INDIAN SOCIETY

Class Notes

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INDEX

SALIENT FEATURES OF INDIAN SOCIETY

Indian Society – An Introduction

India offers astounding variety in virtually every aspect of social life. Diversities of ethnic, linguistic, regional, economic, religious, class, and caste groups crosscut Indian society, which is also permeated with immense urban-rural differences and gender distinctions.

Indian society is a pluralistic society. Full of diversities of language, region, religion, caste and customs, Indian society is moving towards the modernization. The establishment of democracy in India that rests on the principles of equality, freedom and universal franchise, changed the traditional structure of Indian society.

Historical Perspective

Indian society is very old, complex, plural and it has a long history. It is composed of different religious groups, racial groups and groups having cultural differences. In the long span of Indian history various groups from" different parts of the world entered into India with their own socio-cultural and racial features. The best example is Indus valley civilization. In the later stage the Indo-Aryans came and they had interaction with earlier inhabitants of the land. They had their own socio-cultural pattern of living. They considered themselves as superior. They developed norms and customs for different social groups with their own category and for the outsiders. That was the phase when Varna's originated.

Christianity and Islam both influenced Indian social system. Not only both the religious groups influenced Indian social system but both were influenced by the prevailing social conditions. So, they acquired some special characteristics in the Indian setting.

Features of Indian Society

- **Multi Ethnic:** Waves of migrations from different corners of the world made this country home of diverse races. India is a mixture of different races. Indian population has all the major races of the world.

- **Multi Lingual:** There is a popular aphorism that depicts India's linguistic diversity rather well: Kos-kos par badle paani, chaar kos par baani (The language spoken in India changes every few kilometres, just like the taste of the water).

- **Religious Pluralism:** India is a multi-cultural and a diverse nation with a flourishing history of pluralism that has been thriving for thousands of years. Among the many faiths represented here are Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism.

- **Tribes:** A tribe is an Indian group that poses similar features and qualities that makes it different from other entities. They are tied together by customs, rituals, beliefs, kinship, social rank, political organization, etc. According to an official report, there are 705 Scheduled tribes in the country and they constitute around 6% of the total population of India.

- **Dynamic and Syncretic:** India as Country had a free hand in assimilation and accommodation of different cultures, religions (Hindus, Muslims, Jains, Sikhs), traditions (Sufi, Bhakti, Vaishnav), different rulers(Mughals, Marathas, British) in the past. India or Indians are the outcome of the mixtures of these all.

- **Unity in Diversity:** India has variations in physical qualities, skin colour, castes, creed, cultural

and religious traditions, etc. These differences are viewed upon as varieties that improve the society and the nation as a whole.

- **Caste and Class:** Social inequality exists throughout the world, but perhaps nowhere has inequality been so elaborately constructed as in the Indian institution of caste.In India, there are different classes present in society. This different class differs based on economic differences. This difference is based on education, property, business and work-related, etc. According to famous economist Karl Marx, Man is a class animal.

- **Family:** Family is of huge importance in society for Indian and it is a dominant institution in the life of an individual. With the second largest population in the world, and often three or more generations often found living together under one roof showing just how much of an importance family life is in the country. This family structure is very well-suited to India's current working conditions, and often family-run businesses will prefer to hire family members over anybody else out of preference.

- **Marriage:** Throughout India, marriages are customarily arranged. Partners are chosen from within a caste (endogamy), excluding certain categories of very close kin. Strategies both of the 'extension' and of the 'intensification' of kin ties are manifested through marriage alliances.

- **Kinship:** The system of kinship, that is, the way in which relations between individuals and groups are organised, occupies a central place in all human societies. kinship continues to be a basic principle of social organisation and mobilisation. It is a complex phenomenon that both rigidity and flexibility exist side by side in regard to values and norms related to the kinship systems.

- **Patriarchy:** In Indian society, patriarchal ideology is formalized and enforced through laws, customs, and rituals and is evidenced by power relations within households. For example, the majority of households within India are headed by a male, with only 15% of the total number of households in India having a female head of household.

- **Rural and Agrarian:** Almost 65 % of the population of the country reside in the villages. They are solely dependent on the agriculture and allied activities for their survival.

- **Mutual Respect and Tolerance:** Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs is embedded in our Social values. The Indian society has survived in the face of diversity, thanks to its accommodative values of tolerance and mutual respect that have existed from the early times.

- **Presence of Spirituality and Materialism:** In Indian society both features of spirituality and materialism are present. Spiritualism is concerned with the human soul and it is a principle that aims to alleviate the human soul. It is a way to od. India is known as the centre of spirituality in the world. On the other hand, Materialism values worldly goods and services. This philosophy advocates valuing the materialistic things of the world. This advocate accommodating luxury items. In India, you will find both coexisting peacefully. Indian society strikes a perfect balance between them.

- **Co-existence of Traditionalism and Modernity:** Globalization might have bought with it a surge of modern values and practices, but traditionalism is still prevalent and preserved in India. The traditions of Indian society have also made their way to the outside world through the same gates of globalization. Ex. Modern Gym and Yoga, Western Medicines and AYUSH

- **Collectivism and Harmony:** Indians generally place a high value on harmony and unity with

others, keeping a strong nexus with their community and relatives. A unified and interdependent community or family provides a support system that an individual can rely on.

- **Modesty and Conservativeness:** Modesty is one of the core values in the Indian culture. Indians tend to be quite conservative in most aspects of life, particularly in rural areas. This is especially noticeable in people's behaviour and dress. Clothing is usually traditional, but it is common to see Western-style clothing throughout the country for men and in urban areas for women.

- **Adaptability and Light-Heartedness:** diversity is celebrated alongside an inventive and entrepreneurial spirit. In this sense, many Indians are very adaptive and creative, often visualising big possibilities for themselves, their people and country. Problems are usually managed in a cheerful, cooperative and innovative manner, along with a light-heartedness towards situations that might otherwise be understood as frustrating.

Factors responsible for continuity in the social system:

- By and large Indians are orthodox and tradition-bound. They are not in favour of violent changes.

- Each institution has some social roots. It is felt that any change in one will have the adverse impact upon the other for which society is not prepared.

- Most of the institutions in India are linked with the idea of God. These are given religious orientations and it is felt that any violation of any social institution amounts to displeasing God.

- In the society, the forces of changes are vitiated by vested interests. They generally swing the balance in their own favour.

- Undoubtedly each social institution has its own advantages, which in no way can be under-estimated.

- A vast majority of population in India is illiterate and as such it becomes difficult to convince them of the need of eradication of evil social institutions.

- A vast majority of the people in India live from hand to mouth and they are averse to understand social problems.

- India is a vast country and people live in far flung areas where access is difficult. It becomes difficult for our social and religious leaders to reach the people, particularly when means of transportation and communication are difficult. Our foreign rulers did not make any effort to make the people conscious of social problems, leave alone removing the evils. Our leadership in independent India and even during freedom struggle, did not favour complete break with the past. Indian leadership has always believed that radical and drastic changes in any field are bound to do more harm than good in the society.

CHANGES IN INDIAN SOCIETY OVER THE PERIOD OF TIME

- There are a number of factors which are responsible for continuity and change in Indian society. Change may occur through adaptation or integration. Adaptation occurs when existing institutions readjust to meet new needs. Integration occurs when a society adopts a new element and makes it part of itself.

- Of the various factors which have enabled our society to adapt/integrate or fail to adapt/integrate, the most important ones are: political independence and introduction of democratic values, industrialisation, urbanisation, increase in education, legislative measures, social change in caste system, and social movements and feminism, globalisation and anti-casteism.

- Some ethnic groups want political independence to preserve their cultural identity. Religious groups want freedom to teach certain values and sub-cultural norms to their members. All these desires and demands have affected the nature of social change and the process of modernisation in our country in the last five decades.

- Urbanisation is another factor that has affected the society. The family, kinship, caste and marriage etc., systems in the urban areas differ from those in the rural areas not only in composition but in ideology and functioning too.

- Changes in cities are also reflected in many other social systems. The kinship relations in the urban areas are not so close as in the rural areas. Whereas in cities, only primary and secondary kin have intimate contacts, in villages, the relations are extensively extended to tertiary and distant kin too. The caste system in the urban areas is not as rigid as in the rural areas.

- In the economic field, Industrialisation has resulted in specialisation in work, occupational mobility, monetisation of economy, and a breakdown of link between kinship and occupational structures; in the social field, it has resulted in the migration of people from rural to urban areas, spread of education, and a strong centralised political structure; in the cultural field, it has brought secularisation of beliefs. Instead of all family members working together in an integrated economic enterprise, a few male members go out of the home to earn the family's living. This has affected not only the traditional structure of the joint family but also the relations among its members.

- Education has not only brought about changes in the attitudes, beliefs, values and ideologies of the people but has also created and aroused individualistic feelings. The increasing education not only brings changes in the philosophy of life of men and women but also provides new avenues of employment to the latter. After becoming economically independent, women demand more voice in family affairs and also refuse to accept anybody's dominance over them. This shows how education brings changes in relations in the family, ultimately leading to the structural changes too.

THE CASTE SYSTEM

Every society is stratified. It has rightly been said that an "unstratified society, with a real equality of its members is a myth, which has never been realised in the history of mankind. The form and proportions may vary but its essence is permanent." The Indian social system rests on three pillars: the caste system, the joint family system, and the village community. Among these, the caste system appears to be the most significant feature of the Indian Society due to its interdependence upon the social, economic and political systems. In fact, the Indian Society has been described as the caste society par excellence. In India we find a unique system of social stratification based on birth, which is not found elsewhere in the world.

MEANING AND DEFINITION

The term 'Caste' is derived from a Portuguese word 'Casta' meaning breed, race or group. As already mentioned, castes are ascriptive groups. Thus basically caste refers to people belonging to the same breed. An individual is born into a caste, and this status is usually permanent. Though the elements of castes are found outside India, it is only in India that numerous castes are found. "Castes are small and complete social worlds in themselves marked off definitely from one another though subsisting within the larger society."

CHARECTERISTICS OF THE CASTE SYSTEM

1. Segmental Division of Society: Under caste system, society is divided into several small social groups called castes. Each of these castes is a well-developed social group, the membership of which is based on birth. Each caste has its own traditional social status, occupation, customs, rules and regulations. It has its own governing body called the caste council or 'jati panchayat', which enforces the caste rules. Above all, members of a caste are bound together by mutual obligations of help and co-operation in their day to day activities. Thus each caste is a social world by itself.

2. Hierarchy: The caste system is always characterized by a hierarchical arrangement. It implies that there are some castes which are considered superior to the others. Membership in the caste is based on birth and is more or less fixed. Traditionally it is the hierarchical arrangement of caste according to different degrees of dominance and subordination.

3. Restrictions on Interaction In the caste system, there are several restrictions on interaction. The members of one caste cannot mix or move freely with the members of the other castes. This ban on interaction becomes still more rigid when the question of mixing of a superior caste with an inferior one comes to the front. Every caste abides by well-established customs and well-defined norms of interaction.

4. Social and religious disabilities: In caste system, the members of a higher caste impose certain disabilities and restrictions on other castes.

5. Imposition on restrictions on commensality: Each caste group has its own laws which govern the food habits of the members.

6. The Ideology of purity and pollution: The higher castes are believed to be pure and the lower caste people as impure. The lower castes are regarded as less pure and more polluted.

7. Restrictions on Occupations: The different castes are usually associated with traditional occupations.

8. Marital restrictions: Caste endogamy is strictly enforced wherein the members of each caste marry only within their own caste. Inter-caste marriage is prohibited.

9. Hereditary status: Caste system is based on the ascriptive pattern which implies that the birth of a person in a particular caste decided his caste and his status in society. It is usually difficult or rather impossible to change one's own caste despite the acquisition of qualifications or disqualifications, the membership of a particular caste continues and does not undergo any change.

BENEFITS OF CASTE SYSTEM

- It continued the traditional social organization of India.

- It has accommodated multiple communities by ensuring each of them a monopoly of a specific means of livelihood.

- Provided social security and social recognition to individuals. It is the individual's caste that canalizes his choice in marriage, plays the roles of the state-club, the orphanage and the benefits society. Besides, it also provides him with health insurance benefits. It even provides for his funeral.

- It has handed over the knowledge and skills of the hereditary occupation of a caste from one generation to another, which has helped the preservation of culture and ensured productivity.

- Caste plays a crucial role in the process of socialization by teaching individuals the culture and traditions, values and norms of their society.

- It has also led to interdependent interaction between different castes, through jajmani relationships. Caste acted as a trade union and protected its members from the exploitation.

- Promoted political stability, as Kshatriyas were generally protected from political competition, conflict and violence by the caste system.

- Maintained racial purity through endogamy.

- Specialization led to quality production of goods and thus promoted economic development. For eg: Many handicraft items of India gained international recognition due to this.

DRAWBACKS OF THE CASTE SYSTEM

1. Hinders social progress: caste system is a hindrance to social progress because it does not allow changes to be easily introduced in society. Under caste system, the individual is not free he is to conform to the age old customs of his caste. Slightest deviation from them is severely dealt with. This rigidity of the system has almost paralyzed Hindu society. Innovation has no place in it.

2. Stifles economic progress: caste system acts as a stumbling block on the path of economic development. As occupations are determined by status rather than contract in caste system, the worker is denied of his freedom to choose and occupation of his liking. This leads to immobility and inefficiency of labour and thereby to economic backwardness.

3. Leads to political disunity: under caste system an individual is required to be more loyal to his caste than to any other group. As such, it fosters casteism rather than nationalism among the people. It is for this reason that the Indians could not develop nationalism and combine against foreign invasions. In fact, disunity and lack of patriotism among the Indians encouraged many foreigners to invade India.

4. Perpetuates social inequalities: caste system has served as an instrument in the hands of the upper castes to maintain their own privileged position in society. It has led to the despotism of the upper castes and created permanent feelings of inferiority and insecurity in the minds of lower caste people.

5. Imposes hardships on women: Another drawback of the system is that it imposes hardships on

women. Under caste system, a caste wishing to raise its status in the caste hierarchy should follow certain customs like child marriage, prohibition of widow remarriages and seclusion of women, which entail hardships for women.

6. Creates untouchabilty: The system keeps a large number of people in a state of virtual slavery. They are the unfortunate untouchables, who suffer from all kinds of disabilities. Untouchability is the ugliest expression of caste system.

7. It stood against democracy: The caste system ran contrary to the democratic spirit. Democracy presupposes human equality, but the caste system believed in inequality and 26 there was a hierarchical arrangement wherein the Brahmins were at the top, whereas the Sudras were at the lowest rung of the ladder.

CHANGES IN THE CASTE SYSTEM

1. Decline in the supremacy of Brahmins: In the traditional caste system, the Brahmins were at the apex of the social and religious sphere and thus they enjoyed supremacy over others. But due to the processes of secularization and westernization, the authority of the Brahmins gradually declined and they ceased to enjoy the traditional respect and honour in the society.

2. Changes in the caste hierarchy: Traditionally, each caste was maintaining its own style of life and the higher castes maintained a better life than the rest. But in course of time the process of Sanskritization started. Sanskritization is a process in which a status group aspiring for upward mobility in the system of social stratification tends to emulate the life style of the higher castes. The lower castes followed Sanskritization to bring about a change in their social status.

3. Changes in status: The status-indicating function of castes has undergone changes due to the process of secularization, westernization and materialistic attitude of individuals.

4. Occupational changes: In a caste-ridden society, occupations were hereditary and an individual's birth into a particular caste determined his occupation forever. But when the rigidity of the caste system broke down, occupational changes were also marked.

5. Changes in the sphere of culture: It has changed the life style of different caste groups, their modes of living, patterns of worship and performance of rites and rituals, customs and traditional practices.

6. Changes in commensality: People are no more confined to their places of origin. They have migrated to different places and so it becomes very difficult to stick to the restrictions relating to the food habits. Particularly in the urban places where the strangers dine in hotels, it is impossible to maintain restrictions. In various offices and work organizations, the same relaxation is evident. The employees assemble together for interdining.

7. Attitudinal changes: Changes in the attitude towards castes have been noticed within the system. This relates to loss of faith in the ascriptive pattern and jurisdiction of the system itself.

WAY FORWARD

1. Modern Education: Modern education being secular in nature, is indifferent to, if not against, religion. It is, on the one hand, based on such democratic values like equality, liberty and fraternity and on the other hand, grounded on such scientific values like reason and observation. Therefore, with the spread of modern education, the beliefs like divine origin of caste, karma and 'karmaphala', which provided ethical justification for 27 caste system, are growing weaker and weaker in the minds of people. As modern education is usually imparted in co-educational institutions, it encourages inter-caste marriages, based on love, among the educated young men and women. Thus, modern

education acts as a very powerful force against caste system in India.

2. Industrialization: Caste, like the joint family, is based on rural economy. As such, industrial economy cuts across the roots of both caste and joint family. Occupational castes cannot survive in the face of large scale industrialization. For example, the members of the weaving castes are finding it extremely difficult to follow their traditional caste occupations as it is not possible for them to compete with the textile mills in the open markets. As a result, of industrialization, the tradition of following caste occupations has come in to disuse.

3. Urbanization: Under urban conditions of life, the ideas of pollution by touch of a shadow cannot be translated into action.

4. Modern means of transportation: Modern means of transportation have increased spatial mobility of the people and thereby put an end to the geographical isolation, which was a favourable condition for the creation and continuation of caste system in India. Moreover, while travelling by the modern means of transportation like buses, trains, it is impossible to observe caste rules regarding food, drink and social inter-course.

5. Increase in the importance of wealth: In our present age, wealth is replacing birth as the basis of social prestige. Consequently, caste, which is based on birth, is no longer the basis of social status.

6. New social movements: In the past, a number of movements were launched against caste system, but none of them succeeded, as they were mainly reformist in their mission. They never questioned orthodoxy. But the social movements started by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dayananda Saraswati and others were unlike the earlier movements, for they were based on the authority of reason rather than the orthodox texts. As such, their ideas could influence the intelligentsia of the country against caste and other evils of Society.

REASONS FOR CONTINUITY/PERPETUITY OF CASTE SYSTEM

Caste system is, therefore, a dynamic reality with a great degree of flexibility in terms of internal structure and functions. To examine the continuity of caste system and its reasons, we need to keep in mind this high degree of flexibility of the system.

- The post-Independence Indian state inherited and reflected some contradictions. On the one hand, the state was committed to the abolition of caste and explicitly wrote this into the Constitution. On the other hand, the state was both unable and unwilling to push through radical reforms which would have undermined the economic basis for caste inequality.

- At yet another level, the state assumed that if it operated in a caste-blind manner, this would automatically lead to the undermining of caste based privileges and the eventual abolition of the institution. For example, appointments to government jobs took no account of caste, thus leaving the well-educated upper castes and the ill-educated or often illiterate lower castes to compete on "equal" terms. The only exception to this was in the form of reservations for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In other words, in the decades immediately after Independence, the state did not make sufficient effort to deal with the fact that the upper castes and the lower castes were far from equal in economic and educational terms.

- it was remarkable how resilient caste proved to be. Recruitment to industrial jobs, whether in the textile mills of Mumbai (then Bombay), the jute mills of Kolkata (then Calcutta), or elsewhere, continued to be organised along caste and kinship-based lines. The middle men who recruited labour for factories tended to recruit them from their own caste and region so that particular departments or shop floors were often dominated by specific castes. Prejudice against the

untouchables remained quite strong and was not absent from the city, though not as extreme as it could be in the village.

- Not surprisingly, it was in the cultural and domestic spheres that caste has proved strongest. Endogamy, or the practice of marrying within the caste, remained largely unaffected by modernisation and change. Even today, most marriages take place within caste boundaries, although there are more intercaste marriages.

- Perhaps, the most eventful and important sphere of change has been that of politics. From its very beginnings in independent India, democratic politics has been deeply conditioned by caste.

- For the so called scheduled castes and tribes and the backward castes, caste has become all too visible, indeed their caste has tended to eclipse the other dimensions of their identities. Because they have no inherited educational and social capital, and because they must compete with an already entrenched upper caste group, they cannot afford to abandon their caste identity for it is one of the few collective assets they have. Moreover, they continue to suffer from discrimination of various kinds. The policies of reservation and other forms of protective discrimination instituted by the state in response to political pressure serve as their lifelines. But using this lifeline tends to make their caste the all-important and often the only aspect of their identity that the world recognises.

CASTE SYSTEM ASSUMING NEW IDENTITIES

- The development activity of the state and the growth of private industry also affected caste indirectly through the speeding up and intensification of economic change. Modern industry created all kinds of new jobs for which there were no caste rules. Urbanisation and the conditions of collective living in the cities made it difficult for the caste-segregated patterns of social interaction to survive. At a different level, modern educated Indians attracted to the liberal ideas of individualism and meritocracy, began to abandon the more extreme caste practices.

- One of the most significant yet paradoxical changes in the caste system in the contemporary period is that it has tended to become 'invisible' for the upper caste, urban middle and upper classes. For these groups, who have benefited the most from the developmental policies of the post-colonial era, caste has appeared to decline in significance precisely because it has done its job so well. Their caste status had been crucial in ensuring that these groups had the necessary economic and educational resources to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by rapid development. In particular, the upper caste elite were able to benefit from subsidised public education, specially professional education in science, technology, medicine and management. At the same time, they were also able to take advantage of the expansion of public sector jobs in the early decades after Independence. In this initial period, their lead over the rest of society (in terms of education) ensured that they did not face any serious competition. As their privileged status got consolidated in the second and third generations, these groups began to believe that their advancement had little to do with caste. Certainly for the third generations from these groups their economic and educational capital alone is quite sufficient to ensure that they will continue to get the best in terms of life chances. For this group, it now seems that caste plays no part in their public lives, being limited to the personal sphere of religious practice or marriage and kinship. However, a further complication is introduced by the fact that this is a differentiated group. Although the privileged as a group are overwhelmingly upper caste, not all upper caste people are privileged, some being poor.

- Changing nature of Indian politics still tend to influence caste identity in social life. It plays a crucial role in upliftment as well as abuse of an individual.

- Increasing rate of Inter-caste and Inter-religion marriages have changed the dynamics of social fabric in India.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

MEANING

Affirmative action refers to a set of policies that support members of disadvantaged groups that have previously suffered discrimination in any form. The nature of affirmative action policies varies from region to region and exists on a spectrum from a hard quota to merely targeting encouragement for increased participation. Some countries use a quota system, whereby a certain percentage of government jobs, political positions, and school vacancies must be reserved for members of a certain group; an example of this is the reservation system in India.

NEED/PROS

- Since the time, India was struggling for its freedom from British imperialism, among many goals that the freedom fighters had in their minds to achieve, eradication of evil effects of the caste system was one of the prominent ones. Therefore, the constitution-makers introduced the following provisions:

- Fundamental Rights Right to Equality includes Equality before Law (Article 14), Social Equality and Equal Access to Public Areas (Article 15), Equality in Matters of Public Employment (Article 16) and Abolition of Untouchability (Article 17).

- To punish those who harass, exploit or discriminate against the lower caste people, the Government of India introduced the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

- To make education and jobs accessible to lower caste people, there are provisions of reservation in places like educational institutions and employment opportunities etc.

- The establishment of social welfare departments and national commissions for the welfare of scheduled castes and tribes is another such initiative to augment the upliftment of lower caste people.

- The Governments at both State and national levels launch welfare schemes from time to time for the welfare of backward castes and the downtrodden. Some of the initiatives include scholarships for education, schemes for social and economic empowerment and others.

CONS

Reverse discrimination: Reverse discrimination is the notion that instead of promoting anti-discrimination, affirmative action leads to discrimination against individuals and groups that come from non-disadvantaged backgrounds. Talented individuals may not be given equal opportunities simply because they are not part of a minority group. It may also result in hatred between majority and minority groups.

Lack of meritocracy: Meritocracy is an important system that aims to push more capable individuals to places of higher education so that they may have the resources and knowledge required to make important changes in the world. By encouraging universities to admit more students of a particular race, nationality, or gender, affirmative action may be discouraging meritocracy in educational institutions.

Demeaning true achievement: Achievements by individuals from minority groups and other disadvantaged groups may be considered a result of affirmative action rather than their own hard work, which can be demeaning to their true level of effort and confidence in their abilities.

WAY FORWARD

It is essential that the government create a category of people with "no caste" for all those who do not wish to subscribe to their caste identity. Children of inter-caste marriages must necessarily belong to this category. A social movement may be started for people to relinquish their caste and caste-based surnames. There may be a need to incentivise inter-caste marriages. Eventually, asking of an individual's caste could be made a cognisable offence and all caste-based organisations must be banned. All mention of caste, except where required for reasons of affirmative action, must be eliminated.

Under the impact of all these powerful forces, wide cracks have already appeared in the walls of the citadel of caste in India. But it would be a gross mistake to think that it has completely collapsed.

Diversity in India

INTRODUCTION

Ordinarily diversity means differences. For our purposes, however, it means something more than mere differences. It means collective differences, that is, differences which mark off one group of people from another. These differences may be of any sort: biological, religious, linguistic etc. On the basis of biological differences, for example, we have racial diversity. On the basis of religious differences, similarly, we have religious diversity. The point to note is that diversity refers to collective differences.

When we say that India is a nation of great cultural diversity, we mean that there are many different types of social groups and communities living here. These are communities defined by cultural markers such as language, religion, sect, race or caste.

EXAMPLES OF DIVERSITY

Religious diversity: According to the data on Population by Religious Communities of Census 2011, Hindu 96.63 crores (79.8%); Muslim 17.22 crores (14.2%); Christian 2.78 crores (2.3%); Sikh 2.08 crores (1.7%); Buddhist 0.84 crores (0.7%); Jain 0.45 crores (0.4%) are dispersed all over the nation forming cultural pockets.

Racial diversity: Most contemporary anthropologists categorize Indians as belonging to racial admixture. Mongoloids are largely confined to the North-eastern region whereas Negritos are found on the Andaman Islands.

Composition of Indian Society –

Plurality and multiplicity characterize Indian society and culture. India has accommodated and assimilated various outside elements into its growing culture. However, it has never been a 'melting pot' in which all differences got dissolved and a uniform identity was created. India is a shining example of a 'salad bowl' in which different elements retain their individual identities and yet, together, they form a distinct recipe. It is in that sense that India is a unity in diversity, guided by the principle of tolerance (Sahishnuta) and mutual respect.

Racial Diversity

The people of India can be divided into four major groups on ethnic and linguistic grounds. The first group include the Neolithic and Paleolithic men who inhabited in this country since the remote past. The second group of people belong to the Mongoloid type and they are found in Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal. The third group is identified as Dravidians living in the Southern part of the country. The fourth group include the tall and fair complexioned Indo-Aryans living in the North-Western part of India. Gradually they brought the whole Gangetic Valley under their settlement. With the passage of time the Dravidians and the Aryans came closer to each other. Other races like Persians, Greeks, Kushanas and Huns came to India at different periods and permanently settled in the country. From the Seventh century onwards Muslim invaders made India their hunting ground. The Arabs, Turks and the Mughals came to India and settled here. Thus the racial diversities play a vital role in Indian society and culture.
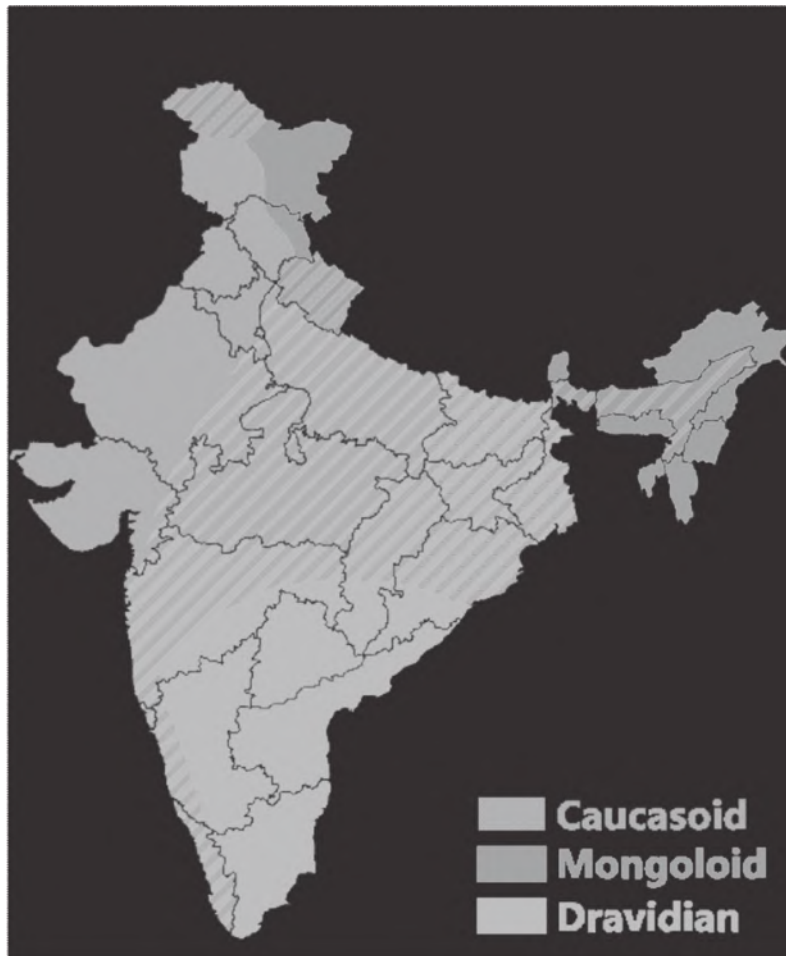
Linguistic Diversity

India is rightly described as a polyglot country – a country of many languages. There are 121 languages which are spoken by 10,000 or more people in India.

Of the total population of India, 96.71 percent have one of the scheduled languages as their mother tongue, the remaining 3.29 per cent is accounted for other languages. It should be mentioned that linguistic diversity is found in each of the states of the Indian Union. It is true that after India got independence, the states were reorganized on the basis of language, but such reorganization did not erase the multilingual character of the individual states.

Most Spoken Language in Each State of India

Religious diversity

India is a land of multiple religions. Apart from the tribal societies, many of whom still live in the pre-religious state of animism and magic, the Indian population consists of the Hindus (82.41%), Muslims (11.6%), Christians (2.32%), Sikhs (1.99%), Buddhists (0.77%) and Jains (0.41%).

The Hindus themselves are divided into several sects such as Vaishnavas, Shaivates, Shaktas, Smartas etc. Similarly, the Muslims are divided into sects such as Shias, Sunnis, Ahmadiyas etc.

Similarly, there are several movements that are mistaken as separate religions such as Lingayat, Kabirpanth, Radhaswamy, Swami Narayani, Arya Samaj, and Brahmo Samaj. In that sense, Hinduism is not a monolithic whole. It allows its adherents to follow whatever path they choose to follow for worship.

The arrival of Islam in India added to the plurality of religions in the country.

Christianity was introduced in Kerala in the first century AD when the apostle, St. Thomas, landed there and founded seven churches on the Malabar Coast. Their descendants are called Syrian Christians. The Christians are also divided between Roman Catholics and Protestants.

India also has small religious groups of Parsees and Jews. The Parsees arrived from Persia in the 8th century AD and settled on the Western coast. Practicing Zoroastrianism, the Parsees speak Gujarati, and wear a distinct dress that bears the Indian imprint. The Jews were concentrated in Kochi in Kerala and Konkan in Maharashtra.

RELIGIONS IN INDIA

DISTRICTWISE RELIGIOUS MAJORITY-1981
- Hindus
- Christians
- Buddhists
- Sikhs
- Muslims

LARGEST RELIGIOUS MINORITY-1981
- Hindus
- Sikhs
- Christians
- Jains
- Muslims
- Buddhists

Map not to Scale

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Caste diversity

India is a country of castes. The term caste is generally used in two senses: sometimes in the sense of Varna and sometimes in the sense of Jati. Varna refers to a segment of the four-fold division of Hindu society based on functional criterion. The four varnas are Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra with their specialized functions as learning, defense, trade and manual service. The Varna hierarchy is accepted all over India. Jati refers to a hereditary endogamous status group practicing a specific traditional occupation. There are more than 3,000 jatis in India. These are hierarchically graded in different ways in different religions. The practice of caste system is not confined to Hindus alone. One can find castes among the Muslims, Christians, Sikhs as well as other communities.

Cultural diversity

Cultural patterns reflect regional variations. Because of population diversity, there is immense variety in Indian culture as it is a blend of various cultures. Different religion, castes, regions follow their own tradition and culture. Thus, there is variation in art, architecture, dance forms, theatre forms, music etc.

Geographical diversity

Spanning across an area of 3.28 million square kilometre, India is a vast country with great diversity of physical features like dry deserts, evergreen forests, lofty mountains, perennial and non-perennial river systems, long coasts and fertile plains.

In India, the vast geographical region has various diversities like high mountains and low plains, areas of freezing chill and frost in northern side and tropical heat in the south, places of high rainfall like in

Charapunji and the dry lands of Rajasthan. The territorial and climatic diversities influence the cultural pattern of the community of those areas. Of course, with all these diversities, these people have developed a sense of unity, because of which we find continuity of our culture.

In addition to the above described major forms of diversity, we have diversity of many other sorts like settlement patterns – tribal, rural, urban; marriage and kinship pattern along religious and regional lines and so on. In this way diversity pervades on the whole of Indian subcontinent. And such diversities are not the hallmarks of Indian culture. The main theme of Indian culture is unity which absorbs all these diversities.

REASONS FOR DIVERSITY

- The Indian subcontinent, within it's national boundary, includes a diverse range of geographical features. Difference in geography brings about great differences in lifestyle and routine practices of people.

- The ones residing near the Himalayas will have different staple food, crop produce, jobs, means of transportation etc when compared to people living in the Thar desert. Thus, geography calls for diversity.

- Historically speaking, different rulers occupied different regions of India at different intervals of time, and thus brought different culuture. Be it the Mughals, or the Marathas or the Rajputs, or later even the Britishers- every ruler brought with itself a mark of culture, ethnicity and heritage, which cannot be wiped off completely. Thus, history again calls for diversity.

- Speaking of modern times, with globalization at its zenith, the transfer of variations in practices has increased exponentially, especially since the dawn of foreign trade and tourism. Our trade today

isn't limited to goods and services. We also trade traditional practices, sometimes unknowingly.

- Diversity is thus caused because India is open to people from every part of the world. And when people travel to and from a place, they carry with them the old traditions and new practices.

Unity amidst Diversity in India

Unity means integration. It is a social psychological condition. It connotes a sense of one-ness, a sense of we-ness. It stands for the bonds, which hold the members of a society together. Unity in diversity essentially means "unity without uniformity" and "diversity without fragmentation". It is based on the notion that diversity enriches human interaction. National unity and integrity have been maintained even through sharp economic and social inequalities have obstructed the emergence of egalitarian social relations. It is this synthesis which has made India a unique mosque of cultures. Thus, India present seemingly multicultural situation within in the framework of a single integrated cultural whole.

Factors Leading to Unity amidst Diversity in India

Geographical unity: India, though very large in size, possesses geographical unity with natural boundaries. It is surrounded on one side by the great Himalayas and on the other sides by the high seas. These natural boundaries give the land geographical unity. The term 'Bharat Varsha' i.e, India has always referred to this vast expanse of, the land expanding from the Himalayas in the North to the Cape Comorin in the south and from the Brahmaputra in the East to the Indus in the West. Religious thinkers, political philosophers, poets, statesmen and kings have always conceived Bharat Varsha in this sense. Even today, Mother India means this vast expanse of land.

Political Unity: Political unity, an offshoot of religious and cultural unity, is not something unknown to Indians. The ideal of bringing the whole country under one central authority has always been a pre-occupation with great kings and statesmen in India. The concept of 'Chakravarti' clearly refers to this idea of political unification of India under one authority. Many kings in the past have been fired by the ambition of achieving the title of Universal Overlord or 'Chakravarti', waged wars and established hegemony over the entire land. In the ancient Indian literature we come across stories referring to kings like Dilip, Sagar, Yajati, Mandhata and Yudhisthira who actually achieved this much coveted position of being a Chakravarti. Later kings like Chandra Gupta Maurya, Ashoka, Samudra Gupta and others also achieved this distinction of being the universal overlord. In the past kings often declared wars on others with no other purpose than to achieve this title. The prevalence of religious practices like the Aswamedha Yajna only indicates the religious support extended to the idea of political unification of India under one central authority.

Constitutional Identity: The entire country is governed by one single Constitution. Even, most of the states follow a generalized scheme of 3-tier government structure, thus imparting uniformity in national governance framework. Further, the Constitution guarantees certain fundamental rights to all citizens regardless of their age, gender, class, caste, religion, etc.

Religious co-existence: Religion tolerance is the unique feature of religions in India due to which multiple religions co-exist in India. Freedom of religion and religious practice is guaranteed by the Constitution itself. Moreover, there is no state religion and all religions are given equal preference by the state.

Inter-State mobility: The Constitution guarantees freedom to move throughout the territory of India under Article 19 (1) (d), thus promoting a sense of unity and brotherhood among the masses. Other

factors such as uniform pattern of law, penal code, and administrative works (eg. All India services) too lead to uniformity in the criminal justice system, policy implementation etc.

Economic integration: The Constitution of India secures the freedom of Trade, Commerce and Intercourse within the Territory of India under Article 301. Further, the Goods and Service Tax(GST) have paved way for 'one country, one tax, one national market', thus facilitating unity among different regions.

Institution of pilgrimage and religious practices: In India, religion and spirituality have great significance. From Badrinath and Kedarnath in the north to Rameshwaram in the south, Jagannath Puri in the east to Dwaraka in the west the religious shrines and holy rivers are spread throughout the length and breadth of the country. Closely related to them is the age-old culture of pilgrimage, which has always moved people to various parts of the country and fostered in them a sense of geo-cultural unity.

Fairs and festivals: They also act as integrating factors as people from all parts of the country celebrate them as per their own local customs. Eg. Diwali is celebrated throughout by Hindus in the country; similarly Id and Christmas are celebrated by Muslims and Christians, respectively. Celebration of inter-religious festivals is also seen in India.

Climatic integration via monsoon: The flora and fauna in the entire Indian subcontinent, agricultural practices, life of people, including their festivities revolve around the monsoon season in India.

Sports and Cinema: These are followed by millions in the country, thus, acting as a binding force across the length and breadth of India.

Factors that threaten India's unity:

Regionalism: Regionalism tends to highlight interests of a particular region/regions over national interests. It can also adversely impact national integration. Law and order situation is hampered due to regional demands and ensuing agitation.

Divisive politics: Sometimes, ascriptive identities such as caste, religion etc. are evoked by politicians in order to garner votes. This type of divisive politics can result in violence, feeling of mistrust and suspicion among minorities.

Development imbalance: Uneven pattern of socio-economic development, inadequate economic policies and consequent economic disparities can lead to backwardness of a region. Consequently, this can result in violence, kick start waves of migration and even accelerate demands of separatism.. For instance, due to economic backwardness of the North East region, several instances of separatist demands and secessionist tendencies have sprung up in the region.

Ethnic differentiation and nativism: Ethnic differentiation has often led to clashes between different ethnic groups especially due to factors such as job competition, limited resources, threat to identity etc. E.g. frequent clashes between Bodos and Bengali speaking Muslims in Assam. This has been accentuated by son of the soil doctrine, which ties people to their place of birth and confers some benefits, rights, roles and responsibilities on them, which may not apply to others.

Geographical isolation: Geographical isolation too can lead to identity issues and separatist demands. The North-East is geographically isolated from the rest of the country as it is connected with the rest of the country by a narrow corridor i.e the Siliguri corridor . The region has inadequate infrastructure, is more backward economically as compared to the rest of the country. As a result, it has witnessed several instances of separatism and cross-border terrorism, among others.

Inter-religious conflicts: Inter-religious conflicts not only hamper relations between two communities by spreading fear and mistrust but also hinder the secular fabric of the country.

Inter-state conflicts: This can lead emergence of feelings related to regionalism. It can also affect trade and communications between conflicting states. For instance, Cauvery river dispute between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Merits and demerits of unity in diversity

Merits

- Unity in diversity increases the morale of individuals within the workplace, organization and community.

- It helps to expand collaboration, relationships, interactions between people, thereby improving performance, quality of work, productivity and lifestyle.

- This enables communication to thrive even under the most trying circumstances.

- Keep people removed from social ills and it helps to manage conflicts more easily.

- It promotes healthy human relationships and protects the equal rights of all people.

- Unity in diversity provides a source of tourism for India. People from all walks of life, cultures, religions, and clothing are attracted to many visitors and tourists from all over the world.

- All these, though distinctly different from one another, results in the practice of national unity among the peoples of the world.

- It strengthens and enhances the rich heritage of the country and moreover as a cultural heritage of India.

- It helps to fill the agricultural sector with biodiversity as well as economic expectations.

- A source of skilled and developing professionals in various parts of the country.

Demerits

- This can give rise to multiple social strains among various states and people of linguistic origin.

- It produces corruption and illiteracy in many regions of the country.

- Due to the undeveloped foundation, power deficiency, roads etc. it can be the origin of poor lifestyle in various pastoral areas.

In-spite of the challenges posed by diversity, there can be no doubt on the role played by sociocultural diversity in sustaining and developing Indian society. Problem is not of diversity per se, but the handling of diversity in India society. The problems of regionalism, communalism, ethnic conflicts etc. have arisen because the fruits of development haven't been distributed equally or the cultures of some groups haven't been accorded due recognition.

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ROLE OF WOMEN

Role and Status of Women in India

The role and status of women in India is a very hot issue that is passionately debated every day, as ever more women become conscious of the inequalities and bias they suffer from. All around the world, women are an untapped "resource" to fight poverty and violence.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

India's struggle for freedom is one such instance in history where women had stepped out of their regular roles as home-makers, mothers and wives to shoulder the responsibility of sculpting the concept of a new nation amidst the conflict between the people and the colonial state. While they were at it, they had stood shoulder to shoulder with their men-folk to rally the masses to the cause, face bullets, picket shops, participate in propaganda making. They embodied self-sufficiency as Gandhi had first visualised through the skill of spinning using a "charkha".

Ideally taken to be a womanly occupation practiced at home, the spinning of cloth with a charkha became the guideline for understanding the resilience of the spirit. Given that India found its footing in ideals drawn from home such as the art of spinning practiced by women, one would naturally expect that the newly born nation would keep in mind the need of empowering its women to stand as an example of a just society.

The Constitution of the Republic of independent India did not disappoint this expectation and sure enough, women found their rights consolidated on paper, in laws and constitutional provisions giving them equal rights to all aspects defining a quality life.

Role of Indian Women in Nation Building

While the growth of a country is dependent on its economy, the real way to measure its achievement is to find out how successful its women are. In the past few decades, India has seen a rise in the number of women ruling different sectors like the IT industry, Banking, Medicine, Real estate, Textiles, etc.

During India's struggle for freedom, the position of women took a favorable turn. After India became independent it was realized by most of the national leaders including Nehru, Gandhi, Dr. Rajendra Prasad that emancipation of Women is necessary and also realized that so long as the conditions of women were not improved, and granted equal status with men, India could not progress. Women constitute approximately 40% population of a nation. If she is given the task for the development of the country she can make a wonder. She is more dedicated, more hard working, more sincere, more devoted to the cause. Many social evils like; dowry, illiteracy among the females, killing of girl child in the womb, ignoring the hygienic values, polio etc. can well be tackled by the active involvement of the women. Many women have proved themselves, dynamic, vibrant, sincere, and perfecting many fields.

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Act passed in 1992 lay upon the women of country more responsibilities in accelerating the development of the country. These amendments provide 33% reservation for women in the Panchayat Raj. Women elected to Panchayat and Municipal Councils, because of the reservation. have started asserting themselves. Now the women in local governments are taking the basic issues as water, health facilities, family planning, polio eradication, more seriously, more sincerely. Now they can play better role in the development of their area of operation whether village or municipality, which in turn will result into the overall development of the State and the country as a whole. Women are more dedicated and devoted to their duties and have much patience and politeness than man by nature.

There is no doubt that women had played very important role in the national building, but the man is still not in favour of giving them the given due powers. The example is that the women's reservation bill lor 30% reservation in State Assemblies and Parliament has not been made the law so far. The bill was introduced several times since 1996 but couldn't take shape of an Act so far. The empowerment of women by itself cannot place women on equal footing with men. the need of hour is the change of social attitudes towards women. Many social evils, like dowry, illiteracy among women, infanticide of female child. elimination of girls foetus, are required to be fully rooted out. The crime against women like, eve teasing, rape. are to be dealt with strongest hand though several measures but half-hearted are being taken by the government in this direction, yet a change of social attitude and honesty, on the part of politicians, is must to make the women participate in the nation building at grass root level,

The following social realities amply indicate the status of women in India today:

- There still prevails a preference for a son over a daughter;

- Stereotyping of gender-based roles occurs even now;

- Her work at home goes unaccounted for even in the national level statistics;

- Power and decision making is shared unequally by men and women and the scale is tilted in the favour of men; Domestic violence goes uncontested and unreported;

- Crimes against women like molestation, rape, sexual harassment at the workplace are on the increase; Dual responsibilities are not accepted by the men at home;

- Lack of access to and control of family and community assets and resources, irrespective of their contributing to the same;

- Situational Analysis of Women in India 267 Low image of women in society manifest through social attitudes and practices.

- Fast forward to 2016, 70 years since independence – the situation stands such that reports indicate a dwindling tendency in participation rates of women in the formal labour force and political participation of women being no more than 10%.

- The discrimination brings together the different oppressive practices from different traditional communities to write out a common low position for women which often go unquestioned due to selective "scripture-based" justification for retaining order in communities. This form of discrimination has over time acquired the status of a norm, permeating the overall cultural attitude towards determining claims of women at multiple levels, besides limits already being imposed on production entitlements owing to the forces of globalisation.

- Due to a disproportionate workload in terms of care giving duties, women most often have less time for other activities such as paid work and education. Besides the lack of time faced by women after care giving activities to pursue income generating skills and active careers, they also find themselves often subjected to a family imposed ideal of priority skill sets to work on which in turn shapes them to cater to the requirements of a chauvinistic marriage market rather than a job market.

- There are also instances of women willingly leaving their jobs as they are conditioned to believe that housekeeping, child bearing are their primary duties and roles. This issue is as much a matter or cultural indoctrination as it is of cultural pressure.

- There is also a noted differentiation in establishing culturally accepted priorities for men and

women.

- For women, the disproportionate pressure to sustain the marriage, manage the household, bear and bring up children alongside careers naturally push them to often compromise with their work life aspirations.

- When thrown in a situation where she has to take important decisions affecting the well-being of her family, she is thus extremely vulnerable to exploitative people. Besides this aspect, in terms of the prospect to take up employment somewhere to earn for the family in dire situations, her lack of adequate skill set throws her into the clutches of the informal sector which further fuels poverty in India. The informal sector being largely unregulated, her quality of life and level of income varies according to the whims and fancies of her employer.

Some reasons commonly forwarded (Registrar General of India, 2001) for declining sex ratio are :

- Sex determination before birth and eliminating female foetuses (Female births);

- Killing of girl children (Female infanticide);

- Neglect of girl children—denial of adequate nutrition and access to health;

- Facilities and imposition of household chores at a tender age;

- In spite of declining infant mortality rates, the relative gap between males and females has been increasing; and High maternal mortality;

Women Empowerment

The term women empowerment is all about authority, or the power embarked on women sharing indistinguishable rights. The term refers to the liberation of women from socio-economic restraints of reliance. Women comprise around 50% of the country's population, and a bulk of them stays economically dependent on each other without employment.

Problems faced by Women in Lower strata

- **Problem of Identity -** The identity of a female belonging to the minority is often associated with a male in the family and in rural areas they are even considered the property of her father or husband thus failing to create her own concrete identity.

- **Problem of Security -** The problem of security is common to all women of the country and not just the women belonging to the minority community but these women are often left feeling more insecure, both physical and psychological and are prone to abuse and threats from both their community and the majority community. This feeling of insecurity gets even worse when the relations between the majority and the minority communities in a society are strained or not much cordial, during the time of communal riots, minority women are specifically targeted and are killed, robbed and raped without mercy.

- **Problem Relating to Equity -** Women are deprived of various opportunities of development as a result of discrimination, based on both religion and gender. Due to the difference in identity, the minority community develops a sense of inequality. They are forced to miss out on many academic and employment opportunities.

- **Lack of representation -** The Constitution of our country provides for equality and equal opportunities to all its citizens including the religious minorities and women through various

articles and provisions but this concept sometimes fails to apply to the minority women and they lack proper representation in many spheres, for instance, in civil services and politics.

- **Backwardness -** Large numbers of people of the minority community belong to the lower strata of the society and results in backwardness for the whole community. Women and girls of these communities face several other problems that are often overlooked or that are not considered as important as the above-mentioned problem. They experience severe discrimination in workplaces, educational institutions or even public places because of the way they dress or speak or just on the basis of their religion. They are assumed to be socially, economically or culturally poor even when that's not true. They are often treated with racial slurs, verbal abuse and are often the victims of eves teasing.

Factors behind Low Female Labour Participation

- Absence of comprehensive and rational policy for women's emancipation through education, training and access to resources such as land, credit and technology etc.

- The perception of male as the breadwinner of the family despite the fact that in low income households women's income is crucial for sustenance. This perception adversely affects women's education & training. Employers also visualize women workers as supplementary workers & also cash in on this perception to achieve their capitalistic motives by keeping the wage low for women.

- Structural changes in the economy e.g decline in traditional rural industries or industrialization.

- Lack of assets (land, house) in their own name in order to have access to credit and self employment opportunities.

- Huge demand of time and energy of women for various tasks at home like child bearing and rearing etc in addition to participation in labour force leave them with little time for education, training and self development.

- Division of labour based on the gender between men and women & technological advancements work against women. They are the last to be hired and first to be sacked.

- Govt. programs to increase employment and productivity are focused more on men & women are seen as beneficiaries rather than active participants.

Causes, Consequences and Solutions to Low Sex Ratio

Causes

Female Foeticide: The rapid spread and use of ultrasound as well as amniocentesis for sex determination are playing vital role in female foetus-induced abortions which is called as High-tech sexism by Amartya Sen.

Female Infanticide: In India there is still preference for male child and in some areas of the country the female infanticide is still common. At least 117 million girls around the world demographically go "missing" due to sex-selective abortions according to United Nations Populations fund.

Education : Due to illiteracy, people are unaware about the power and role of women in today's era. The role of education has a great influence on the sex ratio scenario of India. Child marriages are a common part of the Indian society. Most of the girls are prone to the issue of child marriage at a very early age. This makes them to stay away from the education and are compelled to take the responsibilities of the household.

Poverty : States like Tamil Nadu have a high sex ratio but the poverty rate is low. There are states wherein due to poverty, a lot of girls are denied of nutritious food. This deprives the women and girl child from a living a healthy life.

Social status of women : In most parts of India, women are merely considered as an object. People are worried about the dowry issue with the birth of a girl child. Due to financial problem, most of the families in rural areas prefer male child over female.

Lack of empowerment of women : There is a lack of empowerment of women especially in the rural areas. Women do not enjoy opportunities as men do. Due to lack of education, women are unable to establish their roles in many places. The state of Uttar Pradesh has become like a grave for girls.

Male domination : Majority of the places in India follow the patriarchal system. In India, males are considered to be the only bread earners. The methods of sex determination and female foeticide are adopted which is main reason of declining number of females.

Infant and Maternal Mortality : Infant mortality rate is the number of death of babies before the age of one. Due to female foeticide, the sex ratio declines terribly. Maternal mortality also contributes to the declining sex ratio as most of the women die during the childbirth due to improper care.

Impact of Population Policies: Under family planning policies, families want one or two children and generally prefer male child over female child.
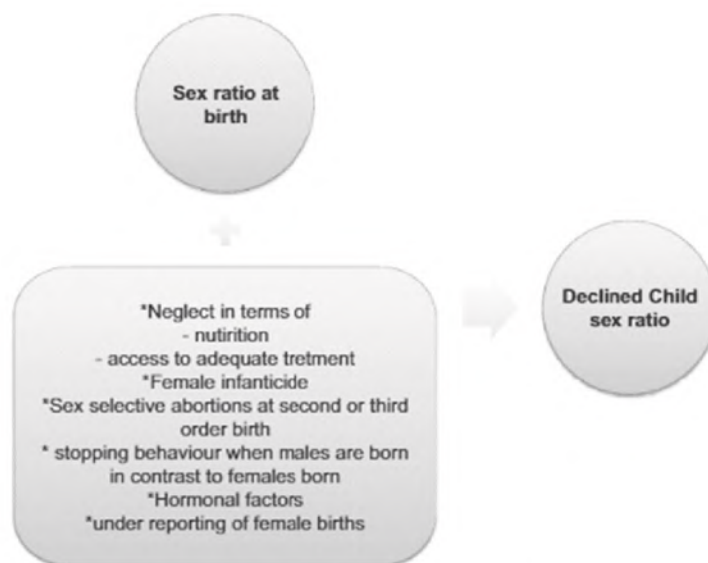

Figure 1: Reasons for declined child sex ratio

Consequences

* It is primarily adverse to men.

* Crime will increase in future if the trend continues. There are concerns that skewed sex ratios lead to more violence against both men and women, as well as human-trafficking.

* Bring down society's reproductive potential by lower net reproduction rate.

* Events such as new household formation will decline.

* Adverse ratio results in a gross imbalance in the number of men and women and its inevitable impact on marriage systems as well as other harms to women.
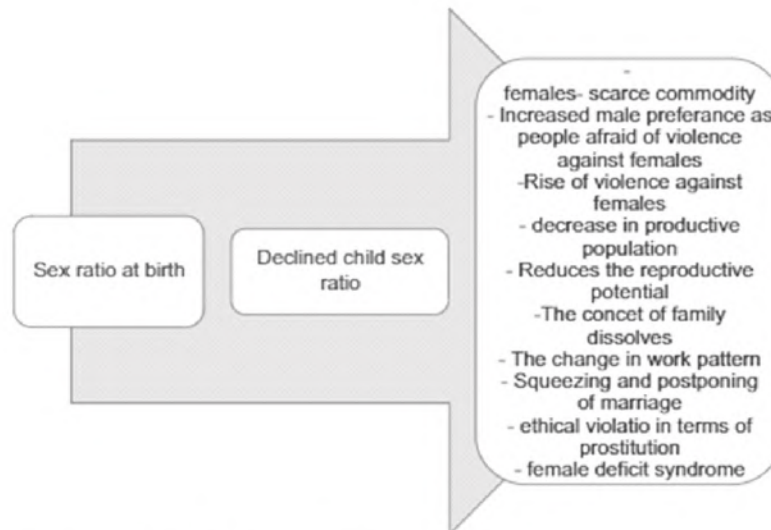
Figure 2: Implication of low child sex ratio

What can be done?

- To Increase sex ratio by preventing sex selection by enforcement of PCPNDT act and legal action against quacks indulging in illegal abortions.

- To provide economical assistance for the girl child and to encourage savings for future benefits.

- Bringing Behavioural Change: Increasing female education and economic prosperity help to improve the ratio. In this pursuit, The government's Beti-Bachao Beti Padhao Campaign has achieved remarkable success in bringing behavioural change in the society.

- Sensitizing Youth: There is an urgent need to reach young people for reproductive health education and services as well as to cultivate gender equity norms.

- Regarding the services of Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) can be leveraged, especially in rural areas.

Factors affetcting Women Empowerment

- Women's participation rate on household decision making not only varies from rural to urban areas but also gets affected by their background characteristics like age, educational status, husband's education, employment status etc.

- Free mobility of women is another indicator of women empowerment. Women's mobility is also affected by their background characteristics like age, education, marital status, type of family.

- Women's access to education which is one of the important sources of empowerment denotes the current status of women empowerment in the country.

- Employment and cash earnings are more likely to empower women if women make decisions about their own earnings alone or jointly with their husband rather than their husband alone.

- Exposure to Media is an important source of empowerment, greater proportion of women without having access to media reflects the relatively disadvantageous position of women in relation to men with regards to empowerment.

- Women's political participation is one of the important issues in the context of empowerment. In conventional analysis it means activities related to electoral politics like voting, campaigning, holding party office and contesting election. But in broader sense it encompasses all voluntary

- actions intended to influence the making of public policies, the administration of public affairs and the choice of political leaders at all levels of government.

- While India has taken some measures on human development, its global standing on gender equality remains low. India's ranking in the Global Gender Gap Report, commissioned by the World Economic Forum, declined from 108th in 2018 to 112th in 2020.

- The Indian legal system is also confronted with gaps between policy and practice. Despite existing legislation to protect women and girls, the enforcement of these laws and conviction of alleged perpetrators is weak. The gaps in these processes are widened by systemic bureaucracy and corruption. It took seven years to hang the perpetrators implicated in the notorious "Nirbhaya" gang rape case.

- The patriarchal and patrilineal customs, with some exceptions, have impeded female mobility, access to basic healthcare and access to education and have led to forced marriages.

- India's prevailing issues on gender inequality should be seen in a wider context of South Asia. In rural areas, especially in the Hindi heartland, gender disparity is still significant. Women continue to be relegated to household tasks, with little or no say in economic decisions. Levels of literacy, nutrition and access to health care continue to be poor, and social welfare parameters are lower than neighbouring Bangladesh.

- Social norms and family structures in developing countries like India, manifests and perpetuate the subordinate status of women. One of such norms is the continuing preference for a son over the birth of a girl child, which is present in almost all societies and communities.

- Poverty is the reality of life for the vast majority of women in India. It is another factor that poses challenge in realizing women's empowerment. In a poor family, girls are the main victims; they are malnourished and are denied the opportunity of better education and other facilities.

- Lack of awareness about legal and constitutional provisions and failure in realizing it, is another factor that hinders the process of empowerment. Most of the women are not aware of their legal rights.

What can be done?

- Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential.

- The de-jure and de-facto enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres – political, economic, social, cultural and civil.

- Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation.

- Equal access to women to health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office etc.

- Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

- Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women.

- Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process.

- Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child.

- Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organizations.

Generally speaking, the women of India are relatively disempowered and they enjoy somewhat lower status than that of men. In spite of so many efforts undertaken by government and NGOs the picture at present is not satisfactory. Mere access to education and employment can only help in the process of empowerment. These are the tools or the enabling factors through which the process gets speeded up. However, achievement towards this goal depends more on attitude. Unless the attitude towards the acceptance of unequal gender role by the society and even the women themselves changed women cannot grab the opportunity provided to them through constitutional provision, law etc. Till then we cannot say that women are empowered in India in its real sense.

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POPULATION AND ASSOCIATED ISSUES

INTRODUCTION

India, like many other countries, has come a long way from the initial days of evolution under conditions of high mortality due to famines, accidents, illness, infections and war, when relatively high levels of fertility was essential for species survival. Over the years, better equipped in dealing with diseases and vagaries of nature, it has witnessed significant increase in life expectancy along with steep fall in mortality. Consequently, in the world of seven billion people, India along with China already occupies a place in the Billionaire club and is likely to overtake China by 2025.

POPULATION GROWTH

As per UN estimates, World population grew at annual rate of 1.23 per cent during 2010-2020 with developing countries like India registering a higher growth rate. The population of developed countries like Japan & USA grew at a slower pace with Russia even witnessing a decline in population. China registered a much lower growth rate (third lowest in top ten most populous countries behind Russia & Japan, in fact much lower than USA).It is now estimated that India will overtake china as the most populous country by 2025-30 despite the fact that the growth rate has slowed down even in case of India. Decadal growth rate in case of India was 17.7 % compared to 21.5 % in the previous decade.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION

India , at present, is at stage three of the four stage model* of demographic transition from stable population with high mortality and fertility to stable population with low mortality and fertility, with some of the states/UT's already into stage four.Percentage decadal growth rate of population has been deciling since 1971-81 at all india level. However, significant fall in case of EAG States(Empowered action group states: UP, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Jharkhand, MP, Chhatisgarh, Rajasthan & Orissa)has been noticed for the first time during 2011 census.

India - Population & Percentage Decadal Growth
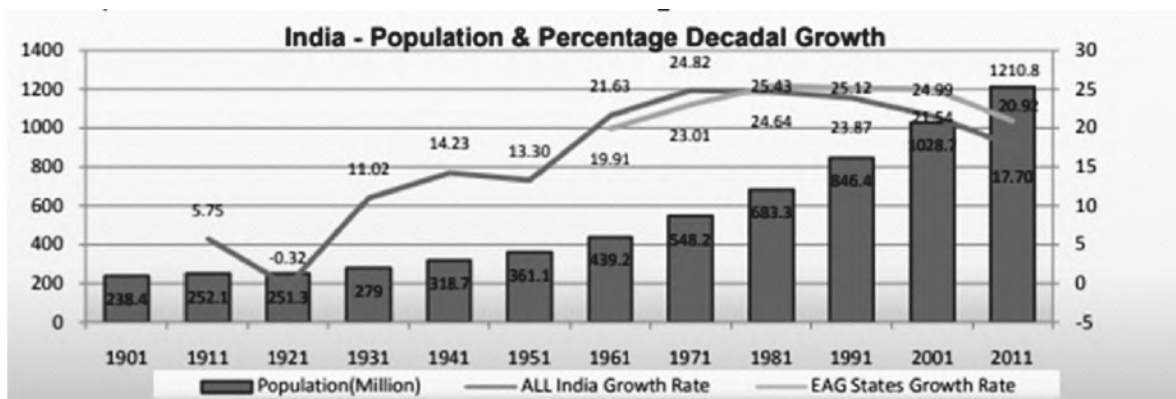
*Stage 1: less developed countries , high birth rate ,high no. of deaths due to preventable causes, stable population

Stage 2: Death rates fall due to improved public health but high fertility due to limited access to health and contraceptive services , spurt in population

Stage 3: Birth rate also falls, population continues to grow due to large no. of people in reproductive age group

Stage 4:Stable population but at a level higher than the initial, low birth & death rates, high social & economic development

DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION MOCDEL/THEORY

The Demographic Transition Model (DTM) is based on historical population trends of two demographic characteristics – birth rate and death rate – to suggest that a country's total population growth rate cycles through stages as that country develops economically. Each stage is characterized by a specific relationship between birth rate (number of annual births per one thousand people) and death rate (number of annual deaths per one thousand people). As these rates change in relation to

each other, their produced impact greatly affects a country's total population. Within the model, a country will progress over time from one stage to the next as certain social and economic forces act upon the birth and death rates. Every country can be placed within the DTM, but not every stage of the model has a country that meets its specific definition. For example, there are currently no countries in Stage 1, nor are there any countries in Stage 5, but the potential is there for movement in the future.
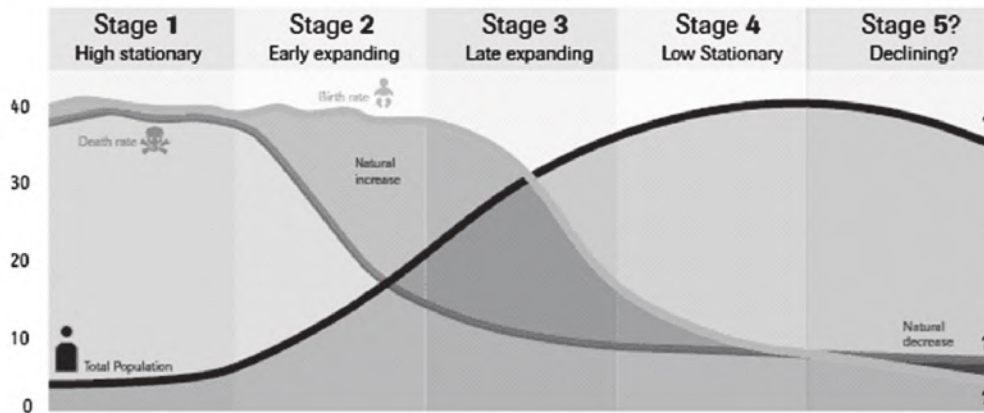
What are the stages of the Demographic Transition Model?

- In Stage 1, which applied to most of the world before the Industrial Revolution, both birth rates and death rates are high. As a result, population size remains fairly constant but can have major swings with events such as wars or pandemics.

- In Stage 2, the introduction of modern medicine lowers death rates, especially among children, while birth rates remain high; the result is rapid population growth. Many of the least developed countries today are in Stage 2.

- In Stage 3, birth rates gradually decrease, usually as a result of improved economic conditions, an increase in women's status, and access to contraception. Population growth continues, but at a lower rate. Most developing countries are in Stage 3.

- In Stage 4, birth and death rates are both low, stabilizing the population. These countries tend to have stronger economies, higher levels of education, better healthcare, a higher proportion of working women, and a fertility rate hovering around two children per woman. Most developed countries are in Stage 4.

- A possible Stage 5 would include countries in which fertility rates have fallen significantly below replacement level (2 children) and the elderly population is greater than the youthful population.

Limitations of the Demographic Transition Model

Like any model, there will be outliers and exceptions to the rule and the Demographic Transition Model is no different. Additionally, there are things the DTM cannot reveal: the impact of other demographic variables such as migration, are not considered, nor does the model predict how long a country will be in each stage. But even so, the relationship between birth rate and death rate is an important concept when discussing population and any patterns, such as those provided by the DTM, that aid in understanding are helpful.

CONSEQUENCES OF POPULATION GROWTH

For India the current phase of demographic transition with low dependency ratio and high working age group population, represents both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is to develop these

human resources through appropriate education and skill development and utilise them fully by giving them appropriate jobs with adequate emoluments; if this challenge is met through well planned schemes for HRD and employment generation which are implemented effectively, there will be improved national productivity and personal savings rates; appropriate investment of these savings will help the country to achieve the economic transition from low economic growth - low per capita income to high economic growth - high per capita income. It is imperative to make the best use of this opportunity so as to enable the country and its citizens to vault to the high income- high economic growth status and stabilize at that level.

Possible benefits of an increasing population are listed below:

- If the population is above the optimum size, the country will be able to make better use of its resources.

- The size of markets will increase. This should enable firms to take greater advantage of economies of scale.

- There may be an increase in factor mobility if the rise has resulted from an increase in the birth rate or immigration. Expanding industries can recruit new workers to the labour force. These people are likely to be familiar with new ideas and methods. If this is the case, firms' training costs will be reduced.

- Extra demand will be generated. This is likely to stimulate investment and this may lead to introduction of new technology.

- A rise in the labour force presently due to net immigration and in the future, caused by a rise in the birth rate. Net immigration will bring in more workers. More children being born will increase the dependency ratio in the short term but in the long term, will result in more workers.

Environmental and ecological consequences

- The already densely populated developing countries contribute to over 95% of the population growth and rapid population growth could lead to environmental deterioration.

- Developed countries are less densely populated and contribute very little to population growth; however, they cause massive ecological damage by the wasteful, unnecessary and unbalanced consumption the consequences of which could adversely affect both the developed and the developing countries.

- In many developing countries continued population growth has resulted in pressure on land, fragmentation of land holding, collapsing fisheries, shrinking forests, rising temperatures, loss of plant and animal species. Global warming due to increasing use of fossil fuels (mainly by the developed countries) could have serious effects on the populous coastal regions in developing countries, their food production and essential water supplies.

- Greenhouse gas emissions are closely linked to both population growth and development. Slower population growth in developing countries and ecologically sustainable lifestyles in developed countries would make reduction in green house gas emission easier to achieve and provide more time and options for adaptation to climate change.

- Rapid population growth, developmental activities either to meet the growing population or the growing needs of the population as well as changing lifestyles and consumption patterns pose major challenge to preservation and promotion of ecological balance in India.

- Severe pressure on the forests due to both the rate of resource use and the nature of use. The per capita forest biomass in the country is only about 6 tons as against the global average of 82 tons.

- Adverse effect on species diversity

- Conversion of habitat to some other land use such as agriculture, urban development, forestry operation. Some 70-80 % of fresh water marshes and lakes in the Gangetic flood plains has been lost in the last 50 years.

- Tropical deforestation and destruction of mangroves for commercial needs and fuel wood. The country's mangrove areas have reduced from 700,000 ha to 453,000 ha in the last 50 years.

- Intense grazing by domestic livestock

- Poaching and illegal harvesting of wildlife.

- Increase in agricultural area, high use of chemical fertilizers pesticides and weedicides; water stagnation, soil erosion, soil salinity and low productivity.

- High level of biomass burning causing large-scale indoor pollution.

- Encroachment on habitat for rail and road construction thereby fragmenting the Habitat. increase in commercial activities such as mining and unsustainable resource extraction.

- Degradation of coastal and other aquatic ecosystems from domestic sewage, pesticides, fertilizers and industrial effluents.

- Over fishing in water bodies and introduction of weeds and exotic species.

- Diversion of water for domestic, industrial and agricultural uses leading to increased river pollution and decrease in self-cleaning properties of rivers.

- Increasing water requirement leading to tapping deeper aquifers which have high content of arsenic or fluoride resulting health problems.

- Disturbance from increased recreational activity and tourism causing pollution of natural ecosystems with wastes left behind by people.

URBANIZATION

- Urban population growth has outpaced the development of basic minimum services; housing, water supply, sewerage and solid waste disposal are far from adequate

- Increasing waste generation at home, offices and industries, coupled with poor waste disposal facilities result in rapid environmental deterioration.

- Increasing automobiles add to air pollution.

- All these have adverse effect on ecology and health.

- Poverty persists in urban and peri-urban areas; awareness about the glaring inequities in close urban setting may lead to social unrest.

Water supply

- In many parts of developed and developing world, water demand substantially exceeds sustainable water supply.

- In India, water withdrawal is estimated to be twice the rate of aquifer recharge; as a result, water tables are falling by one to three meters every year; tapping deeper aquifers have resulted in

larger population groups being exposed to newer health hazards such as high fluoride or arsenic content in drinking water.

- At the other end of the spectrum, excessive use of water has led to water logging and increasing salinity in some parts of the country.

- Eventually, both lack of water and water logging could have adverse impact on India's food production.

Food security:

- It is a matter of concern that while the cereal production has been growing steadily at a rate higher than the population growth rates, the coarse grain and pulse production has not shown a similar increase. Consequently there has been a reduction in the per capita availability of and coarse grains.

- Another area of concern is the lack of sufficient focus and thrust in horticulture; because of this, availability of vegetables especially green leafy vegetables and yellow/red vegetables throughout the year at affordable cost both in urban and rural areas has remained an unfulfilled dream.

Economic Implications:

- The early Malthusian view was that population growth is likely to impede economic growth because it will put pressure on the available resources, result in reduction in per capita income and resources; this, in turn, will result in deterioration in quality of life.

- The population growth or demographic transition can have favourable impact on economic growth only when there are optimal interventions aimed at human resource development (HRD) and appropriate utilisation of available human resources.

Migration

- Given the combination of high population growth, low literacy and lack of employment opportunities in the poorly performing States, there may be increasing rural to urban migration as well as interstate migration especially of unskilled workers.

- Such migration may in the short run assist the migrants in overcoming economic problems associated with unemployment. However, the migrant workers and their families may face problems in securing shelter, education and health care.

- It is essential to build up a mechanism for monitoring these changes. Steps will have to be taken to provide for the minimum essential needs of the vulnerable migrant population.

Education

- Growing numbers have made it harder to improve schooling. India has had a poor outcome even with the low educational expenditures it manages.

- Only just over half the population completes more than four years of education, and the average quality of education is low.

Rise in Unemployment

- When a country becomes overpopulated, it gives rise to unemployment as there are fewer jobs to support a large number of people.

- The rise in unemployment gives rise to crime, such as theft, as people want to feed their families and provide them basic amenities of life.

High Cost of Living

- As the difference between demand and supply continues to expand due to overpopulation, it raises the prices of various essential commodities, including food, shelter, and healthcare. This means that people have to pay more to survive and feed their families.

Pandemics and Epidemics

- Poverty is linked to many environmental and social reasons, including overcrowded and unhygienic living conditions, malnutrition and inaccessible, inadequate, or non-existent health care, for which the poor are more likely to be exposed to infectious diseases.

- Further, high densities of population increase the chance of the emergence of new pandemics and epidemics.

Increased Intensive Farming

- With the growth of population over the years, farming practices have evolved to produce enough food required to feed a larger number of people. However, this intensive farming methods cause damage to local ecosystems and the land that may pose problems in the future.

- Furthermore, intensive farming is also contributed to climate change due to the machinery required. If the population continues to grow at its current rate, this effect will likely intensify.

SOLUTIONS

Better Education

- One of the first measures is to implement policies reflecting social change. Educating the masses helps them understand the need to have one or two children at the most.

- Similarly, education plays a vital role in understanding the latest technologies that are making huge waves in the world of computing. Families that are facing a hard life and choose to have four or five children should be discouraged.

Education for Girl Child

- Entrenched gender norms and child marriage further disrupt their access to education. The girl who receives less education is more likely to have children early and vulnerable to exploitation.

Making People Aware of Family

- As the population of this world is growing at a rapid pace, raising awareness among people regarding family planning and letting them know about serious after-effects of overpopulation can help curb population growth.

- One of the best ways is to let them know about various safe sex techniques and contraceptive methods available to avoid any unwanted pregnancy.

Tax Benefits or Concessions

- The government of various countries might have to come up with various policies related to tax exemptions to curb overpopulation.

- One of them might be to waive a certain part of income tax or lowering rates of income tax for those married couples who have single or two children.

Knowledge of Sex Education

- Imparting sex education to young kids at the elementary level should be a must. Most parents feel

shy in discussing such things with their kids that results in their children going out and look out for such information on the internet or discuss it with their peers.

- Mostly, the information is incomplete, which results in sexually active teenagers unaware of contraceptives and embarrassed to seek information about the same. It is, therefore, important for parents and teachers to shed their old inhibitions and make their kids or students aware of solid sex education.

Social Marketing

- Social marketing has already been started by some societies to educate the public on overpopulation effects. The intervention can be made widespread at a low cost.

- A variety of print materials (flyers, brochures, fact sheets, stickers) can be distributed in places such as at local places of worship, sporting events, local food markets, schools and at car parks.

Actions on the national level

- In high fertility developing countries, governments should …

- Generously fund family planning programs

- Make modern contraception legal, free and available everywhere, even in remote areas

- Improve health care to reduce infant and child mortality

- Restrict child marriage and raise the legal age of marriage (minimum 18 years)

- Introduce obligatory education as long as possible (minimum until the age of 16), and generously fund the necessary infrastructure.

- Empower women, assuring equal rights, treatment and opportunities for both genders Provide information and access to reproductive health care, including all types of low cost, safe, effective contraception

- Make sterilization free, for men and women, or at least covered under all healthcare plans Legalize abortion without restrictions or social stigma

- Integrate family planning and safe motherhood programs into primary health care systems Make population and environmental issues and sex education part of the basic educational curriculum Disincentivize third and further children non-coercively, by limiting government support to the first two children Create a national population policy built around an optimal population size, and work to achieve it.

- Set aside half the national landscape free from intensive development and dedicated to biodiversity protection.

AGEING POPULATION IN INDIA

India enjoys one of the youngest global population with average national age at around 29 years, while 41 percent of our population is under 18 years of age, according to the last census. This means that most Indians have a majority of their working years ahead of them. This population can contribute to nation-building and economy, if equipped with the right skills, training and jobs. If the fertility rate of a nation drops below the replacement rate, it means its population is ageing faster than the young ones reaching the age where they can join the active workforce. Once fertility decline is underway, it's hard to flip it back. Europe's population is greying continuously, and their pro-population-growth measures – such as incentives to have children – are not working. The young population also came to the

country's aid when it is battling a global catastrophe like the coronavirus pandemic. It has been India's biggest shield in keeping the mortality rate well below 3 percent.

As of 2019, over 139 million people living in India are aged over 60 which is over 10% of the country's total population. The proportion of older people is expected to almost double to 19.5% in 2050 with 319 million people aged over 60. This means that every 1 in 5 Indians is likely to be a senior citizen.
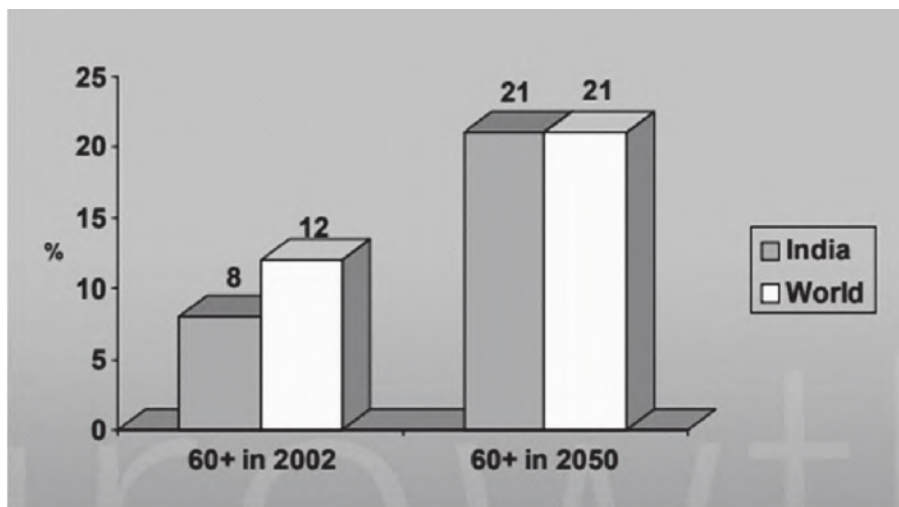
COMPARATIVE DEMOGRAPHIC FACTS

SOME KEY STATISTICS

	2019	2050
Population aged 60 and above (total)	139,610,000	319,918,000
Population aged 60 and above (% of total population)	10.1	19.5
Older women aged 60+ (% of total population)	5.15	10
Life expectancy (males)	68.11	73.61
Life expectancy (females)	70.53	77.25
Old-Age Dependency Ratio (Age 65+ / Age 15-64)	9.8	20.3
Rural older people (% of total population)	3.86	
Urban older people (% of total population)	1.60	
Older persons living alone aged 60 and above (% of total population aged 60+)	4.9	

ISSUES RELATED TO AGEING POPULATION

- Family structures are changing. As people live longer and have fewer children, family structures are transformed, leaving older people with fewer options for care.

- Patterns of work and retirement are shifting. Shrinking ratios of workers to pensioners and people spending a larger portion of their lives in retirement increasingly strain existing health and pension systems.

- As India's population structure changes, so does its health profile. The prevalence of mental illness, another prominent NCD, is also rising as the population ages.

- Accompanying the aging of the Indian population is increasing feminization in older age groups, which brings its own unique issues and challenges. In addition to the perils of widowhood, older women in India are significantly disadvantaged in terms of education and literacy relative to both

their male contemporaries and to women and men in younger age groups.

- Another major challenge of population aging in India is income and housing security for older adults. This is due in part to a changing social and economic landscape in which the traditional family support system is breaking down in the households of many older adults.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Economic Security

- Non-Contributory Pensions to the Older Persons in BPL Families.

- Income Generation Opportunities for Able and Willing Older Persons.

- Imaginative Schemes for contributory Pensions for those older Persons Who can Afford to Save in Prime Years.

- Special Schemes for Women, Dalits, Rural Poor, Destitute and Disabled Older Persons, Widows.

Health Security

- Accessible, Available and Affordable Geriatric Health Facilities to All Older Persons.

- Provision of Infrastructure and Trained Personnel.

- Development of facilities in Public Health Arena for the Poor.

- Exploration of Public Private Partnership in Development of Infrastructure and Financing of Health Care.

- Special Attention to Rural Facilities Women, Poor, Disabled, Rural, Dalits, Destitute.

- Promoting awareness about the concept of healthy ageing and the health problems and to involve the community in the process of their mitigation.

- All the private hospitals who are receiving govt. grants/ land at subsidised rates can be given these directions. Others can be given suggestions through Central Governments/ State Governments/ Indian Medical Associations.

- NDMA to take special efforts to tackle older persons in emergencies. Rehabilitation of elderly in emergencies through special income generation efforts.

To improve income security for all its aging individuals, India needs to revise its retirement and pension policy to accommodate the country's changing demography

India faces unprecedented population aging due to lengthening lifespans and dropping fertility. This demographic shift poses massive and complex challenges to Indian society in the form of a rising burden of noncommunicable diseases, a vulnerable female-heavy older adult population, a changing family structure, and a lack of a social safety net. Successfully addressing these challenges, while certainly far from impossible, will require equally complex and ambitious changes and innovations in health, fiscal, and social policies.

DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND

Concept

Demographic dividend refers to the growth in an economy that is the result of a change in the age structure of a country's population. The change in age structure is typically brought on by a decline in fertility and mortality rates.

A decline in fertility and mortality rates boosts working population productivity, which leads to a demographic dividend.

The demographic dividend comes as there's an increase in the working population's productivity, which boosts per capita income. The first period for a demographic dividend can last 50 or more years and then the second period can last indefinitely as an aging population invests in various investment vehicles. Demographic dividends can be found with savings, labor supply, human capital, and economic growth.

Status of India

India has 62.5% of its population in the age group of 15-59 years which is ever increasing and will be at the peak around 2036 when it will reach approximately 65%.

These population parameters indicate an availability of demographic dividend in India, which started in 2005- 06 and will last till 2055-56. India's demographic bulge can translate into a demographic dividend lest this human resource takes shape of a productive quality workforce through interventions in the areas of healthcare, education, skill training and creation of sustainable employment opportunities, failing which the supposed demographic advantage could turn into a demographic disaster.

BENEFITS AND POTENTIAL

During the course of the demographic dividend there are four mechanisms through which the benefits are delivered.

Labour Supply: The first is the increased labour supply However, the magnitude of this benefit appears to be dependent on the ability of the economy to absorb and productively employ the extra workers rather than be a pure demographic gift.

Increase in savings: The second mechanism is the increase in savings. As the number of dependents decreases individuals can save more. This increase in national savings rates increases the stock of capital in developing countries already facing shortages of capital and leads to higher productivity as the accumulated capital is invested. Human Capital: The third mechanism is human capital. Decrease in fertility rates results in healthier women and fewer economic pressures at home. This also allows parents to invest more resources per child, leading to better health and educational out comes.

Increase in Demand: The fourth mechanism for growth is the increasing domestic demand brought about by the increasing GDP per capita and the decreasing dependency ratio.

Issues related to demographic Dividend

Demographic dividend will be fully realized only if India is able to create gainful employment opportunities for the ever increasing working-age population.

- Lack of skill in Indian workforce is a major challenge. India may not be able to take advantage of the opportunities, due to a low human capital base and lack of skills. India ranks 130 out of 189 countries in UNDP's Human Development Index, which is alarming. Therefore, health and education parameters need to be improved substantially to make the Indian workforce efficient and skilled. Informal nature of economy in India is another hurdle in reaping the benefits of demographic transition in India.

- There is mounting concern that future growth could turn out to be jobless due to de-

industrialization, de-globalization, the fourth industrial revolution and technological progress.

- The status of institutions in India regarding caste discrimination, gender inequalities, widening income gap between the rich and the poor, religious differences, inefficient and slow legal system- all contribute to the poor standard of living of the masses.

Solution

- Investing in people through healthcare, quality education, jobs and skills helps build human capital, which is key to supporting economic growth, ending extreme poverty, and creating a more inclusive society.

- Skill development to increase employability of young population. India's labour force needs to be empowered with the right skills for the modern economy.

- Enhancing educational levels by properly investing in primary, secondary and higher education. Also, academic-industry collaboration is necessary to synchronise modern industry demands and learning levels in academics.

- Improvement in healthcare infrastructure would ensure higher number of productive days for young labour force, thus increasing the productivity of the economy.

- The nation needs to create ten million jobs per year to absorb the addition of young people into the workforce. Promoting businesses' interests and entrepreneurship would help in job creation to provide employment to the large labour force.

- The large young and working population in the years to come will migrate to urban areas within their own and other States, leading to rapid and large-scale increase in urban population. How these migrating people can have access to basic amenities, health and social services in urban areas need to be the focus of urban policy planning.

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POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES

Introduction

Poverty involves an infinite variety of circumstantial misfortune experienced both at the household level and the societal level. Poverty has many faces, changing from place to place and across time, and has been described in many ways. Extreme poverty strikes when household resources prove insufficient to secure the essentials of dignified living. The very poor are those who can hardly afford more than one meal a day and depend exclusively on a single source of income. That fragility is defined by a lack of education, the absence of work opportunities, the diminution of household back up resources, and exclusion from valuable social and decision making networks. The trend of migration from poor farming regions has raised the incidence of urban poverty, especially in the slum zones of the world's major cities. Nevertheless, poverty remains inextricably linked with the disappointing progress in agriculture in developing countries. Rural poverty rates are more than double those in cities, often embracing the majority of the rural population. The most persistent poverty is found amongst ethnic minorities, scheduled castes, tribal and indigenous people experiencing discrimination, nomadic pastoralists, and landless labourer toiling on marginal land. Most often, poverty is a situation people want to escape. So poverty is a call to action - for the poor and the wealthy alike - a call to change the world so that many more may have enough to eat, adequate shelter, access to education and health, protection from violence, and a voice in their communities.

Definition of Poverty

Poverty is the syndrome of assetlessness, landlessness, joblessness, deprivation and helplessness. It is not a pure economic phenomenon. It has social, cultural, political, historical, and geographical dimensions. It is lack of livelihood security and food security. It is hunger, starvation, and vulnerability. Poverty is lack of shelter, and lack of education, and lack of access to health care. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not being able to go to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water. Poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom. In general, poverty can be defined as a situation when people are unable to satisfy the basic needs of life.

Features of Poverty

Poverty has many faces, many causes and many effects. It has several monetary and non monetary dimensions. It has several manifestations. It is caused by several obstacles and constraints, which do reinforce each other.

It is characterized by the following features.

- Few assets, landlessness and low income

- Low consumption, no savings and high indebtedness

- Jobless, employment insecurity and food insecurity

- Illiteracy and lack of formal education and training

- Poor health, housing, or ill health, poor sanitation

- Marginalization and high dependency

- Few contacts with key persons/institutions

- Little involvement in influential forum
- Competition for resources among the poor
- Economic vulnerability and subordination
- Low self esteem, low social status and resignation
- Subsistence living and no future plan.

Types of Poverty

Absolute Poverty: It is a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to social services. For example, a family is poor if it is not able to earn food, water or even a basic kutcha house to live.

Relative poverty: It is a level of household income which is considerably less than median income of the country. It is the lack of resources when compared to other members of the society. It is a relative concept therefore it differs across countries. For example, a family may be considered poor if it is not able to send their children in good school even though they have basic amenities like food, water, shelter etc.

Situational Poverty: It is temporary in nature and occurs due to some adverse situation like earthquakes, floods or some severe health problem. For example, a family earns decent income of RS.20,000 per month and is able to meet basic necessities of life. One day earthquake hits the city and destroys their house; earning member of family loses his job. So a well off family suddenly becomes poor overnight.

Generational or Chronic Poverty: This type of poverty is inherited by household. The two to three generation born into poverty and they do not have tools to come out of this situation.

Rural Poverty: It occurs in non-metro areas with population less than 50,000 inhabitants. Due to lesser population, the area lacks basic services and amenities which is the cause of their financial struggle.

Urban Poverty: It occurs in areas with population of more than 50,000 inhabitants. These families live in much stressed condition due to overcrowding. They lack basic necessities like affordable housing.

Measuring Poverty

To know what helps to alleviate poverty, what works and what does not, what changes over time, poverty has to be defined, measured, and studied - and even lived. As poverty has many dimensions, it has to be looked at through a variety of indicators — levels of income and consumption, social indicators, and now, increasingly, indicators of vulnerability to risks, and of socio/political access. It has many non-income and non-quantifiable dimensions. Attempts to define or measure poverty do not give justice to the reality of its experience.

Poverty and inequality are multidimensional – consumption and income, education, health, opportunities, voice, etc., and have multiple determinants: geographic and agro-climatic factors, services, infrastructure, etc. It has to be looked at through a variety of indicators - levels of income and consumption, social indicators, and indicators of vulnerability to risks, and of socio/political access.

Absolute poverty is not related to income or the consumption level of the household but to some minimum standard of living. The concept of absolute poverty is relevant for less developed countries. In order to measure it, absolute norms for living are first laid down. It is expressed in terms of income or

expenditure. A person falling below this norm (called the poverty line) is classified as poor. In India, the poverty norm is anchored in terms of daily intake of food. According to the definition by the Planning Commission of India, the poverty line is drawn at an intake of 2400 calories in rural areas, and 2100 calories in urban areas. If a person is unable to get that minimum level of calories, then he, or she, is considered as living below the poverty line. The consumption basket representing this calorie intake is then converted into a monetary equivalent by using price indices separately for rural and urban areas.

Poverty Line in India

The erstwhile planning commission and now NITI aayog is the nodal agency for estimation of poverty line in India. It is calculated on the basis of data collected by NSSO.

Some the famous committees appointed so far along with their recommendations are:

Suresh Tendulkar panel's recommendations in 2011-12, the poverty line had been fixed at Rs 27 in rural areas and Rs 33 in urban areas. About 22% of the population lives below this line.

Rangarajan committee raised these limits to Rs.32 and Rs.47, respectively, and worked out this line at close to 30%

METHODOLOGY OF ESTIMATION

India has a long history of studies on measurement of poverty. The erstwhile Planning Commission was the nodal agency in India for estimation of poverty. Based on the methodology suggested by the Expert Groups/Committees set up by the Planning Commission from time to time, India has undertaken periodic assessments of the incidence of poverty since the 1960s.

The poverty ratio in India has been measured from an exogenously determined poverty line quantified in terms of per capita consumption expenditure over a month and the class distribution of persons obtained from the large sample survey of consumer expenditure data of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). Households with consumption expenditures below the poverty line are said to be "Below the Poverty Line (BPL)" and deemed poor. Consumption is measured in terms of a collection of goods and services known as reference Poverty Line Baskets (PLB).

Thus, estimation of poverty in India has been based on two critical components:

- Information on the consumption expenditures and its distribution across households is provided by the NSS consumption expenditure surveys;

- These expenditures by households are evaluated with reference to a given poverty line.

a) Poverty Line Estimation

The first step in estimating poverty is to define and quantify a poverty line.

Pre-Independence Poverty Estimation

i) Poverty and Unbritish Rule in India (1901): Dadabhai Naoroji' in his book 'Poverty and Un-British Rule in India,' made the earliest estimate of poverty line at 1867-68 prices (16 to 35 per capita per year) based on the cost of a subsistence diet for the emigrant coolies during their voyage living in a state of quietude.

ii) National Planning Committee's (1938): In 1938, the National Planning Committee set up under the chairmanship of Jawaharlal Nehru suggested a poverty line (ranging from 15 to 20 per capita per month) based on a minimum standard of living.

iii) The Bombay Plan (1944): Bombay Plan1 proponents suggested a poverty line of 75 per capita per year, which was much more modest than that of the NPC.

Post- Independence Poverty Estimation

Various expert groups constituted by the Planning Commission have estimated the number of people living in poverty in India:

i) Working Group (1962): The poverty line in India was quantified for the first time in 1962 by this Group in terms of a minimum requirement (food and non-food) of individuals for healthy living. The Group appeared to have taken into account the recommendation of balanced diet made by the Nutrition Advisory Group of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in 1958. The Group formulated the separate poverty lines for rural and urban areas (20 and 25 per capita per month respectively in terms of 1960-61 prices) without any regional variation. The poverty line excluded expenditure on health and education, both of which, it was assumed, were to be provided by the State. Although not official poverty lines, these were widely used in the 1960s and 1970s to estimate the poverty ratio at national and state level.

ii) Study by VM Dandekar and N Rath (1971): Although this was not a study commissioned by the Planning Commission, the origins of India's poverty line lie in the seminal work of two economists, V N Dandekar and N Rath, who first established the consumption levels required to meet a minimum calorie norm of an average calorie norm of 2,250 calories per capita per day. They made the first systematic assessment of poverty in India, based on National Sample Survey (NSS) data. Unlike previous scholars who had considered subsistence living or basic minimum needs criteria as the measure of poverty line, they derived poverty line from the expenditure adequate to provide 2250 calories per day in both rural and urban areas. Expenditure based Poverty line estimation generated a debate on minimum calorie consumption norms. They found poverty lines to be Rs. 15 per capita per month for rural households and Rs. 22.5 per capita per month for urban households at 1960‑61 prices.

iii) Task Force on "Projections of Minimum Needs and Effective Consumption Demand" headed by Dr. Y. K. Alagh (1979): This Task Force was constituted in 1977 and it submitted its report in 1979. Official poverty counts began for the first time in India based on the approach of this Task Force. Poverty line was defined as the per capita consumption expenditure level to meet average per capita daily calorie requirement of 2400 kcal per capita per day in rural areas and 2100 kcal per capita per day in urban areas. The average calorie requirements were estimated as a population–weighted average of the age-gender-activity specific calorie allowances recommended by the Nutrition Expert Group (1968) by reference to the 1971 population Census. Based on 1973-74 prices, the Task Force set the rural and urban poverty lines at Rs. 49.09 and Rs. 56.64 per capita per month at 1973-74 prices. These lines were based on the assumption of different PLBs for rural and urban consumption.

iv) Lakdawala Expert Group (1993): The Expert Group submitted its report in 1993. It did not redefine the poverty line and retained the separate rural and urban poverty lines recommended by the Alagh Committee at the national level based on minimum nutritional requirements.

v) Tendulkar Expert Group (2009): In 2005, another expert group chaired by Suresh Tendulkar was constituted to review the methodology for poverty estimation. It was to do address the three key shortcomings of the previous methods: (i) Poverty estimates being linked to the 1973-74 poverty line baskets (PLBs) of goods and services did not reflect significant changes in consumption patterns of poor over time; (ii) Issues with the adjustment of prices for inflation, both spatially (across regions) and temporally (across 6 time); and (iii) Presumption of provision of health and education by the State only. Instead of monthly household consumption, consumption expenditure was broken up into per person per day consumption, resulting in the figure of Rs 32 and Rs 26 a day for urban and rural areas. The

national poverty line for 2011-12 was estimated at Rs. 816 per capita per month for rural areas and Rs. 1,000 per capita per month for urban areas.

vi) Rangrajan Committee (2014): Due to widespread criticism of Tendulkar Committee approach as well as due to changing times and aspirations of people of India, Rangarajan Committee was set up in 2012. This Committee submitted its report in June 2014. It reverted to the practice of having separate all-India rural and urban poverty line baskets and deriving state-level rural and urban estimates from these. It recommended separate consumption baskets for rural and urban areas which include food items that ensure recommended calorie, protein & fat intake and non-food items like clothing, education, health, housing and transport. This committee raised the daily per capita expenditure to Rs 47 for urban and Rs 32 for rural from Rs 32 and Rs 26 respectively3 at 2011-12 prices. Monthly per capita consumption expenditure of Rs. 972 in rural areas and Rs. 1407 in urban areas is recommended as the poverty line at the all India level. The government did not take a call on the report of the Rangarajan Committee.

Six official committees have so far estimated the number of people living in poverty in India — the working group of 1962; V N Dandekar and N Rath in 1971; Y K Alagh in 1979; D T Lakdawala in 1993; Suresh Tendulkar in 2009; and C Rangarajan in 2014. The government did not take a call on the report of the Rangarajan Committee; therefore, poverty is measured using the Tendulkar poverty line. As per this, 21.9% of people in India live below the poverty line.

In what other ways can poverty be estimated?

In 2011, Oxford University researchers Sabina Alkire and James Foster devised the multidimensional poverty index (MPI) to capture poverty using 10 indicators: nutrition, child mortality, years of schooling, school attendance, ownership of assets, and access to proper house, electricity, drinking water, sanitation, and clean cooking fuel. Poverty is measured in terms of deprivation in at least a third of these indicators. In 2015-16, 369.546 million (nearly 37 crore) Indians were estimated to meet the deprivation cut-off for three or more of the 10 indicators. While the overall headcount multidimensional poverty ratio in 2015-16 was 27.9%, the number was 36.8% for rural and 9.2% for urban India. There were wide variations across states — poverty was the highest for Bihar (52.5%), followed by Jharkhand (46.5%), Madhya Pradesh (41.1%), and Uttar Pradesh (40.8%). It was the lowest for Kerala (1.1%), Delhi (4.2%), Punjab (6.1%), Tamil Nadu (7.3%) and Himachal Pradesh (8.1%). The MPI is a more comprehensive measure of poverty because it includes components that capture the standard of living more effectively. However, uses "outcomes" rather than expenditure — the presence of an undernourished person in the household will result in it being classified as "poor", regardless of the expenditure on nutritious food.

Causes of Poverty In India

A. Economic causes of poverty

1. Slow Economic growth and development: A country that has slow economic growth due to bad governmental policies causes widespread poverty. Stagnant or slow paced economic development also leads to poverty.

2. Increasing unemployment: The population to jobs ratio if unbalanced can cause unemployment between masses and is a leading cause of poverty. Increased and uncontrolled population in any country is the biggest threat of unemployment related poverty.

3. Decreased Agricultural Output: This can be due to unpredictable weather patterns. Decreased agricultural output leads to some serious inflation issues. No country can be economically balanced

without the aid of a strong agricultural backbone. Yearly agricultural produce governs a major part of a country`s economy and needs to be in surplus to keep poverty at bay.

4. Under-developed infrastructure: Infrastructural development also drives the economic growth and hence determines the poverty situation of any place.

5. Inadequate industrialization in certain areas: Industries provide employment opportunities to the locals of the place. Concentration of industries in any one state or place sure escalates the employment in that particular place but, the deprived areas face acute poverty. Areas having inadequate industrialization causes poverty since employment opportunities become limited in the said area. Industries also offer well salaried jobs when compared to small time jobs.

6. Inadequate production of essential items: Any inadequacy in the production of basic necessities causes poverty nationwide. Food as well as non-food essentials production always needs to be adequate to avoid poverty.

7. Deprivation of resources: Natural deprivation of resources as well as forced or situational deprivation can cause poverty. Lack of proper resources and opportunities deprive people from their target lifestyle and employment options and push them towards poverty.

8. Uneven concentration of wealth and resources: A nation that has uneven concentration of wealth and resources is more prone to poverty than the one that has a uniform distribution. Uneven concentration leads to an extreme situation wherein people are either neo-rich or below the poverty line. This unbalance is harmful for a nation`s overall economy and development.

9. Underutilized natural resources: Natural resources are God`s gift and a place with rich natural resources is blessed. Hence, natural resources of every place need to completely discovered and tapped to extract their complete economical benefit. This should be a governmental initiative to ensure that there is no scope of poverty in any place due to under-utilization of natural resources.

10. Economic inflation: An economic inflation not only affects the poor but also the middle class of the society. This means that more people come under borderline poverty. Economic inflation is extremely detrimental for a nation and hit all sections of the society. Also, a country may take a long time to recover from an economic inflation and face years of poverty.

B. Social causes of Poverty:

1. Social evils like untouchability: Untouchability is an unfair social norm in some of the backward parts of a country that limit people of certain lower castes from their democratic rights. They are shunned from the society and pushed towards poverty. There are not allowed to venture into the general employment opportunities and are forced to do meagre jobs.

2. Unethical abuse of power: When power is abused, it has a biased outlook and never helps the downtrodden and poor. A corrupt government would always want to keep the poor section of the society a status quo to exercise more control on the masses. This is another major cause of poverty in corrupt countries.

3. Widespread ignorance and illiteracy: Illiteracy is another major cause of poverty. Uneducated people are unable to tap their complete potential and hence their earning sources get limited. They are unable to compete with the educated counter-parts of the competitive society and hence remain in poverty. Illiteracy also is a reason for ignorance in people. They are unaware of all the possible opportunities any modern society has to offer and spend their life in ignorance.

4. Overpopulated places: Over population in any place increases competition in the employment

sector. As a result, poverty creeps in, in any overpopulated place since competition increases and opportunities decreases.

5. Practicing caste-system: Caste system segregates people (based on their job) in a society and does not allow them to venture outside their caste to seek employment. For example, a lower caste person will not be allowed to become a businessman or a trader. This system makes the poor get poorer and the rich get richer. This unbalanced and unfair system is another leading cause of poverty.

6. High divorce rates and Feminization of Poverty: Feminine gender of the society should be given equally employment opportunities to eradicate feminization of poverty. Also, high divorce rates cause poverty among the feminine section that cannot support themselves due to gender inequality.

7. Inequality of available opportunities: Exercising inequality in the society for whatever reasons can cause poverty. Available opportunities should be offered equally to one and all in a society. Inequality leads to unfair loss of opportunities among the weaker sections of the society.

C. Geographical Factors:

1. Density of population: Area population density also determines the poverty graph of the place. Densely populated places see a red when it comes to poverty.

2. Selective fertility of land: The fertility of soil is not the same in every region of a country and varies from place to place. While the fertile areas have blessed agricultural produce, the unfertile lands are pushed towards poverty naturally.

3. Uneven distribution of fertile land: Geographically, fertile lands are distributed in an uneven fashion and this is also a primary cause of poverty in naturally unfertile lands. Fertile lands provide agricultural employment to the local people and they do not have to strive for job opportunities to earn a living. Unfertile lands completely deprive the natives from the agricultural sector and take away this employment scope, which is one of the most sought after choice of employed among the uneducated villagers.

4. Variable farm output: Farm output varies from season to season and year by year. A good year will lead to substantial produce while droughts and other natural calamities can limit the output at times. This variability also causes poverty in trying times.

5. Differential rural and urban poverty: rural and urban poverty differ at many levels. The difference in rural and urban lifestyle has different effects in their poverty scenario. For example: Survival of the poor is more sustainable in rural areas than in urban areas due to high cost of living in the latter scenario.

D. Environmental and climatic factors:

1. Flooding of lands: Natural calamities like floods can completely destroy farmlands and adversely affect the agricultural produce. This will lead to uncalled for poverty situations that a country can seldom tackle.

2. Long spells of drought: Another climatic adversity that causes poverty is drought. Long spells of drought harms farmlands and the overall agricultural output. Droughts are a permanent cause of poverty in most nations.

3. Lack of seasonal rainfall: Any abnormalities with the seasonal rainfall also can cause some serious poverty problems. Agricultural produce gets disturbed due to the absence of the predicted rainfall and hence causes inflation related poverty.

E. Other Causes:

1. Lack of proper education: Education is obviously essential for a growing economy, but relevant education is even more important. For example, rural population should be given more of technical and vocational education than bookish knowledge. This will help them land technical jobs easily and abolish poverty among the masses.

2. Increasing competition: A society that has a raised qualification standard faces increased competition in the job acquisition front. This also leads to increased competition and resultant poverty even among the educated population. This can also be said as a side-effect of increased education standards, especially in cities.

3. More demand and less supply: The demand-supply relationship has to be balanced to achieve a poverty free nation. The key to a balanced demand-supply state is population control. There is no escaping from the population management, is you are looking for a poverty free nation.

4. Lack of adaptable nature of the rural population: Rural population usually have a backward mindset and refuse to adapt with modernization. This does little to help them change their economic conditions and eliminate poverty. Open mindedness and adaptability of the population at large is an important quality to remove poverty from its very roots.

5. Mass migration to cities: It is important to limit over-crowding of the cities. This is only possible by stopping the mass migration of the villagers to cities. Most rural people leave their village and migrate to cities in search of bigger employment scopes. If the government can develop the rural areas sufficiently and provide good employment as well as educational opportunities to the rural population, they will remain content and stay put in their villages. This will reduce the urban poverty index and keep the population of cities in control as well.

Consequences of Poverty

Effect on Health – The biggest effect of poverty is poor health. Those who suffer from poverty do not have access to enough food, adequate clothing, medical facilities, and clean surroundings. The lack of all these basic facilities leads to poor health. Such individuals and their families suffer from malnutrition.

Effects on Society –

- Due to unemployment and marginalization, poor people often indulge in wrong practices such as prostitution, theft, and criminal activities such as chain snatching, etc.

- Poor people are usually homeless. They sleep on the roadsides at night. This makes the entire situation very unsafe for women and children.

- Due to lack of money, poor people suffer from a lot of stress which leads to reduction in the productivity of individuals, thereby making poor people poorer.

- Poverty forces poor people to send their children to work instead of sending them to schools. This is because the families fail to bear the burden of their child/ children.

- Youngsters from poor families are usually targeted and involved in terrorist activities. These people are offered a huge amount of money instead of which they are assigned with a destructive task of terrorism.

Poverty is directly proportional to the success of the economy. The number of people living in the poverty is reflective of how powerful is the economy.

Remedies for Poverty

There are different measures for tackling poverty is discussed below. Let us discuss these aspects in detail.

i)   Increase in Saving : In order to get rid of the supply side vicious circle in these countries, efforts should be made to increase savings so that investment in productive channels may be encouraged. To increase saving, expenditure on marriages, social ceremonies, etc., should be curtailed. In under developed countries, the possibility of voluntary savings is slim. Thus, in this regard, government interference is necessary. The government can increase saving by altering its fiscal policy. The government can impose heavy taxes on luxury goods. Moreover, it can increase the role of direct taxes. Thus, the government can curtail consumption by altering the tax system.

ii) Increase in Investment : To break the vicious circle of poverty, apart from increasing savings, investment of saving in productive channels is also of immense use. The policies of short run and long run investment should be coordinated. By short period investment, people can get the necessary goods at fair rates, which will have a favourable impact on their skill. Moreover, along with short period investment, investment in the establishment of multipurpose projects, like iron and chemical fertilizers should be properly encouraged. In UDCs, proper monetary and banking policies should be adopted which may provide facilities and encouragement to small savings.

iii) Balanced Growth: To resolve the demand side vicious circle in under developed countries, the extent of the market should be widened so that people may get inducement to invest. In this regard, Prof. Nurkse advocated the doctrine of balanced growth. According to the principle of balanced growth, investment should be made in every sphere of an economy so that demand of one sector can be fulfilled by another sector. Thus, an increase in demand will lead to wider extent of the market, and so, the inducement to invest. On the other hand, economists like Hirschman, Singer, and Fleming do not consider the policy of balanced growth effective. According to them, the policy of unbalanced growth would be more useful. In UDCs, there is every possibility of increase in demand and there is the need of increase in monetary income. The majority of UDCs have adopted the policy of planned development. Accordingly, due to more investment in the public sector, the supply of money increases. Due to increase in monetary income, sizes of the market widen. These countries endeavour to widen the size of foreign market by increasing their exports.

iv) Human Capital Formation : In underdeveloped countries, the main obstacle to economic growth is the backwardness of human capital. Human capital should no longer be neglected. Many suggestions can be made to increase skill of manpower. For instance, in these countries, education, technical knowledge, and vocational training should be enlarged. Health facilities should be enhanced, which may increase the efficiency of the workers. Transportation and communication should be developed.

v) Industrialisation : Poverty can be eradicated by a self-sustaining process of industrialization. All industries should have linkage to build a powerful process of ancilary industries and occupations. The percolation effect of industries can be very strong through the establishment of auxiliary industries. Industry should be linked to agricultural growth. Agro-based industries should grow to provide employment to village people as they are very much labour intensive. Industrialisation can contribute to the growth process and bring improvement in the standard of living of people.

Other Measures for Poverty Reduction

i)   More employment opportunities : poverty can be eliminated by creating more employment

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opportunities, so that people may be able to meet their basis needs

ii) Minimum needs programmes: providing minimum needs to the poor people can help to reduce the problem of poverty

iii) Social security programmes: various social security schemes, like worker's compensation, maternity benefit. provident fund, etc., can make a frontal attack on poverty

iv) Small scale industries: encouraging and establishing small scale industries can create jobs in rural areas, which can reduce poverty

v) Spread of education: education can create awareness and build confidence among people to find methods to overcome poverty

vi) Empowerment of poor: poor people are voiceless due to the ruthless system of development. So, empowerment of poor people will reduce poverty

vii) Land reforms: land belongs to the absentee landlords in India. Therefore, land reform is needed for giving rights to the actual tiller of the soil

viii) Asset creation: productive assets must be created which will ensure regular income for the poor people

ix) Political will: political will and thrust is needed to face the challenge of poverty. Government policy should be designed with determination for having a poverty-free country

x) Social change: social strata and traditional values should be free from dogmas. The caste system should not discriminate any people for anything. Social reforms are also needed to remove poverty among the lower caste and women.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POVERTY AND HUNGER

- Despite increase in real income of the people over the last two decades, overall calorie consumption and nutritional intake has not commensurately increased. According to Global Hunger Index, India is second after South Sudan, when it comes to wasting (low weight for height) among children. Also, there are millions of children and adults suffering from "Hidden Hunger".

- The poor are increasingly spending more on education, healthcare, transportation, fuel and lighting. The share of monthly expenditure devoted to these items has increased at such a pace that it has absorbed all the increase in real income over the past decades. This has led to a 'Food Budget Squeeze'.

- Possibly, the most important reason for this is shrinking social expenditure by the government which is rendering the urban and the rural poor dependent on market prices of non-food essential items, like education, healthcare etc which are typically high.

- Social sector spending has always been low in India compared to other countries. According to the National Health Profile 2018, India spends 1.02% of the gross domestic product on public healthcare, while Maldives spends 9.4%, Sri Lanka 1.6%, Bhutan 2.5%, and Thailand about 2.9%.In education, India's public investment is around 2.7% of GDP, while it is 3.4% in Sri Lanka and 7.4% in Bhutan.

- Another reason is, rural working people are migrating in large numbers to urban centres or other rural areas in search of work. Most of such migration is temporary and seasonal in character, and involves travelling relatively large distances. This large circulation of labor does have substantial impact on the expenditure patterns of households. For instance, an increasingly footloose

labourforce means that a large section of the working poor have to bear higher costs of transportation, maintain communication with the sites of work (much of which is seasonal in character), and are deprived of traditional non-market sources of food when away from home.

- Hunger persists in India also because of a decline in access to non-market food sources, preference for 'better tasting more expensive calories and increased spending on luxury items like radio, TV, and mobile phones, as economist Abhijit Banerjee writes in his book – "Poor Economics".

- In recent times, talks of Universal Basic Income and replacing food subsidies with Direct Benefit Transfer are gaining ground. These measures may further aggravate the crisis of hunger by exposing the poor to market volatility.

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URBANIZATION, THEIR PROBLEMS

What is Urbanisation?

Urbanization refers to the process of increase in the number of people living in urban areas and the ways in which the population adapts to the change. Urbanization increases with industrialization. As urbanization increases, a number of towns and cities increases, and people begin to live and work in central areas. Urbanization is a result of the historic transformation of human societies, where the rural culture is being replaced by urban culture. The rural culture consists of closeness in relations and communal behavior amongst the members of society. However, the urban culture consists of distant relations and there is competition amongst each other. The lifestyle of cities is very beneficial in terms of cultural and economic factors. With no industries and facilities in rural areas, the population is left to work only in the fields. But, in cities, there are more opportunities in employment in many sectors like industries, and other specialist services which create ample jobs. In cities, people have access to better medical facilities, they can look for better schools for good education of their children and can have better living standards. These reasons lead to rural people settling in cities. Another reason for people moving to cities in the modern environment of urban areas. There is a variety of fashion, food, travel, and trends that fascinates the people. People try their luck in cities to get all the luxuries of life and increase their standards of living. Apart from these factors, environmental factors like drought and rain can also lead to urbanization, as the livelihood of the village people is primarily dependent upon land and cultivation.

However, there are countless numbers of problems associated with urbanization as well. As all the rural people start moving to cities, it results in overcrowding. With jobs being limited and demand increases, it results in unemployment of a large number of people. There is a scarcity of opportunities, and every sector becomes full of competition. Unemployment naturally causes poverty. This leads to the formation of slums on the outskirts of the city, as people cannot afford houses. Urbanization causes many environmental effects as well. Harmful gases produced by vehicles, factories, and industries worsen the environmental conditions. More population results in more waste being produced, which degrades the environment. Urbanization also leads to degradation of mental health. There is a lack of social relations and communal behaviors among the people, and there is more of a competitive nature. Every individual remains busy in earning and making their lives luxurious, forgetting that human is a social animal which cannot survive without socialization and human interactions.

Urbanization in India

India is a rapidly urbanising country. In India, the urban population amounts to 461 million people. This number is growing by 2.3 per cent each year. By 2031, 75 per cent of India's national income is estimated to come from cities. Providing the necessary urban infrastructure is a big challenge: 70 to 80 per cent of the infrastructure that will be needed by 2050 has not been built yet, and the estimated investment gap amounts to approximately 827 billion US dollars.

Urbanisation in India – Key Figures

461 million people are living in cities

2,3% is the annual urban population growth

42% of the urban population lives in smaller cities with less than 300.000 inhabitants

75% of India's national income is expected to come from cities by 2031

70-80% of the urban infrastructure that will exist in 2050 has yet to be built

US$ 827 billion is the estimated gap in urban infrastructure investment over the next 20 years

Source: UN DESA, Population Division (2018)
World urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision, custom data acquired via websites

The World Bank, World Bank Open Data (2016)
World Development Indicators: Urbanization, custom data acquired via websites

Tewari, M., Godfrey. N., et al.: Better Cities, Better Growth: India's Urban Opportunity (2016)
New Climate Economy, World Resources Institute, and Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations
London, Washington, DC, and New Delhi

Floater, G., Dowling, D., et al.: Global Review of Finance for Sustainable Urban Infrastructure (2017)
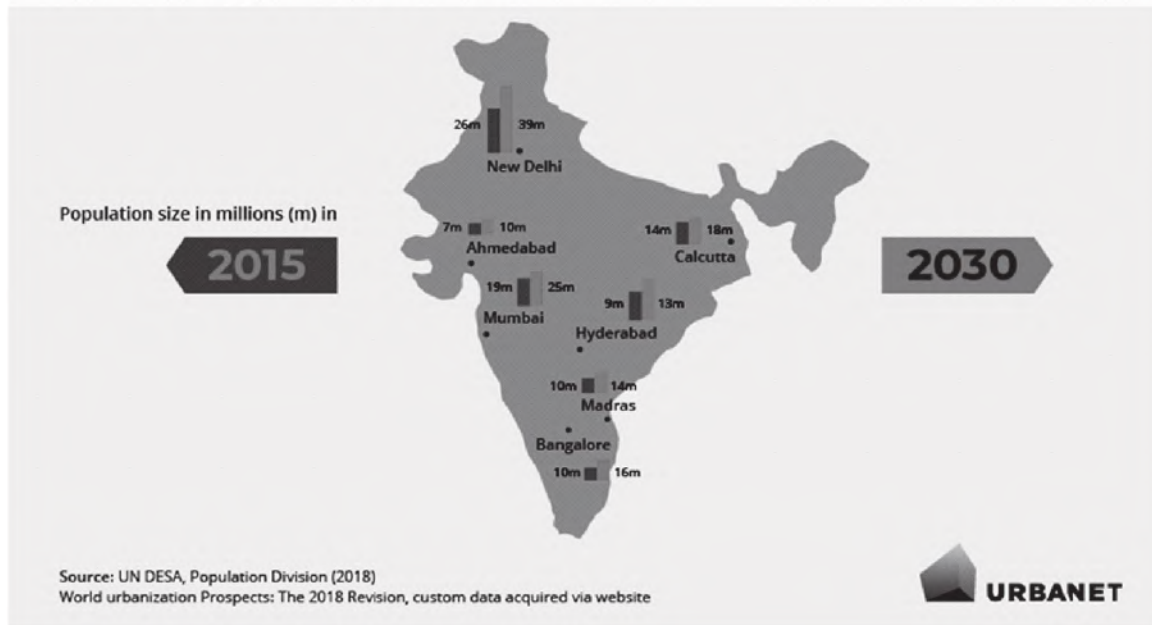London and Washington, DC.

URBANET

In 2018 a large number of India's cities have a population between 300,000 and 1 million inhabitants. There are 120 medium-sized cities of such population size, and only five urban settlements with 20 million or more inhabitants.
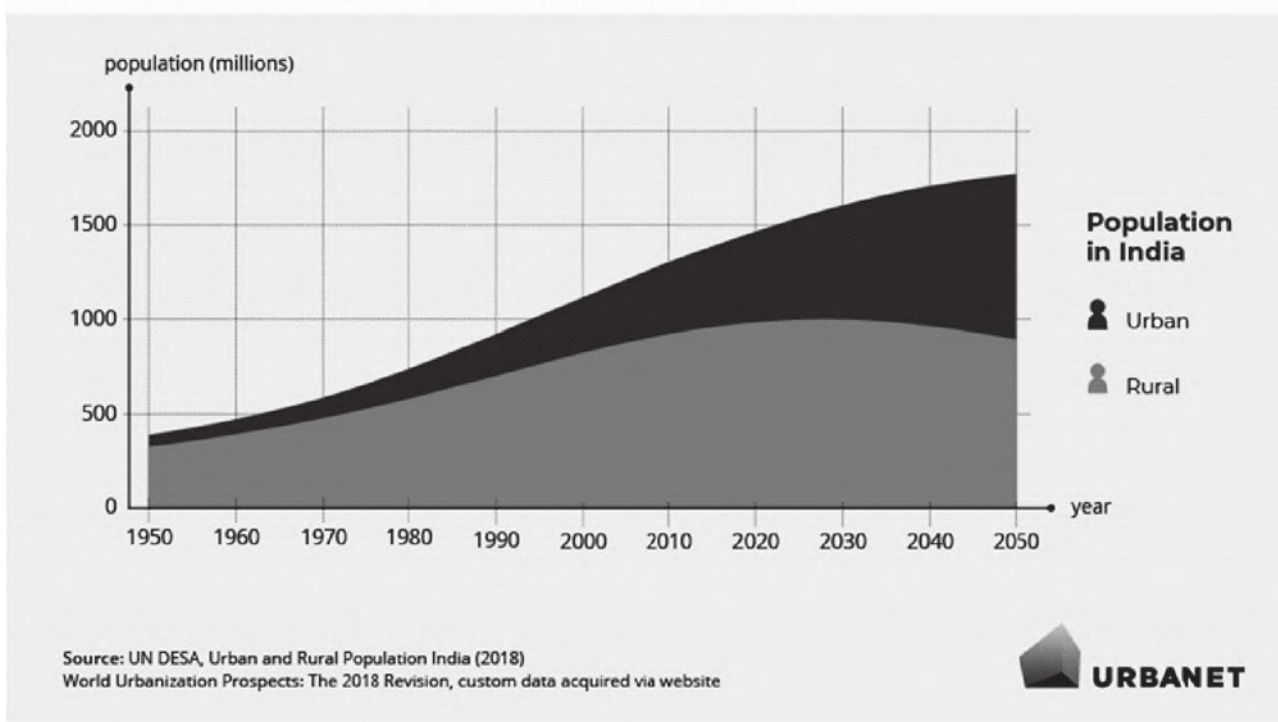
Size of Settlements in India 2018

71 cities

49 cities

4 cities

52 cities

5 cities

Inhabitants
- 300,000 to 500,000
- 500,000 to 1 million
- 1 to 5 million
- 5 to 10 million
- 10 million or more

Source: UN DESA, Population Division (2018)
World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision, custom data acquired via website

URBANET
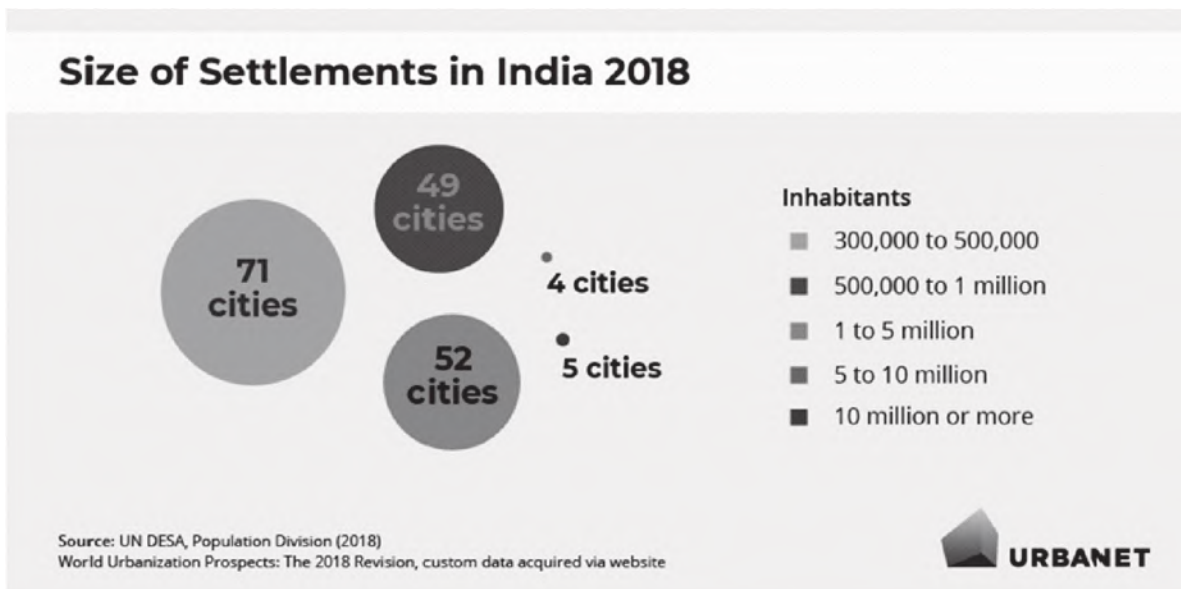
The seven largest cities in India will become even bigger until 2030. Prospects suggest that the population growth of India´s capital Delhi will increase about one third within the next decade up to 38.9 million people.

The 7 Largest Cities in India

Population size in millions (m) in

2015 ◄

2030 ►

City	2015	2030
New Delhi	26m	39m
Ahmedabad	7m	10m
Calcutta	14m	18m
Mumbai	19m	25m
Hyderabad	9m	13m
Madras	10m	14m
Bangalore	10m	16m

Source: UN DESA, Population Division (2018)
World urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision, custom data acquired via website

URBANET

The graphic displays the steady growth of India's urban and rural population starting in 1950. Around 2030, for the first time, the rural population declines while the urban population continues to rise rapidly.

Urban and Rural Population in India

Source: UN DESA, Urban and Rural Population India (2018)
World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision, custom data acquired via website

URBANET

Level of Urbanisation (According to Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs)

Among all the States and Union territories, the National Capital Territory of Delhi and the Union territory of Chandigarh are most urbanized with 97.5 percent and 97.25 percent urban population respectively, followed by Daman and Diu (75.2 percent) and Puducherry (68.3 percent). Among

States, Goa is now the most urbanised State with 62.2 percent urban population, a significant increase since 2001 when urban population of Goa was 49.8%. Another significant instance of rapid urbanisation is that of Kerala, its urban population is now 47.7 per cent, while a decade ago it was just 25.9 percent. Among the North-Eastern States, Mizoram is most urbanised with 51.5 per cent urban population, though in terms of absolute contribution to total urban population in the country, Mizoram's contribution is just 0.1 percent. Similarly Sikkim, which was just 11.0 urbanised a decade ago became almost 25 percent urbanised in 2011. Among major states, Tamil Nadu continues to be the most urbanized state with 48.4 percent of the population living in urban areas followed now by Kerala (47.7 per cent) upstaging Maharashtra (45.2 percent). The proportion of urban population continues to be the lowest in Himachal Pradesh with 10.0 per cent followed by Bihar with 11.3 percent, Assam (14.1 percent) and Orissa (16.7 percent). In terms of absolute number of persons living in urban areas, Maharashtra continues to lead with 50.8 million persons which comprises 13.5 percent of the total urban population of the country. Uttar Pradesh accounts for about 44.4 million, followed by Tamil Nadu at 34.9 million.

Causes of Urbanisation in India

Urbanisation has become a common feature of Indian society. Growth of Industries has contributed to the growth of cities. As a result of industrialization people have started moving towards the industrial areas in search of employment. This has resulted in the growth of towns and cities. Various reasons have led to the growth of cities.

They are as follows:

Industrialization: Industrialization is a trend representing a shift from the old agricultural economics to novel non-agricultural economy, which creates a modernized society. Through industrial revolution, more people have been attracted to move from rural to urban areas on the account of improved employment opportunities. Industrialization has increased employment opportunities by giving people the chance to work in modern sectors in job categories that aids to stir economic developments.

Commercialization: Commerce and trade play a major role in urbanization. The distribution of goods and services and commercial transactions in the modern era has developed modern marketing institutions and exchange methods that have tremendously given rise to the growth of towns and cities. Commercialization and trade comes with the general perception that the towns and cities offer better commercial opportunities and returns compared to the rural areas.

Social benefits and services: There are numerous social benefits attributed to life in the cities and towns. Examples include better educational facilities, better living standards, and better sanitation and housing, better health care, better recreation facilities, and better social life in general. On this account, more and more people are prompted to migrate into cities and towns to obtain the wide variety of social benefits and services which are unavailable in the rural areas.

Employment opportunities: In cities and towns, there are ample job opportunities that continually draw people from the rural areas to seek better livelihood. Therefore, the majority of people frequently migrate into urban areas to access well paying jobs as urban areas have countless employment opportunities in all developmental sectors such as public health, education, transport, sports and recreation, industries, and business enterprises. Services and industries generate and increase higher value-added jobs, and this leads to more employment opportunities.

Modernization and changes in the mode of living: Modernization plays a very important role in the process of urbanization. As urban areas become more technology savvy together with highly sophisticated communication, infrastructure, medical facilities, dressing code, enlightenment, liberalization, and other social amenities availability, people believe they can lead a happy life in cities. In urban areas, people also embrace changes in the modes of living namely residential habits, attitudes, dressing, food, and beliefs. As a result, people migrate to cities and the cities grow by absorbing the growing number of people day after day.

Rural urban transformation: As localities become more fruitful and prosperous due to the discovery of minerals, resource exploitation, or agricultural activities, cities start emerging as the rural areas transform to urbanism. The increase in productivity leads to economic growth and higher value-added employment opportunities. This brings about the need to develop better infrastructure, better education institutions, better health facilities, better transportation networks, establishment of banking institutions, better governance, and better housing. As this takes place, rural communities start to adopt the urban culture and ultimately become urban centers that continue to grow as more people move to such locations in search of a better life.

Spread of education: The literacy rate has increased among the rural people. They have become more modernized.

FEATURES OF INDIAN URBANISATION

- The history of urbanization in India is quite old as towns and urban places flourished in the Indus Valley around 2500 B.C. Urbanization in India during the ancient and medieval periods was associated with the seats of administrations, capitals and trading centers. After the arrival of the Europeans in India, urbanization rate was accelerated mainly because of the location and establishment of modern factories and industries.

- The Indian urbanization is of subsistence nature. It implies that the migrants from rural areas are attracted to the urban centers not for urban environment but for employment. They may be eating worse food or may be living in worse houses but they stick to the cities for jobs. This affects badly the quality of life in the urban places, especially in the mega, Class I and metropolitan cities.

- The Indian urbanization has poly-metropolitan apex in which the million cities dominate the entire urban scheme accounting for more than one-third of India's total urban population. There are as many as 3 million cities, including three mega cities, i.e., Mumbai, Kolkata and Delhi.

- The Indian urban system is not integrated both functionally and spatially as a consequence of which there are breaks and imbalances in urban hierarchy as well as in the rural-urban profile. The apex of the urban system in India is lopsided, the urban base in rural areas is sub-standard and the intermediary link through the market towns is weak.

- Southern India is more urbanized than Northern and Eastern India. This is because of the historical, socio-cultural and resource factors.

- City planning focused only on legitimate area.

- Growing regionalism in face of a migration.

- Increase in slums followed by poverty, unemployment, exploitation, inequality, degradation of quality of life.

- Urbanization occurs due to rural push.

- Demographic explosion in few areas. It has occurred without much industrialization. (Service sector growth).

The Problems and issues in urbanization in India

In India urbanization is unplanned due to uncontrolled migration. Due to unplanned urbanization, India is facing too much problem such as unemployment, electricity problem, pollution, social problems, improper sanitation facilities etc. Rapid rise in urban population in India is leading to many problems like increasing slums, decrease in standard of living in urban areas, also causing environmental damage. Following problems need to be highlighted.

1. Urban lounge: Urban sprawl or real expansion of the cities, both in population and geographical area, of rapidly growing cities is the root cause of urban problems. In most cities the economic base is incapable of dealing with the problems created by their excessive size. Massive immigration from rural areas as well as from small towns into big cities has taken place almost consistently; thereby adding to the size of cities.

2. Overcrowding: Overcrowding is a situation in which too many people live in too little space. Overcrowding is a logical consequence of over-population in urban areas. It is naturally expected that cities having a large size of population squeezed in a small space must suffer from overcrowding. This is well exhibited by almost all the big cities of India.

3. Housing: Housing provision for the growing urban population will be the biggest challenge before the government. The growing cost of houses comparison to the income of the urban middle class has made it impossible for majority of lower income groups and is residing in congested accommodation and many of those are devoid of proper ventilation, lighting, water supply, sewage system, etc. For instance in Delhi, the current estimate is of a shortage of 5, 00,000 dwelling units the coming decades. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) introduced the concept of "Housing Poverty" which includes "Individuals and households who lack safe, secure and healthy shelter, with basic infrastructure such as piped water and adequate provision for sanitation, drainage and the removal of household waste".

4. Sanitation: The poor sanitation condition is another gloomy feature in urban areas and particularly in slums and unauthorized colonies of urban areas. The drainage system in many unorganized colonies and slums do either not exist and if existing are in a bad shape and in bits resulting in blockage of waste water. These unsanitary conditions lead too many sanitation related diseases such as diahorrea and malaria. Unsafe garbage disposal is one of the critical problems in urban areas and garbage management always remained a major challenge.

5. Squatter Settlements: No clear-cut distinction can be drawn between slums and squatter settlements in practice except that slums are relatively more stable and are located in older, inner parts of cities compared to squatter settlements which are relatively temporary and are often scattered in all parts of the city, especially outer zones where urban areas merge with their rural hinterland. Normally, squatter settlements contain makeshift dwellings constructed without official permission (i.e., on unauthorized land).

6. Environmental concern : Vulnerability to risk posed by the increasing man-made and natural disasters. According to UNDP 70 % of Indian population is at risk to floods and 60% susceptible to earthquakes. The risk is higher in urban areas owing to density and overcrowding. Urban areas are becoming heat islands, ground water is not being recharged and water crisis is persistent. Here making, water harvesting compulsory will be beneficial.

7. Poverty: Today roughly one third of the urban population lives below poverty line. There are glaring disparities between haves and have-nots in urban areas. The most demanding of the urban challenges unquestionably is the challenge posed by poverty; the challenge of reducing exploitation, relieving misery and creating more human condition for urban poor. There is rise in urban inequality, as per UN habitat report, 2010, urban inequality in India rose from 34 to 38 % based on consumption in period of 1995 to 2005.

8. Transport: As high income individual are buying more private vehicle and use less public transport. Such huge number of vehicles in cities is causing more traffic jam, which in turn decreases the efficiency of public transport. Also the penetration of public transport is less, which makes people use private vehicle. Public transport is less disabled friendly. There is also lack of infrastructure and poor maintenance of existing public transport infrastructure.

9. Unemployment: The problem of unemployment is no less serious than the problem of housing mentioned above. Urban unemployment in India is estimated at 15 to 25 per cent of the labour force. This percentage is even higher among the educated people.

10.Water: What is one of the most essential elements of nature to sustain life and right from the beginning of urban civilization, sites for settlements have always been chosen keeping in view the availability of water to the inhabitants of the settlement. However, supply of water started falling short of demand as the cities grew in size and number.

11.Trash Disposal: As Indian cities grow in number and size the problem of trash disposal is assuming alarming proportions. Huge quantities of garbage produced by our cities pose a serious health problem. Most cites do not have proper arrangements for garbage disposal and the existing landfills are full to the brim. These landfills are hotbeds of disease and innumerable poisons leaking into their surroundings.

12.Urban Crimes: Modem cities present a meeting point of people from different walks of life having no affinity with one another. Like other problems, the problem of crimes increases with the increase in urbanization. In fact the increasing trend in urban crimes tends to disturb peace and tranquility of the cities and make them unsafe to live in particularly for the women.

Remedial Measures of Urban Problems in India

Building sustainable and environmentally friendly cities: Governments should pass laws that plan and provide environmentally sound cities and smart growth techniques, considering that people should not reside in unsafe and polluted areas. The objective here is to build sustainable cities that embrace improved environmental conditions and safe habitats for all urban populations. Governments should also encourage sustainable use of urban resources and support an economy based on sustainable environment such as investment in green infrastructure, sustainable industries, recycling and environmental campaigns, pollution management, renewable energy, green public transportation, and water recycling and reclamation.

Provision of essential services: Urban stakeholders must ensure all populations within the urban areas have access to adequate essential social services namely education, health, sanitation and clean water, technology, electricity, and food. The objective here is to provide and implement employment opportunities and wealth creation activities so that people can earn a living to pay for the maintenance of the services. Subsidies can also be availed by the government to lower the costs of basic healthcare, basic education, energy, education, public transportation, communication systems and technology.

Creation of more jobs: To lessen the negative effects of rapid urbanization while at the same time conserving natural ecosystems, private investments should be encouraged so as to utilize natural resources and create more job opportunities. Tourism promotion and the sustainable exploitation of natural resources can create more jobs for the urban populations. Subsidies and grants may as well be provided to foreign and private investment in environmentally friendly development projects that encourage job creation.

Population control: Key stakeholders in urban areas must provide campaigns and counseling for effective medical health clinics and family planning to help reduce the high rates of population growth. Medical health clinics oriented towards family planning options must be made accessible across the entire urban area with the objective of controlling diseases and population growth.

Urban Corridors

Transport and urbanisation mutually reinforce each other. Transport corridors, providing linkages among important urban centres with increased flow of goods and passengers is well recognised.

Public Transport

Cities need to re-examine urban transportation demand and devise new strategies, such as land use – transport planning, demand management, cleaner fuels and technologies, integration of traffic modes and traffic management. The objective should be to provide maximum access at a minimum cost. Other initiatives needed for controlling air pollution are use of unleaded fuel, phasing out old vehicles and priority for public transport.

Private sector participation

Urban infrastructure services require huge investments, coupled with requirements for deferred maintenance of the urban services. Such heavy financing is beyond the means of urban local bodies. There is a need to turn to private sector or institutional financing.

Government Initiatives

India's Seven Mission Program With the rapid rise of urbanization in India, there is an increase in overall development in the different sectors. Due to this, the Seven Mission Program was founded. This program aims to fund cities to achieve intended milestones.

The Seven Mission Program includes the following plans:

- 100 Smart Cities Mission
- AMRUT stands for 'Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation'
- HRIDAY (National Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana)
- Sardar Patel National Urban Housing mission
- National Mission on sustainable habitat
- Clean India mission
- National urban information system

The better and efficient management of cities can have multiple impacts on the economy, society and development of the country. This would lead to allocation of resources in right direction and will ease up the situation for the people and government as well.

SPEEDY PROCESS OF URBANISATION (BENEFITS AND ISSUES)

BENEFITS

- Ongoing rapid urbanisation has the potential to improve the well-being of societies.

- Although only around half the world's people live in cities, they generate more than 80 percent of Global Domestic Product (GDP).

- Cities are also younger: home to relatively more young and working-age adults than rural areas, making them pivotal places to capture demographic dividends.

- Around the world cities are introducing initiatives aimed at addressing poverty, improving infrastructure and tackling pollution.

ISSUES

- Urbanization also presents many human development challenges. It is estimated that nearly 40 percent of the world's urban expansion may be in slums, exacerbating economic disparities and unsanitary conditions.

- Rapid urbanization is also linked to environmental concerns and many cities located in coastal areas or on river banks may also be vulnerable to natural disasters such as storms, cyclones and floods. Likewise, poor urban infrastructure - such as unreliable power systems, congested roads and poor public transport, inefficient ports and inadequate schools - reduces cities' competitiveness and economic prospects.

- There is, however, no one-size-fits-all urban strategy. Urban policy priorities and choices depend on a variety of factors - including the scale, speed and source of urbanisation, the size of cities and the stage of urban development.

- More than 1 billion people live in housing that is below minimum standards of comfort and sanitation, and new houses will have to be built for 3 billion people by 2030.

- More industrial activity causing more water pollution. Like the water quality of Noida degraded. Rapid urbanization is creating a threat to biodiversity. Deforestation, communication tower radiation is severely causing harm to birds and other creatures.

Investing in essential infrastructure propels growth and human development. There has been some progress in narrowing the infrastructure deficit in recent decades, but much more needs to be done. Good planning and sound management is needed to manage this. National and local governments need to become more strategic in responding to the full range of challenges and opportunities posed by rapid urbanisation. This can be done by formulating a national urbanisation strategy as a first step to help to identify urban development priorities, shape plans and better coordinate actions by all the actors involved, including the private sector.

GROWTH OF CITIES AS IT HUBS (BENEFITS AND ISSUES)

According to the Economic Survey of India 2019-20, The IT-BPO sector of India contributed nearly 162 billion USD (2018-19) to the economy of India. The IT hubs located in the cities like Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Noida, Gurgaon, and Pune emerged India as an epicenter of IT industries and eventually opened up new avenues of employment.

BENEFITS

- Shifting duties of industries to meet the overseas clients increased the number of recruitment.

- Several other small industries got benefited from the IT industries i.e. facility management, third party security provider, Maintenance, accommodation, construction industries, etc.

- Skill providing institutions, automobile industry, and e-commerce industry received a boost indirectly.

ISSUES

- Due to concentration of IT companies only in few cities, urban population swelled leading to endless traffic jams, over-crowded public transport, etc.

- The cities are booming with malls, shops and offices of multinational companies, but completely lacks the infrastructure to support this growth.

- Led to the compact growth at central core areas of cities and sprawl at outskirts which are deprived of basic amenities.

- Infrastructural issues related to new construction sites other than the main area.

- Lack of adequate public transport, Increased reliance on private transport Increased pollution, carbon footprint.

- Incoherent planning and ad hoc solution, Rapid urban crawl Contributes to increasing social tension.

- Issues regarding safety and security of women are increasing.

Planning plays an important role when it comes to sustainable living in urban areas. There is a need to create better living areas that cater to the employed section such as IT that can translate into better work efficiency.

For any city to handle large crowds especially from IT, there needs to be properly developed infrastructure consisting of residential hubs, transport etc so that urbanisation can be better handled.

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EFFECTS OF GLOBALISATION

Introduction

Globalization is a significant factor in competitive world that integrate and mobilize cultural values of people at global level. In the age of rapid technical progression, many countries are unified and transformed due to the process of globalization. Globalization has a huge impact on cultural, social, monetary, political, and communal life of countries. Globalization powerfully influences the social partners' attitudes since traditional labour relations have to cope with completely new and very dynamic situations. In political field, globalization helps to eradicate poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy, ill-health and fighting cross border terrorism and global terrorism. The social structure and construction has been changing due to these modern phenomena. Industrialization and Globalization are always focusing on industrial investment and economic growth process. Today is a global world. Globalization is process of nation prosperity and progress as per the current trend. Globalization is a series of social, economic, technological, cultural, and political changes occur in all the stages of society. It mainly focused on the consequences and effects of urbanization, modernization and globalization process with context to an Indian society.

Definition

Globalization is the spread of products, technology, information, and jobs across national borders and cultures. In economic terms, it describes an interdependence of nations around the globe fostered through free trade.

Globalization is a social, cultural, political, and legal phenomenon.

Factors Aiding globalisation

- Improved transport: making global travel easier. For example, there has been a rapid growth in air travel, enabling greater movement of people and goods across the globe.

- Containerisation: From 1970, there was a rapid adoption of the steel transport container. This reduced the costs of inter-modal transport, making trade cheaper and more efficient.

- Improved technology: which makes it easier to communicate and share information around the world. E.g. internet. For example, to work on improvements on this website, I will go to a global online community, like elance.com. There, people from any country can bid for the right to provide a service. It means that I can often find people to do a job relatively cheaply because labour costs are relatively lower in the Indian sub-continent.

- Growth of multinational companies: with a global presence in many different economies.

- Growth of global trading blocks which have reduced national barriers. (e.g. European Union, NAFTA, ASEAN).

- Reduced tariff barriers which encourage global trade. Often this has occurred through the support of the WTO.

- Growth of global media.

- Global trade cycle: Economic growth is global in nature. This means countries are increasingly interconnected. (e.g. recession in one country affects global trade and invariably causes an economic downturn in major trading partners.)

- Financial system increasingly global in nature: When US banks suffered losses due to the sub-

prime mortgage crisis, it affected all major banks in other countries who had bought financial derivatives from US banks and mortgage companies.

- Improved mobility of capital: In the past few decades, there has been a general reduction in capital barriers, making it easier for capital to flow between different economies. This has increased the ability for firms to receive finance. It has also increased the global interconnectedness of global financial markets.

- Increased mobility of labour: People are more willing to move between different countries in search for work. Global trade remittances now play a large role in transfers from developed countries to developing countries.

- Internet: This enables firms to communicate on a global level, this may overcome managerial diseconomies of scale. The firm may be able to get cheaper supplies by dealing with a wider choice of firms. Consumers are also able to order more goods online E.G. Dell Computers takes orders online and can meet customer specifications.

- Cross-border political influence: Governments have formulated polices that facilitate cross-border trade and influence. For example, there is growing influence of China especially in Africa where China is offering long-term loans to countries. Zambia is a key example where China virtually took over operations at the international airport. This shows that developed countries are positioning themselves to influence political and economic developments in developing countries.

- Intense competition: With intense competition among firms, firms are looking for new markets across borders. In some sectors such as news media, there is competition from any corner of the world. Information is readily accessible from both local and foreign news firms thus forcing firms to keep innovating in order to remain competitive and/or survive. Due to intense competition, firms are now searching for foreign markets.

Impact of Globalisation

Globalization has both positive and negative effects all through the globe. May it be business, trade, and work exposure or the economic and financial status of the nation; no field is deserted from the scope of globalization. As every coin has two sides likewise globalization also has its positive and negative effects.

Economic impacts

Positive

- Trade Boom, import-export Boom that helps in capitalising the initial benefits of open and free markets world over.

- Global food chain of restaurants presents different options in front of people. They bring culture and traditions along with them.

- Increased inflow of cheap men, Money, labour, material, technology etc which will help in industrial and economic prosperity of the nation.

- Market expansion with the entry of foreign players that makes market more competitive.

- Growth of software industry, which eventually helps in employment generation and will aid economic as well as technological advancement.

- Greater access to quality goods and services makes human life more pleasant.

- Greater access to global markets with the help of various means of transportation.

- Access to global capital resources Via stock markets, bond yields, fund markets.

- Protection of IPR through different legal routes.

- Shifting economics from primary to secondary, tertiary sectors

- Ending disguised unemployment.

- Growth of organised retail chain that helps in timely and efficient delivery.

- Increased competition thus greater consumer right protection, high quality low cost products.

Negative

- Rich poor divide will be more strigent.

- Ethical responsibility of business diminished, as they can divert the claims and blame one another for the problems occured.

- Tribes were unable to integrate in the overall process of developement and thus industrial expansion led to land alienation, loss of livelihood.

- High growth but problem of unemployment wont decrease with time.

- Native industries of developing and underdeveloped countries badly affected.

- Public Sector Industries suffered and it led to privatization .

- Uneven growth- Regional Disparities.

- More inflow of money lead to corruption.

Cultural impact

Language

- People become multilingual and bilingual

- Some languages got world wide recognition due to easily available literary material.

- Revival of languages as they got new base of speakers.

- Importance of english increase and other languages decreased.

- Extinction of some languages examples Sanskrit Gothic tribal etc. traditional languages suffer more in the wave of globalisation.

- Knowledge expressed in traditional language got extinct Music dance etc

- Many Foreign musical instruments influenced the music

- Indian classical music got worldwide recognition

- Foreign movies and Indian movie industry

- Fusion of Indian and western art forms (Pandit Ravishankar and Norah Jones)

- Marginalization of traditional and folk art forms

- Tribal music nearly got extinct.

- Encroachment of consumerism had further deteriorated the traditional art forms and lost its purity.

Food and dress

- Foreign brands

- Foreign dressing style and costumes

- Distinction between male and female dressing is blurred

- Food and dress habits are Internationalized

- Indian cuisine got worldwide recognition and attracted tourism

- Flooding of Western fast food has lead to cardiovascular diseases and obesity.

Religion

- New religion like Christianity, Judaism entered

- New Global values to religion

- Global citizenship

Festivals

- New western festivals like valentine's day, Friendship Day etc

- Importance of traditional festivals decreased

- Sacred component of festivals got decreased and festivals are being celebrated as fashion

- Societies are losing our social morals and ideals and happy moments of harmony and peace. The present age generation is glad observing Valentine's Day and friendship day than Holi and Diwali. Traditionally namaste, namaskar or touching of feet of elders is a common way of greeting in the Indian subcontinent. But in modern times 'Hi', 'Hello' is used to greet people in place of Namaskar.

Social impact

Positive

- Institution of marriage changes with the advent of love marriages

- Inter religious and inter caste marriages are increased

- End of disguised employment within a joint family

- Literacy rate increased substantially.

- Foreign university tie ups which opens new avenues of education.

- Scientific and technological innovations and supports are easily accessible and promoted .

- Extension of internet facilities to rural areas and thus rural awareness

- Improved quality of education with the help of technology.

- People shifting from unorganised to organised sector

- Caste system weakened with awareness through education.

- Social taboos weakened

- Growth of self selected culture

- Changing people's outlook and life style

Negative

- Rural urban divide will Increase.

- Migration and urbanization

- Extreme mechanization has reduced the demand for manual labour

- Child labour has been increased as demand for cheap labour increased.

- Increasing health care cost has burdened the middle and lower class.

- Health and emotional vulnerability of old and handicapped people as advent of social media makes people more self centric.

- Commercialisation of education which is not having a soul or aim to

- Pressure on children to compete in globalised world

- Emphasis on grades

- Nuclear families

- Rise of daycare centres and consequently losing the control over children

- Family cease to be the unit of production

- Voice and decision making power of elders in family decreased

- Divorce rate increased

- Marriage institution changed from sacred thread to Civil contract

- Live in relationships

- Mcdonaldization and walmartization

- Small size, heterogeneous groups, money are a center of family, generation gap, secondary relationship

- Globalization has given the birth to marginalization.

Political impact

- Political participation

- Awareness about voting

- Pressure groups become more influential

- Accountability and transparency

- International obligations and finances

- Crony capitalism

- Criminalisation of politics

- Organised crime with political support increased

Environmental impact

- Awareness and concerns increased

- Funding and Technology for mitigation and adaptation

- Global best practices in conservation
    - Over exploitation of resources from Low developed countries
    - Dumping ground of West
    - Consumerism increased along with use and throw culture
    - Trade of illegal species and objects increased

On vulnerable sections

- Increased job opportunities
- Growth in self confidence and bargaining power
- Change in people's attitude and approach against orthodox traditions
- Decreased discrimination and growing equality
- Spread of new ideas of growth
- Increase in Human resource organisations
- Decrease in exploitation
- Marginalisation in to informal sector due to lack of skills
- Loss of traditional source of income
- Commodification or objectification of women
- Increasing incidences of crime

Family Structure, Marriage System and Values

- Expansion of nuclear families and missing persistence to get balanced into the joint family
- Kids have begun treating grandparents like visitors or guests, and such upbringing of children is one of the principle reasons of expanding old-age homes.
- Men and women are gaining equal right to education, to earn, and to articulate.
- Marriages in comparison to earlier times have lost their values and morality. As number of separation cases, divorce cases and extra-marital affairs are increasing. Today marriage resembles an expert bond or a purported pledge to share existence without bargaining their self-interests.
- The sense of self factor into the Indian youth is a result of globalization.
- Inter-caste marriages with totally different social systems are increasing.

Education Sector

- Globalisation like higher literacy rate and foreign universities collaborating with different Indian universities.
- The Indian academic system faces challenges of globalisation through info-technology although it offers opportunities to evolve new paradigms shifts in developmental education.
- Globalization promotes new tools and techniques such as E-learning, flexible learning, distance education programs and overseas training programs.

Indian Business Culture

- Indian organizations have embraced international accounting standards, Just-in-time and other more effective methods of stock control, flexitime and new practices of human asset administration, social duty and business morals thoughts, improvement in corporate governance practices, customer relationship management practices, inflow of outside assets and healthy competition with foreign products.

- The effect of globalization has changed the business system in India in terms of psychology, approach, innovation, attitude, work culture and so on.

- As a consequence of globalisation Indian industries are adapting themselves to newer challenges and taking benefit from the new and better opportunities making their business all the more profitable with prospects of future growth.

- Urbanisation is on the rise and people of rural areas preferring to shift to urban areas, agriculture workers shifting to industry sector, trade market getting opened, boom in international import and export, big open saturated market for products, a growing market for high quality and low price product, gradual increase of organized retail chain, growing range of merger and acquisitions and lucid license policies for overseas multinational corporation.

IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON INFORMAL SECTOR

- Informal Sector includes the large and amorphous category called the self-employed, daily wage laborers, as also those who are salaried employees but do not have job security, wage revisions and other benefits.

- Globalization often leads to shifts from secure self-employment to more precarious self-employment, as producers and traders lose their market niche.

- Globalization tends to benefit large companies which can move quickly and easily across borders but posses disadvantage to labour, especially lower-skilled workers that cannot migrate easily or at all. This puts a pressure on low skilled workers and petty producers by weakening their bargaining power and subjecting them to enhanced competition.

- As more and more men enter the informal economy, women tend to be pushed to the lowest income end of the informal economy.

- Thus, globalization of the economy tends to reinforce the links between poverty, informality, and gender.

- But globalization can also lead to new opportunities for those who work in the informal economy in the form of new jobs for wageworkers or new markets for the self-employed.

- There has been a radical restructuring of production and distribution in many key areas characterized by outsourcing or subcontracting through global commodity chains. The net result is that more and more workers are being paid very low wages and many of them have to absorb the non-wage costs of production.

IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON WOMEN IN INDIA

Positive Impacts

- Prospects of higher and quality education have become feasible for those women who can afford them, economically and socially.

- Employment in technological and other advanced sectors, which have global bearing, has opened up for suitably qualified women.

- With changing attitude towards women, especially in the urban areas, women enjoy more egalitarian set of gender relationship.

- Augmentation of women's movements through exposures at the international level will help bring about major changes in the economic, social and political lives of women.

- Reduction in gender inequalities will have positive effect on women's empowerment in the socio-economic context.

- Attitudinal changes towards women's role in the family due to good education, benefits of family planning and health care, child care, good job opportunities etc. will surely help in the development of more confident and healthy women.

- Positive approach to economic and cultural migration will facilitate women to be exposed to better prospects at the international level.

Negative Impacts

- The traditional role of women in agriculture, livestock and animal husbandry, Khadi and village industries including handicrafts, handlooms fisheries, etc, is being undermined because mechanization and automation is becoming prevalent in the market based economy which will adversely affect the village based traditional economy.

- Privatisation and reduction of public services will reduce regular employment opportunities for women.

- Globalisation has increased the number of low paid, part-time and exploitative jobs.

- Occupational sex segregation will be a stark reality in the open economy. This will tend to result in worse working condition, lower pay and inferior career opportunities.

- Curtailment of state provisions in child care, community care and social security, will increase the dual burden of employment and family responsibilities for women in general.

- With male migration on the increase from the rural to urban sectors, the women have to bear the triple burden of caring, farming and paid employment in the rural sector.

- In the neo liberal work practices, contract work, unsocial hours of work,, cooperative practices, payment by result make it very difficult for women to cope with their multiple responsibilities.

- With the disappearing social and financial safety nets and government subsidy, the poverty alleviation programmes, universal education, and woman oriented health programmes will be adversely affected.

- Trade liberalisation will allow MNCS to enter into food processing and other feminised industries which will lead to reduction in low skilled women labour.

- Privatisation of education and training will increase the cost of getting educated. When family budgets are readjusted, the female children will be the main casualty because most of the resources will be spent to educate the male children.

- Migration of women specially for economic reasons often give rise to exploitation and trafficking in women at the local, regional and global levels.

- Open market economy leads to price rise in food and other basic necessities. Women who have to directly deal with family subsistence have to cope with such changes.

IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON YOUTH

Positive Impact

- Global teenager: In addition to the dynamic, global, economic forces effecting India, globalization has brought change to India's culture. They see themselves as global teenagers. The younger generation is embracing western popular culture and incorporating it into their Indian identity. There is a subtle and powerful hybridization of western and Indian values – particularly evident among Indian youth. It has a huge impact on their personal as well as professional life.

- Cultural change: Present day youth, with its more materialistic ambitions and more globally informed opinions, are gradually abandoning the austere ways and restricted traditional Indian markets. Youth demand a more cosmopolitan society that is a full-fledged member of the global economy.

- Attitude towards religion: Most religious activities are becoming irrelevant to the youth. They want to see changes in religion. They are not internalizing traditional ideas; rather, they are merely tolerating them. Though they do find some indirect value with religion.

NEGATIVE IMPACT

- Increased urban poverty: Economic globalization has led to increased urban poverty as people move from the rural areas to the cities in search of opportunity. Youth make up the large majority of urban migrants. But youth face a high level of unemployment in urban centres.

- Consumerist attitude towards life: Consumerism has permeated and changed the traditional beliefs and practices of the Indian people. The younger poor population is particularly susceptible to the allure of expensive products seen in advertisements and when they cannot respond to these ads, they get frustrated.

- Status of youth in family: Globalization also is changing family institutions, and the nuclear family is increasingly the norm. Youth are not as close to their grandparents as were earlier generations and spend less time with the older generation resulting in loss of wisdom handed down from generation to generation.

- Increased cases of depression and suicide: Globalization has led to an increase in uncertainty among youth; this underlying instability may serve to magnify the tensions and lack of control they experience on a daily basis. Uncertainty is because of the breakdown of traditional norms, weakening of social relations like that of family and marriage, uncertainty in career due to market economy.

GLOBAL v/s LOCAL DEBATE

When it comes to understanding globalization versus localization, knowing the differences between the two is crucial. While globalization is the process of ensuring the content can meet multiple markets, localization is the process of guaranteeing your resources are focused on the requirements of one specific audience.

When it comes to looking at the differences between the two, there are three key factors to remember :

- Localization is the process of focusing on a specific culture, location, or audience. Globalization is

the process of looking at multiple cultures, locations, or audiences.

- Localization is a part of the wider globalization process, whereas globalization forms part of your overall business strategy.

- Globalization is often part of a larger long-term business strategy, while localization is often used for more short-term actions.

Pros and cons of globalization

- Globalization is able to provide businesses with a wide range of benefits, helping them to reach a far greater audience. Not only can this help to increase revenue by expanding your customer base, but it is also able to significantly enhance your overall brand reputation and global image. This, in turn, can help to decrease dependence on a single market, ensuring your business is more resilient in the face of economic challenges.

- However, globalization can be a very time-consuming process and does require additional resources alongside the many challenges of expanding a business.

Pros and cons of localization

- If you are looking to enter specific new markets, then localization is essential in helping to facilitate this. It can help to create significant brand loyalty from customers, improving their overall experience with your company. By building loyal customers, you will be able to increase revenue and secure a more competitive advantage in that market.

- Just like globalization, localization does require significant investment in terms of time and resources. If not done correctly, it can also have a negative impact on your brand image, so it is always recommended you work with a professional partner who can help you.

For successful localization, you should find a balance between your global brand and the local versions that you create for each target market. It's easier when dealing with countries that share a common cultural background, and gets more complicated when you approach nations with a different vision of life.

Finding reliable partners and tools – e.g. a translation management system, among other things – to guide you through your globalization campaign can help speed up the process and increase the return on your marketing efforts.

GLOCALISATION

Glocalisation is the combination of the words 'globalisation' and 'localisation'. It's a term that's used to describe a type of business that has been seeing more and more growth: a type of business that's distributed globally, but adjusted to meet local needs as well.

Glocalization is business term for the adaptation of a product or service specifically to each locality or culture in which it is sold. It is similar to internationalization. Glocalization serves as a means of combining the idea of globalization with that of local considerations. In other words it is the integration of the global market with the local market. Many developing countries are both integrating with the world economy and devolving power to local governments and communities. This combination of globalization and localization is best called glocalization. The centralized nation-state is giving way to both supra-national and sub-national institutions.

There is an increasing tendency towards 'glocalization' of culture which refers to the mixing of the global with the local culture. This "cultural homogenization" is witnessed in sectors like :

Food/ Dietary: Macdonaldisation i. e. homogenisation of taste and suppression of diversity in flavour.

Purchasing habit: Walmartisation i.e. promotion of consumerism , artificial needs Thought Process: Westoxication i.e. blind imitation of western culture , sense of inferiority.

Language: emphasis of English as lingua franca.

Society: Liberal ideas of individualism are permeating the Indian society; nuclear families; live-in relationships are proliferating;

Culture: Popularity of Hollywood movies, Bhangra pop, Indi pop, etc. are some of the homogenizing influences of globalization on Indian society. However, globalization is not simply about homogenization, but it is also strengthening cultural specificities in India. Indian classical dance and music has got fillip in the recent years with the efforts of organization like SPIC MACAY and others. Local customs, and festivals are being observed by some tribal groups, especially in North-east India more zealously than before.

The Indian culture has also spread its impact globally. Yoga traditions and practices are not only being practiced by Indians, but people across the globe are embracing them.

Indian system of Ayurveda is being promoted by a large section of society in the backdrop of the ills of western system of medicine and cure. Thus, relationship between globalisation and culture is complex with each impacting the other. The above examples indeed prove that cultural specificities appear to be strengthened in the Indian society.

With the increasing glocalization we are making the local market available for global control. Local community are sometimes are not satisfied with global orientation of product and services. sometimes, it is an essential thing that local requirements are taken care rather of global standards. therefore too much integration with the global market may lead to the problems with local community. Glocalization is neccessary to some extent because it presents a potential response meant to offer protection against the more negative effects of globalization.

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COMMUNALISM

INTRODUCTION

Communalism has been described as a sectarian exploitation of social traditions as a medium of political mobilization. This is done to punish the interests of the entrenched groups. Thus, communalism is an ideology used to fulfil socio-eco-politico hopes of a community. It requires proposals and programmes to ensure its very existence. These become active in phases of social change. Communalism arose in India during its colonial phase. Communal politicises it strategies on religion and tradition. The interpretation of history is for purposes of mobilisation. Communal organisations have little room for democracy. Secondly they may also involve racist contrasts and perpetrate the same. Communalism is therefore a belief system and social phenomenon.

Concept and Definition of Communalism

Communalism, in a broad sense means a strong attachment to one's own community. In India, it is understood as unhealthy attachment to one's own religion.

It's an ideology that, in order to unify the community, suppresses distinctions within the community and emphasizes the essential unity of the community against other communities.

In this way it promotes belief in orthodox tenets and principles, intolerance and hatred of other religions and thus, divides the society.

Positive aspect of communalism stands for the affinity of an individual towards his own community involving efforts for the social and economic upliftment of his community.

However, in negative connotation, it is an ideology which emphasises the separate identity of a religious group in relation to other groups with a tendency to promote its own interests at the expense of the others.

Characteristics/Nature/Features of Communalism

i)   It is more politically motivated than fuelled by religion.

ii) Besides political interests, economic interests also play a vital role in fermenting communal clashes.

iii) The probability of recurrence of communalism in a town where communal riots have already taken place once or twice is stronger than in a town when such riots have never occurred.

iv) Most of the times communalism pops up on the occasion of religious festivals.

Historical Background of Communalism

For centuries, the Hindus and Muslims in India had lived in peace and harmony. Before the advent of the British, religion and religious community had no political salience. The society was divided into the ruling class and the subject class. It was the British who accentuated the religious and cultural differences between the communities and tried to pit one against the other. They maliciously designated the entire period from 1200 AD to 1757 AD as the period of Muslim rule over the Hindus Moreover, the European historians portrayed this long period as one of the subjugation and oppression of the Hindus. Thus, after the Battle of Plassey in 1757, they claimed that the British rule was a Divine Providence for the Hindus as it had delivered them from the tyranny of the Muslim rulers. The accentuation of the religious and cultural differences between the Hindus and Muslims and the consolidation of separate communal identities were aided not only by the aggressive religious revivalist movements during the nineteenth century but also by the deliberate British policy of

promoting one community and downgrading the other, particularly after the Revolt of 1857. After the failure of the Revolt, the Hindus had taken full advantage of opportunities of modern education and employment created by the British and improved their lot whereas the Muslims followed a policy of aloofness from the British and suffered from degradation and backwardness. The huge imbalance created between the two communities was one of the reasons for the alienation of Muslims from the Indian National Congress. When the British saw a challenge to their supremacy from the growing nationalism of the Hindu middle class, they applied the traditional policy of divide-and-rule and the counterpoise of the natives by the natives. The grant of certain safeguards (separate electorate and weightage) to the Muslim community under the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 began a new era of Hindu-Muslim conflict as the majority community considered any gain of the minority community as the loss of the majority. A measure of the Hindu-Muslim political unity and cooperation was brought about by the Congress-League Lucknow Pact of 1916 and the Khilafat and Noncooperation Movement, the movement that had joined together the Khilafat Committee, the Muslim League, the Jamiat-ul-Ulama and the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. However, the collapse of the Khilafat and Noncooperation Movement, the growth of extremist politics and a series of Hindu-Muslim skirmishes on petty issues embittered the inter-community relations. A turning-point in Indian politics came with the Montague Declaration of 1917 which changed the approach of the majority towards the minority entirely as became evident later with the abandonment by the Motilal Nehru Committee Report (1928) of the Congress-League pact of 1916. Then came the next crucial phase in 1937 when the Indian National Congress won the first general elections held for the provincial legislative assemblies under the Government of India Act, 1935. Its steadfast and outright refusal to take the minority party into its ministries heralded an era of full-fledged Congress-League confrontation and consequently, the worsening of Hindu-Muslim relations. It was perhaps at this stage that the term communalism was coined to describe the inter-party and inter-community antagonism. During the period 1937-1947 no efforts could lead to an inter-party understanding and a communal settlement. As a result, India got independence with the Partition of the country in 1947.

TYPES OF COMMUNALISM

Welfarist communalism aims at the welfare of a particular community, say, improving living standard and providing for education and health of Christians by the Christian associations, or Parsi associations working for the uplift of the Parsis. Such communal mobilization aims at working only for the members of one's own community.

Retreatist communalism is one in which a small religious community keeps itself away from politics; for example, Bahai community, which proscribes its members from participating in political activities. Retaliatory communalism attempts to harm, hurt, injure the members of other religious communities.

Separatist communalism is one in which one religious or a cultural group wants to maintain its cultural specificity and demands a separate territorial state within the country, for example, the demand of some Mizos and Nagas in northeast India or Bodos in Assam, or of Jharkhand tribals in Bihar, or of Gorkhas for Gorkhaland in West Bengal, or of hill people for Uttarakhand in Uttar Pradesh, or of Vidarbha in Maharashtra.

Lastly, **secessionist communalism** is one in which a religious community wants a separate political identity, and demands an independent state. A very small militant section of Sikh population de-manding Khalistan or some Muslim militants demanding independent Kashmir were engaged in practising this type of communalism. Of these six types of communalism, the last three create problems engendering agitations, communal riots, terrorism, and insurgency.

Causes of Communalism

The main forces, which have encouraged the growth of communalism in contemporary India, are:

- Economic backwardness of the religious communities

- Growth of communal parties and organisations

- Electoral compulsions of political parties

- Communal media, literature and text-books

- Separatism and isolation religious communities

- Hindu and Muslim revivalist movements

- Rise of communal and fundamentalist parties.

Consequences of Communalism

Jawaharlal Nehru once described communalism as the Indian version of fascism. He said, while all communalism is bad, we must remember that minority communalism is born out of fear, while majority communalism takes the form of political reaction to assert dominance. But he added: 'there could be no compromise on the issue of communalism, Hindu communalism or Muslim communalism, as it is a challenge to Indian nationhood and Indian nationalism.

- It causes hatred among different religious sections in the society and disrupts the peaceful social fabric of our society.

- Communal riots often break out in many parts of the country and damge the social fabric which take more time to repair.

- Economic growth can take place only in environment of peace and tranquillity, communalism creates an atmosphere of intolerance and violence which would impede the flow of goods and capital.

- The flow of labour from productive activities is diverted to unproductive activities; there is massive destruction of public properties to spread the ideology. The investment attitude towards the country from foreign investor would be cautiousness; they tend to avoid the countries with highly communal country, for not take the risk of end up losing their investment.

- Voters generally vote on communal lines. After getting elected, the representatives try to safeguard the interests of their community and ignore national interests. These conditions hinder the progress of democracy in the country

- Due to prevalent communalism in the society individuals are never at peace and a spiritual powerhouse India seems to lose its charm.

Long and short term perspective measures to deal with communalism

Measures to meet the challenge of communalism and communal violence can be of two types: long-term and short-term.

The long-term measures are:

- In initiating the process of de-communalising the people at all levels, say, by bringing home to them that communal assumptions are false, by explaining to them the socio-economic and political roots of communalism.

- Communalisation of the state and of the political elite has to be checked because it leads to inaction against communal violence and covert or overt political and ideological support to communalism by the state apparatus.

- The communalisation of civil society also needs to be checked because it leads to riots that are more communal. People with communal ideas and ideologies pressurize the government to act in a manner, which is always against the principles of secularism.

- The role of education, particularly emphasizing on value oriented education both in schools and colleges is important in preventing communal feelings.

- The media can also prove to be significant in preventing communal feelings. Communal press can be banned and legal action can be taken against communal writers.

- Abolition of Communal Parties in our Country: In our country, the political parties are mainly responsible for promoting communalism under the veil of various religious and cultural organisations. The Government should keep a vigilant eye on them and, if found detrimental to the interest of the nation, should abolish them.

- Transmission of the Past Heritage: Attempts should be made to remind the countrymen those glorious moments of history in which the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were combined to safeguard the interest of the nation. This will inspire our countrymen with nationalist zeal.

- Inter-religious marriage: In order to have close contact among various communities, youth organisations should be formed in every locality in which young people belonging to different communities can get a scope to come in contact with each other and work together in different developmental programmes. That apart associations of other kinds may also be constituted to give opportunity to people of every community to come closer and know each other. This may help them to practise inter-religious marriages. Inter-religious marriages will lessen the social distance among the members of different religious groups.

- Declaration of National Festivals: The most widely observed festivals of every community should be declared as national festivals, as a result of which members of every religious group will have a chance to take part and have mutual contact and thereby communal harmony can be promoted. Notwithstanding the different methods of eradication or mitigation of communal conflict, what is really needed is a concerted effort of both, the government as well as the people. The combined effort of the institutional as well as attitudinal change can only bring the desired result.

Some immediate measures are imperative for containing communalism and communal riots:

- Peace committees can be set up in which individuals belonging to different religious communities can work together to spread goodwill and fellow feelings and remove feelings of fear and hatred in the riot affected areas. 314 Social Work Intervention with Individuals and Groups

- The state has to plan and use new strategies in dealing with communal violence. Whenever strong and secular administrators have used or threatened the use of strong steps, riots either did not occur or were of short duration.

- The role of media is immensely highlighted during the course of communal violence. The fear and hatred can be checked if the press, radio and TV report the events in a way conducive to soothing the frayed nerves of people instead of inflaming the temper further.

- Lastly, the government in power has to treat the extremist communal outfits as its immediate

targets and cripple their capacity to disrupt law and order. The secessionists in Kashmir, the militants in Punjab, the ISS now banned in Kerala and other extremist organisations of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communalism have to be dealt with by the state through its law and order machinery.

- **Healthy Public Opinion:** People should be appealed through mass media for changing their attitude towards other communities. Communal propaganda in any form should be banned.

Religiosity and Communalism (Transition and comparison)

Religiosity

Religiosity is as old as the religion and civilization itself. It can be found throughout the world. Religiosity is concerned with the worship of God. A person usually engage in religiosity to seek help of a supernatural power to solve his problems. Religiosity is the human response to those elements in the life and environment which are beyond his ordinary comprehension.

Religiosity by default is not associated with violence, unless the religious tenants themselves require human or animal sacrifice.

Communalism

Communalism is a newer phenomenon compared to religiosity. It was born during the colonial times, when the British used religious contrasts among different communities to rule over them. Communalism is a belief system and a social phenomenon wherein, history is interpreted for mobilization of people. It involves the use of sacred symbols, religious leaders, emotional appeal and plain fear in order to bring the followers of one religion together in the political arena. Secularism and egalitarianism are portrayed as abnormal. People belonging to other faith and religion are portrayed as antagonists. In Communalism the religious identity overrides everything else. Anyone who doesn't share this identity can be attacked verbally or physically. When communalism escalates into communal riots, people become faceless members of their respective communities. They are willing to kill, rape, and loot members of other communities in order to redeem their pride, to protect their home turf or avenge the death of dishonour suffered by their co-religionists elsewhere or even in the distant past.

Communalism needs to be denounced by political leaders and all leading citizens. Measures should be taken for raising the economic lot of the minority community; About all overall ethos should be created which leads to peace between communities and an end to communal violence. Community leaders should explain the situation to the community and defuse tensions.

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REGIONALISM

INTRODUCTION

To understand regionalism, we need to know various dimensions of the region. Region as a geographical unit, is delimited form each other. Region as a social system, reflects the relation between different human beings and groups. Regions are an organized cooperation in cultural, economic, political or military fields. Region acts as a subject with distinct identity, language, culture and tradition. Regionalism is an ideology and political movement that seeks to advance the causes of regions. As a process it plays role within the nation as well as outside the nation i.e. at international level. Both types of regionalism have different meaning and have positive as well as negative impact on society, polity, diplomacy, economy, security, culture, development, negotiations, etc. At the international level, regionalism refers to transnational cooperation to meet a common goal or to resolve a shared problem or it refers to a group of countries such as Western Europe, or Southeast Asia, linked by geography, history or economic features. Used in this sense, regionalism refers to attempts to reinforce the links between these countries economic features. The second meaning of the term is regionalism at national level refers to a process in which sub-state actors become increasingly powerful, power devolves from central level to regional governments. These are the regions within country, distinguished in culture, language and other socio-cultural factors.

Concept and Definition of Regionalism

Regionalism is the expression of a common sense of identity and purpose by people within a specific geographical region, united by its unique language, culture, language, etc. In a positive sense, it encourages people to develop a sense of brotherhood and oneness which seeks to protect the interests of a particular region and promotes the welfare and development of the state and its people. In the negative sense, it implies excessive attachment to one's region which is a great threat to the unity and integrity of the country.

In the Indian context generally, the term 'regionalism' has been used in the negative sense.

Various Forms of Regionalism

Regionalism, properly so called.

It is the first and most legitimate kind of regionalism which is often in the form of the demand of a separate space or state of one's own, for the purpose of resting securely within the Union of India. This was spearheaded by the Telugu-speaking residents of the erstwhile Madras Presidency. The forms of protest it involved were attacks on state property, and the hunger-fast, most definitively in the case of Potti Sriramulu, who in 1952 died after not eating for 52 days, his death leading, in the short term and as a result of this, the creation of the state of Andhra Pradesh and, later redrawing of the map of India on linguistic lines took place.

Parochialism

Another form of regionalism has been termed as parochialism. This can be benevolent, as in evident in form or pretensions of the Bengali Bhadralok, who claim that their literature, music, dress and cuisine are superior to others in India. However, sometimes it has also taken the form of blood shade, as evident in the attacks on Bihari labourers by the Ulfa cadre, in which the belief rests that only Assamese speakers have the right to live in Assam.

Secessionism from the Indian Union

It can be classified as the most violent and dangerous form of regionalism as it is based on the desire,

or hope, or fantasy, to divide the Republic of India and form a separate nation of one's own. The movement of Khalistan, spearheaded by the Sikh extremists during 1980s also hoped to form their own nation-state. In fact, even the Dravidian movement for many years demanded a separate nation out of India.

Inter State Disputes

Another form of regionalism in India has found expression in the form of Interstate disputes. There is a dispute over Chandigarh between Punjab and Haryana. There are boundary disputes, for example, between Maharashtra and Karnataka on Belgaun, where the Marathi speaking population is surrounded by Kannada speaking people between Karnataka and Kerala on Kasargod and several other border areas between Assam and Nagaland on Rangma reserved forests in Ram Pagani area.

REGIONALISM IN INDIA: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Roots of regionalism is in India's manifold diversity of languages, cultures, ethnic groups, communities, religions and so on, and encouraged by the regional concentration of those identity markers, and fueled by a sense of regional deprivation. For many centuries, India remained the land of many lands, regions, cultures and traditions. For instance, southern India (the home of Dravidian cultures), which is itself a region of many regions, is evidently different from the north, the west, the central and the northeast. Even the east of India is different from the North-East of India comprising today seven constituent units of Indian federation with the largest concentration of tribal people.

Regionalism has remained perhaps the most potent force in Indian politics ever since independence (1947), if not before. It has remained the main basis of many regional political parties which have governed many states since the late 1960s. Three clear patterns can be identified in the post-independence phases of accommodation of regional identity through statehood.

First, in the 1950s and 1960s, intense (ethnic) mass mobilisation, often taking on a violent character, was the main force behind the state's response with an institutional package for statehood. Andhra Pradesh in India's south showed the way. The fast unto death in 1952 of the legendary (Telugu) leader Potti Sriramulu for a state for the Telegu speakers out of the composite Madras Presidency moved an otherwise reluctant Jawaharlal Nehru, a top nationalist leader and it was followed by State reorganization commission under Fazal Ali paving way for State Reorganization Act, 1956.

Second, in the 1970s and 1980s, the main focus of reorganization was India's North-east. The basis of reorganization was tribal insurgency for separation and statehood. The main institutional response of the Union government was the North-eastern States Reorganization Act, 1971 which upgraded the Union Territories of Manipur and Tripura, and the Sub-State of Meghalaya to full statehood, and Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh (then Tribal Districts) to Union Territories. The latter became states in 1986. Goa (based on Konkani language (8th Schedule)), which became a state in 1987, was the sole exception.

Third, the movements for the three new states (created in 2000)—Chhattisgarh out of Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand out of Bihar and Uttaranchal out of Uttar Pradesh— were long-drawn but became vigorous in the 1990s. And the most recent one, we can see with the division of Andhra Pradesh, giving a separate Telangana, which started in 1950s.

WHY REGIONAL DISPARITY STILL PERSISTS?

Low rate of economic growth: The economic growth of India has been fluctuating since independence. But with respect to High population growth, the economic growth has been not enough to catch the development with full speed. In the last decade, the economic growth were

progressive, but now they are reeling under the influence of world economic crisis and other bottlenecks at domestic level.

Socio-economic and political organisation of states: The states have been unable to do the adequate land reforms and the feudal mentality still persists. Bhoodan and Gramdaan movements, after independence, were not enthusiastically carried and even land under land Banks were not efficiently distributed. The political activities in the backward states were limited to vote bank politics and scams.

Lower level of infrastructural facilities in backward states: The level of infrastructural development, such as- power distribution, irrigation facilities, roads, modern markets for agricultural produce has been at back stage. All these are state list subjects.

Low level of social expenditure by states on education, health and sanitation: These subjects are core for human resource development. The sates which have invested heavily on these subjects, fall under the developed and advanced states, for example Tamil Nadu, where health care services in Primary health centre is bench mark for other states.

Political and administration failure: This is source of tension and gives birth to subregional movements for separate states. Jarkhand, Chattisgarh, Uttrakhand and recently Telangana are result of these failure only. Many such demands are in pipeline such as- Vidarbha, Saurashtra, Darjeeling and Bodoland, etc. These failures also weakens the confidence of private players and do not attract investors in the states.

"Son of the soil" doctrine explains a form of regionalism, which is in discussion since 1950. According to it, a state specifically belongs to the main linguistic group inhabiting it or that the state constitutes the exclusive homeland of its main language speakers, who are the sons of the soil or local residents.

STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF REGIONALISM:

- Regionalism could have flourished in India, if any state/region had felt that it was being culturally dominated or discriminated against. Regional economic inequality is a potent time bomb directed against national unity and political stability. But, this potential cause did not take shape of regionalism, because of government steps, which focused on the balanced regional development and fulfilled the aspiration of states. Few of them are – Industrial Policy, 1956, National Integration council, 1961. Transfer of financial resources to poorer states on the recommendation of Finance commission.

- Planning became an important tool through Planning commission and Five year plans. But the new government is planning to devolve the planning power to the respective states, so that they can do planning with real-time approach of their respective needs and requirements.

- The central government has categorized states on the basis of backwardness and accordingly gives grants and loans. In September 2013, Raghuram Rajan, recommended a new index of backwardness to determine- which state need special help from central government. It is composed of 10 equally weighted indicators. According to that, Orissa and Bihar are the most backward states.

- Regular public investment by central government through centrally sponsored schemes have focussed on development of necessary infrastructure and poverty eradication, integrated rural development, education, health, family planning, etc. For example Prdhan Mantri Gram sadak yojana, Mid day meal, MGNREGA, etc.

- Government at centre and states give incentives to private players to develop in backward states through subsidies, taxation, etc. Nationalization of banks, granting new banking licenses, making mandatory for banks to open rural branches are few other steps for inclusive development and balanced regional development.

- There are certain discrepancies at the implementation part of these schemes. Few areas have been neglected like irrigation, which has created agricultural disparity. Rain fed and dry land agriculture also have been neglected, which became cause for suicide of farmers in various states (Coverage of P. Sainath, gives us more insights on such issues.)In reality, the interstate industrial disparity, agricultural disparity, number of BPL, etc. are decreasing. But, more actions are needed to completely eradicate the disparities.

IMPACT OF REGIONALISM IN INDIA

Positive

- Scholars believe that regionalism plays important role in building of the nation, if the demands of the regions are accommodated by the political system of the country.

- Regional recognition in terms of state hood or state autonomy gives self-determination to the people of that particular region and they feel empowered and happy. Internal self determination of community, whether linguistic, tribal, religious, regional, or their combinations, has remained the predominant form in which regionalism in India has sought to express itself, historically as well as at present time.

- Regional identities in India have not always defined themselves in opposition to and at the expense of, the national identity, noticed a democratic effect of such process in that India's representative democracy has moved closed to the people who feel more involved and show greater concern for institutions of local and regional governance. For example- Tripura Tribal Autonomous District Council (TTADC), formed in 1985, has served to protect an otherwise endangered tribal identity in the state by providing a democratic platform for former separatists to become a party of governance, and thereby reduced significantly the bases of political extremism in the state.

- In such political setup, there always remains a scope of balanced regional development. The socio-cultural diversity is given due respect and it helps the regional people to practise their own culture too.

Negative

- Regionalism is often seen as a serious threat to the development, progress and unity of the nation. It gives internal security challenges by the insurgent groups, who propagate the feelings of regionalism against the mainstream politico-administrative setup of the country.

- Regionalism definitely impacts politics as days of collation government and alliances are taking place. Regional demands become national demands, policies are launched to satisfy regional demands and generally those are extended to all pockets of country, hence national policies are now dominated by regional demands. E.g. MSP given to sugarcane, it was helpful for farmers in Maharashtra but it was implemented across all states resulting agitations of farmers belonging to UP, Punjab and Haryana. Meanwhile it sowed seed of defection among ministers and targeting to corresponding minister.

- Some regional leaders play politics of vote bank based on language, culture, this is certainly

against healthy democratic procedures. This always leads to demand for separate state and it has observed that after creating small states only few political leaders could run efficient government else alliances run government which ultimately makes administration machinery ineffective.

- Developmental plans are implemented unevenly focusing on regions to which heavy weight leaders belongs are benefitted, hence unrest is generated among rest regions. Law and order is disturbed, agitations with massive violence take place ultimately government is compelled to take harsh steps; hence wrong signals are emitted about government authorities.

- Regionalism, also becomes hurdle in the international diplomacy, as in 2013 we saw how Tamil Nadu regional parties were against the Prime Minister of India, attending the Commonwealth heads meeting(CHOGM) in Sri Lanka. These actions have their direct implication on the relation of India with Sri Lanka or other countries of the forums or in case of Mamata Banerjee not agreeing to Land Boundary agreement and Teesta River Water sharing, when the leaders at centre level were ready to do it.

- The regionalism induced violence disturbs the whole society, people are killed, students cannot attend the schools & colleges, tourism cannot be promoted, etc. This impacts the development of human resource, governments need to deploy extra forces to control the situation and it has direct implication on the economy of the nation. Impacted societies remain aloof from the mainstream development and then the regional variations and backwardness is clearly reflected.

- On the broader front, it harms India's status in global arena and becomes hurdle in becoming global power or world leader.

SUGGESTIONS

In order to eliminate the regionalism and achieve national integration the following suggestions may be given.

Doing away with regional imbalance: It has been experienced that the regional imbalance has been the main cause of disgruntlement among the inhabitants of a particular region for regionalism. If the national resources are distributed in a balanced manner, the problem of regionalism will be mitigated.

Abolition of regional parties: The regional parties play a dirty role in exploiting the regional feelings of people. This solidifies the base for regionalism. Therefore efforts should be made to ban all regional parties posing threat to national unity.

Top priority to the economic development of deprived zones: Due to uneven development of different areas of the country, political issues have been made (As in case of Telengana in Andhra Pradesh and Vidarbha in Maharashtra) and enmity between different regions increased. Therefore if top priority is given to economic development of those areas where the people have developed the feeling of relative deprivation, the situation will improve and they can be drawn into the national mainstream.

Restructuring the society: The social structure of the developing societies at the national or regional level is essentially anti-development. India is no exception to it. The benefits of increased investment in economic and social activities in this society often go to those who need them the least and the majority is the deprived section. But the irony is that the beneficiaries set the deprived mass against the nation showing the plea of regionalism. Hence our social structure needs to be restructured.

Acculturation:The regional groups of people also maintain their cultural distinctiveness. This delimits the interaction between different regional and cultural superiority for each group. Frequent cultural contacts should be promoted to break the regional barriers and to develop the nationalistic spirit.

Developed means of Transport and Communication: Most of the backward regions of the country do not have proper link with the rest of the country through transport and communication system. Due to this reason their interaction and contact with other regional groups become restricted and they develop a, feeling of alienation. Therefore transport and communication system should be developed in the backward areas in order to bring economic and social development.

Proper education: Education may be construed as a very powerful agent for doing away with the separatist tendencies and for flourishing the sense of nationalistic spirit among the country men.

Appeal through mass media: Today mass media have become very powerful agents of change. If both direct and indirect appeals are made highlighting the concept of equality of opportunity to every region for their development and the concept of national unity through various programmes like 'Mera Bharat Mahan', people will be motivated to cut across regional boundaries and come forward for national development.

STATEHOOD DEMAND IN INDIA
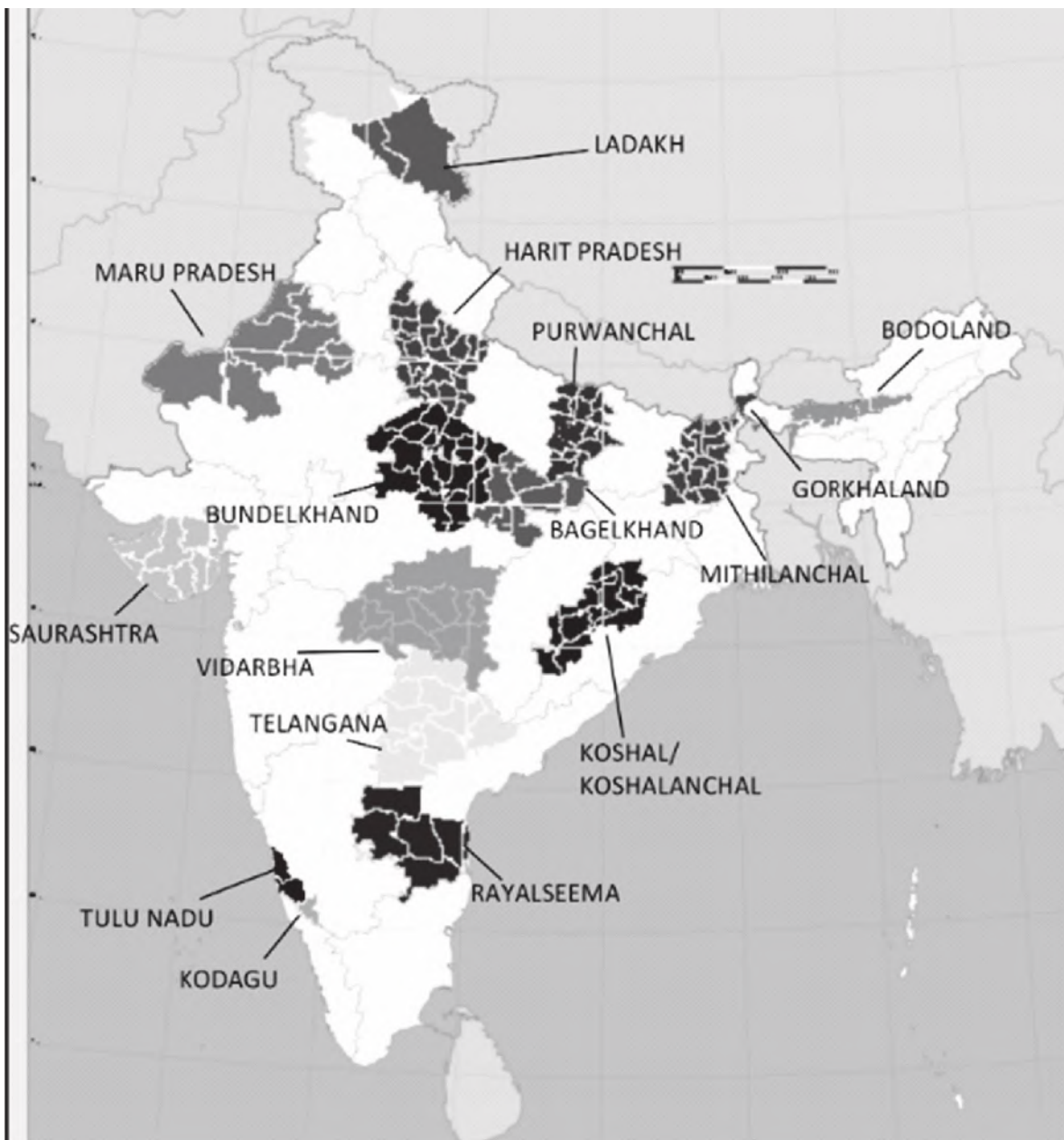
SMALL STATES Vs LARGER STATE DEBATE

Are larger states better than smaller ones? It's a never-ending debate that took centre-stage during the pro-Telangana movement and after the formation of the 29th state. It is a popular notion that smaller states have better development prospects. More than a decade ago India created three new states—Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand—following long-standing demands and protests. But does a smaller size necessarily guarantee development?

Smaller states

Pros:

- Key decisions related to local issues will be taken closer home. Ex: Neither Delhi nor Hyderabad nor Mumbai could think of solutions for food shortage & farmer suicides in Chattisgarh, AP, Vidarbha, etc. The closer-to-home the government stays, the easier will be managing regional issues.

- Governmental and bureaucratic affairs can be managed well with focused attention when the population and the administrative area are of manageable proportions.

- Smaller states signify empowerment of common people.

- A few concerned and well-meaning experts in demographics and psychographics believe that in India, a lot of larger states need re-division – UP can be split into four states, Andhra, Maharashtra, Karnataka and J&K into three (Valley, Jammu and Ladakh), and Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Kerala into two each.

- Improved attention especially towards neglected areas, better focus on developing backward regions, a new legislative assembly and monetary support from the union prove to be advantageous to new/smaller states.

- New states generally get separate institutions exclusively for the state – State Election Commission, Human Rights/ Women's/ SC/STs/Child Commissions, Public Service Commission, separate cadre for IAS/IPS/IFS under UPSC, and High Court – which will be beneficial to the state.

- Better representation for minorities – in terms of caste, religion, tribe, etc.

- Better administration and access to better development for hitherto ignored areas and people there.

- Re-distribution of tax and other resources ensures that money and resources are being utilized for the overall development of the entire state rather than being concentrated on a few areas.

Cons:

- Since India is primarily an agrarian economy, there's no guarantee that smaller states will benefit immediately after the division. Most states depend on agriculture largely and their fate is, therefore, decided by the monsoon.

- Setting up of various institutions (mentioned above), government offices & residences, universities & research institutions, stadia, basic amenities like hospitals in remote places, etc., requires huge sums of money. A new state invariably ends up depending on the Union for funds – which may or may not be readily available.

- River water distribution and other new issues in terms of resource distribution and management may crop up and become a major bone of contention between the two states.

- Distribution & control of natural resources isn't very easy post-division. Some regions may be flourishing while others are deprived of resources and the latter ones tend to lose in the bargain.

- Newer political parties come up leading to more disputes & dividing people further on regional grounds too, and a 'stable centralized power' will remain a distant dream as coalitions will become our preordained destiny.

- If one state's demands are granted, it'll encourage other states to follow their lead.

Larger States

Pros:

- Though a state's performance is not so much determined by its size, size does matter – especially when it comes to utilization of available natural resources & man power, the larger the state is, the better it is for overall progress.

- United we stand, divided we fall' may or may not hold true always but when the majority of a state's population stands together and demands for something, the government will be forced to sit up and take notice of/listen to its vox populi.

- The political will and orientation of a state's government determine the development of its people, and concentrated political agendas in certain areas may sometimes help bring people together in larger states.

- In terms of economies of scale and growth rate, larger states tend to fare better than smaller ones.

Cons:

- Administering large and diverse states is more complex and leads to inefficiency on part of government and bureaucratic agencies.

- A majority of states in India are just too huge to manage things without complexities & conflicts of interest.

- Diversity is not only about language but also about economy and culture. The economic culture of certain regions in a state leads to a gap that cannot actually be filled. Ex: Coastal Andhra versus Telangana; Vidarbha versus Marathwada versus Mumbai (which in itself is another story because of its diversity, population and thriving business).

- Allocation of resources isn't easy in larger states due to inconsistent-yet-influential power structures created by politicians for their own selfish ends.

- The physical distance between the 'power centre' (capital city usually) and the complete disconnect between the people of one region and the powerful/richer politicians who come from another region influences the public sentiment & divides the state.

The need of the hour is to develop each region of India, through devolution of power to local governments and empowering people for their participation in decision-making. The governments at state level need to find out the alternative resources of energy, source of employment for local people, use of technology in governance, planning and for agriculture development. The 12th five year targets for "Faster, sustainable and more inclusive growth", which will be instrumental for balanced regional growth.

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SECULARISM

INTRODUCTION

Secularism is a principle which advocates the separation of religion from politics (what in India we call dharma-nirpekshataa). The key term here is separation. On the face of it, this seems a simple, uncomplicated principle. But on a closer examination, it will be seen that it is not. Separation can mean many different things and can pose difficulties, if we work with a single meaning. It can mean different things in different societies. The Indian case poses unique difficulties.

Secularism seeks to ensure and protect freedom of religious belief and practice for all citizens. Secularists want freedoms of thought and conscience to apply equally to all – believers and non-believers alike. They do not wish to curtail religious freedoms.

Secularism seeks to defend the absolute freedom of religious and other belief, and protect the right to manifest religious belief insofar as it does not impinge on the rights and freedoms of others. Secularism ensures that the right of individuals to freedom of religion is always balanced by the right to be free from religion.

In a secular democracy all citizens are equal before the law and parliament. No religious or political affiliation gives advantages or disadvantages and religious believers are citizens with the same rights and obligations as anyone else. These equality laws ensure that non-believers have the same rights as those who identify with a religious or philosophical belief.

Atheism is a lack of belief in gods. Secularism simply provides a framework for a democratic society. Atheists have an obvious interest in supporting secularism, but secularism itself does not seek to challenge the tenets of any particular religion or belief, neither does it seek to impose atheism on anyone. Secularism is simply a framework for ensuring equality throughout society – in politics, education, the law and elsewhere – for believers and non-believers alike.

Religious people have the right to express their beliefs publicly but so do those who oppose or question those beliefs. Religious beliefs, ideas and organisations must not enjoy privileged protection from the right to freedom of expression. In a democracy, all ideas and beliefs must be open to discussion. Individuals have rights; ideas do not.

DEFINITION OF SECULARISM

It means the separation of religion from political, economic, social and cultural aspects of life, religion being treated as a purely personal matter.

Separation of religious institutions from state institutions and a public sphere where religion may participate, but not dominate.

Freedom to practice one's faith or belief without harming others, or to change it or not have one, according to one's own conscience.

Equality so that our religious beliefs or lack of them doesn't put any of us at an advantage or a disadvantage.

WESTERN CONTEXT OF SECULARISM

- As per the western model of secularism, the "State" and the "religion" have their own separate spheres and neither the state nor the religion shall intervene in each other's affairs.

- Thus, the western concept of secularism requires complete separation of religion and state.

- As per the western model, the state cannot give any financial support to educational institutions run by religious communities.

- In the western model, State does not intervene in the affairs of religion till the time religion is working within the limits of the law.

- In western concept of secularism, religion is relegated entirely to the private sphere and has no place in public life whatsoever.

- The western model prohibits any public policy to be drafted on the basis of religion therefore; state is absolutely distanced from the religious activities and practices of its citizens.

SECULARISM IN INDIA

Indian Model of Secularism:

- It has a place not only for the right of individuals to profess their religious beliefs but also for the right of religious communities to establish and maintain educational institution.

- The acceptance of community specific rights brings us to the third feature of Indian secularism because it was born in a deeply multi-religious society, it is concerned as much with inter-religious domination as it is with intra-religious domination.

- It does not erect a wall of separation between the state and religion. This allows the state to intervene in religions, to help or hinder them without the impulse to control or destroy them.

- It is not entirely averse the public character of religion. Although the state is not identified with a particular religion, there is official and therefore public recognition granted to religious communities.

- Multiple values and principled distance means that the state tries to balance different, ambiguous but equally important values.

In Indian Context Secularism has changed its course throughout the history and it is still in the evolving phase. Secularism, under such conditions of shifting conflictual communal equations, requires careful and flexible application.

Secularism as practiced in India, with its marked differences with Western practice of secularism, is a controversial topic in India. Supporters of the Indian concept of secularism claim it respects "minorities and pluralism". Critics claim the Indian form of secularism as "pseudo-secularism". Supporters state that any attempt to introduce a uniform civil code, that is equal laws for every citizen irrespective of his or her religion, would impose majoritarian Hindu sensibilities and ideals.

THE NEED OF SECULARISM IN INDIA/IMPORTANCE OF SECULARISM

Secularism and Democracy are two remarkable achievements of independent India. Secularism has no alternative option in a multicultural nation like India, therefore, the Indian Constitution adopted secularism. People of different languages and religions live in Indian Union. They needed secularism to keep them together. Therefore, with the right to freedom, it was necessary to accept secularism. The State, remaining free from religious obligations, can take a tolerant attitude towards every religion and can pursue the ideal of achieving the well-being of the people, irrespective of caste, creed, religion etc.

Though there is an attempt to bring unite in diversity in India, the minority communities suffer injustice, oppression of minorities. Of course, even after the formation of a secular state, the spirit of nationalism could not be created. Awareness of social intolerance among minorities is a threat to national integration. There is a need for secularism to instil a sense of nationalism among the minority groups in the country.

Although India has adopted the concept of secular state, in fact religion has been politicized. Religious institutions are used for voting politics. Therefore, the principle of secularism is falling behind by increasing communalism. Communalism is anti-democratic, so the concept of secularism needs to be rooted in the promotion of democratic values. In a pluralistic society like India, politics based on religion is detrimental to national integrity. Therefore, in order to build a strong democracy, the values of secularism must be respected in the society while respecting religious values.

We are marching fairly rapidly to the goal of universal brotherhood. In this age of universal fraternity, the narrow concept of theocracy has absolutely no place.

SECULARISM AND CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

Secularism as contemplated by the Constitution of India has the following distinguishing features:

- The state will not identify itself with or be controlled by any religion;

- While the state guarantees to everyone the right to profess whatever religion one chooses to follow, it will not accord any preferential treatment to any of them.

- No discrimination will be shown by the state against any person on account of his religion or faith.

- The right of every citizen, subject to any general condition, to enter any offices under the state and religious tolerance form the heart and soul of secularism as envisaged by the constitution. It secures the conditions of creating a fraternity of the Indian people which assures both the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation.

The Preamble of Indian Constitution aims to constitute India a Sovereign, Socialist, Democratic Republic. The terms socialist and secular were added to it by the 42nd amendment. The whole constitution is summarized in the preamble. It is the mirror to the spirit of the constitution. The arrangement of the words in the preamble is also very significant. Indian society is a multi-religious society it is having different caste, religion along with several religion diversification. So, all these are the divisive factor in some way or the other and if not handled carefully then can cause a threat to the unity and integrity of the nation.

THE CHALLENGES BEFORE SECULARISM IN INDIA

- Increasing interference of religion in politics is a major challenge facing the secular state. Candidates selected for elections are given on the basis of religion.

- Everyone has the right to spread and promote his or her religion. Despite this, the feelings of insecurity in religious minorities still do not seem to diminish. This makes it difficult to create a secular society. India's growing racism is one of the major challenges facing the secular society.

- The attempt to respect religious law has created a number of issues in India, such as acceptability of polygamy, unequal inheritance rights, extra judicial unilateral divorce rights favourable to some males, and conflicting interpretations of religious books.

- The failure of the government to evolve a just economic order and eliminate poverty also gave a serious setback to secularism.

- Non-separation of religion from politics à the few events in the past like the demolition of the Babri Masjid, anti-Sikh riots in 1984, Mumbai riots in December 1992 and January 1993, Godhra riots in 2002, etc. have shown the well-established problem of communalism raising its head now and then.

- Growing fundamentalism à Religious fundamentalism refers to the blind and unquestioning

adherence to particular religious beliefs. It is manifest in orthodoxy, conservatism, and singularity as against democratic norms of modernism and plurality.

CRITIQUE OF SECULARISM

- Supporters of the Indian concept of secularism claim it respects "minorities and pluralism". Critics claim the Indian form of secularism as "pseudo-secularism".

- Supporters state that any attempt to introduce a uniform civil code, that is equal laws for every citizen irrespective of his or her religion, would impose majoritarian Hindu sensibilities and ideals.

- Critics state that India's acceptance of Sharia and religious laws violates the principle of Equality before the law.

- Anti-religious: it is often argued that secularism is anti-religious. We have tried to show that secularism is against institutionalised religious domination. This is not the same as being anti-religious. Similarly, it has been argued by some that secularism threatens religious identity.

- Western Import: A second criticism is that it is western and therefore unsuited to Indian conditions. The fact is that the secularism has both western and non-western origins. In the west, it was the Church-state separation which was central and in countries such as India, the ideas of peaceful co-existence of different religious communities has been important.

- Minoritism: A third accusation is the charge of minoritism. To make a separate arrangement for them is not to accord them any special treatment. It is to treat them with the same respect and dignity with which all others are being treated. The lesson is that minority rights need not be nor should be viewed as special privileges.

- Interventionist: A fourth criticism claims that secularism is coercive and that it interferes excessively with the religious freedom of communities. Indian secularism follows the concept of principled distance which also allows for non-interference. Besides, interference need not automatically mean coercive intervention.

- Vote Bank Politics: According to some scholars Secularism encourages the politics of vote banks. To blame a politician for pursuing a group of people or promising to initiate a policy with the motivation to secure their votes is unfair. If secular politicians who sought the votes of minorities also manage to give them what they want, then this is a success of the secular project which aims, after all, to also protect the interests of the minorities.

HOW TO DEVELOP INDIAN BRAND OF SECULARISM

- In a pluralistic society, the best approach to nurture secularism is to expand religious freedom rather than strictly practicing state neutrality.

- Movements for social reform will have to be organized and public opinion mobilized- Minorities should be encouraged to participate in the mainstream of national life.

- Two crucial moves to kick-start the discourse and practice of secularism. First, a shift of focus from a politically-led project to a socially-driven movement for justice. Second, a shift of emphasis from inter-religious to intra-religious issues.

The history of civilizations and the painful experiences felt because of the communal problems have made us realize that the secularism is indispensable to overcome the religious anomalies. Secularism is crucial to restrain the authority of the majority religion and restrict the use of political clout on religious base. It is also to safeguard the freedom of individuals (i.e., to exit from their religion, embrace another religion or have the freedom to interpret religious teachings).

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