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SOCIOLOGY

2010-2024 Topicwise PYQ Solved Papers



SOCIOLOGY

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Topic-wise Solved Papers 2010-2024

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Edited by - N.N. Ojha

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Syllabus-Paper I

Fundamentals of Sociology

1. Sociology - The Discipline

- Modernity and Social Changes in Europe and Emergence of Sociology
- Scope of the Subject and Comparison with Other Social Sciences
- Sociology and Common Sense

2. Sociology as Science

- Science, Scientific Method and Critique
- Major Theoretical Strands of Research Methodology
- Positivism and its Critique
- Fact, Value and Objectivity
- Non-Positivist Methodologies

3. Research Methods and Analysis

- Qualitative and Quantitative Methods
- Techniques of Data Collection
- Variables, Sampling, Hypothesis, Reliability and Validity

4. Sociological Thinkers

- **Karl Marx** - Historical Materialism, Mode of Production, Alienation, Class Struggle
- **Emile Durkheim** - Division of Labour, Social Fact, Suicide, Religion and Society
- **Max Weber** - Social Action, Ideal Types, Authority, Bureaucracy, Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.
- **Talcott Parsons** - Social System, Pattern Variables
- **Robert K. Merton** - Latent and Manifest Functions, Conformity and Deviance, Reference Groups
- **Mead** - Self and Identity

5. Stratification and Mobility

- **Concepts** - Equality, Inequality, Hierarchy, Exclusion, Poverty and Deprivation
- **Theories of Social Stratification** - Structural Functionalist Theory, Marxist Theory, Weberian Theory
- **Dimensions** - Social Stratification of Class, Status Groups, Gender, Ethnicity and Race
- **Social Mobility** - Open and Closed Systems, Types of Mobility, Sources and Causes of Mobility

6. Works and Economic Life

- Social Organization of Work in Different Types of Society- Slave Society, Feudal Society, Industrial /Capitalist Society
- Formal and Informal Organization of Work
- Labour and Society

7. Politics and Society

- Sociological Theories of Power
- Power Elite, Bureaucracy, Pressure Groups, and Political Parties
- Nation, State, Citizenship, Democracy, Civil Society, Ideology
- Protest, Agitation, Social Movements, Collective Action, Revolution

8. Religion and Society

- Sociological Theories of Religion
- Types of Religious Practices: Animism, Monism, Pluralism, Sects, Cults
- Religion in Modern Society: Religion and Science, Secularization, Religious Revivalism, Fundamentalism.

9. Systems of Kinship

- Family, Household, Marriage
- Types and Forms of Family
- Lineage and Descent
- Patriarchy and Sexual Division of Labour
- Contemporary Trends

10. Social Change in Modern Society

- Sociological Theories of Social Change
- Development and Dependency
- Agents of Social Change
- Education and Social Change
- Science, Technology and Social Change

Syllabus-Paper II

Indian Society: Structure and Change

A. Introducing Indian Society

(I) Perspectives on the Study of Indian Society

- Indology (G. S. Ghurye)
- Structural Functionalism (M N Srinivas)
- Marxist Sociology (A R Desai)

(II) Impact of Colonial Rule on Indian Society

- Social Background of Indian Nationalism
- Modernization of Indian Tradition
- Protests and Movements during the Colonial Period
- Social Reforms

B. Social Structure

(I) Rural and Agrarian Social Structure

- The Idea of Indian Village and Village Studies
- Agrarian Social Structure - Evolution of Land Tenure System, Land Reforms

(II) Caste System

- Perspectives on the Study of Caste Systems: GS Ghurye, M N Srinivas, Louis Dumont, Andre Beteille
- Features of Caste System
- Untouchability - Forms and Perspectives

(III) Tribal Communities in India

- Definitional Problems
- Geographical Spread
- Colonial Policies and Tribes
- Issues of Integration and Autonomy

(IV) Social Classes in India

- Agrarian Class Structure
- Industrial Class Structure
- Middle Classes in India

(V) Systems of Kinship in India

- Lineage and Descent in India
- Types of Kinship Systems
- Family and Marriage in India
- Household Dimensions of the Family

(VI) Religion and Society

- Religious Communities in India
- Problems of Religious Minorities

C. Social Changes in India

(I) Visions of Social Change in India

- Idea of Development Planning and Mixed Economy
- Constitution, Law and Social Change
- Education and Social Change

(II) Rural and Agrarian Transformation in India

- Programmes of Rural Development, Community Development Programme, Cooperatives, Poverty Alleviation Schemes
- Green Revolution and Social Change
- Changing Modes of Production in Indian Agriculture
- Problems of Rural Labour, Bondage, Migration

(III) Industrialization and Urbanisation in India

- Evolution of Modern Industry in India
- Growth of Urban Settlements in India
- Working Class: Structure, Growth, Class Mobilization
- Informal Sector, Child Labour
- Slums and Deprivation in Urban Areas

(IV) Politics and Society

- Nation, Democracy and Citizenship
- Political Parties, Pressure Groups, Social and Political Elite
- Regionalism and Decentralization of Power
- Secularization

(V) Social Movements in Modern India

- Peasants and Farmers Movements
- Women's Movement
- Backward Classes & Dalit Movement
- Environmental Movements
- Ethnicity and Identity Movements

(VI) Population Dynamics

- Population Size, Growth, Composition and Distribution
- Components of Population Growth: Birth, Death, Migration
- Population Policy and Family Planning
- Emerging Issues: Ageing, Sex Ratios, Child and Infant Mortality, Reproductive Health

(VII) Challenges of Social Transformation

- Crisis of Development: Displacement, Environmental Problems and Sustainability
- Poverty, Deprivation and Inequalities
- Violence against Women
- Caste Conflicts
- Ethnic Conflicts, Communalism, Religious Revivalism
- Illiteracy and Disparities in Education



SOCIOLOGY - THE DISCIPLINE

Q. Discuss the nature of Sociology. Highlight its relationship with Social Anthropology.

(CSE 2024)

Ans: Sociology, a social science that studies human societies, their interactions, and the processes that preserve and change them. It does this by examining the dynamics of constituent parts of societies such as institutions, communities, populations, and gender, racial, or age groups.

Relationship with Social Anthropology

- Both fields examine human society, with similar theoretical concerns and areas of interest. Though they place differing emphasis on it, they both seek to comprehend social interactions and cultural patterns.
- Sociology usually takes a macro-level approach, looking at how people and groups are impacted by broader societal trends. By examining people as representatives of larger societies, social anthropology provides insights at the micro level.
- Classical Western notions of these two disciplines view sociology as the study of industrialized society, while anthropology as study of primitive society. However, today the distinction between 'Industrialized' and 'Others' have blurred and this definition is also not applicable in a plural society like India where this 'Other' is found every next door according to Srinivas.
- In terms of methodology, sociology uses larger samples and more quantitative data to identify general trends. For a deeper knowledge of culture, anthropology frequently employs qualitative techniques and smaller, immersive investigations.
- Sociology and anthropology had quite different origins. While the Western intellectuals of sociology had a ready context closer to home when modernism and industrialization arrived, Anthropologists have to discover their own. Anthropology borrows from prehistoric archeology.

Therefore, both the disciplines are equally useful in studying the various societies which are changing under the impact of modernism. It is no longer the prerogative of sociologists to study advanced societies.

Q. Sociology is the product of European enlightenment and renaissance. Critically examine this statement.

(CSE 2024)

Ans: Renaissance gave birth to the ideology of modernism and it led to the dawn of modernity. Old beliefs were liberally questioned and rationality emerged as a new 'religion'.

Sociology as Product of Enlightenment and Renaissance

- Rousseau, Montesquieu, etc. talked of modern political ideas while the likes of Adam Smith, Ricardo and J S Mill talked of new economic order. All these had a common thread – rationality of human thoughts.
- A new order started to replace the old order and it created considerable social upheaval and disturbance in society. In this background emerged earliest sociological thoughts in minds of the likes of Hegel, Comte and Spencer.
- The transition of social phenomena from religious to logical explanations was essential to the growth of sociology.
- Biggest event that affected emergence of discipline was French Revolution which itself was influenced by Enlightenment philosophy. It led to replacement of old feudal system with a new one.
- Ideals of democracy, liberty and fraternity became new watch words. But they didn't come easily and the old system resisted stiffly. A tussle between the old and new ensued which created a condition of great uncertainty. It prompted intellectuals – especially Comte, Saint Simon and Durkheim – to search for new answers to restore stability in the society.

SOCIOLOGY AS SCIENCE

Q. Do you think 'objectivity' is an over-hyped idea in sociological research? Discuss the merits and demerits of non-positivist methods.

(CSE 2024)

Ans: Objectivity is an approach in which the attitude of a scientific investigator is detached, unprejudiced, value free and free from biases.

Significance of Objectivity in Sociological Research

- Values are the basis of biases and subjectivity and they flow from different preconceived notions like caste, gender, culture, class, religion, ideology and so on.
- Robert Bierstedt defines it as 'objectivity means that conclusions arrived at as a result of inquiry and investigation are independent of the race, color, creed, occupation, nationality, religion, moral preferences and political predisposition of the investigator'.
- Hence, objectivity pre-supposes value neutrality and predictability about outcome. It is one of the pillars of 'Scientific Method' and core of positivism.

'Objectivity' is an Over-hyped Idea

- In late 19th Century Non-Positivist ideas argued that 'complete objectivity was neither desirable nor achievable'.
- According to Dilthey, a fact based approach explores only one dimension as it ignores cultural, ideological dimensions.
- Weber criticized the fact based approach and he laid down the fundamentals of an interpretivist approach. As there are different ideologies and viewpoints in study of sociology, absolute objectivity is not possible.
- According to post-positivist Elvin Gouldner - 'Value neutrality is an Elusive Goal in Sociology' as investigators have to deal with multi-layered truths. Viewpoints and values are hence considered essential.
- According to Gunnar Myrdal - 'Chaos itself cannot organize into Cosmos, we need viewpoints'.

Merits of Non-Positivist Methods

- Non-positivists study the internal processes represented through emotions, motives, aspirations and the individual's interpretation of social reality.
- Non-positivists suggested understanding of social reality and not prediction of events. They refrained from formulation of generalized universal theories.
- Non-positivists highlighted impossibility of total objectivity and hence were accommodative of subjectivity in research.

Demerits of Non-Positivist Methods

- Non-positivists could not develop a single methodological principle leading to wide variations in non-positivist research and some even stressed on using quantitative methods.
- Non-positivist methods depend heavily on ability of interrogator and as a result, different explanations were given for same phenomenon.
- Non-positivists ignore independent existence of social phenomenon and overlook the fact that man is born in a pre-existing society.

Therefore, meaning of objectivity today is not the same and has undergone changes. Today, objectivity has to be thought of as a continuous, ongoing process rather than an already achieved end result. So, despite conflicting perspectives in sociology, objectivity can be maintained while adopting each one of them.

Q. What is the distinctiveness of the feminist method of social research? Comment.

(CSE 2023)

Ans: A method for doing social science research that emphasises the viewpoints, experiences, and interests of women is called feminist research methodology. It calls into question the conventional, male-centric research approaches and emphasises how crucial gender is to comprehending social processes.

- The focus of this method is on gender equality, power dynamics, and women's subjective experi-

RESEARCH METHODS & ANALYSIS

Q. How do you view and assess the increasing trend of digital ethnography and use of visual culture in sociological research? (CSE 2024)

Ans: Ethnography is descriptive study of a particular human society or the process of making such a study. Contemporary ethnography is based almost entirely on fieldwork and requires the complete immersion of the investigator in the culture and everyday life of the people who are the subject of his study.

Digital Ethnography and its Advantages

- It is an online research method that adapts ethnographic methods to the study of the communities and cultures created through computer-mediated social interaction.
- There is no canonical approach to cyber-ethnography that prescribes how ethnography is adapted to the online setting. Instead individual researchers are left to specify their own adaptations.
- Online communities, social media platforms, and digital interactions are all studied in digital ethnography, which is an extension of classic ethnographic approaches.
- Online forums and social media offer real-time insights on recurring societal occurrences.
- Researchers can interact with a variety of groups regardless of where they live thus providing more datasets efficiently.
- As the encounters are virtual, people might behave more naturally.

However, digital ethnography also has drawbacks, such as potential bias in sampling because of digital inequality, Difficulty in confirming online identities and information and Ethical considerations surrounding privacy and consent in online settings.

Use of Visual Culture in Sociological Research

Sociologists are increasingly using visual culture in their research, which includes analyzing pictures, films, and other visual media.

- Research participants are more actively engaged when photo-elicitation and interactive video approaches are used.
- Visual resources provide subtle insights about power relations, social behaviours, and cultural standards.
- A more thorough understanding of social processes can be obtained by combining textual and visual data.
- Visual culture encompasses a wide range of images and image creators. Visual culture questions can undoubtedly focus on well-known paintings displayed in art galleries, but they can also examine commercials, social media posts, cartoons, sports logos, and passport shots.

Above techniques improve on conventional qualitative methods by providing fresh perspectives on how to document and examine social realities. Researchers must, however, continue to be aware of any biases in the interpretation and portrayal of images.

Sociological study can benefit greatly from the rich data and fresh viewpoints that digital ethnography and visual culture approaches provide. To guarantee thorough and accountable scholarship, researchers must overcome methodological and ethical obstacles.

Q. What do you understand by 'mixed method'? Discuss its strengths and limitations in social research. (CSE 2024)

Ans: Mixed method research attempts to give a more thorough understanding of social phenomena by integrating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies in a single study. Over the past few decades, the social sciences have seen an increase in the use of this integrative method.

Advantages of Mixed Methods

- A more comprehensive understanding of the research problem is provided by the complementary nature of quantitative and qualitative data. For example, quantitative surveys can reveal general patterns, but qualitative interviews can explore the underlying causes.

SOCIOLOGICAL THINKERS

Q. What are the 'basic and irreducible' functions of the family as proposed by Talcott Parsons? Explain. (CSE 2024)

Ans: Parsons observes that the family performs certain basic and irreducible functions. Primary socialization of children and stabilization of adult personalities are these functions.

Primary Socialization of Children

- It is the process in which children learn the norms of the society in which they are born and it happens in early years.
- The family is the primary and most important socialization agent. Parents teach their children cultural values, customs, and social skills. This process helps children grow as individuals and gets them ready for social responsibilities in the future.

Stabilization of Adult Personalities

- For adults, the family offers a stable atmosphere and emotional support.
- It provides a space for intimacy, relaxation, and emotional release; it acts as a barrier against outside tensions and demands.
- Marriage is the mode of stabilizing of adult personalities. He saw families as factories producing human personalities. Once produced, families must be kept stable through marriage, relationships and emotional security.

Parsons maintained that since other social institutions are unable to carry out these functions efficiently, they are irreducible. He argued that in contemporary industrial countries, the nuclear family – parents and children were best fitted to carry out these roles.

However, Parsons is criticized for taking an overly harmonious view of family and suffering from patriarchal bias. Despite criticism, Parsons makes a substantial contribution to our knowledge of the function of the family in society.

Q. Describe the main idea of Max Weber's book, 'The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism' as a critique of Marxism. (CSE 2024)

(CSE 2024)

Ans: Weber's theory of 'Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism' is contained in his 'The Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism, 1904' widely known for – its use of scientific methods in sociology, possibility of studying 'macro' phenomenon in terms of 'micro' and a demonstration of his idea of 'causal pluralism' or 'probabilism' as he factored in political, economic, and religious factors in the rise of capitalism.

- His study of capitalism is that of modern capitalism and, unlike Marx who gave primacy to economic structure and material aspects, Weber put more emphasis on ideas leading to an economic system.
- He was concerned with Protestantism, mainly as a system of ideas, and its impact on the rise of another system of ideas, the 'spirit of capitalism', and ultimately on a capitalist economic system.
- Weber argued that the Protestant work ethic, which placed a strong emphasis on hard work, thrift, and the concept of a "calling," helped to shape capitalist attitudes.
- By introducing the idea of rationalization, Weber argued that capitalism developed as a result of a larger trend in Western civilization toward more rationality. This involved the creation of bureaucratic structures and the quest for effectiveness.
- By seeing the interaction of multiple causes rather than a single economic determinant, Weber's method enabled a more nuanced view of historical change.
- Weber's thesis placed greater emphasis on how individual impulses and actions shape economic systems than Marx's emphasis on class struggle.
- Marx sees the emergence of capitalism in terms of a shift in mode of production.

SYSTEM OF KINSHIP

Q. Marriage as an institution has undergone a radical transformation from 'ritual' to 'commercial' in its outlook. Explain the factors behind this change. (CSE 2024)

Ans: Marriage can be defined as a socially acknowledged and approved sexual union between two adult individuals. According to Malinowski, 'Marriage is a contract for the production and maintenance of children'.

Factors responsible for transformation of Marriage from Ritual to Commercial Outlook

- Traditional kinship bonds have been undermined by migration to urban areas, which has resulted in more individualistic and frequently lavish approaches to marriage celebrations.
- Increased consumerism as a result of economic reforms has influenced wedding rituals. According to M.N. Srinivas, extravagant wedding traditions are adopted as status symbols.
- The way that lavish weddings are portrayed in the media, particularly in Bollywood, has led to a rise in public expectations and aspirations.
- Some components of wedding customs have become commercialized due to the expanding industry of wedding planners, designers, and specialized services.
- Decision-making processes in marriage arrangements have changed as a result of the transition from joint to nuclear families, frequently leading to higher wedding expenses.
- As more women pursue education and enter the workforce, they frequently have greater financial resources and decision-making authority when it comes to wedding preparation, which can occasionally result in more lavish festivities.

Therefore, all of these elements have combined to change marriage from a largely ritualistic institution to one that is increasingly impacted by shifting social dynamics and business interests.

Q. Modern families have not just become nuclear and neo-local, but also filiocentric. How do you explain this trend? (CSE 2024)

Ans: Modern families are filiocentric, putting children at the center of family life, in addition to becoming nuclear and neo-local units. This pattern is a reflection of important social and cultural shifts that have an impact on priorities and family structures.

A filio-centric family is one wherein the children tend to dominate the scene and their wishes determine the policy of the family. In modern family, physical punishment is rarely awarded to the children.

Factors Responsible for the Rise of Filiocentrism

- As urbanization and industrialization increased, nuclear and neo-local families became more prevalent. Smaller, nuclear family units resulted from couples creating independent households (neo-local residence) in response to increased economic prospects. In contemporary societies, this framework promotes economic efficiency and mobility.
- Parents now put their children's needs and well-being first because of the contemporary idea that childhood is a special and protected time.
- Reduced fertility rates allow parents to have smaller families, which allow them to spend more time, money, and energy on each child. This increases the emphasis on the education, well-being, and personal growth of children.
- Strong parent-child bonds and emotional fulfillment are top priorities in modern families. In line with Talcott Parsons' theory of the family's function in socialization and emotional support, the family turns into a sanctuary for raising and assisting kids.
- Education is viewed as a means of achieving success in modern civilizations. Children are at the center of family objectives because parents make significant investments in their schooling and extracurricular activities to improve their prospects for the future.

STRATIFICATION & MOBILITY

Q. Analyse the changing nature of caste as a status group. (CSE 2024)

Ans: India's caste system has changed dramatically over the years, moving from a strict hierarchical system to a more intricate and dynamic framework in modern society.

Changing Nature of Caste

- Caste was formerly a closed system of stratification based on occupation and ritual purity, as Max Weber explained. However, its expression as a status group has changed as a result of urbanization, modernization, and legislative changes.
- While historically, caste status was ascribed at birth, there is now increased social and economic mobility. M.N. Srinivas's concept of "Sanskritization" explains how lower castes adopt practices of higher castes to improve their status.
- The relationship between caste and occupation has partially weakened as a result of new opportunities brought about by economic liberalization. But as Andre Beteille points out, caste networks continue to influence employment and business.
- Movements such as the Dalit Panthers serve as examples of how lower castes have united to demand representation and rights.
- Caste has become a significant factor in democratic politics, with caste-based parties and vote banks emerging. This has led to "politicization of caste." Despite its persistence, the caste system has changed to reflect the intricate relationship between tradition and modernity in modern-day India.

Q. What is social mobility? Critically examine the classification of 'closed' and 'open' models of social stratification. (CSE 2024)

Ans: First comprehensive account of mobility in societies was given by Sorokin in his book - 'Social Mobility, 1927'. He defines it as 'transition of an individual, object or value which is of human creation, from one social position to another'.

Social Mobility - Open and Closed Systems

- **Open systems** are those systems which offer free mobility from one stratum to another and there are no barriers which cannot be overcome. Modern societies are considered such open systems, at least theoretically, as one may reach to any social position by one's hard work, skill, knowledge and efforts.
- **Closed systems** on the other hand are marked by rigid boundaries which are unassailable. Individuals cannot cross their strata in ordinary circumstances. Often this is facilitated by the ascriptive nature of membership to particular strata or exclusivity of membership. Caste system, gender stratification, ethnic stratification, etc. are examples of such closed stratification.

Critiques of this Classification

- The majority of societies display characteristics of both models and are in the middle of these two extremes.
- Even "open" systems could have unnoticed obstacles to mobility, such as glass ceilings and institutional racism.
- Mobility outside of formal institutions is influenced by elements such as social capital and cultural capital.
- Mobility is influenced by the interaction of several factors, including race, gender, and class. Therefore, a more nuanced approach is required to completely understand the complexity of social mobility across many socioeconomic situations, even though the closed/open dichotomy offers a helpful framework.

Q. How does a multicultural society accommodate diversities of all kinds - ethnic, linguistic and religious? Discuss its major challenges. (CSE 2024)

Ans: The cohabitation of several ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups inside a single country is a hallmark of a multicultural society. Social harmony and the advancement of the country depend on embracing these

CHAPTER 7

WORKS & ECONOMIC LIFE

Q. Define the concept of 'gig' economy and discuss its impact on the labour market and workers' social security net. (CSE 2024)

Ans: The "gig economy involves the exchange of labour for money between individuals or companies via digital platforms that actively facilitate matching between providers and customers, on a short-term and payment-by-task basis."

The gig economy experienced significant increases in 2020. COVID-19 lockdowns forced people to work from home and rely more on purchasing goods and services online, and these trends continued when restrictions were lifted.

Impact on the Labor Market

- Employment prospects are uncertain due to the absence of long-term contracts.
- Makes financial planning and obtaining loans difficult and income vary according to platform algorithms and market demand.
- Encourage flexibility and a variety of skill sets but may impede the development of deep expertise.
- It separates the workforce into gig workers and regular employees and may make socioeconomic disparities worse.
- Greater flexibility for individuals to set their own schedule. It offers various side-hustle opportunities to those who work regular full-time jobs.

Impact on Workers' Social Security Net

- Remote positions allow gig workers to live anywhere that has an internet connection
- The gig economy trend can make it harder for full-time employees to develop careers and establish a long-term reputation.
- The gig economy is often associated with eroding worker rights, loss of health insurance, and sick and vacation pay.
- Employers are under little pressure to pay higher wages. Opening up positions to people living anywhere in the world, including places where the cost

of living is much cheaper, allows employers to seek places with lower wages.

- The flexibility of working gigs can disrupt the work-life balance, sleep patterns, and daily life.
- Individuals being independent contractor restrict unionization and lessen the ability to bargain for benefits and working conditions.
- Long-term relationships between workers, employers, clients, and vendors can erode. This can eliminate the benefits of building long-term trust, customary practice, and familiarity with clients and employers.
- According to the National Institute of Health, gig workers reported lower mental health and life satisfaction than those employed full-time and part-time in 2022. Gig workers also experienced higher levels of loneliness and financial insecurity.

Therefore, the gig economy challenges conventional ideas of work and social security, radically altering labor relations. To address the particular vulnerabilities faced by gig workers, labor laws and social safety nets must be reexamined.

Q. Critically assess the impact of technological advancement and automation on the nature of work and employment. (CSE 2024)

Ans: Automation and technology development have had a significant impact on work and employment, changing labor markets, job positions, and industries all around the world.

Impact of Technology and Automation on the Nature of Work and Employment

- Numerous manual and regular tasks have been replaced by automation, especially in the industrial and administrative sectors. In some industries, this has resulted in structural unemployment.
- Freelance and contract employment have become more popular due to digital platforms; these jobs offer flexibility but frequently come with fewer perks and job security.

CHAPTER
8

POLITICS & SOCIETY

Q. Democracy needs a vibrant culture of civil society in order to strengthen its foundation of citizenship. Comment. (CSE 2024)

Ans: Civil Society is an umbrella like organization which lies between the family, the state and the market. Hence, it is a non-market based, no-state based and non-kin based part of the public domain in which individuals get together voluntarily to create institutions and organizations.

Need for Vibrant Culture of Civil society

- By creating opportunities for public involvement, civil society fosters civic responsibility. It is still true today that Tocqueville referred to these kinds of gatherings as “schools of democracy.”
- Civil society encourages governmental transparency by serving as a watchdog. Marshall’s theory of citizenship rights, especially its civil and political aspects, is consistent with this position.
- In the emerging scenario post globalization and liberalization, the emphasis has been on the increasing roles of the civil societies to take the burden off the state, by involving citizens and communities in the delivery of the collective goods and on strengthening of the abilities and opportunities of local communities to ensure the process of empowerment of the marginalized in society.
- According to Cohen and Arato, civil society has long been playing a pivotal role in influencing the state’s policy on social welfare, articulating views on current issues, serving as the voice of constructive debate.

Civil society is a bastion of culture against the state, the law and capitalism. According to Locke, civil society was born to secure the rights which were already available in the state of nature. Elite dominance and fragmentation are other issues that civil society encounters that can impede democratic processes.

A vibrant civil society is nevertheless essential for encouraging active participation and bolstering democracy in spite of these problems.

Q. Underline the role of social media in contemporary social movements and describe its challenges. (CSE 2024)

Ans: A social movement is defined as a sustained collective action aimed at bringing or resisting social change outside the sphere of established institutions.

- A social movement requires sustained collective action over time. Collective action must be marked by some degree of organization and also has certain ideology.
- This organization may include a ‘leadership’ and a ‘structure’ that defines how members relate to each other, make decisions and carry them out.
- Social media has revolutionized the way activists plan, communicate, and mobilize for group action, making it a revolutionary force in today’s social movements. Its widespread impact has changed conventional forms of lobbying and protest, presenting both new opportunities and difficulties.

Role of Social Media in Contemporary Social Movements

- These platforms allow local movements to achieve worldwide traction since they cut beyond regional barriers. After starting in the US, the #MeToo movement swiftly expanded throughout the globe, bringing people together in opposition to sexual harassment.
- Social media provides instant information during demonstrations or emergencies, which is essential for safety and coordination. Pro-democracy demonstrators in Hong Kong organized flash mobs and outwitted security by using encrypted texting apps.
- Protests and events can be quickly organized thanks to social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. Social media was essential in organizing protests throughout the Middle East and North Africa during the 2011 Arab Spring.
- Underrepresented communities can mobilize support and share their stories on social media. The Black Lives Matter movement successfully drew attention to institutional racism and police violence through the use of hashtags and viral content.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Q. What are the reactions of R.K. Merton to the functionalism of social anthropologists? Bring out the limitations of latent functions.

(CSE 2020)

Ans: Merton was a prominent American sociologist known for his various path breaking concepts like – Middle Range Theories, latent and Manifest Functions, Anomie, etc. Merton was one of the biggest doyens of structural functionalism along with Parsons. Due to his modified functionalism, he is also known as ‘neofunctionalist’.

He particularly draws our attention to the reasons why functional theories of Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski which were formulated to deal with the realities of a simpler tribal society, isolated from rest of the world, could not be applied to contemporary societies of our own time which are complex and where historical traditions have overlapped on social institutions over several centuries.

He modified earlier functionalist view and criticized the three fundamental postulates of earlier functionalist and suggested their modification in following paradigms –

- I. Modification to Postulate of Functional Unity:** Investigator has to study ‘dysfunction’ and ‘non-functions’ of a particular ‘social item’ as well. This idea was novel in the functionalist approach as earlier structural functionalists never looked beyond the pure functionalist perspective.
- II. Modification to Postulates of Functional Indispensability:** Merton argued that ‘social items’ are not indispensable in nature and there may be ‘functional alternatives’ i.e. the same function may be performed by different items as well.
- III. Modification to Postulates of Universal Functionalism:** Earlier functionalists believed that all existing social and cultural forms are invariably functional and fulfill some positive function. Merton argued that the context in which the ‘social

item’ is studied should also be taken into account. The item may be functional in one context and dysfunctional in other context. He also distinguished between latent and manifest functions.

Latent functions are those functions which are unintended or unrecognized consequences of any social pattern. They are present but are not immediately obvious. On the other hand, the intended, conscious, or deliberate functions of the social policies or action which are created for the benefit of the society are called manifest functions. Manifest functions are generally expected from the institutions to be fulfilled.

Manifest functions are beneficial in nature, whereas latent functions can harm as well as benefit society. Latent functions therefore have the tendency to turn into dysfunctions. However, this is not always the case.

Dysfunctions are the latent functions which harm society, create social disorder and conflict. Latent functions often go unnoticed, unless they are dysfunctions or functions resulting in negative outcomes. It is not unnatural for manifest functions to be dysfunctional at times; in many cases, it is already known that policy or action might lead to some kind of a negative consequence. But, it is the latent dysfunctions which are of greater concern because being unknown and unpredictable, they tend to bear more harm to the society which is often irreparable.

Q. Examine how social movements come to an end. Illustrate with examples. (CSE 2020)

Ans: Social movements are purposeful, organized groups striving to work toward a common goal. These groups might be attempting to create change (Occupy Wall Street, Arab Spring), to resist change (anti-globalization movement), or to provide a political voice to those otherwise disenfranchised (civil rights movements). Social movements create social change. A social movement requires sustained collective action over time and hence totally spontaneous and ephemeral collective actions cannot be termed as social movements.

EDUCATION SYSTEM & SOCIAL CHANGE

Q. Analyse the relevance of 'Pattern variables' in the study of social change. (CSE 2020)

Ans: Pattern variables refers to a set of concepts, which reflects the 'properties of all action systems', in Talcott Parsons Theory of 'Social Action.' According to Parsons, in the performance of roles, individuals face 'dilemmas' which occur due to 'improper internalization of values' related to 'role -expectation.'

These strains in the 'role performance' are reflected in five sets of dilemmas, placed dichotomously, with each side representing one polar extreme. The social actor has to 'choose' one side before the actor can act.

The five pattern variables, as listed by Parsons are:

1. Affectivity versus affective neutrality
2. Self-orientation versus Collectivity orientation
3. Universalism versus Particularism
4. Ascription versus Achievement
5. Specificity versus Diffuseness

The Pattern variables, therefore according to Parsons, define the nature of 'role interaction' and 'role expectations' in the social system. It provides the overall direction in which most members of a social system choose their roles.

It therefore gives us an idea about the nature of the social system. They help us to identify different types of 'structures of social systems'.

'Social structure', refers to the specific manner in which 'roles in an interaction situation are configured or composed'.

The Pattern - variables, can, thus help us to identify different types of structures of social systems, their social characteristics and their place in society.

For Example, the Universalistic -achievement pattern - It is a type of 'structure of social system' in whose roles those 'value orientations' are dominant which encourage achievement based on 'legal rational methods' among members of a society. Example: American Society.

However, in real life, the 'dilemma of choices' in terms of pattern variables is much more 'precarious' and 'full of strain' than, emphasised by Parsons. The empirical social systems as described by Parsons, may in real life settings, show variations example - Racism in American society, mobility in Indian caste system.

Social reality has however, become very complex, especially due to rapid pace of 'social change,' in the wake of an increasingly globalizing world. It is therefore, very difficult to identify social systems, with a predominant 'cultural value' defining them.

Q. According to Durkheim, "The major function of education is the transmission of society's norms and values." Discuss. (CSE 2020)

Ans: Emile Durkheim argued that schools were essential for 'imprinting' shared social values into the minds of children. He believed schools would play a central role in forming modern societies. Functionalist sociologist Emile Durkheim saw Education as performing two major functions in advanced industrial societies - transmitting the shared values of society and simultaneously teaching the specialised skills for an economy based on a specialised division of labour.

According to Durkheim 'Society can survive only if there exists among its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity: education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the child from the beginning the essential similarities which collective life demands'.

Durkheim argued that, in complex societies, school serves a function which cannot be fulfilled by either the family, which is based on kinship or friendship, which is based on personal choice, whereas being a member of wider society involves learning to get on with and co-operate with people who are neither our kin or our friends. Durkheim argued that a second crucial function for education in an advanced industrial economy is the teaching of specialised skills required for a complex division of labour.

RELIGION & SOCIETY

Q. Discuss the concept of animism and differentiate it from naturism. (CSE 2024)

Ans: Animism means the belief in spirits/soul. Rather than focusing on the idea of ghost, Edward B Tylor emphasized on idea of soul in his 'Primitive Culture, 1871'.

- Animism refers to a given form of religion in which man finds the presence of spirit in every object that surrounds him.
- Primitive man applied crude logic that it is the 'soul' that differentiates living and dead. During dreams at night, it leaves temporarily and after death it leaves permanently.
- Animals, plants and other objects, which help or obstruct man's activities, are regarded to possess souls or spirits.

Naturism - It is the belief that the forces of nature have supernatural power. Man used to see forces of nature with various emotions - awe, fear, respect and so on.

- Max Muller developed the theory of naturism. He held that grand natural objects gave people a feeling of the infinite.
- He that with the passage of time, the symbolic representations came to gain an independent identity of their own and became separated from that which they represented.
- Early human beings ended up worshipping it out of fear and awe out of dependency and as a token of respect.

Key Differences between Animism and Naturism

- Animism gives consciousness to things and phenomena, but naturism honors nature itself.
- Animism involves many spirits, whereas naturism frequently results in systems of polytheism or pantheism.
- While naturism can grow into more intricate theological systems, animism is typically more regional and specialized.

Thus, it can be concluded that Animism stresses the spiritual element of everything, while Naturism emphasizes the divinity of nature itself. Both ideas aim to explain early religious thought.

Q. Do modernization and secularization necessarily go together? Give your views. (CSE 2024)

Ans: Modernization leads to what Max Weber called "the disenchantment of the world." It calls into question all the superhuman and supernatural forces, the gods and spirits, with which non-industrial cultures populate the universe and to which they attribute responsibility for the phenomena of the natural and social worlds.

In general, secularization is a process which has occurred throughout the history. It can now be summed as a process of lower involvement of men with religious institutions, decrease in influence of religious institutions on other material aspects of life and decline in the degree to which people hold religious beliefs.

Modernization and Secularization

- Modernization introduces as a competing cosmology the modern scientific interpretation of nature by which only the laws and regularities discovered by the scientific method are admitted as valid explanations of phenomena.
- Modernization involves a process of secularization; that is, it systematically challenges religious institutions, beliefs, and practices, substituting for them those of reason and science.
- Although secularization is a general tendency or principle of development in modern societies, this does not imply that religion is driven out altogether from society.
- The secularization thesis is demonstrated by nations like Sweden and France, which have low religious engagement and high levels of industrialization.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Q. Is humanity at the mercy of Nature, Science and Technology? Comment in the light of pandemic situation. (CSE 2020)

Ans: The world is facing a global health pandemic as many countries battle the widespread transmission of COVID-19 that has already cost the lives of millions.

The healthcare community across nations is engaged in desperate attempts to save lives and stem this crisis, even while becoming highly vulnerable through continuous exposure to the dreaded infection.

Developed countries such as the US, Italy, France and Spain experienced an unprecedented health crisis as their national death toll increases on account of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Science, technology and innovation have played an important role in addressing this health crisis. The emergence of COVID-19 is a direct consequence of anti-people approaches to science and technology rooted in an unfair patent regime, evisceration of investments in public health, and the expansion of unregulated new frontiers that put people and planet in peril.

Big Tech companies have jumped into the fray, seeing a business opportunity in the current context, announcing that they will develop new apps for self-screening. This will only help them further amass data capital at the cost of privacy.

From drones that monitor people in cities to Facial Recognition Technologies that can see through helmets, wristbands that trace the movement of those home-quarantined and AI based video analytics that capture number plates of vehicles to monitor mobility, national authorities have deployed surveillance technology, violating by a huge margin, the necessity, proportionality and legality tests needed to track citizens.

The COVID-19 outbreak is but a reflection of a science and technology paradigm that has had little regard for social ethics and human wellbeing. Today, zoonotic epidemics have become the new normal, an indicator of a climate emergency born

from capitalist greed that has destroyed habitats and natural ecosystems. The marriage of genetic and AI technologies, and the datafication of soil, forests and oceans by powerful Big Tech today creates great risks for the future of human civilization. The pursuit of such research - in gene editing, for example - is carried out in utmost secrecy, without any public disclosure about potential harms.

While national epidemiological databases on COVID-19 are vital for enabling governments to take steps to effectively address the crisis, such data must also be pooled for furthering global public health research for the common good, ensuring future benefits are not cornered by corporations. Therefore, the global scientific community must continue to take part in the development of scientific and technological innovations not only to successfully combat the COVID-19 emergency, but also to contribute to knowledge societies that exist in harmony with nature and where individuals can lead prosperous and fulfilling lives.

Q. Technology has accelerated the process of development and dependency. Discuss. (CSE 2020)

Ans: Development as a social concept involves progressive change from one inferior state to a superior state of wellbeing or simply change in the desired direction. It is also defined as 'development is about removing the obstacles to the things that a person can do in life, such as illiteracy, ill health, lack of access to resources, or lack of civil and political freedoms'.

Andre Gunder Frank (1971) argues that developing nations have failed to develop not because of 'internal barriers to development' as modernization theorists argue, but because the developed West has systematically underdeveloped them, keeping them in a state of dependency (hence 'dependency theory').

Technological globalization is speeded in large part by technological diffusion, the spread of technology across borders.

SOCIAL CHANGE IN MODERN SOCIETY & DEVELOPMENT

Q. Critically examine the roles of science and technology in social change. What is your opinion on their increasing trend in 'online' education and teaching? (CSE 2024)

Ans: Social change has been defined by sociologist Wilbert Moore as 'a significant alteration in structure over time in behaviour patterns and culture, including norms and values'.

Roles of Science and Technology in Social Change

- Science and technology can help lift millions above poverty by helping in improving food security and making basic amenities more affordable.
- Science and technology has greatly improved connectivity and communication.
- Similar technologies also have different impacts in different societies. Printing in China led to standardization of manuscripts, but in Europe it led to diversity in literary works.
- Information technology can be used for centralization and espionage, but can also be used for empowerment and social change as well.
- Science and technology also have a homogenizing tendency. Industries are now global in scale leading to similar products, similar cloths, similar tastes and similar consumption.
- Karl Marx placed a strong emphasis on how technological advancements impact social structures and shift the economic foundation.
- Max Weber highlighted the rationality brought about by scientific advancements, which resulted in bureaucratic structures.

Challenges Associated with Science and Technology

- It is bringing the world together, but at the cost of their diversity.
- One major difficulty in technology as a source of change is that its impact on society is not visible in the short run.
- Technological changes don't lead to social change so easily and often there is backlash as well. Luddites vandalized industrial machinery as a reaction to newly introduced machines at the workplace.

- Robert Blauner in his study 'Alienation and Freedom 1964' has also highlighted the alienating aspects of technology at work.

Increasing Trend in 'Online' Education and Teaching

- Online education benefits include access to high-quality education for distant learners, flexibility and expanded reach and democratization of learning chances.
- But it also brings disparities resulting from unequal access to technology, possible decline in social connection and concerns regarding the quality of online pedagogy.
Thus, even if science and technology have a big impact on society, resolving related issues is essential to maximizing their positive effects.

Q. Examine the relevance of corporate social responsibility in a world marked by increasing environmental crises. (CSE 2023)

Ans: A corporation's ethical behavior toward society is referred to as corporate social responsibility, or CSR. It suggests that businesses ought to care about the environment and the welfare of society in addition to maximizing profits.

Relevance of Corporate Social Responsibility

- According to Anthony Giddens' "reflexive modernity" theory, institutions and people alike must adjust to changing environmental conditions. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can be understood as a way for firms to demonstrate reflective modernity, which acknowledges that in order to address environmental issues and maintain their own sustainability, their behaviors must be modified.
- According to Ulrich Beck's "Risk Society" theory, contemporary industrial societies are marked by hitherto unseen risks, particularly environmental hazards. Within this framework, environmental crises pose hazards that can be addressed by corporate social responsibility, or CSR. Companies participate in corporate social responsibility (CSR) in order to

INTRODUCING INDIAN SOCIETY

Q. Differentiate between 'Western' and 'Indological' perspectives on the study of Indian society. Bring out the major aspects of G. S. Ghurye's contribution to 'Indological' approach. (CSE 2024)

Ans: Many viewpoints have been used to examine Indian society, most notably the Western and Indian perspectives. The methods, presumptions, and interpretations of Indian social processes and structures vary between these approaches.

'Western' and 'Indological' Perspectives on the Study of Indian Society

- 'Indology' literally means 'systematic study of Indian society and culture'. Task of Indological perspective is to interpret and understand Indian society on the basis of traditional religious text, ancient legal and historical documents, literary works and even archeological evidence.
- Indology emphasizes upon study of Indian languages, ideas, beliefs, customs, etc. within broad purview of Indian society.
- Early sociological thought in India was also influenced by the ideology of Indian freedom struggle and uniqueness of Indian culture and thought. It is reflected in the choice of subjects of study of Ghurye, D P Mukharjee, etc. as well.
- After Independence, sociology developed more scientifically and it was also influenced by American functionalism in 1950s. M N Srinivas introduced 'Structural Functional Perspective' in study of Indian society in his famous study of Coorgs of Mysore and emphasis on field view was also given.
- Emphasis was laid on factual, empirical surveying and field studies in place of theocratic and traditional issues. A series of rural and urban studies came to light.
- During the 1970s A R Desai popularized Marxist perspective in study of Indian society.

G. S. Ghurye's Contribution to 'Indological' Approach

- In Ghurye's Indology, culture is the central element throughout his works.

- He understands society in terms of Sanskrit texts, historical documents and other archeological material, but supplements it with theoretical perspectives as well.
- Methodology of Ghurye is based upon a large number of texts. His approach was a combination of historical, diffusionist and descriptive ethnography. He attempted to study Indian society in a specific historical context.
- Indian traditions were seen as diffusion from one place to another resulting in unity of society. His descriptive ethnography was very much rooted in empirical reality.
- According to him, villages are the centre of Indian social life, but he rejected the self-sufficiency view of western scholars.
- Ghurye is however criticized for his over Hinduized view of Indian society. He fails to explore the structural implications of various social institutions like caste and he only focuses on cultural aspects only. Thus, Ghurye's work made a substantial contribution to the Indological method by providing insightful cultural analysis that is necessary for a true comprehension of Indian society.

Q. Highlight the major contributions of the reform movements in pre-independent India. (CSE 2024)

Ans: The social, cultural, and political environment of pre-independent India was significantly shaped by the reform movements. These movements, which sought to modernize Indian society while maintaining its cultural core, arose in reaction to a number of socioeconomic challenges.

Contribution of Reform Movements

- Social movements in modern India have a multi-dimensional face. They grew as consciousness and communication media grew. Education, political awareness about rights and new means of mobilization provided a conducive environment for their rise.

CASTE SYSTEM

Q. What, according to you, are the factors responsible for the continuance of caste system in India? Explain. (CSE 2024)

Ans: India's caste system endures because of a complicated interaction of political, social, religious, and historical elements. Despite attempts at modernity, this firmly established social order has been remarkably resilient.

Factors Responsible for the Continuance of Caste System in India

- G.S. Ghurye highlighted how endogamous marriage customs promote caste identities, which are absorbed from an early age.
- Caste networks, according to André Béteille, frequently create job possibilities and uphold economic interdependence.
- Through the ideas of karma and dharma, ancient Hindu writings such as the Manusmriti uphold caste standards.
- Louis Dumont emphasized how caste distinctions are upheld by ideas of cleanliness and defilement.
- In Indian politics, caste is a powerful mobilisation factor, and political parties frequently use it to forward their electoral agendas.
- Reservation programs and anti-discrimination legislation can unintentionally reinforce caste divisions.
- According to Yogendra Singh, caste frequently adjusts to changing situations rather than being eradicated by urbanization and education.
- The coming of modern means of communication has increased the 'horizontal stretch of caste'. Far-flung caste groups are able to interact and communicate with each other and find commonalities and shared interests to form clusters and this has resulted in the increase of caste solidarity within a region.
- One effect of universal adult franchise is the strengthening of caste consciousness. Political parties are at pains to select candidates who have a social base, usually drawn from the locally dominant caste groups.

- The joint family and caste system provide the individual in our society some of the benefits, which a welfare state provides in the industrially advanced countries.

The caste system has persisted because it is complex and ingrained in many facets of Indian society, that need comprehensive transformation strategies for change.

Q. What are the different forms of untouchability still practised in India? Discuss with suitable illustrations. (CSE 2024)

Ans: 'Untouchability' refers to a practice in which various types of segregation are imposed within the cultural framework of the caste. It refers not just to the avoidance or prohibition of physical contact but to a much broader set of social sanctions and social disabilities which are ascriptive in nature within the ritual framework of the caste system. It is also understood in terms of the 'social distance' that various castes maintain with each other.

Forms of Untouchability Practised in India

- **Political:** The exclusion of lower castes from the political process is linked to political untouchability. During elections, they frequently experience violence and prejudice in addition to being denied the opportunity to vote.
- **Religious:** The religious practices and beliefs that uphold the caste system and untouchability are linked to religious untouchability.
- **Occupational:** The traditional activities of the lower castes, which are viewed as contaminating or filthy, constitute the foundation of occupational untouchability. These jobs include leatherworking, scavenging by hand, cleaning sewers, and getting rid of dead animals.
- **Economic:** The economic exploitation of lower castes by higher castes is linked to economic untouchability. They frequently lack access to better employment alternatives and are compelled to labor in low-paying, menial jobs. They are also denied

SOCIAL CLASS STRUCTURE IN INDIA

Q. Discuss the changes taking place in the industrial class structure in India.

(CSE 2024)

Ans: Globalization, liberalization, and technical improvements are all having a major impact on India's industrial class structure. An increasingly dispersed and informal workforce is replacing traditional organized labor.

Changes Taking Place in Industrial Class Structure

- According to A R Desai, the British dumped their surplus factory-produced goods in India and stifled the growth of indigenous entrepreneurs and destroyed the domestic handloom industry. Instead of the industrial class, a merchant class arrived first as a result of colonial mercantilism.
- Post-Independence industrial class structure was initially largely governed by a state driven socialist economy.
- According to Sharit Bhowmik, the rise of the public sector gave birth to multiple classes, but they carried a distinct status of 'government employees' and not of 'industrial employees' in a strict capitalistic sense.
- At the top of the hierarchy of state run enterprises were political appointees cum administrators and not elite capitalists.
- Government's policy of import substitution and quantitative controls on the other hand led to growth of the capitalist class also.
- With the growth of the working class, their social spread also diversified leading to introduction of various cleavages in terms of caste, gender, age etc. Each of these sections had their own problems and posed a challenge in their mobilization.
- Post liberalization saw another shift in Industrial class structure which was marked by informalisation of labor on one hand and swell of middle management on the other.
- Bardhan and Rudra claim that globalization and liberalization has grossly inflated the assets of the capitalist class at the expense of the working class.

Therefore, occupational diversification has led to sub-classes in the previously tightly defined industrial class structure.

Q. Elaborate the salient features and the role of the middle class in India's democracy and development.

(CSE 2023)

Ans: Middle Class as a conceptual stratum in urban strata of class structure emerged only after industrialization when the concept of class itself emerged in its current sense and it's placed in between the dichotomous property owning and working class. Structurally the middle class is placed in the middle and has characteristics of both upper and lower classes.

Salient Features of Middle Class in India

- In 'Theories of Surplus Value', Marx goes on to argue that as capitalism develops there is an expansion of the middle class. This happens because there is a rising surplus and middle class rises to consume that surplus. Growth of middle class is a roadblock for proletariat revolution according to Marx.
- Functionalists view middle class in terms of differential occupational rewards. Expansion of middle caste in post-independence period is due to diversification of occupation, economic liberalization and expansion of educational and entrepreneurial opportunities.
- The middle class values education. They value their children's education and are well educated. This focus on education frequently results in social mobility upward.
- They belonged to castes which were educationally forward traditionally, but they exhibited their caste identities to lesser degree. In fact, they were the pioneers of social reforms and donned a liberal and secular outlook. Thus, though, it had caste origins, but it was not hesitant to shake its roots for a liberal outlook.
- The members of the educated class such as government servants, lawyers, college teachers and doctors constituted the bulk of the Indian middle class.

SYSTEM OF KINSHIP IN INDIA

Q. Is patriarchy a key to understanding different forms of inequalities in Indian society? Elaborate. (CSE 2024)

Ans: Patriarchy is defined by Sylvia Walby in her 'Theorizing Patriarchy, 1990' as 'a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate and oppress women'.

Patriarchy and Forms of Inequalities in India

- Patriarchy operates through multiple structures like – production relations in the household where women are subjected to unpaid labor, discriminatory allocation of occupations in the labor market, capture of political power by patriarchs, male violence, etc.
- Walby distinguishes patriarchy as private patriarchy which is practiced in households and public patriarchy which is the collective response of a patriarchal society to women.
- Within family, authority structure, inheritance rights and other entitlements, rituals, division of labor reflect it.
- In society, gender discrimination, division of labor – some jobs are now stereotyped as women's job and others as men's jobs, physical and sexual violence against woman, etc. reflect it.
- In Indian society, patriarchy as a social institution gives rise to other social values such as male child preference, monogamy, fasting by women, abstinence of women from public discourse and so on.
- Ann Oakley too blames industrialization as the real beginning of the modern patriarchal system in which women were branded as 'housewives'.
- According to Uma Chakravorty, Brahminical traditions glorify obedient women as 'Pativrata' and hence put a veil on gender discrimination.
- Patriarchy legitimizes motherhood as the primary role of women. While her status on one hand is of Devi in scriptures, she is given treatment of Dasi. Bina Das calls it the 'Devi dichotomy'.

However, the patriarchal system with its unlimited restrictions on women and its comparative freedom for men is gradually breaking down under the impact of new civilization and culture.

Q. Do you think that family bondings are being affected by the changing kinship patterns in India? Comment. (CSE 2024)

Ans: The structure of relationships between individuals and groups, known as the kinship system, is fundamental to all human societies. Numerous variables, such as cultural transitions, economic growth, technical improvements, and modifications to social and legal standards, have impacted kinship patterns.

Changing Kinship Patterns and Family Bonding in India

- Contemporary trends in kinship patterns can be viewed in terms of changing structure and functions of kinship groups and patterns of relationships between them.
- Many of the changes are brought about by the newly emerging bureaucratic organizations, individualization, migration, education, nuclearization, and so on.
- In structural terms, nuclear family, decline of patriarchal relations, weaning authority of parents over children, rise of alternative kinship institutions like live-ins are contemporary trends.
- Functional aspects of kinship relations are also changing. Various functions of family and other descent groups are taken over by alternative institutions.
- Placement function is no longer performed by family and it is done by other economic organizations. Similarly, jural rights of kin groups are also taken away by formal judicial institutions.
- Education functions are also performed by schools now.
- Cases of marital breakdown, divorce and separation are increasing in families. Incidences of domestic violence are also increasing.

RURAL & AGRARIAN SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Q. What, according to Andre Beteille, are the bases of agrarian class structure in India? Analyse. (CSE 2024)

Ans: In his book “Caste, Class, and Power,” Andre Beteille identified a number of important pillars supporting the class system of India’s agrarian society. His research offers a multifaceted perspective on India’s rural stratification.

Agrarian social structure will include caste, class, land ownership, Jajmani system, etc. while agrarian class structure will include only classes. Land is the central element to the agrarian social structure in India and caste, class and land ownership are closely linked.

Bases of Agrarian Class Structure

- Andre Beteille highlighted that the main factor influencing agrarian class differences is control over land. According to this criterion, the primary classes are landless laborers, small peasant proprietors, and large landowners.
- Despite their imperfect alignment, caste frequently reinforces class differences by being correlated with economic status and land ownership. While lower castes were frequently laborers without land, upper castes usually held more land.
- A more sophisticated class structure is produced by the intricate tenancy system, which includes sharecropping agreements and establishes intermediate classes between landowners and workers.
- Caste and land ownership were major sources of local political influence, which strengthened the link between political and economic power.
- Beteille noted that caste-based mobility was becoming less common as a result of the mechanization and commercialization of agriculture, which was changing traditional class connections.

Therefore, Andre Beteille in his ‘Agrarian Structure in India’ indicates that classes should be understood from a cultural point of view as well. Agrarian class should be understood not only from ownership criteria,

but also from land use criteria. Thus, it can be said that the interaction of political, social, and economic elements in forming India’s agrarian class structure is acknowledged by Beteille’s analysis.

Q. Identify different forms of inequalities associated with agrarian social structure in India. (CSE 2024)

Ans: The agrarian social structure is marked by wide diversities. As pointed out by Dhanagare in his ‘Peasant Movements in India, 1983’, ‘the relations among classes and social composition of groups that occupy specific class position in relation to land-control and land-use in India are so diverse and complex that it is difficult to incorporate them all in a general schema’.

Inequalities Associated with Agrarian Social Structure

- Disparities between rich landowners and impoverished peasants are caused by socio-economic class divides. Andre Beteille’s research on Tanjore village demonstrates how caste and economic class combine to produce a complex web of inequality. While small farmers find it difficult to make ends meet, wealthy farmers can buy better inputs and technology, which boosts output.
- India has an extremely unequal allocation of land. In the past, the Zamindari system concentrated land in the hands of a select few. Marginal farmers own very little land, while big landholdings continue to exist despite land reforms. Their ability to negotiate and their standard of living are impacted.
- In rural India, discrimination against women occurs in both work and land rights. Despite rarely owning land, they make a substantial contribution to agriculture. According to Leela Dube, women’s social and economic standing is impacted by patriarchal traditions that restrict their access to resources.
- Agrarian interactions are significantly impacted by the caste system. Dalits and other lower castes frequently have less access to resources and land ownership.

INDUSTRIALISATION & URBANISATION

Q. Examine with suitable examples the recent trends in the growth of urban settlements in India. (CSE 2024)

Ans: The process of 'urbanization' denotes population growth of the cities and towns. Sociologically, it also denotes the spread of urban ways of life to the countryside. The process of urbanization has demographic as well as social dimensions.

Recent Trends in the Growth of Urban Settlements

- With urbanization, transformation of economic activities from the agricultural sector to the non-agricultural sector took place, and the proportion of population engaged in secondary and tertiary sectors of activities increased with division of labor and specialization of work.
- The process of urbanization led to breakdown in the functioning of traditional institutions and patterns of behavior and of social control.
- Government-led construction of highly developed metropolitan areas with cutting-edge technology with the goal of enhancing the quality of life and urban infrastructure.
- The creation of hybrid environments as the lines between rural and urban areas has become hazier. The landscapes around Delhi have rapidly changed from being primarily agricultural to being mixed-use.
- The growth of already-existing major cities into large metropolitan areas, as is the case in the Delhi-area National Capital Region. This is consistent with the "unintended city" theory put forth by Indian sociologist Ashis Nandy.
- Smaller urban settlements are being developed surrounding larger cities, such as Navi Mumbai, in order to relieve traffic in the central districts and supply reasonably priced housing.

These patterns show how India's urban landscape has been shaped by the intricate interactions of internal migration, globalization, and economic liberalization. These developments have made Indian cities more un-

equal in terms of both space and society. India's urban growth exhibits a variety of trends that offer both opportunities and difficulties for equitable and sustainable development.

Q. Is there a connection between labour migration and informal sector? Justify your answer with reference to Indian context. (CSE 2024)

Ans: In India, the informal sector and labor migration are intimately related, influencing social structures and urban economies. This link has important development-related ramifications and is the result of intricate socioeconomic circumstances.

Migration plays an important role in the distribution of the population of any country, and determines the growth of the labor force in any area. Migration is thus an important symptom of social change in society.

Labour Migration and Informal Sector

- The informal sector in Indian cities is growing as a result of rural-urban migration, which is fueled by pull factors like perceived metropolitan prospects and push factors like rural poverty.
- Informal jobs like construction, small-scale manufacturing, street vending, and housework are frequently performed by migrant workers. According to the Economic Survey of India, more than 90% of workers are employed in the unorganized sector, with a sizable percentage being migrants.
- The low obstacles to entrance in the informal sector make it ideal for migrants without formal education or social connections. However, this leads to a lack of social benefits, job insecurity, and vulnerability to abuse.
- Poverty, low productivity, unemployment, exhaustion of natural resources and natural calamities are some of 'Push factors'. Opportunities for better employment, higher wages, better working conditions and better amenities of life like education, health, etc. are the 'Pull factors'.

POLITICS & SOCIETY

Q. Discuss the changing nature of political elites in India. (CSE 2024)

Ans: Political elites derive their position due to the 'power to influence' they possess. Political elites usually have their unique position due to their numerical strength, their lineage, party affiliation, social linkages, and position in government and so on.

Changing Nature of Political Elites

- In traditional India, political elites belonged to certain social groups namely Kshatriyas, royal nobility, kings, priestly class, etc. It was mainly authoritarian and feudal.
- Change in elite structure takes place as the rulers change and ideology changes. For example, the priestly class played little role during the time of Akbar, but during the Sultanate period, their role was immense.
- When democracy was adopted post-independence, the nobility also lost its relevance after consolidation of princely states.
- Composition of the elites is further altered as society moved towards a rational organization based on egalitarian and achievement based structure.
- In a society like India where kinship ties are still very strong, casteism still plays as an electoral card. As democratic system gave power to numbers, representatives of dominant castes assumed powerful roles.
- The formation of political elites in India has also been influenced by the growing importance of money and physical strength in politics. Candidates with substantial financial resources and criminal histories are more likely to win elections, which allow them to join the political elite.
- In rural areas, the elite consist of well to do peasantry, ritually superior community, dominant castes and trading class. Politics have become competitive where all sections of society vie for a share. Most of the people participating in politics in a village are from the dominant caste.

- Despite significant changes, the political elite in India are still characterized by nepotism, dynastic rule, personality cults, regionalism and casteism.

Since independence, India's political elite structure has changed significantly. Social and economic development, the emergence of regional and caste-based politics, and the democratization of the political system have all played important roles in this transition.

Q. What do you understand by decentralisation of power? What is its role in strengthening the roots of democracy in India? Elaborate. (CSE 2024)

Ans: The transfer of authority and decision-making from national to local levels is known as decentralization of power. Decentralization entails giving local organizations more authority. Decentralization gives local governments more authority to decide on issues that impact their communities.

Role of Decentralisation in Strengthening the Roots of Democracy in India

- By allocating authority and responsibilities, decentralization promotes societal stability and integration. This promotes community togetherness and is consistent with Durkheim's idea of collective conscience.
- The public may more easily reach local officials, which encourages responsiveness and transparency in governance.
- The development of democratic and political leadership abilities is facilitated by local governance.
- Decentralization makes it possible to allocate resources more effectively and precisely according to regional goals and requirements.
- Decentralization gives communities and local governments greater authority over their operations. Local organizations are better able to recognize and meet the needs and objectives of their community.

SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA

Q. Discuss the major challenges related to women's reproductive health in India. What measures would you suggest to overcome these challenges? (CSE 2024)

Ans: Reproductive health concerns with issues like ability to reproduce, safe motherhood, prevention from sexually transmitted diseases, hygiene, family planning, and so on. It is an important social and demographic indicator which is closely related to maternal mortality, neonatal mortality and overall health of cohabiting partners.

Challenges Related to Women's Reproductive Health

- In India, malnutrition, proper adult education, age at marriage and lack of medical infrastructure are key factors affecting reproductive health.
- Social beliefs regarding menstruation have also worked against good reproductive health of women.
- Institutional delivery is still less than 70% and pre-natal and postnatal care is still not up to desirable standards.
- 40% girls still get married by the age of 18 years and early child bearing affect their reproductive health adversely.
- Adolescent pregnancies raise the likelihood of maternal difficulties and prolong cycles of poverty and dependency because young mothers frequently encounter obstacles in their pursuit of education and employment, which exacerbates socioeconomic and health inequalities.
- Maternal mortality and morbidity rates are high due to limited access to safe abortion services and qualified maternal healthcare practitioners.

Measures to Overcome Challenges

- People can be given right knowledge about relationships, consent, contraception, and sexual health by implementing age-appropriate, culturally sensitive, and evidence-based sexuality education programs in schools and communities.
- Provide women with economic and educational possibilities to empower them.

- By implementing legislation prohibiting child marriage.
- By promoting gender parity.
- By upgrading the infrastructure for healthcare.
- By putting in place programs for education and awareness.
- Extend public programs such as the Janani Suraksha Yojana.
- The stigma and silence around menstruation can be reduced by involving local communities in creative peer education initiatives. Women and girls can be trained and empowered to become ambassadors for menstrual hygiene through these programs.

National Population Policy, 2000 has a specific focus on reproductive health and it has for the first time acknowledged sexual and reproductive needs of adolescents. Government has launched various schemes like 'Kishori Shakti Yojna' for improvement of reproductive health of adolescent girls. Nehru Yuva Kendras also promote awareness about reproductive health and hygiene among youth.

India's road to guarantee sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) is continuous, characterized by advancements but also by enduring obstacles. We must not waver in our resolve to advance everyone's liberty, dignity, and well-being as we fight the challenges of healthcare access, gender equality, and social norms.

Q. Despite the efforts of the government, bonded labour still continues in India. Discuss.

(CSE 2024)

Ans: Bonded Labor can be termed as modern day slavery. National Commission on Labor defines bonded labor as 'labor which remains in bondage for the debt incurred'. Thus, it is a relation between a creditor and debtor in highly unequal terms.

Government's Efforts against Bonded Labour

- Article 23 prohibits bonded labor as the Constitution guarantees us right against exploitation.
- 'Bonded Labor System Abolition Act' was passed in 1976.

CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Q. To what extent have the legal provisions been effective in curbing violence against women in India? Give your argument. (CSE 2024)

Ans: Violence against women is primarily a result of unequal patriarchal social structure. Woman is pushed at margins in relationships, given lesser rights and is expected to subjugate to whims of male counterparts. Absence of equal rights and financial liberty coupled with gender stereotypical notions leave her vulnerable to multiple violence right from birth to death.

Violence Against Women

- Violence sometimes appears as manifest in form of – rapes, dowry deaths, feticides, domestic violence and so on.
- Sometimes it is more indirect and latent like – unequal rights, poor nutrition of girl child, inferior education of girls, no share in parental property, low social status, unequal sexual division of labor, discrimination in employment, and misrepresentation of women in the media and so on.
- Lotika Sarkar considers that ‘anxiety is another name for women in Indian context’. She is surrounded by anxieties from puberty till death.
- Utsa Patnaik in her article ‘The Economics of Dowry’ indicates that dowry inflicts injury into minds of women compelling her to feel worthless who cannot live without marriage and without support of her husband. While upper class goes for dowry due to affluence, middle class goes for it for status and lower class goes for it for compensation.
- According to Uma Chakravorty, despite liberal legislation, the condition of women remains unimproved because culture and patriarchal social structures dominate statutory norms in day to day life.

Legal Provisions and their Effectiveness

A number of laws have been passed, including the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 2013, the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961, and the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) of 2005, all of which reinforced anti-rape legislation.

- As required by the Constitution, the state’s commitment to gender equality is reflected in these regulations, which seek to shield women from various forms of abuse.
- Law enforcement and legislation frequently diverge. Cases are underreported due to lack of awareness. For example, authorities often ignore domestic violence incidents as “family matters.”
- Cultural considerations are also important. Reporting is discouraged by the stigma associated with sexual violence victims. Despite widespread demonstrations and legislative changes brought about by the Nirbhaya case in 2012, crimes against women continue to occur.
- According to Uma Chakravorty, despite liberal legislation, the condition of women remains unimproved because culture and patriarchal social structures dominate statutory norms in day to day life. Sociological theories of patriarchy emphasize how male supremacy is maintained by institutionalized gender norms.
- Another factor influencing the efficacy of legal provisions is economic reliance. Women frequently lack the financial means to file a lawsuit.

Therefore, to stop this violence, active steps must be taken from all stakeholders in society. Women themselves must be crusaders against it. While legal measures are crucial, they are only partially successful if underlying socio-cultural problems are not addressed.

Q. What is sustainable development? How can sustainability be achieved in India where livelihood needs conflict with environmental protection? (CSE 2024)

Ans: According to the Brundtland Commission (1987), “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” is what is meant by sustainable development. It strikes a balance between environmental preservation, social justice, and economic progress.