipur : Rawat Publications.
- (iii) Bhattacharyya, Dinesh Chandra. (2014) : Sociology, Kolkata : Vijaya Publishing House
- (iv) Chakravorty, Bhuban Mohan. (2009) : Sociology : Theory, Methodology and Concepts, Kolkata : New Central Book Agency (P) Ltd.
- (v) Chitambar, J. B. (2002) : Introductory Rural Sociology, New Delhi : New Age International (P) Limited Publishers.
- (vi) Giddens, Anthony. (2009) : Sociology, Cambridge : Polity Press.
- (vii) Kar, Parimal B. (2009) : Sociology : The Discipline And Its Dimensions, Kolkata : New Central Book Agency (P) Ltd.
- (viii) Kolenda, Pauline (1997) : Caste in Contemporary India, Jaipur : Rawat Publications
- (ix) MacIver, R. M and Page, Charles H. (2006) : Society : An Introductory Analysis, Delhi : Macmillan India Ltd.
- (x) Rao, C.N. Shankar (2003) : Sociology : Primary Principles, New Delhi : S. Chand and Company Ltd.
- (xi) Rao, C. N. Shankar (2004) : Sociology of Indian Society, New Delhi : S. Chand and Company Ltd.
- (xii) Rothman, Robert A.(2011) : Inequality and Stratification : Race, Class and Gender, New Delhi : PHI Learning Private Limited.
- (xiii) Singh, Yogendra (2004) : Modernization of Indian Tradition, Jaipur : Rawat Publications.
- (xiv) Tumin, Melvin M. (2003) : Social Stratification : The Forms and Functions of Inequality, New Delhi : Prentice Hall of India Private Limited.

Unit - 18 □ Sanskritization

Structure

- 18.1 Objectives**
- 18.2 Introduction**
- 18.3 Sanskritization – The Concept**
- 18.4 Brahminization vs. Sanskritization**
- 18.5 Sanskritization – Caste Position and Rituals**
- 18.6 Sanskritization – Some Barriers**
- 18.7 Features of Sanskritization**
- 18.8 Sanskritization among Tribes and Scheduled Castes**
- 18.9 Sanskritization and its Negative Aspects**
- 18.10 De-Sanskritization and Re-Sanskritization**
- 18.11 Summary**
- 18.12 Questions**
- 18.13 Suggested Readings**

18.1 Objectives

In the current unit, the student will gain knowledge on the following topics :

- An idea about Sanskritization
- Differences between Brahminization and Sanskritization
- The locally dominant caste
- A comparison of Sanskritization and Westernization

18.2 Introduction

In sociology, Sanskritisation (Indian and British English) or Sanskritization (Oxford and American English), is the process by which caste or tribes placed lower

in the caste hierarchy seek upward mobility by emulating the rituals and practices of the dominant or upper castes. It is a process similar to “passing” in sociological terms. This term was made popular by Indian sociologist M. N. Srinivas in the 1950s.

In a broader sense, also called Brahmanization, it is a historical process in which various local Indian religious traditions become aligned to and absorbed within the Brahmanical tradition, creating the pan-Indian tradition of Hinduism.

18.3 Sanskritization – The Concept

Caste system, in theory, is a closed system; that means no one can change his caste identity which he has acquired by birth. But in practice some movement has been found within caste-system. ‘Sanskritization’ helps to explain the changes within caste-system in the traditional social structure of India. The term ‘Sanskritization’ has been conceived by M.N Srinivas when he studied religion and society among Coorgs in Mysore in the state of Karnataka in south India. People of lower castes, in order to raise their position in the caste hierarchy, adopt some customs, rituals, ideologies, life-style of the Brahmins and give-up some of their own habits such as meat eating, consumption of liquor etc. which are considered impure by the higher castes. After a period of time, a generation or two, people who imitate Brahmins claim higher positions in caste-hierarchy. It is an upward group mobility not individual. Initially this process was defined as ‘Brahminization’. Later on, the term ‘Sanskritization’ has come to denote this process of mobility. (Doshi and Jain 2004 : 81-82; Singh 2004 : 5; Srinivas 1998: 6-7).

18.4 Brahminization and Sanskritization

Srinivas (1998: 7) has admitted that, he has emphasized on Brahminical model of Sanskritization specially derived from Kannada, Tamil and Telegu Brahmins and has ignored the other models, viz. Kshatriya, Vaishya, Sudra and even Brahmin castes of other regions. In addition to Brahminical model, Pocock (1955, cited in *ibid*) has pointed to the existence of Kshatriya model. According to Pocock (*ibid*), Kings (or Kshatriyas) along with the Brahmins, are also superior group to the Vaishya and Shudra varna. Sometimes they become dominant political power in some areas and also become local dominant non-Brahmin caste of that area. Kshatriya model of sanskritization is followed in those areas. Srinivas (1998 : 7-8) has mentioned that not only the kingly model but the other models (locally dominant

castes) of varna group are also followed. It has been found that the relative prestige and rank of different varnas vary with time and place. In many areas life-style of any non-Brahmin group is either equal or higher than that of the Brahmin groups; in those areas, people who wish to improve their position may follow the patterns of life-style of those dominant non-Brahmin castes. Even the life-style of the merchant and peasant are considered as models in localities where these groups are dominant.

Sanskritization is a broader concept than Brahminization. It is a general tendency among the lower castes to imitate the cultural ways of higher castes. These higher castes may be non-Brahmins; they may be Kshatriyas, Jats, Vaisyas, Rajputs etc. Hence, the term 'Brahminization' does not explain all these processes and different terms in different cases have to be used. Further there are no uniform characteristics among the Brahmins. Though, by and large, Brahmins are vegetarians, some of them like Kashmiris, Bengalees, Saraswath Brahmins are non-vegetarians. Some Brahmin groups are more sanskritized in their style of life than others. Brahmins in some areas such as Punjab, parts of western Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan have a low secular status. Some Brahmin groups in Gujrat (e.g., Tapodhan) Bengal and Mysore are considered as ritually low. (Srinivas 1998 : 8). If the term 'Brahminization' is to be used then it should be specified which particular Brahmin group is meant. Further, the reference groups of sanskritization are not always Brahmins. Srinivas (1998 : 6) has mentioned that, Harijan castes in Mysore do not accept cooked food and drinking water from the Smiths. Smiths claim themselves as 'Vishwakarma Brahmins'. Though their claim is not accepted by others and even untouchables, they are certainly one of the touchable castes and therefore superior to Harijan. Similarly, Maraka Brahmins, who are certainly Brahmins, are not accepted by Okkaligas (peasants), Kurupas (Shepherds) and others. However, the ways of life of Lingayats, who are not Brahmins but claim as equal to Brahmins, are adopted by some low castes. So, the term Brahminization is not enough for explaining the process of cultural and social mobility (Ahuja 2006 : 354; Rao 2003 : 310).

18.5 Sanskritization : Caste Position and Rituals

The Brahmins constitute the top of the Varna hierarchy and enjoy a respectable position in the caste system. They are also expected to conform to ideal norms of Hinduism. The castes who belong to lower level in caste-ladder especially untouchables are tolerated some kind of deviation. Thus, the higher position in caste-structure is

associated with high expectations of conformity to ideal Hindu norms. But the ideal code of conduct in Hindu religion varies from time to time. For example, in Vedic period, the Brahmins took Soma (liquor), offered animal sacrifice to gods, ate beef. All these have become prohibited for Brahmins in later period. Thus, what was culturally accepted (Sanskritic) in Vedic period, became taboo in later period (Singh 2004 : 6).

Through the process of sanskritization Hindu low-caste groups or tribes or other groups change their customs, rituals, ideology and way of life in direction of a high twice-born caste. The first three groups of varna model i.e. Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya are considered as 'twice-born' caste or dwija as they are entitled to put sacred thread at the ceremony of 'upanayana' which is interpreted as second birth. Only the members of these three varnas are entitled to perform Vedic rituals. Among these twice-born varnas, the Brahmins are regarded as better models of Sanskritization than the others. The cultural content of each varna varies from one area to another and also from one period of time to another. The diversity is generally greater at lower levels of the varna hierarchy than the highest group (Srinivas 1998 : 6–8). Further, Srinivas (1998 : 9) has mentioned that there are some castes belonging to the category of Shudra maintain highly sanskritized style of life whereas others are minimally sanskritized. But the dominant peasant castes, may be highly sanskritized or not, provide local models for imitation.

A feature of rural life in different parts of India is the existence of dominant caste. In traditional society, a dominant caste should own a large amount of arable land locally available, must occupy a high place in the local caste hierarchy and should have strength of numbers. Dominance of one caste may be changed in time and sometimes there may be more than one dominant castes in a village. In British India, western education, job in administration and urban based income have become the important factors for dominance. In independent India, introduction of adult franchise and Panchayati raj (local self – government at village level) have given a new sense of self-respect and power to low castes who enjoy reservation of seats in all elected bodies from the village to the Union Parliament. The long-term implications of these changes are important in this respect that a particular caste group with its numerical strength can sway the local balance of power. In traditional society, a small number of people belonging to a high caste and having a large quantity of arable land can enjoy authority over the entire village. Later, in many parts of rural India power has been transferred to the hands of numerically large, land owning peasant castes (Srinivas 1998 : 10).

In rural India, dominance is not purely a local matter. Sometimes a caste group enjoys dominance regionally. In such a situation dominant caste group in a village finds that it has to reckon with the lesser caste group in the village which is a dominant caste group in the region. Further, vast improvement in communication has contributed to the decline in prestige of purely local styles of living. It is now a general trend to borrow urban style of living. The long-term effect of this process is a **decrease in cultural diversity and an increase in uniformity. It is to be noted here** that land ownership is a crucial factor in establishing dominance. In traditional India, the bulk of the arable land is concentrated in the hands of a relatively small number of big owners and a large number of people either own very little land or no at land all. Landowner generally come from higher castes and enjoy power over bulk of the poor villagers. Along with power land ownership confers prestige and it is found in traditional India that all walks of life tend to invest in land (Srinivas 1998: 11- 12).

There are ample examples in rural areas that land owning castes enjoy power over other castes even over ritually superior cases. In some places of Punjab, land owning Jats look down upon the Brahmins as their servants. In Madhopur village in the eastern Uttar Pradesh, the dominant castes Thakurs do not accept cooked food from the Brahmins except their gurus or religious teaches. In Rampura village in Mysore, a Brahmin priest needs to be accompanied by someone from dominant pleasant caste to perform his ritual duties. So, there are some areas in rural India where ritual rank is less power than economic rank. In contrary, the Brahmins of some areas refuse cooked food from other castes even if they are economically powerful. An economically powerful Gujrati Bania does not enter the kitchen where his Brahmin cook works (ibid :13).

Various models of Sanskritization are found in rural India. Local dominant castes become the model for this cultural transmission. If a Brahmin or Lingayat becomes locally dominant then Brahminical model of Sanskritization is followed. If Rajput or Bania becomes dominant then Kshatriya or Vaishya model is followed. Each locally dominant caste has its own conception of Brahmin, Kshatriya or Vaishya models. According to Srinivas (1998 : 13-14), two distinct tendencies are associated with caste groups. Each caste group is dominated by local moral and religious norm. Multiple cultures are associated with castes. Some beliefs, ideas, practices are followed by one caste group while other groups do not follow the same. Generally, it is determined by hereditary occupations which they follow. A peasant group talks about agricultural skill, its importance and difficulty and patience

required and so on. Similarly, artisans or any other serving castes show some attitude towards their hereditary occupations. The second tendency inherent within caste system is the imitation of the life-style of higher castes. Elaborately speaking, one local section of a caste imitates another local section of caste. It is to be noted here that imitation is not of any particular caste or higher caste. Model of imitation is from any higher caste.

Local village system is independent of wider Indian system. Ideal behaviour may be derived from the sources of great Traditions like pilgrimages or religious doctrines. The process of Sanskritization is neither smooth nor automatic. The leaders of dominant caste watch the value system of the village. They ignore minor changes in the ritual and style of life of low castes, but when the members of low caste refuse to perform their caste-bound service then they (leaders of dominant caste) take action against them. If the process of Sanskritization hampers the economic interest of any caste, then the elders of dominant caste interfere in that process. But this does not hold good in the case of agriculture and trading in some goods which are deemed to be open occupations.

18.6 Sanskritization : Some Barriers

When any low caste group follows any important symbols or rituals then they face strong opposition even punishment from dominant high caste group. The members of dominant castes are also concerned regarding the imitation of customs of upper castes by the lower castes. They ignore the minor changes in style of life of lower castes. But if occupational changes disturb the village solidarity as well as social system then they look into the matter. If lower castes refuse to perform their traditional duties or imitate any important symbols of higher castes then they are punished severely by the higher castes. Some incidents may be described here for instance. Once a low caste man in a village of Gujrat dressed like a Patidar (high caste) and carried his hookah like a Patidar. He was caught, beaten and ordered “never to try to look like a Patidar again.” In 1936, the Noniyas (low caste of salt makers) of Senapur village in eastern Uttar Pradesh wore sacred threads. They were also beaten by their Kshatriya landlords and their sacred threads were torn off. A collective fine was imposed on them. Their attempt was direct and it was a public challenge. Later, the Noniyas wore sacred thread quietly and on an individual basis. Similarly, Ahirs (cowherds) of North India donned the sacred thread and claimed Kshatriya status. In North Bihar, the high caste Rajputs and Bhumihar Brahmins

prevented them which in turn led to violence and resort to the law courts. In 1930 the Kallar (a dominant caste) in the district of Ramnad (in the extreme south of India) imposed eight prohibitions on Harijans. When Harijans disregarded the order of Kallars then their huts were fired, granaries and property were destroyed (Srinivas 1998: 14-16). Similarly, in the first half of the twentieth century the Mahars of Maharashtra (Kothari 1995: 35) faced strong opposition when they claimed equal rights with caste Hindus and attempted to enter in three temples. Nadars (low caste) of Tamilnadu suffered severe social disabilities as a defiled caste. During the first of nineteenth century Nadar women were motivated by Christian missionaries and dressed like Nair (high caste) women which caused a wide spread riot in Christian areas in South India (ibid : 101-102).

18.7 Features of Sanskritization

The concept of sanskritization has emerged in 1952. Sociologists and social anthropologists have shown their interest regarding this issue. It is agreed that the concept of sanskritization is useful to analyse changes among villagers, especially in respect of cultural changes. Some basic features of Sanskritization are given below :

- (i) Sanskritization is a cultural paradigm – Culture consists of ideas, beliefs, traditions, rituals, practices and so on. When lower castes or non-caste groups change their own ways of life and imitate upper castes then it is a change of their cultural life.
- (ii) Sanskritization is generally an upward mobility for the caste. But mobility may take place without sanskritization. However, the mobility associated within sanskritization directs only in positional changes in the system. It does not lead to any structural changes in society.
- (iii) Unit of mobility is group, not individual or family.
- (iv) Sanskritization is a change directed to twice-born castes. There are more than one models for sanskritization. A particular group may imitate Brahmins as their model of change while in another village, they may follow Kshatriya or Vaishya model. Sanskritization is thus an endogenous source of social change during those periods of relatively closed Hindu social system.
- (v) From social-psychological point of view, sanskritization is a motivation toward ‘anticipatory socialization’ to the culture of a higher group in the hope of gaining its status in future.

- (vi) Sanskritization has two connotations – ‘historical specific’ and contextual specific’. In ‘historical specific’ sense, sanskritization indicates social mobility in different periods of history of caste-based Indian society. In contextual specific sense, the process of sanskritization varies from region to region, time to time depending on factors internal as well as external to the context. In many places lower castes imitate Kshatriyas; at other places, tribes imitate caste-Hindus; in a few exceptional cases, caste Hindus even higher castes imitate tribal ways of life (tribalization). In a few villages where Muslims are dominant group, Muslim culture is followed.
- (vii) The local dominant caste or group become the model for sanskritization. The concept of sanskritization is thus integrated with economic and political domination. But there is a gap between ritual rank of one caste and its political-economic position. The domination of political and economic field does not mean the highest ritual rank in locality. Further, each locally dominant caste has its own conception of Brahmin, Kshatriya or Vaishya models. Thus, the context of sanskritization differs not only in each model but also within the same model from region to region.
- (viii) Impurity or the gap between pure and impure can be removed or reduced through the process of sanskritization.
- (ix) The values of Sanskrit literature like ‘karma’, ‘dharma’, ‘moksha’, etc. are also adopted through the process of sanskritization.
- (x) Both sacred and secular elements of culture are associated with sanskritization. Lower castes imitate rituals and sacred customs of upper castes. Further they imitate consumption patterns also such as betel-chewing, wearing gold ornaments, shoes and other forms of dresses.
- (xi) Lower castes have a tendency to improve their status in caste hierarchy by adopting vegetarianism and teetotalism.
- (xii) Sanskritization is not an ‘one-way’ process. The lower castes take the rituals from higher castes and the higher castes even Brahmins also worship their deities (or local deities) along with the gods of all India Hinduism.
- (xiii) Some factors like occupational mobility, developed communication. Modern education and modern technology are conducive to Sanskritization. The British rule in India has provided a favourable condition for Sanskritization.
- (xiv) Sanskritization is a corporate activity which attacks hierarchy. It is therefore a process towards ‘general levelling of culture.’

- (xv) Dominant castes are also aware of the movements of sanskritizing castes. They take defensive mechanisms and maintain or create more status-distinctions than before which are generally beyond the reach of sanskritizing caste.

18.8 Sanskritization among Tribes and Scheduled Castes

According to Pramanick (1994 : 61-62) the process of caste formation among the tribes has been reported by scholars in different ways such as Hinduization, Aryanization, Sanskritization, Tribe-Caste continuum and so on. Ghurye (1963, cited in Pramanick 1994 : 57–58) considers tribals as ‘backward Hindus.’ To support his view Ghurye has presented ample data from the tribal communities of central India. According to Ghurye Kataris, Bhuiyas, Oraons, Khonds, Gonds, Korkus, Baigas, Kols, Bhils, Halbas, Bhuiyas etc. have substantially adopted Hinduism as their religion. In Bastar region, the main tribes participate in the Dussahara festival which is marked as a festival of Hindus. Srinivas (1998 : 7) has mentioned that the process of sanskritization is also found among tribes. Ghurye (1963, cited in Pramanick 1994 : 58) believes that the economic motivation plays an important impetus for the adoption of Hinduism. After adoption of Hindu religion, tribes can join in specialized types of caste-occupations which are in demand in society. Here is to be mentioned that Ghurye (ibid : 71) is also aware of the fact that the tribes of eastern region are culturally so different that his general conclusions regarding tribe-caste relationship are not applied to them. Similarly, Bose (1996 : 170) has opined “fact of economic affiliation to Hindu society may explain why the Juangs look upon Hindu culture as superior to their own.” Here is to be mentioned that the process, which is widely described as ‘sanskritization’, is discussed by Bose (1996 : 168–181) as “The Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption”. Bose has studied three tribes of Orissa – the Juangs, the Savaras and the Pauri Bhuiyas. The Juangs are originally hunters, food gatherers and jhum cultivators. The state has restricted hunting and that type of cultivation for the preservation of forests. The Juangs have been forced to adopt wet cultivation in the valleys between the hills. They work with bamboo and sell baskets, wicker-boxes etc. and start to earn money. Thus, they have been tagged to the larger body of Hindu society. In the matter of manufacture of bamboo articles, the Juangs enjoy monopoly because no other caste joins in that occupation from a fear of losing its own social position. Further, Bose (ibid : 33 – 35) has noticed that the Juangs have same specific patterns of rituals which are clear indicators of brahminical culture such as the bath, the fast, the use of turmeric and sun-dried rice etc. On the other hand, some practices

such as the sacrifice of cocks, worship of their own deities Burambura and Buramburi, absence of a separate category of priest bear the marks of their autonomous folk culture or tribal culture. The Oraons and Mundas of Chotanagpur have a strong inclination towards Hindu religion and ideas (ibid : 170).

Ahuja (1999 : 290-291) has mentioned that the process of acculturation is found among many tribes in different states. One of the examples of acculturation is Sabaras (tribe) in Ghorabar village in Orissa. The sabaras have discarded egalitarianism and accepted caste system. They are hierarchically divided into four segments on the basis of occupational distribution. Four divisions are like four 'varnas' in Hindu religion. These four segments are – hunting and fighting, worshipping, cultivation and dancing and singing respectively. In varna system, worshipping occupies first position but among the Sabaras, it occupies second place. Further, purity and pollution are absent among the Sabaras unlike caste system. They are divided into sub-groups like Hindu sub-caste groups. Each sabara sub-group has its own panchayat. Each sub-division of the Sabaras claims descent from three Sabaras who figure in Ramayana and Mahabharat. Hindu culture is prominent in the marriage customs of Sabaras. They have been accepted as 'caste' in the village not as tribe and have been assigned the occupation of wood-cutting. The model followed by the Sabaras for mobility is Vaishya not Brahminic. Ahuja (ibid) prefers the term acculturation to sanskritization. Pramanick (1994 : 59) has mentioned that, "The conferences of Social Workers and Anthropologists held in Calcutta in 1948 estimated that of the total 25 million tribes living in India, 20 million live in the plains and are assimilated with the rest of the people." This process of assimilation is not continued. The British rulers do not like the process of assimilation and have tried to check it. This is obviously helpful to their colonial interest. The colonial rulers, by separating tribals from non-tribals, have fulfilled their commercial and business interests. The British rulers have exploited the natural resources with the help of cheap labour provided by the tribes. They have tried to keep separate tribal areas so that tribes can act as human reservoir to meet the demands of European commercial interest. But this separation between tribals and non-tribals is detrimental to national integration (Pramanick 1994 : 64-66).

Shasmal (Pramanick and Manna 2006 : 172-179) has noticed the Bauris, one of the large scheduled castes of West Bengal. In West Bengal, Bauris are mainly agricultural labourers while in lower Orissa, they are a basket-making caste. The caste-rank of the Bauris is so low that they do not have fixed barber or Brahmin to perform their socio-religious ceremonies. The religious beliefs and practices of the Bauris do not differ much from the upper caste Hindus. They worship the goddess

Durga, Saraswati; celebrate festivals of colours, Rathjatra (Sacred Chariot) drawing ceremony) etc. Along with the upper caste Hindus. According to Shasmal (ibid : 179) though Bauris bear some traits of aboriginals, the process of sanskritization have upgraded their position.

Mahars are the original inhabitants of Maharashtra and are found almost in every village of Maharashtra. Mahars' hereditary duties are village watchman, sweeping the village roads, carrying death notices and messages to other villages, bringing fuel to the burning ground, removing the carcasses of dead cattle of the village. They have fixed duties in religious matters. They belong to the untouchable category. Public places like temples, schools etc. are closed to them. Some restrictions on clothing and ornaments are imposed on them. Their role in village festival is specified. Everything is the indicator of their low status. British rule has brought several socio-economic changes in India. Mahars, like many other castes, have got a chance to improve their condition. Here is to be noted that, Mahars have a record from the time of Shivaji as guards in the hill forts and soldiers in the artillery. Thus, Mahars have an old record of military connection which help them to put a claim of Kshatriya status. Joining in military is surely an outlet to the Mahars from their hereditary occupations. Their service in military continues in British period also. Zelliott (Kothari 1995 : 34-35) has mentioned that throughout the first period of the 20th century, numerous efforts including the practices of higher caste rituals (sanskritization) are made by Mahars for improving their caste status. Ultimately, they have become a strong united group under the leadership of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (ibid : 37).

The Nadars of Tamilnadu suffered socially and economically for a long time. As a ritually impure caste Nadars were forbidden to enter into Hindu temples, to use wells for caste-Hindus, to carry an umbrella, to wear shoes and golden ornaments, to milk cows, to walk in certain streets, to approach a Brahmin within twenty-four paces and so on. Women were imposed more restrictions. In early 19th century, European missionary's activities helped Nadars and a good number of Nadars were able to improve their economic conditions. Nadars gradually disassociated themselves from community's traditional occupation. During the latter part of the 19th century, the Nadars began to sanskritise their ways of life. Many of the Nadars men cropped their hair like the Brahmins, put on sacred threads, became vegetarians, named their children after the new sanskritic gods. Some Brahmin priests were found to provide their services to the wealthy Nadar temples and caste-ceremonies. Newly advanced Nadar claimed high Kshatriya status (ibid : 99-104).

18.9 Sanskritization and its Negative Aspects

The people of lower castes accept the customs and habits of higher castes (though the process of sanskritization). Some practices and habits of higher castes are considered good and functional in respect of present rational standard and are imitated by lower caste groups. But there are also some practices among higher castes which are not good; even those are degrading and dysfunctional according to modern rational standard. In the process of sanskritization, lower caste groups also accept those degrading customs and habits. For example, generally people of lower castes are more liberal in the spheres of marriage, sex and attitude towards women. They permit divorce and widow remarriage. On the other hand, Brahmins regard marriage indissoluble, prevent widows from remarriage and expect that widows shall maintain restrained ways of life. When a low caste group achieves higher rank in the process of sanskritization or its ways become more sanskritised, it adopts the marriage code of Brahmins. Further, a high caste Hindu wife is expected to treat her husband as deity. She is expected to perform a number of vratas (religious fasts) for the welfare of her husband and other members of her family. Lower caste groups also accept these practices. Sanskritization thus brings harshness towards women. It is a blind and irrational imitation of the customs, practices, habits and values of higher castes, especially Brahmins (Ahuja 1999 : 470-471).

Theoretically, sanskritization represents the cultural changes of the little as well as the great tradition. But majority of the empirical observations indicate that the process of sanskritization is mainly confined to little tradition only. So sanskritization though wider in scope remains restricted to a few castes in a specific region as castes vary from region to region. Any movement of sanskritization among the potters in any particular region does not mean that the movement will spread among the potters at national level. The concept of Sanskritization is limited within ritual-cultural sphere. In terms of social stratification, Sanskritization considers only caste hierarchy that is a ritual-cultural hierarchy. It does not explain other types of hierarchies in society. Further, Sanskritization is only an analytical tool in the context of group mobility and particularly with reference to dominant castes. It cannot help to understand mobility at the level of individual or the level of family. Srivastava (cited in Sharma 2002 : 203-204) has opined that the progressive family becomes a strong reference group for mobility. He has mentioned that the koiris of Barigaon do not imitate the behaviour patterns of the dominant caste chhatris but imitate the behaviour patterns of their own caste from a nearby village. There is no dominant

caste in the village Asalpur and the Raigars imitate the Raigars who live in Ahmedabad. Here 'city-culture' becomes prominent instead of religious adaptations (Doshi and Jain 2004 : 87; Sharma 2002 : 200-203)

It is to be stated that Sanskritization explains only socio-cultural mobility in a very limited way. The lower caste people adopt the cultural practices of upper caste groups and these practices no longer remain the symbols of status for the upper castes. Sanskritization is the positional changes within the caste system and not of the system. In the present situation, on the one hand dominant castes change their strategies for the perpetuation of their dominance (Sharma 2008: 327-328), and on the other hand, some castes like Jatavas of Agra find Sanskritization no longer attractive and have decided to politicise themselves to extract greater dividends (ibid: 218). In modern India, the concept of dominant caste becomes gradually irrelevant. The concept of ritual hierarchy is replaced by professional status and party association. In developed villages, dominant caste is no longer considered as reference model for Sanskritization. Some American scholars have applied reference group theory to analyse social change in India. Doshi and Jain (2004 : 88-89) have opined that reference group theory is more comprehensive than dominant caste theory. The process of Sanskritization, at least as depicted by Srinivas (1998 : 1-48), explains social mobility as well as social change only in Indian context where caste system exists. It is not applicable to other societies. Sanskritization does not explain the adoption of non-sanskritic tradition. (Ahuja 1999 : 61).

Urge of Sanskritization sometimes produces psychological strains. If any group, especially very small community, does not succeed to raise its status after a long period of attempt, then their status necessarily creates an insecure and unsettled position in society. This is really a frustrating and painful situation for that group. In spite of this psychological cost, the process of Sanskritization always present in Hindu Society (Kothari 1995 : 12-13). As the process of Sanskritization is neither smooth nor automatic, it creates tensions, contradictions and inter-class hostility in society, manifestly or latently. It does not reduce economic inequalities nor it challenges caste hierarchy and dominant castes. Sanskritization does not fit for political analysis of the village community (Sharma 2002 : 58). In contemporary India, democratisation has become a new political as well as social value. So, the hierarchical transformation of lower castes through the process of Sanskritization is becoming weak. Youths belonging to lower castes have started to believe that they have their own dignity, they have legitimate rights-nobody can deny that. So they do not need to follow higher castes (Doshi and Jain 2004 : 89).

18.10 De-Sanskritization and Re-Sanskritization

It has been observed that new social situation and value system have changed the model of sanskritization. In Gujrat, Kolis and Patidars imitated Rajputs (Kshatriya). But now they prefer to imitate business model (Vaishya). Some years ago, a man of Baria (lower caste) was victimized as he tried to imitate the style of Patidar castes. But now-a-days such emulation is ignored. Another pattern of sanskritization is found now-a-days. In Uttar Pradesh Koris refuse to accept water from others even from the Brahmins. They consider Brahmins less pure than themselves. Many other lower castes reject some models of the great tradition in their process of Sanskritization; such process of deliberate reaction against Sanskritization is called De-Sanskritization. De-Sanskritization may be a reflection of anti-Brahmin movements in South India and an expression of politicization (Singh 2004 : 55-57).

Last process of Sanskritization may be called re-Sanskritization. A westernized or modernized group discards many of the cultural symbols of modernization such as dress, spoken language, food habits, style of living and accepts traditional sanskritic symbols and beliefs. Before independence, the Rajputs of eastern Uttar Pradesh were identified with the western culture and ideologies. But after independence they deliberately accept orthodox Hindu culture (ibid : 56).

18.11 Summary

The social aspect of Sanskritization is much more important from the view point of change. The low caste individuals are inclined towards Sanskritization because in that way they can elevate their social status and get higher status in caste hierarchy. Economic betterment and Sanskritization is another related issue. The lower caste people have given up un-cleaned occupation to raise their economic status because clean trades are a symbol of social light. Sanskritization also can be observed in the religious field. Like Brahmins many of the lower castes people put on sacred thread. They also go to their temple regularly and perform Arti and Bhajan. They have left prohibited food and un-cleaned occupation. Even they have specialised in performing ceremonies like Brahmins. The living patterns of lower castes have also Sanskritized. Like higher caste they also get Pucca houses built for them. Now they sit along with the higher caste on the cots without any fear or hesitation. They also keep their houses clean and put on dresses like higher castes.

18.12 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) What do you mean by sanskritization?
- (ii) What is Brahminization?
- (iii) Are tribes eager to become sanskritized in present situation?
- (iv) How does sanskritization produce psychological strain?
- (v) Does sanskritization occur automatically?
- (vi) How do dominant castes influence the process of sanskritization?
- (vii) How do Scheduled Castes become sanskritized?
- (viii) Mention some barriers in the process of sanskritization.
- (ix) Examine the negative aspects of sanskritization.

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (x) What is meant by de-sanskritization and re-sanskritization?
- (xi) Differentiate between Brahminization and sanskritization?
- (xii) Write a note on the process of sanskritization among the tribes.
- (xiii) Mention the features of sanskritization.
- (xiv) Write a critical note on sanskritization.

18.13 Suggested Readings

- (i) Ahuja, Ram. (1999) : Society in India : Concepts, Theories and Recent Trends, Jaipur : Rawat Publications.
- (ii) Ahuja, Ram. (2006) : Indian Social System, Jaipur : Rawat Publication
- (iii) Bose, Nirmal Kumar. (1996) : The Structure of Hindu Society, Hyderabad : Orient Longman.
- (iv) Dosi, S. L. and Jain, P. C. (2004) : Rural Sociology, Jaipur : Rawat Publications.
- (v) Ghurye, G. S. (1963) : The Scheduled Tribes, Bombay : Popular Prakashan.

- (vi) Hardgrave, Robert L. Jr. (1995) : “Political Participation and Principal Solidarity : The Nadars of Tamilnad” in Rajni Kothari (ed.) Caste in Indian Politics, Hyderabad : Orient Longman. PP 96-120.
- (vii) Kothari, Rajni (1995) : “Introduction” in Rajni Kothari (ed.) Caste in Indian Politics, Hyderabad (AP) : Orient Longman. PP 3-26
- (viii) Pocock, D. F. (1955) : “The Movement of Castes” in Man, May 1955, PP 71-72.
- (ix) Pramanick Swapan. (1994) : Sociology of G.S. Ghurey, Jaipur : Rawat Publication
- (x) Rao, C. N. Shankar (2003) : Sociology : Primary Principles, New Delhi : S. Chand and Company Ltd.
- (xi) Sharma, K. L. (2002) : Social Stratification and Mobility, Jaipur : Rawat Publications.
- (xii) Sharma, K. L. (2008): Indian Social Structure and Change, Jaipur : Rawat Publications.
- (xiii) Shasmal, Kartik Chandra. (2006) : “The Bauris of West Bengal : A Socio-Economic Study” in Swapan Kumar Pramanick and Samita Manna (eds.) Exploration in Anthropology : P. K. Bhowmick and His Collaborative Research Works, West Bengal : The Institute of Social Research and Applied Anthropology. PP 172-179
- (xiv) Singh, Yogendra (2004) : Modernization of Indian Tradition, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (xv) Srinivas, M. N. (1998) : Social Change in Modern India. Hyderabad (A.P.) : Orient Longman.
- (xvi) Srivastava, Sahab Lal (1969) : “The Concept of Sanskritization : A Re-evaluation”, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol 4, No. 16, April 19, PP 695-698.
- (xvii) Zelliott, Eleanor. (1995) : “Learning the use of Political Means : The Mahars of Maharashtra” in Rajni Kothari (ed.) Caste in Indian Politics, Hyderabad : Orient Longman. PP 27-65.

Unit - 19 □ Urbanization

Structure

19.1 Objectives

19.2 Introduction

19.3 Urbanization: Definition

19.4 Prerequisites of Urbanization

19.5 Difference between Rural and Urban areas

19.6 Characteristics of Urban Community

19.7 Urbanization in India

19.8 Urban Evolution

19.9 Urbanization and Theories

19.10 Urbanization and Social Change

19.11 Summary

19.12 Questions

19.13 Suggested Readings

19.1 Objectives

- To introduce various socio-economic theories which explain process of urbanization and its outcomes.
- To create an understanding about the organization of space in terms of land uses at the city level
- To understand the hierarchical arrangements of urban settlement

19.2 Introduction

Urbanization (or urbanisation) refers to the population shift from rural to urban areas, the corresponding decrease in the proportion of people living in rural areas, and the ways in which societies adapt to this change. It is predominantly the process

by which towns and cities are formed and become larger as more people begin living and working in central areas.

Although the two concepts are sometimes used interchangeably, urbanization should be distinguished from urban growth. Whereas urbanization refers to the proportion of the total national population living in areas classified as urban, urban growth strictly refers to the absolute number of people living in those areas. It is predicted that by 2050 about 64% of the developing world and 86% of the developed world will be urbanized. That is equivalent to approximately 3 billion urbanites by 2050, much of which will occur in Africa and Asia. Notably, the United Nations has also recently projected that nearly all global population growth from 2017 to 2030 will be by cities, with about 1.1 billion new urbanites over the next 10 years.

19.3 Urbanization : Definition

Urbanization denotes excessive growth of cities. It is a part of developmental process though it varies from society to society. In backward societies, process of urbanization is slow but in developing countries, the process of urbanization becomes gradually faster. Newly established industries and other commercial developments create various types of jobs. As a result, a large section of population concentrates in urban areas. A number of terms such as city, community or urban-community, urbanism, urban areas, urbanisation are used by the urban sociologists. Urbanization is a continuous and universal process in all types of developed and developing countries. Men create city – it is a product of men and their achievement. It is a centre of any civilised society. “Civilization means the city and the city means civilization.” By becoming a member of a city, a man becomes citizen. A city is regarded as an epitome of culture. As a manufactured environment culture surrounds the city man. A city is described as an environment of bricks, steel, mortar and cement. Bridges, tunnels, streets, subway platforms, monuments and buildings have detached a city from a village (Rao 2004 : 440-441).

The term ‘urban’ is popularly used but it is defined in various ways by the urban sociologists. They have used different criteria to define the concept urban and also a community as urban. Urban community life represents the city-life. City is not only a collection of individuals. City is a state of mind, a body of customs, an organised attitudes and sentiments. It is a geographic area inhabited by closely settled population whose occupations are non-agriculture. Some urban sociologists have

defined city as a place with a minimum of ten thousand population. The 1991 census has defined a city or urban place on the basis of following criteria.

- (i) An urban area must have minimum five thousand people.
- (ii) At least 75% male workers remain engaged in non-agricultural occupation.
- (iii) Density of population must be minimum one thousand per square mile.
- (iv) All places with a municipality, corporation, cantonment board or notified town area are also regarded as urban area.

The definition of urban area is varied from countries to countries. For example, in Japan, Urban areas are considered as a place having minimum 30,000 inhabitants. In U.S.A., this number is 3,500; in Netherlands and Holland, this number is 20,000 and the number is just 2000 in Austria, Germany and France. So the size of population is not important for a definition of urban area. The important aspects of urban area are the characteristics of its inhabitants. Urban area is marked by heterogeneous population, complex division of labour, impersonal secondary relations, dependence on formal social control, predominance of non-agricultural occupations, formalised system of local government and so on (ibid : 441-445).

Kar (2009: 86) has mentioned that the definitions of urbanization have indicated three dimensions of urbanization. These are - (i) the process of urbanization gradually includes its country sides. In other words, country sides are acquiring physical characteristics of urban areas. (ii) Urbanization is a process of population concentration. (iii) Urbanization is a process of changing of behaviour patterns. To define urban areas, the United Nations have applied five main criteria. These are (i) Population size; (ii) Local self-government; (iii) Certain urban characteristics such as public water supply, electricity, sewerage, police station, hospital, market, educational institutions, courts of law, local means of transport and so on; (iv) certain administrative functions; and (v) Predominant economic activity that is majority of the people in urban area must be engaged in non-agricultural occupations (Kuppuswamy1984 : 338).

19.4 Prerequisites of Urbanization

Urbanization is a process of creating and developing urban communities. Urban community is characterized by a dominance of commercial, industrial and service occupations. Extensive division of labour and its corresponding social complexity;

high density of population; development of coordination etc. are some basic features of urban community. Dasgupta (2011: 197-198) has mentioned that urban communities are originated from rural communities and some strategic features of rural communities become the important prerequisites of the growth of urban communities as well as urbanization.

(i) Agriculture and Domestication of Animals

The most important and fundamental rural contribution for the growth of towns is to provide food. In details, increasing efficiency in food production, favourable geographic condition and a developed technical competence in raising crops are the essential pre-conditions of urban communities. Surplus of food allows extension of trade and commerce.

(ii) Improvements in tools, weapons and technical methods

Surplus food production leads to the development of other occupations to meet the demand of other practical purposes such as pottery making, weaving, melting of metals and their fabrication into other instruments and so on. Perfection of military weapons is particularly important because defence of the community was an important concern of early urban experience.

(iii) Complex social Organization

The two main features of rural community are – (a) primary, personal relationships and (b) powerful kinship organization. But urbanization inherently involves larger social aggregations, cultural differences within populations, problems of coordinating a variety of activities, resolving inevitable disputes and controversies etc. The kin or familial organization of rural society is succeeded by civil organization in urban society. Civil organization provides a clear-cut public, community wide form of coordination and control. A central, universally applicable and legitimate control system is developed. Gradually city becomes prominent and visible.

19.5 Difference between Rural and Urban Areas

For centuries, rural and urban areas have been recognised for human habitation. The two are dependent on each other, especially in the field of economy. There are also a lot of difference between them in terms of occupation, style of life, social relations and cultural ethos. But the distinction is very prominent in case of social environment. In urban areas, many aspects of natural environment are modified or

eliminated for the purpose of community living. But the distinction between rural and urban communities is always changing. In fact rural community stands in one end and the big metropolis at the other end. There are many types of cities between two ends. Generally, city is relatively dense. Major portions of the these population maintain their livelihood from non-agricultural activities and depend on the rural communities for food and agro-products (Bhattacharyya 2014 : 236).

Following are the important criteria for distinguishing the urban social world from the rural social world (Desai 1997 : 10-12; Rao 2004 : 456-457; Sharma 2002 : 114-116).

(i) Occupational Differences

Majority of the urban community are involved in non-agricultural occupation while in rural society, majority of the rural community are involved in agriculture. People of urban area engaged in manufacturing, mechanical pursuits, trade, commerce various professional job like lawyer, doctor, teaching and so on.

(ii) Environmental Differences

Urban community is isolated from nature. Man-made environment dominates over nature. Rural community has direct and close relation with nature.

(iii) Difference in the Size of Community

Urbanity and size of community are positively correlated. In the same country and at the same time, the size of urban community is much larger than the rural community.

(iv) Differences in the Density of the Population

In comparison with rural area, the density of population is higher in urban area in same country and at the same period.

(v) Differences in Social Stratification Pattern

Distinct patterns of life-style are found in urban and rural areas. Rural areas are dominated by agrarian relations while urban areas are dominated by industrial relations. So urban-industrial social stratification is characterized by industrialists, working class and various professional groups. As a result urban-industrial social stratification consists of the following classes : (i) upper class; (ii) upper middle class; (iii) lower middle class and (iv) working class. These classes are formed on the basis of occupation and income.

(vi) Differences in the Social Mobility and in the Direction of Migration

Occupation and other forms of social mobility are comparatively more intensive in urban areas. More people are migrated from rural to urban areas. Only at the time of social catastrophe (like war etc.), the migration from the city to country is greater than from the country to the city.

(vii) Characteristics of the Population

Compared to the rural populations, urban communities are more heterogeneous in the same country and at the same time rural communities are homogeneous in character.

(viii) Differences in the System of Social Interaction

Compared to rural people, urban community has wider area of interaction system. Secondary, impersonal, casual and short-lived relations; standardized formality in relationship; greater complexity and superficiality dominate interactional pattern in urban areas. Personal and relatively durable relations; primary contacts, simplicity get importance in rural interactional pattern.

(ix) Means of Social Control

Generally, it is perceived that informal means of social control such as norms, customs, folkways and mores are sufficient to regulate rural people. But formal means of social control such as law, legislation, police and court are also needed with the informal means of social control to regulate urban people.

(x) Nature of Families

Families in rural areas are very influential and dominant institution. People are bound by the family-traditions. In urban areas, families are said to be unstable. In rural areas average size of household is larger than urban areas. Rural people are more conservative than urban people. They are less class-conscious. On the other hand, there is more class-conscious and class-conflict among urban people. In short, rural society is a simple in-group society while urban society is a complex multi-group society.

(xi) Ideas of Career

Finally, it is to be stated that women in rural areas are mostly tradition bound. They are not career-conscious. They are submissive and obedient. On the other hand, women in urban areas are career-conscious.

19.6 Characteristics of Urban Community

(i) Urban community is characterized by secondary relations that is face-to-face, friendly, intimate relations are not present among urban communities. People rarely take personal interests in others' concerns. Even the neighbours are unknown to each other. Urban people are motivated by personal interests. Formal relationships dominate over informal relationships (ii) Informal means of social control such as norms, customs, traditions, religion are not effective in cities. Formal means of social control such as law, police and court play greater role to control human behaviours. People are more individualistic in their attitude. (iii) Urban society is heterogeneous in character. Urban people differ significantly from each other. Their ways of thinking, behaving, acting habits, morals, occupations, religious beliefs and practices, food and dress-habits are different from each other (iv) Large-scale division of labour and specialization are found in cities . As a result, occupational divisions are greater in urban areas which cause different kinds of workers and occupational groups such as skilled, unskilled, semiskilled workers; technicians; white-collar workers of different levels; different types of businessmen, administrators and politicians; artists and so on. Work is divided among people on the basis of talents, efficiency, opportunities, age, sex, interests etc. (v) In urban areas, an individual's position is determined by his or her achievements, not on birth. Intense social mobility, that is the movement of people from one social status to another, is found in urban areas. (vi) Varieties in types of urban population have provided a solid ground for the emergence of voluntary associations. People become the members of a number of associations, which are called secondary groups, in order to fulfil their interests. (vii) Heterogeneous characteristics of a city make the inhabitants of city to develop a spirit of tolerance. Urban dwellers have to adjust different types of cultures which cause greater degree of tolerance. The spirit of tolerance gives the strength of unity in diversity to the life in a city. Distinction between private and public is sharp in the lives of city. City regulates public behaviour and ignores private aspects (Rao 2004 : 442–444).

Some scholars have mentioned some other characteristics of a city which are actually negative aspects of urban community. Cities are places of heterogeneous communities unlike villages. Diversity in cultures, religions and professions are common in cities. Feeling of 'one-ness' is not found among city dwellers. This feeling is also absent among the members of family. Members of same family may become the members of separate clubs and association. Impact of western cultures

is greater in urban areas. As a result, incidence of pre-marital and extra-marital sexual relationships are more prevalent in urban areas. Different types of crimes such as smuggling, fraudulence, kidnapping, sexual abuse, murder, rape etc. are much noticed in urban areas. Social dis-organisation, marital problems, are very common in almost all cities. Ahuja (2009 : 296 – 305) has mentioned that some problems such as housing and slums; crowding; water supply and drainage; transportation and traffic; power shortage; sanitation and pollution; different types of crime are associated with urbanization. Some factors like migration, industrial growth, defective town planning are responsible for urban-problems. These problems may be overcome through proper planning and systematic development of urban centres.

19.7 Urbanization in India

It is a very popular statement that India is a land of villages but India has a long tradition of urban living since ancient times. Archaeological discoveries have shown that India is equated with the world's oldest urban civilizations that is the Indus Valley civilization. Nearly 5000 years back, Indian people have built a city civilization which extends from Ropar in Haryana in the north to Rangepur in Kathiawar in the South and up to Baluchistan in the West. The two main cities of this civilization are Harappa and Mohanjodaro which are now in Sindh (Pakistan). The other important sites of this civilization are Kot Diji (Sindh, Pakistan), Kalibangan (Rajasthan), Ropar (Punjab, India), Lothal (Gujrat). Lothal is also important as port-town. Cities of indus-valley civilization were well-planned with drainage and sewerage. There were wide streets with large brick-built houses. Each house consisted of a number of rooms, courtyard, bathroom (Dube 2001 : 4; Kuppuswamy 1984 : 335-336).

It is estimated that for a thousand of years after the Aryan invasion, India has not developed any city. Except it, the urban tradition of India is continued. There are several types of urban centres in ancient India-political capitals; military towns; manufacturing and trading towns of various sizes (large one is known as nagar, commercial parts by rivers or the sea is known as pattan, small size trading centres called kheta); educational and intellectual centres like Nalanda, Taxila, and many others; major temple towns and centres of pilgrimage like Mathura, Brindaban, Dwarika, Puri, Rameshwaram, Haridwar, Prayag, Varanasi, Gaya, Tirupathi and so on. Different ruling dynasties have developed the capitals of their kingdoms. They have built new forts and also renovated old forts. Followers of all major religions of India such as Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and Sikhism have

built their temples mosque or church for worship and pilgrimage. Several scholars like Kautilya, Vatsayana and travellers like Magasthanese have described cities and the life-style of the men of cities. Muslim rulers have built the great cities of Agra, Delhi, Lahore in the North and Golkonda, Bijapur, Hyderabad, Srirangapatnam in the South. Further, in medieval period, a number of small or big towns have become famous for their handicrafts and trade; for example, Dacca for fine muslins, Murshidabad for silk, Krishnanagar for clay modelling, Golkonda for diamond and jewellery, Agra for perfumes and marble works. During British regime, some cities like Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, and New-Delhi have become important for administration and also for centres of learning and socio-political activities. After independence, some old cities have been extended and some new cities have been established. Some cities such as Rourkela, Durgapur, Bhilai, Chittaranjan, Sindri, Vishakapatnam etc. have come to be known as industrial cities. Some cities like Haldia, Paradeep, Tuticorin have been developed as port cities. Cities like Faridabad, Rajpur, Nilokheri, Kalyani, and others have been developed to rehabilitate the refugees who came from Pakistan during partition. Some cities have been developed as capital of different states such as Chandigarh, Bhopal, Bhuvaneshwar, Hyderabad and so on. Some cities have become centres of attraction due to the vast employment opportunities such as Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Kanpur, Pune, Dhanbad, Bangalore, Ahmedabad and so on (Dube 2001 : 96; Kuppuswamy 1984 : 336; Rao 2004 : 446-447).

According to census figures 10.5 percent people lived in urban areas in 1901 and 1911. It went up to 12 percent in 1931. Since then, there was a steady growth in urban population. It went up to 14 percent in 1941, 17 percent in 1951, 18 percent in 1961, 20 percent in 1971 and 23.3 percent in 1981. Industrial development and changing attitude of middle-class people were the causes of rapid growth of urban population. Though the size of urban population has increased the number of towns has decreased in 1961. It is due to the new attempt of definition.

In India, after 1961, cities are divided into four parts on the basis of population size. These are –

Class I. Metropolitan Cities : Urban areas with 10 lakh and above population.
Class II. Big Cities : Urban areas with population between 50,000 and 1 lakh. Class III. Large Towns : Urban areas with population between 20,000 and 50,000.

Class IV. Small Towns : Urban areas with population between 5,000 and 20,000.

Because of this new definition of town, many towns have lost their status of town. Now the total number of towns in India is 7935. (Kuppuswamy 1984 : 337; Dube 2001 : 97; Rao 2004 : 445, Google.Com, 22.06.2019, 21:15).

19.8 Urban Evolution

The theory of urban sociology has experienced a rough, discontinuous evolution of urban development. This evolution is not inevitable but a reflection of increasing social complexity. This complexity emerges from a specific socio-cultural conditions of given historical periods and from particular geographic factors. The evolution of urban development is divided into three parts – the first urban wave : 4500 B.C. – 500 A.D. The Second urban wave : 1000 A.D. - 1800 A.D. And the third urban wave: 1800 A.D. onwards (Dasgupta 2011 : 199-203)

(i) The First Urban Wave : 4500 B.C. – 500 A.D

Gordon Childe (cited in Dasgupta 2011: 200-201) believes that the first urban society was developed in Neolithic period on the Afro-Eurasian land. The earliest urban centres appeared in the favourable environments of semitropical river valleys of Tigris, Euphrates, Nile, Ganges and Yangtze. Surplus agricultural production was the prime factor of transformation of rural society into urban society. The most striking features of cities during this phase were - defence, worship and commerce. Merchants became prominent and some industries like textile, pottery, metal working and the production of alloys such as copper, the crafts of jewel working, furniture making, construction (public buildings and temples) were developed. The final contribution of first urban wave was the emergence of complex diversified arts - those are sculpture, architecture, painting and decoration, music, drama, dance and literary forms like dialogue, comedy, tragedy, verse and so on.

In India, this phase was witnessed during the period of Indus-valley civilization. It was estimated that this civilization originated around 2500 B.C., flourished by 2300 B.C. and declined around 1700 B.C. Extensive excavations proved that this civilization was enriched by different ethnic streams such as Proto-Australoid, Mediterranean, Alpine, Mongoloid and so on. Several animals like the humped bull, the buffalo, the camel, the elephant had evidently been domesticated. Hinterlands of this urban areas grew cotton and vast quantities of cereals which were stored in the spacious granaries built in the cities. Many people were engaged in profitable commercial activities within the country and also outside of the country. Many of

them were rich and used ornaments of gold, silver, precious stones etc. Arts and crafts were also flourished during that time. People worshipped lord Shiva and Mother Goddess. Historians opined that the foundations of Indian civilization were laid during this phase (Dube 2001 : 4-5).

(ii) The Second Urban Wave : 1000 – 1800 A.D.

With the emergence of new political and economic consciousness, the second urban wave started in the latter part of tenth century. The new city which was primarily a European phenomenon was principally organized in terms of six criteria – economic features, rise of the bourgeois, the urban legal innovations, the University, ecological structure and the stratification of art. The three significant economic development during this phase were (a) improvement in agricultural methods; (b) expanded trade in manufactured goods (cloth in particular) and promoted development of basic handicraft industries; (c) wide-ranging trade transformed barter economics into money economics. Merchants started to demand political safeguards and by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries they became a respected and powerful middle class. Gradually, cities became independent from feudal regulations and restrictions. Legal system became strong. Institutions (Universities) for higher and specialized education were established. Universities met the increasing demand of civil professional services. During this phase, population started to increase. Congestion led to emergence of urban slum problems. The arts of first urban wave were in general a public enterprise in which most of the citizens could participate. The arts were the expressions of dominant religious activities. In latter part of second urban wave arts came under the control of private enterprises (Dasgupta 2011: 201-202).

(iii) Third and Current Urban Wave : 1800 AD to the Present

The economic and political success of urban communities in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries led to further social changes that indicated the emergence of the modern urban region. Four important features of third as well as current urban waves are – expansion and separation of industrial units, Cooperative capitals, the urban-national axis and ecological complexities. Large scale heavy industries were established in this phase and workplace was separated from home. Joint stock companies, Banks, Corporations etc. played an important role for the development of urban-economy. It was found that with the rise of modern urban features, city became the centre of wealth. Gradually city became an arena of competitive power groups and the new locus of politics. New modern class structure developed with the consequence of technological and economic developments with the expansion of

urban region, differentiated central commercial administrative area, residential districts and numerous retail areas were established. Further, arts, recreation, education developed and different types of deviant behaviours like crime, gambling, drug addiction, prostitution etc. arose within urban set up (Dasgupta 2011 : 202 – 203).

19.9 Urbanization and Theories

Theory means a set of propositions about relationships between facts. Urban theories consist of essential features of the urban environment. Some urban theories such as theories of contrast focus on comparisons between rural nature and urban nature. Redfield (cited in Dasgupta 2011 : 204-207) has focused on folk culture and urban culture. His study on four different areas in Yucatan peninsula of Mexico has revealed the significant contrasts between a folk and an urban culture. He has studied a tribal village (Tusik), a peasant village (Chankom), a town (Dizitas) and a large city (Merida). It has been found that the peasant village as compared with the tribal village; the town as compared with the peasant village; the city compared as with town are less isolated; more heterogeneous, characterized by a more complex division of labour, have a more complete developed money economy have professional specialists who are more secular and less sacred, have less organized kinship system and less effective in social control, less religious, allow greater degree of freedom.

Three main features are prominent in urban society – cultural diversity, increase in secularization and greater degree of individualization. The homogenous nature of folk society that is “the same kind of people are doing the same kind of thing” creates an unambiguous, monolithic social structure. With the growth of urban society, this homogeneous character of people is replaced by heterogeneous character. As a result, conflict and disorganization are the inevitable marks of urban culture. Urban culture is also dominated by secular values. Secularism is such a factor which causes to lessen the importance of religion in society. Rational and practical judgements get importance in urban society. Further urbanization and individualization have positive correlation. Urban people enjoy more individuality than rural people. The extended families of rural areas become small and nuclear in urban areas. Finally, it is to be stated that this theory is not only the theory of contrast but also an indication of evolutionary changes. Later, some scholars have criticised Redfield from different perspective but Redfield has pointed out some important features of urban areas (ibid). Emile Durkheim (cited in Ritzer 2000 : 186), a French sociologist, has developed a model of contrasting types – mechanical solidarity and organic

solidarity. Mechanical solidarity, found in typical primitive society, refers to social bonds which are constructed on the basis of resemblances. Common beliefs, customs, rituals, symbols are the basic criteria of these resemblances. Such solidarity is mechanical because the people who participate in it (living in traditional society) are almost identical in major respects and are united almost automatically. In contrast, organic solidarity, a feature of heterogeneous society, describes a social order that is based on differences among people. Like the organs of a body, people depend more on one another to fulfil their needs. This type of solidarity depends on complex division of labour in which people engage in different types of occupations and depend on others to meet their basic demands. In other words, people of different categories perform varieties of tasks to fulfil society's needs and they are interdependent upon one another.

Tonnies (cited in Kar 2009 : 80-81) has talked about two kinds of group-Gemeinschaft (found in village) and Gesellschaft (found in town). Tonnies has used the term Gemeinschaft to describe the rural areas and its habitants. Social life is characterized by intimate, private relationships. Members are bound by common language and tradition. They recognize common goods – common evils; common friends – common enemies; carry a sense of 'we-ness' and 'our-ness'. In contrast Gesellschaft indicates a totally different style of life. By its very nature Gesellschaft allows people to become more self-centered. Sense of 'we-ness' is declined, people become more rational and more calculating. In Gesellschaft, the natural social institutions of kinship, neighbourhood and friendship are predominant; in Gemeinschaft, all these forms of associations tend to decline. In Gesellschaft, each person is known in terms of a particular role and service provided such as teacher, butcher and so on.

Along with theories of contrast, theories of deduction are frequently used to explain urban society. Louis Wirth, George Simmel are the main proposers of this theory. Wirth's (cited in Dasgupta 2011 : 208) remarkable proposition 'urbanism as a way of life' has emphasized on three assumptions from which other propositions are deduced: size, density and heterogeneity. Urban characteristics are based on these three basic criteria. The first two are mainly ecological characteristics and the third one is sociological. Size, the principal ecological characteristic of the city, is the indicator of large number of populations which includes a wide range of individual variation in status and ethnic heritage. Urban social situations weaken the kinship bond and neighbourhood bond. The limitation in personal interaction leads to segmentation of social contacts and less intimacy. In term, urbanity increases superficiality, anonymity and the transitory characteristics. Density, another

characteristic of city, intensifies the need of specialization and differentiation of occupations. Heterogeneity destroys the narrow divisions of groups and introduces a more complex pattern of social stratification. The contact between people of different backgrounds leads to sophistication and cosmopolitanism which are considered the typical of urbanity. Heterogeneity also leads to greater mobility both geographical and social. Heterogeneity also produces a certain amount of social levelling. This levelling is accomplished by means of the standardization of consumer goods, beliefs, social intercourse and so on.

Another proposer of deductive theory is George Simmel (1964, cited in Macionis and Parrillo 2011 : 125-126). According to him, compared with rural society, urban society demands greater punctuality and exactness from urban residents. If an individual wants to survive in city, he or she needs to be more rational and precise and less impulsive. Urban people are sophisticated and intellectual. Rationality is associated with advanced economic division of labour which requires a universal means of exchange. Money performs that vital task. He believes that money is the base of development of metropolis.

19.10 Urbanization and Social Change

Rao's (1992 : 487-509) study has revealed that the process of urbanisation leads to certain changes in society. These changes depend on several factors such as attitude of people who live at near-by villages, relationship between town and its surrounding villages, the location of the city, type of the city and so on. There are some villages in which a good number of people work in far-off cities even in overseas cities. They live there and visit natal villages occasionally. But they send money regularly to their families and invest their earnings in building houses within the village. In such villages, urban employment itself becomes a symbol of higher social prestige. Further, the city where an emigrant is employed and the nature of his job become additional criteria of status-differentiation. Rao (1992 : 488) has mentioned that a good number of people from the villages of Gujrat are engaged in jobs in different cities of Africa and Britain. They have built fashionable houses in their natal villages; invested money on land and industry; donated money for library, establishment of educational institutions and trusts. Villagers feel urban impact though villages are not physically situated near the cities.

The second type of urban impact is seen in those villages which are close to an industrial town. If any industrial town, like Bhilai, comes up in the midst of villages

then some villages are totally uprooted while the lands of others are partially acquired. Influx of immigrant workers stimulates a demand for houses and market inside the villages and create some problems regarding relationships between the native residents and the immigrants. The growth of metropolitan cities accounts for the third type of urban impact on the surrounding villages. During the time of expansion, metropolitan city includes its surrounding villages, In general, these villagers seek urban employment. Some of them may involve dairy-farming, poultry keeping and so on. They may seek employment in the city and start commenting. They participate directly in the economic, political and social activities, and cultural life of the city (ibid : 488-490).

19.11 Summary

Urbanization may improve environmental quality as a result of numerous reasons. For instance, urbanization upsurges income levels which instigates the eco-friendly services sector and increases demand for green and environmentally compliant products. Furthermore, urbanization improves environmental eminence through superior facilities and better-quality living standards in urban areas as compared to rural areas. Lastly, urbanization curbs pollution emissions by increasing R&D and innovations. In his book *Whole Earth Discipline*, Stewart Brand argues that the effects of urbanization are primarily positive for the environment. First, the birth rate of new urban dwellers falls immediately to replacement rate and keeps falling, reducing environmental stresses caused by population growth. Secondly, emigration from rural areas reduces destructive subsistence farming techniques, such as improperly implemented slash and burn agriculture. Alex Steffen also speaks of the environmental benefits of increasing the urbanization level in “Carbon Zero: Imagining Cities that can save the planet”.

However, existing infrastructure and city planning practices are not sustainable. In July 2013 a report issued by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs warned that with 2.4 billion more people by 2050, the amount of food produced will have to increase by 70%, straining food resources, especially in countries already facing food insecurity due to changing environmental conditions. The mix of changing environmental conditions and the growing population of urban regions, according to UN experts, will strain basic sanitation systems and health care, and potentially cause a humanitarian and environmental disaster.

19.12 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) What do you mean by urbanization ?
- (ii) What is urban evolution ?
- (iii) Define Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft.
- (iv) What do you mean by current urban wave ?
- (v) Describe first urban wave ?
- (vi) What do you mean by current urban wave ?
- (vii) Describe the different types of urban centres in India.
- (viii) What is mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity ?
- (ix) Write a note on second urban wave.
- (x) Write a note on theory of deduction.

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (xi) Describe the Indus Valley Civilization ?
- (xii) Describe the features of urban community.
- (xiii) Discuss the pre-requisites of urbanization.
- (xiv) Write a note on urban waves.
- (xv) Differentiate between rural and urban areas.
- (xvi) Discuss the theories of contrast.
- (xvii) Discuss the impact of urbanization on social change ?

19.13 Bibliography

- (i) Ahuja, Ram. (2009) : Social Problems in India, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (ii) Bhattacharyya, D. C (2014) : Sociology, Kolkata : Vijaya Publishing House
- (iii) Childe, V. Gordon (1951) : Man Makes Himself, New York : New American Library

- (iv) Dasgupta, Samir. (2011) : ArthanaitikSamajtwatta, Delhi : Darling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd.
- (v) Desai, A. R. (1997): Rural Sociology in India, Bombay : Popular Prakashan.
- (vi) Dube, S. C. (2001) : Indian Society, New Delhi : National Book Trust, India
- (vii) Durkheim, Emile. (1893/1964) : The Division of Labour in Society, New York : Free Press
- (viii) Simmel, George. (1964) : “Metropolis and Mental Life” in K. Wolff (ed.) The Sociology of George Simmel, New York : Free Press. PP 409–424.
- (ix) Kar, P. B. (2009) : Sociology : The Discipline And Its Dimensions, Kolkata : New Central Book Agency (P) Ltd.
- (x) Kuppuswamy, B. (1984). Social Change in India, Ghaziabad (UP) : Vani Educational Books.
- (xi) Macionis, John J. and Parillo, Vincent N. (2011) : Cities and Urban Life, New Delhi : PHI Pvt. Ltd.
- (xii) Rao, C. N. Shankar (2004) : Sociology of Indian Society, New Delhi : S. Chand and Company Ltd.
- (xiii) Rao, M.S.A. (1992) : “Urbanization and Social Change” in MSA Rao (ed.) Urban Sociology in India, Hyderabad : Orient Longman. 487-509
- (xiv) Sharma, K. L.(2002) : Social Stratification and Mobility, Jaipur : Rawat Publication
- (xv) Tonnies, F. (1887) : Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, tr. And ed. By Loomis, C.P. (1940) : as Fundamental Concepts of Sociology, New York : American Book Company
- (xvi) Ritzer, George (2000) : Classical Sociological Theory, New Delhi : Mcgraw Hill
- (xvii) Wirth, Louis (1938) “Urbanism as a way of life” in American Journal of Sociology : PP 1-24
- (xviii) <http://www.google.com>, 22.06.2019, 21:15

Unit - 20 □ Westernization

Structure

- 20.1 Objectives**
- 20.2 Introduction**
- 20.3 Westernization : Origin and Concept**
- 20.4 Phases of Westernization in India**
- 20.5 Modernization**
- 20.6 Process of Westernization in India**
- 20.7 Westernization : Some features**
- 20.8 Impact of Westernization on India during British Rule**
- 20.9 Impact of Westernization in Indian Culture**
- 20.10 Westernization and Sanskritization**
- 20.11 Criticism**
- 20.12 Summary**
- 20.13 Questions**
- 20.14 Suggested Readings**

20.1 Objectives

- To understand the nature of social change in Indian society.
- Describe Hinduisation, Sanskritisation, Westernisation, Modernisation, Globalisation and Multiculturalism as social processes.
- Understand how these processes are responsible for social change in India.

20.2 Introduction

Like Sanskritization, westernization is an important process of social change. It has taken place in India as a result of the British rule. The 150 years British rule

produced some radical and lasting changes in Indian social set up. The Britishers brought with them new technology, knowledge, beliefs, values and institutions. For example, the introduction of Printing Press by them are produced many changes in the life of the Indians. The concept 'Westernization' is easy to understand but difficult to "Explain. We can define. Westernization is a process or changing life style of the Indians towards the west.

20.3 Westernization : Origin and Concept

The concept of Westernization is applied to indicate the certain changes in Indian society. M. N. Srinivas (1998 : 49) has used this term to describe the process of social and cultural mobility in traditional social structure of India. He (ibid) has remarked that, "British rule produced radical and lasting changes in Indian society and culture. It was unlike any previous period in Indian history as the British brought with them new technology, institutions, knowledge, beliefs and values." The British have laid the foundation of modern state in the nineteenth century. In other words, modernization has taken place in India during British rule through the process of survey of land, settlement of revenue, establishment of schools, colleges, police, army, law-courts, new bureaucracy, development of communication like railways, post, and telegraph and so on. Newspapers have made people of different parts of India to realise that they have common bond. In fact, the colonial rule has integrated the different segments of Indian society (Srinivas 1998 : 49; Doshi and Jain 2004: 90).

Some traditional customs such as suttee, female infanticide, human sacrifice, slavery have also been abolished during the first half of nineteenth century. All these changes are the result of British rule and Srinivas (ibid : 50) has used the term 'Westernization' to indicate the changes in a non-western country as a result of contact with a western one. Further, he (ibid : 51) has stated that westernization has brought fundamental changes in old institutions. In traditional India, only upper caste pupils can enter into schools and they are taught mostly traditional knowledge. Civil service and law courts are also similarly affected in traditional India. Westernization results the introduction of new schools and other institutions which are secular in character. In short, through the process of westernization a non-western country comes with the contact of western society and changes its technology, institutions, ideology and values. In India westernization is primarily meant the impact of British (Ahuja 2006 : 356-357).

20.4 Phases of Westernization in India

The impact of west in India has been discussed in five phases. The first phase has experienced a hostile contact with the conquest of Alexander, though successive centuries experience a peaceful interchange in the field of trade and Commerce. The second phase has begun by the end of the fifteenth century when Vasco de Gama arrives in 1498 A.D. Within a few years the Portuguese have occupied Goa. But the effects of west during these phases are relatively restricted. The third phase begins with the arrival of the East India Company in the eighteenth century. The phase of British rule is very important for the expansion of western cultures in India. The fourth phase begins in the nineteenth century. The British has exploited India economically and has become active to expand western cultures in social field. The fifth and last phase had begun after independence (Ahuja 1999 : 476 – 477). Western culture has brought four types of changes in Indian society. These are eliminative changes, addictive changes, supportive changes and synthetic changes. The eliminative changes indicate those changes which have been abolished from Indian culture, such as abolition of ‘suttee system’ (widow burning). India has adopted certain cultural traits from the British such as introduction of divorce in the Hindu marriage system, giving share to the daughters of their fathers’ property and so on. These changes are called addictive changes. Some changes have strengthened the values, beliefs or behaviour patterns which are still present in society. These values and beliefs are continued from pre-western era. These types of changes are supportive changes. The synthetic changes are created from existing culture and adopted culture. Some examples of these synthetic changes are emergence of residentially nuclear family but functionally joint family which continues to fulfil the social obligations towards parents and siblings. It is to be noted here some changes simultaneously may become supportive changes and eliminative changes. For example, introduction of textile industry. It contains supportive elements as it facilitates the production of cloth. But at the same time, it has eliminative character as it pushes back the traditional handloom and weaving industries. Finally, it is to be mentioned here that westernization has brought both positive (giving up evil social practices) and negative (communal disharmony) changes in Indian society (ibid : 478–479).

20.5 Modernization

It is found that westernization has brought a good number of modern changes

and then it can be called modernization. Some sociologists like Singh (2004 : 12), Lerner (cited in Srinivas 1998 : 53) prefer to use the term modernization to westernization. Modernization may start in various aspects of social structure. The process of modernization is commonly approached in terms of economic development. It brings certain changes in traditional societies. For example, education is viewed as essential for all. Without mass education democracy cannot be successful or 'good for all' cannot be achieved. Land reform is sought as a matter of social justice. It is a system of income re-distribution rather than an increase in total income. Establishment of modern civil service is an important characteristic of modernization. A kind of administrative ethic can be established through civil service by choosing full-time personnel on the basis of merit. Further, modernization must be considered in terms of economic growth. The process of industrialization is closely related with modernization. "Industrialization means an extensive use of inanimate sources of power for economic production and all that entails by way of organization, transportation, communication and so on." Many underdeveloped areas, which are mainly based on agricultural production, consider industrialization as factory production of non-agricultural products. Later, industrialization includes mechanization of agriculture and of the ancillary services of transportation and communication. (Moore 1978 : 95-97).

It is clear that modernization is that process of social change in which economic development is the principal component. Along with economic development modernization brings some changes such as secularisation of ideas, increase in geographical and social mobility, spread of scientific and technical education, transition from ascribed to achieved status, increase in material standards of living, high proportion of working face employed in secondary and tertiary level rather than primary level, high degree of urbanisation, high level of literacy, improvement in mass media, high expectancy rate of life and so on. In short, modernization brings certain changes in economic, political and cultural sphere. In economic field, modernization indicates the development of very high level of technology and systematic application of knowledge.

In political sphere, modernization means democratization. In cultural sphere, modernization brings new values in respect of education, religion, personal outlook and so on (Ahuja 1999 : 481-482). Daniel Lerner (cited in Srinivas 1998 : 53) has considered the term modernization as appropriate. The term westernization is unsuitable for several reasons. It is a term of local label. He has found that educated people in the Middle East, which is Lerner's area of interest, reject U.S.A and accept

USSR. The model which is imitated by the countries of Middle East may not be a Western country but Russia, Turkey, Japan or India. They have a strong anti-colonial feeling. The hostile attitude towards west may be expressed in several areas of culture and social life. Srinivas (1998 : 53) has opined that “The allergy to westernization is the result of Middle Eastern ethnocentrism, expressed politically in extreme nationalism, psychologically in passionate xenophobia.” According to him (ibid: 54) the term westernization is ethically neutral. It does not carry the implication of ‘good’ or ‘bad’ whereas modernization is normally used in the sense of good. But Singh (2004 : 12) believes that the term westernization is more value-loaded than modernization because it has a pejorative connotation. The term westernization is an indicator of former colonial domination on the countries of the East.

20.6 Process of Westernization in India

It was found that, at the initial stage the process of westernization was localised and peripheral. It was confined to middle class people in the cities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras which are now known as Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai respectively. Educational institutions were concentrated around those cities and education was confined to the upper and middle-class urban people. English education acquainted the Indians with western ideologies and values. Further, English education gave an impetus to the rise of social and cultural reformation movements. Westernization was not equally spread among all sections of people.

The twice-born castes were the first among all to realise the trend of change and also took advantage of those new opportunities. In India, the process of westernization took place through three levels – primary, secondary and tertiary. At the primary level, a small group of people came into contact with western cultures and they were the first group of beneficiaries. At the secondary level, some group of people came into direct contact with the primary beneficiaries. The third level or tertiary level of westernization indicated to those people who were benefitted by the process of westernization indirectly. Weaker sections of India also came to contact with westernization through missionary activities. During British rule, Christian missionaries worked in different parts of India including backward and tribal areas. As a result, weaker sections of people got a sense of westernization (Sharma 2008 : 43; Doshi and Jain 2004 : 91; Abraham 2009 : 255).

Westernization is closely related with urbanization and industrialization. In India, urbanization has brought certain changes in family structure (breakdown of the

joint families) and also in family relationships. Caste ties have been slackened. Certain changes have come in the fields of morality and religion. Though westernization also accelerates the above changes, urbanization and westernization are not same processes. It is to be mentioned here that the cities of pre-industrial era and the cities of post-industrial era are characteristically different. This is also true in case of western societies. But after the industrial revolution, number of cities has been increased. Simultaneously it is also found that urbanization and industrialization are positively correlated.

Highly westernized groups are generally found in the big cities. Again, it is cautioned that urbanization and westernization are not same process. It may be possible that groups inhabiting in rural areas are westernized. Even in India, in some rural areas where commercial crops are grown, westernized groups are found. Westernized groups are also found in those villages which have a tradition of providing soldiers for the Indian army. (Rao 1992: 20-21; Srinivas 1998: 50) Rao(1992: 94) has remarked that “urbanization during British rule was characterized by features of westernization”. Kuppuswamy (1984: 61-62) has mentioned the process of westernization in two areas of Bangalore – Cantonment area and City area. In Cantonment area people frequently come across British civil and military personnel. Indians of this area speak in English (with or without education), wear clothes of western style, consume alcohol and smoke. Another significant influence in this area is existence of a fairly large Anglo-Indian population. In contrast, Brahmins of the city area have learnt western education at the high school and college level. They have accepted western literature and science, but do not change their style in dress nor they adopt the habits of the British. Brahmins speak English more grammatically while the cantonment people speak English with the British accent and use their diction. The picture houses in cantonment area show only British films while Indian films are popular in city area. Restaurants of cantonment area serve bread, butter, cakes, biscuits and so on. They are more westernized in style while the restaurants of city area serve idli, dosa, vada etc. in Karnatak style. There are bars in cantonment areas. Middle-class people of cantonment areas visit these bars to consume bear whisky etc. In city areas, only toddy and arrack shops are found in slum areas. Workers of city area visit those shops. In general, it is to be said that cantonment people are more westernized externally.

Singer (cited in Ahuja 1999: 474) has studied the leading industries in Madras and has found a different process of change in the style of life and religious belief of lower and upper castes. There is a change in the practice of ritual pollution both

in the office and factory. Home and workplace – both are separated in terms of practising of ritual pollution and daily habits. In workplaces, different castes mix with each-other freely. They eat same hotels and restaurants, travel in same cars, participate same meeting and so on. Many upper caste Hindus even Brahmins are engaged in highly polluting works as per Hindu religion. They use western dress, speak English and follow western customs in the factories. At home, they use Indian clothes, speak in their local languages and practise Hindu rituals. This is what Singer recommends as ‘compartmentalisation.’ Another study in a village of eastern Uttar Pradesh has revealed that Sanskritization and westernization have taken place simultaneously. There are two main castes – a dominant caste of Thakurs and a large number of untouchable caste of Chamars. The Chamars attend local schools and have managed to raise their income. They have a trend to imitate their landlord’s (Thakur’s) ritual in the ceremonies of marriage and birth. On the other hand, a good number of Thakurs have migrated to the cities and have become industrial workers, clerks and teachers. They are westernized in respect of their dress, habits, manners and also in religious outlook (ibid: 473 - 474).

20.7 Westernization : Some Features

Scholars have mentioned certain characteristics of westernization. Some of these important characteristics are given below.

- In Indian society, westernization is the result of British rule.
- Westernization is accelerated by the British as well as Christian Missionaries.
- Westernization is associated with certain values such as humanitarianism, equalitarianism, rationalism and so on.
- The term humanitarianism has a broad connotation which includes certain other values. One of these values is welfare of all human beings irrespective of caste, sex, age, religion, economic status etc.
- Another value which is associated with westernization is equalitarianism which stands for minimising inequality, (removal of poverty), liberty to all and so on. It is also a democratic value.
- Indians have accepted the scientific innovations of west. As a result, Indians are eager to improve their standard of living in terms of material welfare.
- The idea of secularization is associated with westernization.

- Westernization causes a number of social reforms in India.
- Westernization is a process of changes of exogenous form in Indian society.
- Westernization has brought a number of socio-economic changes such as establishment of scientific-technological institutions, establishment of modern schools and colleges, rise of new political culture, development in communication system and so on.
- Western institutions such as banking system, public administration, military organisation, modern medicine, law etc. are introduced in India.
- Modern means of communication such as railways, bus, postal service, press, radio, television have affected the lives of Indians in various ways.
- Westernization becomes an important factor of upward social mobility.
- The term westernization has close association with some other terms such as modernization, urbanization, industrialization and so on.
- To some extent the process of westernization is accelerated by Sanskritization. In fact, these two processes are linked with each other.
- The nature of westernization in India is varied from region to region.
- Westernization is attached to macroscopic level at least as depicted by Srinivas. In other words, westernization brings cultural changes in macro-level.
- Westernization reduces rigidity of caste system.
- Westernization has brought a new ‘great tradition of modernization.’
- Western educated people become conscious regarding their rights and freedom. In other words, western education has broadened the outlook of Indian people.
- The impact of westernization on traditional Indian institutions such as marriage, family, caste, religion is great. Westernization has affected the inter-personal and the inter-familial relationships of the Indians.
- A vibrant middle-class has emerged.
- Westernization causes to establish a strong feeling of nationalism.

(Ahuja 1999 : 473-479; Beteille 1971 : 220; Doshi and Jain 2004 : 91-93; Kothari 1995 : 69; Sharma 2008 : 43-46; Singh 2004 : 9-27).

20.8 Impact of Westernization on India during British Rule

In India, westernization is equated with British rule. A number of socio-economic changes have taken place in the fields of food habit, dress, education, technology, and patterns of behaviour and so on. Westernization is a multi-layered process of diffusion of western ideas, philosophy, system of laws, western ways of life and culture in Indian society. Western education and communication have accelerated the process of westernization. Western ideas have eroded the concept of purity and pollution in caste system – eating is no longer an act of ritual; vegetarianism is not necessarily a virtue. Traditional dresses are replaced by western fashions. Though caste system has been survived in India, ideas of equality, humanity, social justice, individual-dignity have been strengthened (Abraham 2009 : 255). As an ongoing process, westernization has a great impact on rural India. After independence, the government of India have given special attention for the development of villages.

The people of rural areas are also accustomed with different types of modern means and come closer to westernization. Western values have a great impact in Indian society. India has experienced a number of social reforms. Age old social evils and practices such as sati, untouchability have become punishable offence by new laws. With the introduction of uniform law, science and technology Indian society has started to become modernized. Industrialization and urbanization have changed the traditional patterns of lives and have introduced modern economic system. These processes are also helpful to lessen age-old social evils like purity and pollution of caste-system. Westernization has also introduced bureaucratic administrative structure in India. Westernization has brought the value of secularism. This value is essential for India as India is a multi-religious country. Later it has been accepted in the Indian constitution. A synthesis especially between the elites of India and the elites of the west has occurred. Finally, westernization accelerates national and social awakening. Indian elites have borrowed several humanistic elements from the British and use those to create national feelings and political consciousness. (Doshi and Jain 2004 : 91-92; Sharma 2008 : 43-44).

Beteille (1971: 191, 220) has conducted a village study in Sripuram of Tanjore District in South India. He has noticed that westernization has brought a certain number of changes within caste-structure. A general trend towards the contraction of structural distance between proximate segments of caste group is found. For example, marriages take place between two subdivisions of the Brihacharanam

segment; commensal relations are common between Smarthas and Shri Vaishnavas. In general westernization has also brought certain changes among Brahmins in their style of life in comparison with the past. Westernized Indians are varied from region to region; from one section of population to another. Some people may become westernized in their dress, diet, manners, speech and by using of gadgets (specially electronics). On the other hand, some people acquire western science, knowledge and literature. Latter group are free from external features of westernization. Many Brahmins have accepted the dress and hair-style (tuff is replaced by cropped hair); send their children to westernized schools, use western gadgets but they do not accept the western diet or recreation patterns (Ahuja 2006 : 357). Westernization has created new status group in Indian society. It also accelerates the distinction between westernized and non-westernized group in Indian society. Structural changes are found in the fields of agriculture, industry and polity.

20.9 Impact of Westernization in Indian Culture

Westernization has brought a new cultural tradition in India. India has got a taste of modern culture with the advent of the West. The impact of the Dutch and the French Culture is minimal but the British has emerged as a dominant power in India. The western impact on the Indian culture is therefore of British culture. With the advent of British rule, India has experienced some modern characteristics such as formal rationality, experimentation, codification, verification, rational-utilitarian orientation in behaviour and thought and so on. Westernization has encouraged the values of equality and universalism. Western cultures have provided new basis of social stratification which emphasise on achievement, not on ascription. Individual performances are encouraged in place of hereditary ascriptions. Gradually, the westernization has brought innovatory changes in the cultural pattern of India. Primarily a group of Indian intellectuals and scholars have accepted western cultures which in turn leads to emergence of a sub-cultural pattern. They also support its rapid expansion. Westernization is also spread in the area of dress, food, style of life and habits. This process is diffused both among the laymen and scholars, among the villagers and urban dwellers. Further, some forms of westernization have crossed local or regional boundaries, such as education, law, science and technology, new forms of politicization, urbanization, industrialization, new media for cultural transmission through press, printing and facilities of transport and communication (Singh 2004 : 85 – 87).

The sub-cultural pattern of westernization has grown in stages. At first, a commercial middle-class emerges in the 18th century. Its social composition is different from region to region. In Calcutta, a most important centre of British influence in terms of politics and commerce, new middle-class has emerged mostly from the Banyan (merchant) caste. In Madras, middle-class emerges from Brahmins and in Bombay from Parsis. The members of this class serve as middle men for the European traders. These commercial groups are partly westernized. They emulate some of the European customs and ways of living. One European has observed these middlemen flocking aboard the ship at Madras Presidency and has differentiated them from boatmen by describing them as “.... they were clad in a more stylish garb, with a head dress of calico-coiled turban, light vest and loose trousers. They all spoke English, offered their services for small wages, and waited on the passengers to execute their business” (ibid: 88-89). This type of middlemen who are also interpreters, are also present in Bengal. According to Singh (ibid: 89), this group is not westernized but quasi-westernized. Their jobs require specialized training and education, new professional skill in trade and commerce, ability of rational managerial administration for modern trade and commerce. Soon they transform into a new commercial middle class. They are very small in number but they play significant role in the process of westernization. They are the fore runners of westernization. A sub-culture of westernization is gradually established in India through them.

In the early part of 19th century, new sub-cultures of westernization have begun to emerge. These are represented by the new generation of middle-class professional groups and social reformers. A good number of western educational institutions are established by the government and missionaries. Though these educational institutions are concentrated in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay regions. Western values and ideologies are inculcated among the Indians. Along with this, expansion of Christianity accelerates the process of westernization. New educated groups have also adopted the habits and customs of Europeans. They have well-furnished houses. They like to consume wines. The impact of westernization is also found in literature. In Bengal, poets and novelists follow western style and ideologies. Similar influence is found among Tamil, Telegu and Marathi literatures.

These literary works also play an important role to inculcate western values among Indian people. Role of social reformers also helps to change stagnant Indian society. They oppose age-old social evils of India (ibid: 89-92). Reform movements of Indians and the British legal system cause the abolition of Indian customs which are considered as a part of religion such as ‘suttee’ (widow burning). Further,

rationality and humanity have got importance with the expansion of westernization. British administration has introduced civil, penal and procedural laws which put an end to unequal laws of Hindu and Islamic jurisprudence. According to the Hindu law in pre-British era, punishment varies on the basis of persons' cast. In Islamic law the evidence of non-Muslims is not admissible. Both Hindus and Muslims regard their codes as divine. On the other hand, British administration and Christian missionaries have fought against all types of inequalities like untouchability, institution of caste, low position of women, child marriage, polygamy and so on (Srinivas 1998 : 51-52). Srinivas (ibid : 52) has remarked that, "no alien government would have dared to declare the practice of untouchability in any form an offense or to enforce the right of Harijans to enter Hindu temples and draw water from upper caste wells in villages." British administration has controlled banditry, lawlessness, private armies and thuggee (an institutionalized form of deception and killing). Thus, India has experienced a qualitative change through the process of westernization (Singh 2004 : 93).

20.10 Westernization and Sanskritization

Westernization and sanskritization, both are the processes of cultural and social change in India. Sanskritization, a process by which low Hindu caste or tribal or other group can change status, seems to have occurred throughout Indian history and still continues to occur. On the other hand, westernization has been introduced in Indian history during British rule and is still continuing. After independence, the process of westernization has been quickened. Westernization is not confined within any particular section of the people. The impact of westernization, both in the number of people it affects and the ways in which it affects them, is steadily increasing. Sanskritization and westernization – both concepts are used by Srinivas (1998 : 1-94) to understand and to analyse the changes of Indian society. Both of them have become the part of cultural approach to study society. Sanskritization is found within the caste structure while westernization is observed beyond the caste structure. Through the process of Sanskritization, lower castes get the chances to be absorbed in the mainstream. Westernization offers modern way of life to all people. It is secular in character but Sanskritization takes place within Hindu religion. The gap between castes becomes narrowed through the process of Sanskritization while westernization may narrow the gap between castes or widen the gap or leave it as before. It depends on impact of westernization on upper and lower castes. Along with

Sanskritization westernization is also an important factor of upward social mobility (Srinivas 1998 : 1; Kothari 1995 : 23, 91; Doshi and Jain 2004 : 91; Ahuja 2006 : 400).

Compared with Sanskritization, westernization is a simpler concept. The social changes take place during British period is known as westernization. Westernization and Sanskritization – both can go simultaneously. Sometimes westernization accelerates the process of Sanskritization. Modern means of communication such as postal facilities, railways, newspapers, media, and telecommunication are developed in British period. These modern means help people to communicate with each other. Caste members also can contact with each other easily. Religious pilgrimages, caste-meetings are more possible now than in the past. Westernization and Sanskritization have focused to analyse the cultural changes in society not structural changes. But a question may arise here – do they (Sanskritization and westernization) explain all types of major cultural changes in India ? Two concepts ‘logical’ and ‘contextual’ are used here to answer this question. In logical sense, Sanskritization and westernization – both are ‘truth asserting’ concepts which oscillate between the logics of ideal-typical and nominal definitions of phenomena.

Their connotation is after all vague, especially when the discussion is shifted from one level of cultural reality to another; that is from historical specific to contextual specific. Sanskritization is not a single concept; it is a bundle of concepts. But it is to be remembered here that Sanskritization denotes a widespread cultural process (Singh 2004 : 9 – 10).

Singh (ibid : 10-26) has also mentioned that Sanskritization and westernization – both are founded upon empirical observations and highlights some aspects of cultural changes. But both have failed to develop any theory of cultural change. Both the concepts are devoid of hypotheses and do not indicate true or false. It is to be said that both the processes may be clumsy or elegant, appropriate or inappropriate, effective or ineffective but not true or false. So as truth-asserting concepts they have appropriateness but theoretically they are loose terms. Now-a-days, some castes and some religious groups prefer to emphasize their own in-group identity through isolation and nativistic revivalism.

Some of these movements are Dravidian identity in south, tribal identity in the eastern border of India, Muslim identity in Kashmir and so on. Both the term, westernization and Sanskritization are unable to explain these processes. Both the processes, Sanskritization and westernization, are connected with macroscopic level though Sanskritization also has some connection in micro level. Sanskritization

means a process of endogenous changes while westernization is a process of changes from an exogenous form. The basic changes in micro and macro structure of Indian society are taking place with the contact of west. The scientific and technological innovations bring changes in Indian social structures.

Westernized group specially who live in urban areas follow western cultures. Brahmins who are westernized approve alcoholic drinks, non-vegetarian diets, widow re-marriage. These processes are acts of De-Sanskritization. People of lower castes consume alcohol and eat meat. In this sense, westernization is connected with De-Sanskritization (Rao 1992 : 386).

20.11 Criticism

The process of westernization has been criticised on the following grounds.

- Westernization has an external character which fails to explain all types of Indian cultural changes.
- The term westernization has also complexity like Sanskritization Srinivas (1998 : 49) has equated the term westernization with the British impact in India. But after independence models of other countries specially Russia and America are followed.
- The term westernization has a pejorative connotation to the Indians and also to the people of some other states of Asia. This term indicates the former colonial domination on these Asian countries by the west. So, it is more value-loaded term than modernization.
- Westernization fails to build theory.
- Though some scholars have mentioned that humanitarianism is associated with westernization; there are some scholars who believe that westernization is a process of cultural and cognitive colonialism.
- Westernization accelerates conflict between the indigenous tradition and the western tradition.
- Now-a-days India is a part of globalization and India becomes the centre of global market and professional activities.
- Western values and ideals are based on the spirit of equality. The people who are inspired by the western values may demand a fair treatment. As the

benefits of westernization are mainly reached to the upper castes then it has also increased a feeling of deprivation among the lower castes.

(Singh 2004 : 12; Sharma 2008 : 43-44; Pramanick 1944 : 41).

20.12 Summary

Westernization has been a growing influence across the world in the last few centuries, with some thinkers assuming Westernization to be the equivalent of modernization, a way of thought that is often debated. The overall process of Westernization is often two-sided in that Western influences and interests themselves are joined with parts of the affected society, at minimum, to change towards a more Westernized society, with the putative goal of attaining a Western life or some aspects of it, while Western societies are themselves affected by this process and interaction with non-Western groups.

Westernization can also be compared to acculturation and enculturation. Acculturation is “the process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between cultural groups and their individual members.” After contact, changes in cultural patterns are evident within one or both cultures. Specific to Westernization and the non-Western culture, foreign societies tend to adopt changes in their own social systems relative to Western ideology, lifestyle, and physical appearance, along with numerous other aspects, and shifts in culture patterns can be seen to take root as a community becomes acculturated to Western customs and characteristics – in other words, Westernized. Westernization can include Christianization, Americanization and Europeanization, with historical versions including Romanization, Hellenization, Francization, Russification and Germanization.

The phenomenon of Westernization does not follow any one specific pattern across societies as the degree of adaption and fusion with Western customs will occur at varying magnitudes within different communities. Specifically, the extent to which domination, destruction, resistance, survival, adaptation or modification affect a native culture may differ following inter-ethnic contact.

20.13 Questions

G-A (5 Marks each)

- (i) What do you mean by westernization?

- (ii) What is modernization?
- (iii) Why does Srinivas prefer the term westernization?
- (iv) Why does Lerner prefer the term modernization?
- (v) What does Singer mean by compartmentalization?
- (vi) Mention the different phases of the process of westernization in India.
- (vii) Discuss the impact of westernization in Indian culture.
- (viii) Discuss the impact of westernization in Indian society.
- (ix) Mention the negative aspects of westernization.

G-B (10 Marks each)

- (x) Mention the features of westernization.
- (xi) Write a note on modernization.
- (xii) Discuss the relationship between westernization and sanskritization.
- (xiii) Write a note on process of westernization in India.
- (xiv) Write a critical note on westernization.

20.14 Suggested Readings

- (i) Abraham, M. Francis. (2009) : Contemporary Sociology : An Introduction to Concepts and Theories, New Delhi : Oxford University Press
- (ii) Ahuja, Ram (1999) : Society in India, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (iii) Ahuja, Ram (2006) : Indian Social System, Jaipur : Rawat Publication.
- (iv) Beteille, Andre (1971) : Caste, Class and Power : Changing Patterns of Stratification in Tanjore Village, Berkeley : University of California Press
- (v) Dosi, S. L. and Jain, P. C. (2004) : Rural Sociology, Jaipur : Rawat Publications
- (vi) Kothari, Rajni (1995) : "Introduction" in Rajni Kothari (ed.) Caste in Indian Politics, Hyderabad (AP) : Orient Longman. PP 3-26
- (vii) Kothari, Rajni and Maru, Rushikesh (1995) : "Federating for Political Interests : The Kshatriyas of Gujrat" in Rajni Kothari (ed.) Caste in Indian Politics, Hyderabad (AP) : Orient Longman. PP 66-95

- (viii) Kuppuswamy, B (1984) : Social change in India, Ghaziabad (U.P.) : Vani Educational Groups.
- (ix) Moore, Wilpert E (1978) : Social Change, New Delhi : Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd.
- (x) Pocock, David F (1992) : “Sociologies : Urban and Rural”, in MSA Rao (ed.) Urban Sociology in India, Hyderabad Orient Longman, PP 18-37.
- (xi) Pramanick Swapan. (1994) : Sociology of G. S. Ghurey, Jaipur : Rawat Publication
- (xii) Rao, M.S.A (1992) : “Introduction”, in MSA Rao (ed.) Urban Sociology in India, Hyderabad Orient Longman, PP 93-94.
- (xiii) Sharma, K. L.(2008) : Indian Social Structure and Change, Jaipur : Rawat Publications.
- (xiv) Singer, Milton (1992) : “The Great Tradition in a Metropolitan Centre : Madras” in MSA Rao (ed.) Urban Sociology in India, Hyderabad Orient Longman, PP 361-390
- (xv) Srinivas, M. N. (1998) : Social change in Modern India, Hyderabad Orient Longman.