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1 Features of Indian Society



There are many definitions of society. For our benefit, we shall just stick to the definition that **“A society, or a human society, is a group of people involved with each other through persistent relations, or a large social grouping sharing the same geographical or social territory, typically subject to the same political authority and dominant cultural expectations”**.

Society is also a medium through which individuals interact with one another.

Another important aspect of **society is its evolving nature**. The outlook of the society and its attitude at a point of time may be completely different at a different point of time. The **influence of technology, laws, economics** and other factors are responsible for the evolution of the society. For example: in some places, **live-in** relationships are being gradually accepted whereas in other places, it is not tolerated in India. A few decades ago, this was unconceivable and the institution of marriage was **sacrosanct**.

Features of Indian Society

There are certain features that are unique to Indian Society. Let us explore some of these features:

• Traditional as well as modern

- » Indian society has always coexisted with its diversities as well as similarities. In this regard, the Indian society has been both traditional as well as modern in its outlook.
- » Modernity and traditionality can be interpreted in different ways.
- » Ever since, India embraced **globalization in 1991**, the notions of modernity have changed.
- » Many consider modernity to reflect cravings for fast food, western clothing and the glitz of malls in modern India whereas for others who are still traditional in these respects, they may be modern in **terms of their thinking**.



WOMEN IN TRADITIONAL AND WESTERN CLOTHING

- » Individuals like **Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar** and even **Mahatma Phule** and his wife **Savitribhai Phule** who supported women's empowerment and went ahead with their work despite objections from a 'traditional society' were modern during their times.
 - » In the present context, we see that not only **traditions co-exist with modernity** but also, **they work in tandem**.
 - » While **'gyms'** and **'fitness centres'** have mushroomed across India, **Yoga** too has been accepted enthusiastically.
 - » Another example is while **western clothing** has gained popularity across the nation, **Khadi** products and **Sarees** are still popular not only in India but also abroad.
- ### • Rural and Agrarian
- » Since 1991, the Agricultural sector may be experiencing considerable amount of stress and its contributions in the national development may have reduced, **but the country largely remains rural and agrarian** in its outlook.
 - » As per the 2011 census, approximately a little over 78% of the population continues to live in rural areas and in another survey, it has been found that close to 56% of the workforce continues to rely on agriculture.



TRADITIONAL FARMS HAVE SOME OF THE LOWEST PER CAPITA PRODUCTIVITIES AND FARMER INCOMES.

• Dynamic and Syncretic

- » Indian culture and its society are not isolated. It is a fusion of different cultures and it retains its identity.
- » Its syncretic culture can be seen across the country. Throughout its History, India has regularly interacted with the outside world and has been plundered for its riches by many barbaric foreign powers.
- » Many of these powers chose to settle down in India and their culture synchronised with that of existing traditions
- » Presently, this tradition continues and the society can be described as being dynamic as opposed to static.

• Patriarchy

- » Most parts of the country which the exceptions of Kerala and Meghalaya are deeply involved in observing the practice of patriarchy. The head of the family is always a senior male member in this system.
- » One of the major disadvantages is the denial of equal rights to women in terms of both economic, social as well as in other areas.

• Spiritual and materialistic

- » Even before the 1991 reforms, Indian society has been both spiritual and

materialistic. However, the reforms have had an effect on the need to acquire wealth and materialism.

- » Many feel that there is a decline in spiritualism in the country. However, both do co-exist.

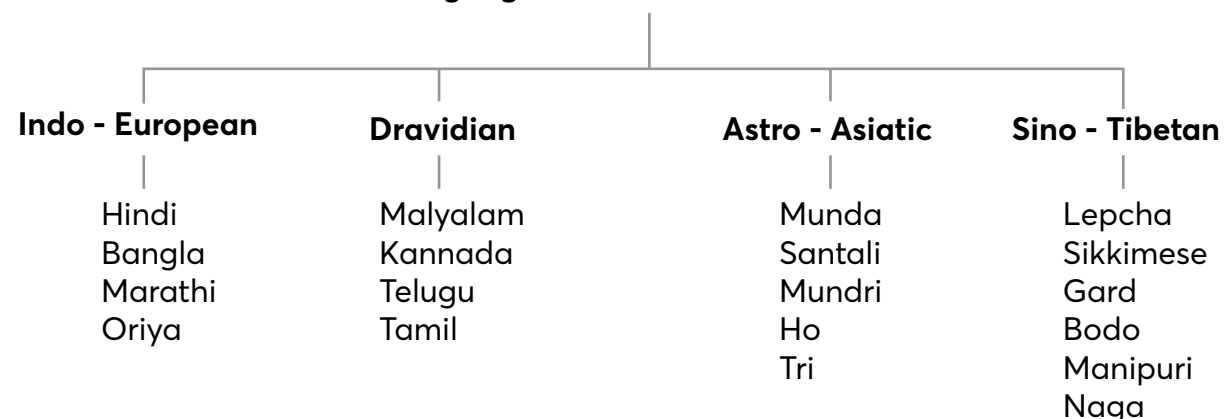
• Caste and class

- » The Indian society does have many shortcomings. The biggest, it can be argued is the system of caste and the classism that exist.
- » There are four main castes and many other sub-castes and though the Constitution of India prohibits any type of discrimination based on caste, it is still a rampant practice in both urban as well as rural areas.
- » Class discrimination exists in terms of level of economic progress, social standing and the nature of jobs.

• Diversity

- » The Constitution of India recognises 22 national languages as per the 8th Schedule. In reality there are more than 1500 known languages as per the 2011 census.
- » These languages can be broadly classified into Indo-Aryan group of languages, Dravidian group of languages, Sino-Tibetan group of languages and the Austric group of languages.

Language Families in South Asia



- » All major religions have their origins in India or have grown here in this land. Hindus constitute the majority religion though they are a minority in Union Territories such as Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.
- » Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism, Zoroastrians and Judaism.
- » There are also different climatic zones. The country is diverse in many aspects.
- » The economic diversity is also stark. States such as Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Maharashtra, Punjab and Tamil Nadu are economically advanced and are leading the country in its quest for economic development.
- » On the other hand, states and Union territories such as Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Mizoram and Tamil Nadu are also socially advanced and are on the verge of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, 2030.

The concept of **Unity in diversity** emanates from this background. The country may be diverse but is yet united in all aspects. The adherence to India and Indian national interests is common to all of us.

Now, let us understand what unites this country?

Factors that Unite India

Despite the diversity in almost all aspects, there are certain factors that unite India. Some of these factors are the following:

• Constitution of India and its ideals

- » Indians formed their own Constitution which came into effect on January 26, 1950. This was after a long struggle for independence where the colonial masters considered Indians to be unfit to rule themselves and frame a modern constitution.

- » Respect for the Constitution is there in every part of the country from Srinagar to Sringeri, Gujarat to Arunachal Pradesh.

- » It is this very Constitution that enables an individual to empower themselves.

• Democracy

- » The opportunity to participate in the political affairs of your country and govern the people of this country, exists throughout the country.
- » You can contest elections and vote in them no matter which part of the country you are from. You could be from Karnataka, but vote in Tamil Nadu, if you are a registered voter of a constituency in that state.

• Institution of pilgrimage

- » The Golden Temple in Amritsar, the dargah of Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti



VIEW OF THE GOLDEN TEMPLE (HARMANDIR SAHIB)



DARGAH OF MU'IN AL-DIN CHISHTI, AJMER, RAJASTHAN, INDIA

in Ajmer, the Sabarimala Temple in Kerala and the Church of Mother Velankanni in Tamil Nadu is visited by people of all faiths.

- » Religion may divide people at times but religious institutions cement this unity in people.
- » Many citizens from the Northern part visit Rameshwaram in the South and likewise many citizens from the Southern part of the country visit Varanasi amongst others.
- **Economic and social opportunities**
 - » Urban centres across the country like New Delhi, Gurgaon, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai amongst others provide upward mobility for a large number of people.
 - » Migration from other parts of the country unites the people and promotes a better sense of understanding between communities.
 - » Kerala is a best example of this tradition. We can see numerous stories of migrant communities from Bihar taking up their examination in Malayalam and topping the state board examination.

- **Government services**

- » The All India Services, Central Services and the Armed Forces enable people from across the nation to work in



GUARD OF HONOUR AT THE INA

different parts of the country. They work to further the national interests of the country.

- » The transparency permits individuals from Andaman and Nicobar Islands to get recruited and also individuals from Jammu and Kashmir amongst others.
- » The best example can be considered to be that of the Armed Forces.
- » A small example is that of Major Sandeep Unnikrishnan, the hero of Operation Black Tornado. Here is the case of a gentleman who was from Bengaluru in Karnataka. Upon joining the Indian Army, he was commissioned into the Bihar Regiment and was deputed to the National Security Guards (NSG).
- » He was martyred fighting Pakistani terrorists in the city of Mumbai in Maharashtra.

- **Sports and Cinema**

- » It is a well-known fact that Sports unites everyone. When sportspersons don the Indian jersey, they play for India and are cheered by all Indians, not only in India but also abroad.
- » It unites the country in the best possible manner.
- » For example: When Mary Kom or Virat Kohli are playing for India, it is the entire country and not just citizens from Manipur and Delhi cheer for them.
- » Similarly, even before the advent of social media, Music united the country. Musicians and film stars are admired across the country for their work.
- » In this regard, it is well known that many CD's of Punjabi singer Daler Mehendi were quickly sold out in Kerala and similarly, actor Rajinikanth is well admired by individuals from across the country.

2 Communalism, Secularism and Regionalism

In this module, we shall look into certain fissiparous tendencies that have the potential to disturb social harmony and divide the nation on communal and linguistic lines.

Communalism

- A simple definition of communalism is the organization of communities on political grounds.
- However, it can also be construed as owing allegiance to one's community more than the wider society.
- For example, I can perfectly be a Hindu, Muslim or Sikh and feel proud of it. But the moment, I start denigrating other communities, I start supporting communalism.
- Communalism as a concept is dangerous for the wellbeing of any nation.
- This sort of hatred towards other communities can manifest in different ways. It may start with some sort of hatred, progress towards active discrimination which may culminate in riots and then in some cases, may even lead to mass killings or genocide.



KEDARNATH TEMPLE, UTTARAKHAND

The common man is clearly not interested in instigating riots and having a communal mindset. They only want development which is inclusive. In the context of India, let us examine some of the possible reasons for communalism to rear its ugly head:

Historical reasons

- The country has witnessed numerous invasions by foreign powers who have threatened to destroy the local culture. Not all rulers but some like Feroz Shah Tughlaq, Sikandra Lodhi, Aurangzeb and Mahmud of Ghazi were known to have destroyed Hindu temples and converted large number of people into Islam.
- The fifth Sikh Guru Arjan Dev was killed by Mughal emperor Jahangir.
- Likewise, Bengal ruler Shashanka Gauda persecuted Buddhist monks and chopped the Bodhi tree under which Lord Buddha attained his enlightenment.
- The partition and riots that followed completely destroyed communal harmony which was seen during the Revolt of 1857 and even during the partition of Bengal.
- This continues to affect communal harmony across the nation.



JAMA MASJID, JAMA MOSQUE, DELHI

Political reasons

- Political parties have exploited and divided the nation on the basis of religion, region, caste and other factors.
- The politics of appeasement has resulted in hatred towards other communities.

- Appeasement politics involves giving certain special benefits to one community and denying it to other communities.
- The Constitution does provide for certain benefits to those communities who are socially and economically backward, but irrational appeasement politics is only harmful.
- Some have even criticized the categorization of minorities.
- It is a fact that certain communities are more progressive than others.
- Various committees such as the Kaka Kalekar and Justice Sachar Committee report have pointed this out.
- Political parties also instigate and provoke riots to fulfil their ambitions.
- Social media has become a tool for these anti-national activities. The recent riots in North-East Delhi has become a case in point. Many accounts were created to instigate mobs against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and this provoked the riots.



GURUDWARA BANGLA SAHIB IS ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT SIKH GURDWARA IN DELHI

Competition for resources

- India is a country that is starved of resources and we witness tough competition for everything and anything. Education, jobs, common resources like housing etc are limited and people normally misappropriate

these resources through money and muscle power.

- Under such circumstances, an exclusionary strategy is evolved to keep out certain communities from the resources.
- Members of the Islamic community often find it difficult to rent properties in many states.
- Members of the Trans gender community find it next to impossible to secure employment opportunities.
- Now that we have studied briefly the reasons for communalism in the country, let us look into the consequences of it.

Consequences

- The most obvious impact of communalism is at the individual level. Individuals who are victims of this social evil, especially riot victims suffer the most. It is difficult for them to



INFANT JESUS CATHEDRAL IN KOLLAM CITY

restart their life and lead normal lives. They may harbour feelings against other communities and may get radicalised to work against the social harmony of the nation.

- At the societal level, communalism impacts social harmony. All of us desire for peace and continuous societal

disharmony will only impact the relationship between communities. It is not possible for development to ensue when there is no social harmony and the rule of law is violated.

- At the national level, it impacts development, national security and more.

Secularism

- Secularism is part of the basic structure of the constitution. It is also part of the Preamble (added by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act).
- However, the concept is a little different in India as compared to the Western nations.
- In the latter part of the world, the concept denotes separation of religion from public policy.
- It reflects the separation of the Church from public policy. It mandates that the government will have nothing to do with religion and religion is a private matter of the citizens.
- Religion in this case is confined to the four walls of one's house.
- However, in a multi-diverse country like India, the state is mandated to support all religions equally and provide for certain benefits to the minority communities.
- As mentioned before, many seek to derogate this important concept in today's politically charged world.
- Secularism will continue to guide us in our public policy but has to be done in a rational manner.

Regionalism

- This is yet another fissiparous tendency that threatens the unity of our nation.
- This in simple terms, can be defined as respecting one's own community while at the same time denigrating those of others.

- Let us once again reaffirm here that it is perfectly all right in taking pride belonging to Tamil Nadu, Punjab or Maharashtra but it is anti-national to disrespect other states and harbour stereotypes and discriminate against people from other regions.
- Mahatma Gandhi said "I am a proud Gujarati and a proud India and I do not see any difference between the two".

Manifestations

- In recent times, we have seen anti-migrant sentiments being exhibited in states such as Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka. Many states have also implemented laws to curb employment opportunities for people outside the given state. This is yet again a failure of governance. It is the government's duty to increase employment opportunities for all citizens. When they fail to do so, they indulge in the politics of hate and enforce reservation for the local population.
- Some states have genuine issues related to their economic development and their actions of reserving jobs for the local population may be justified. States such as Sikkim and certain other North-East states and Ladakh have put in place such mechanisms.
- Larger and more advanced states such as Karnataka and Maharashtra cannot justify their actions.
- The second manifestation is a visceral hatred towards other communities based on inter-state disputes or even instigated by political parties.
- We see this in the form of anti-North Indian sentiments in Maharashtra and a few South Indian states.
- There are also issues based on inter-state disputes between Karnataka-Maharashtra and Karnataka-Tamil Nadu.

- Often these disputes are used by the political parties to yet again divert attention from the real developmental issues and focus on irrelevant issues, thereby upsetting regional harmony.
- The third manifestation can be seen in the form of linguistic issues.
- India is a diverse country and doesn't have a single national language. However, in recent times, political parties and governments have focused on imposition of Hindi in non-Hindi states.
- The non-Hindi states have rightly reacted to this by guarding their language, but in the process, some have also instigated hatred against Hindi and Hindi speaking people.
- The Union Government needs to recalibrate its policy and understand the futility of language imposition.

Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, it can be easily said that India is united and will always remain united. The people of this country only seek better development and good governance. Issues of communalism and regionalism are tools of the political parties to divide the citizens, so as to reap political benefits. A word also needs to be mentioned here that the onus is on the people of India to punish these political parties who do not work for its welfare.

The recent verdict of the Supreme Court and its efforts over the past decade in cleansing political discourse will have to be supported by the people who enforce their decisions through the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM).



3 Women's Empowerment

It is strange in a country like India that women are worshipped, but any question on their empowerment is not addressed adequately. In recent times, government's efforts have paid off, yet the condition of women has been continuously deteriorating to a great extent.

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has only led to further complications.

This chapter seeks to understand various facets associated with this important national and international development goal.

Sex vs. Gender

- First and foremost, it is important for us to understand that there is a difference between these two terms.
- » Sex is the identity of an individual who can be a male, female, transgender or others. It is the way one would identify themselves based on certain biological characteristics.
- » Gender, on the other hand reflects the social conditioning that an individual goes through related to his/ her sex. It is the cultural/ social differences that guide an individual.
- For example: Men are strong and women are weak is a thought that pervades many individuals across the country and the world. They have been conditioned in this manner. Hence, they conclude that men are best suited in the Armed Forces and women are best suited in professions such as teaching or medical.



SAROJINI NAIDU WAS AN IMPORTANT FIGURE IN INDIA'S STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE FROM COLONIAL RULE



BEGUM HAZRAT MAHAL REBELLED AGAINST THE BRITISH EAST INDIA COMPANY DURING THE INDIAN REBELLION OF 1857



DR. USHA MEHTA WAS A GANDHIAN AND FREEDOM FIGHTER OF INDIA



CAPTAIN LAXMI SEHGAL WAS THE MINISTER OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS IN THE AZAD HIND GOVERNMENT

- This is far from the truth. We have had many examples from our history and even in present times to disprove this. Kiran Bedi who is the first woman IPS officer of this country and Olympian and Rajya Sabha Member Mary Kom who boxed her way to glory and smashed such gender constructs.
- Hence, it is important for all citizens to be gender sensitized and to unlearn
- In the **nationalist movement**, while many leaders like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Mahatma Jyotirao Phule worked for the empowerment of women, many women played a leading role in the nationalist movement.
- From Annie Besant to Sarojini Naidu, Begum Hazrat Mahal to Usha Mehta and Captain Lakshmi Sehgal of the Indian National Army, women have led

whatever they may have been taught or experienced.

Contributions of women to the nationalist movement and even before

- In the **ancient Rig Vedic times**, the position of women was a lot better with many of them being encouraged to pursue their ambitions and being given an equal role in all spheres of life. A well-known philosopher was Gargi during this period.
- In the **medieval times**, the Chola dynasty gave prominence to women, so did the Rashtrakuta dynasty.
- The former deployed women as naval commanders in their marine conquests and the latter had a matrilineal line of descent.
- In the **slave dynasty** that ruled Delhi and other parts, Razia Sultan became the first woman ruler of India.

the nationalist movement.

- They responded enthusiastically to every call of Mahatma Gandhi. The latter even praised them and believed in their empowerment.
- Ever since our independence, women continue to play an important role in national development. However, despite their well-known contributions, certain issues continue to affect them and their empowerment.

Issues confronting women and their empowerment

• Safety

- » The first and foremost issue that we shall discuss is the safety aspect. According to the National Crimes Record Bureau, an organization under the Union Home Ministry, there is an increase in the number of crimes being perpetrated against women across the country.
- » For the year 2018, the crime of domestic violence tops the chart followed by sexual harassment including the heinous crime of rape.
- » According to the statistics; 3,78,277 cases of crimes against women have been registered in the year 2018.
- » The states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra top the list of states with the greatest number of registered cases for crimes against women.
- » The sex ratio, according to the 2011 census stands at 940 females per 1000 males which has shown a slight improvement. The Child Sex Ratio has however declined.
- » The criminal justice system is struggling to protect women and reforms which are long pending are moving at a snail's pace.

• Economic issues

- » Next is the issues in economic empowerment.
- » India's female Labour Force Participation Rate defined as the share of working age women who report either being employed, or being available for work has fallen to a historical low of 23.3% in 2017-2018. The earlier reported number was around 37%.
- » The actual number of women employed across various sectors is lower than this number.
- » It is also reported that women own only 20% of the total number of business enterprises in India.
- » Women also are not adequately represented in the government and in the various research institutions across the country.
- » There also exists inequality as far as wages are concerned. It is the duty of the state, according to the Directive Principles of State Policy to ensure that equal wages are paid for equal work. This remains on paper for a large number of people.

• Social issues

- » The root cause of all issues that women face on a day to day basis is the issue of patriarchy.
- » In simple terms, in this system of society, women are treated as second class citizens.
- » In every sphere of life, they are given less priority over males.
- » Now that we have established that their social mobility is greatly restricted due to issues over physical safety and economic issues, let us look at some of the social issues affecting them.
- » Education wise, the enrolment ratio is improving. However, a large number

of them continue to drop out of school upon reaching the age of menstruation.

- » According to UNICEF, approximately 1.5 million girls under the age of 18 are married off by their families.
- » The issue of dowry continues to haunt large numbers of families across the country.

• Political emancipation

- » Less than 10% of the total number of Parliamentarians in India are women. A Bill that sought to reserve 33% of the total number of seats in both houses of the parliament failed to muster the numbers required for its passage.
- » The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts of 1993 which created the rural and urban local bodies has reserved 1/3 of the total number of seats for women and even in the senior positions such as Sarpanch and Mayor.
- » This has succeeded to some extent in improving the developmental outcomes. However, in many cases it has been reported that these become mere proxies for the male members of their families.

Government intervention

There exist many government schemes to tackle various issues related to women's empowerment.

Article 15 of the Indian Constitution permits special schemes and policy to safeguard the interests of women and children. Here we shall list a few of them:

- Beti Bachao and Beti Padhao initiative to reverse the low child sex ratio has yielded positive results, especially in the state of Haryana.
- KIRAN scheme by Department of Science and Technology to promote women's employment in the various research institutions in the country.



- The recent decision of the Supreme Court of India to grant permanent commission for women in the Indian Army.
- One stop centre, National Cybercrime coordination centre covers aspects related to their safety.
- Rashtriya Poshan Abhiyan takes care of the nutritional aspects of women and children.
- The Kudambashree programme of the Government of Kerala and the Mahila E- Haat for women entrepreneurs are examples of economic empowerment.

COVID-19 related issues

- The government's decision to enforce a complete lockdown, in accordance with the Disaster Management Act of 2005 has resulted in complete chaos in the lives of many women.
- The lockdown has resulted in the number of domestic violence cases going up and presently is at a ten year high, according to various surveys.
- The job losses that have been reported also are expected to burden a large number of women.
- In this struggle for jobs and competition with respect to resources, women will suffer the most and are particularly vulnerable.
- The government has to face this mounting challenge and lay out a roadmap for empowering the women of India who can achieve great tasks and bring glory to the nation.

4 Poverty in India

Poverty can be defined in many ways. However, in this case when we look into the very basic approach, we can define poverty as an **inability to procure items for the basic sustenance of life**. There are many other definitions and approaches to study poverty, we shall look into it in detail in this chapter. India has succeeded to a great extent in reducing its poverty count in the past two decades. However, issues still continue to haunt it.

Types of poverty

There are two types of poverty and multiple approaches to study this topic. **The types of poverty are absolute poverty and relative poverty.**

- **Basic Sustenance Model**

- » Absolute poverty can be defined as the inability to procure items for the basic sustenance of life such as food, clothing, housing etc. A person is considered to be poor if he/ she is unable to satisfy their basic needs. Based on a list of basic items of sustenance, countries assign a particular amount of money needed to procure these items. If individuals are unable to procure these items, they are considered to be poor and below the poverty line (those below the minimum amount assigned towards procurement of these items). This is called absolute poverty.
- » Relative poverty on the other hand is comparing individuals. For example: I earn Rs 100 whereas my neighbour earns Rs 200. Then I am relatively poorer than my neighbour.
- **Capabilities approach:** This theory has been propounded by Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen. It studies poverty from the standpoint of an individual's capabilities. An individual has to be healthy and educated to lead a good professional career and earn his income. If there exist no



NOBEL LAUREATE
AMARTYA SEN WAS
AWARDED THE NOBEL
MEMORIAL PRIZE IN
ECONOMIC SCIENCES
IN 1998 AND INDIA'S
BHARAT RATNA IN
1999 FOR HIS WORK IN
WELFARE ECONOMICS

opportunities to acquire educational qualifications and good health, it can impair the working of an individual, thereby leading to poverty. Therefore, Sen calls on the government to focus its investments and policy decisions on improving public health and education.

Committee reports in India on poverty

Some of the important committees set up by the government after independence to tackle poverty were the following:

- **YK Alagh Committee (1979):** It defined a poverty line based on the nutritional requirements for the urban and rural areas and assigned a consumption expenditure amount for it. Every year, this line was adjusted for inflation.
- **Lakdawala Committee (1993):** This committee continued with the poverty line and nutritional requirements approach. However, it recommended that it is important for every state to define its own poverty line based on the diversity and also a separate poverty for the rural and urban areas.
- **Suresh Tendulkar Committee report (2009):** The following were the recommendations:
 - » Shift away from consumption-based poverty estimation to a more inclusive approach. The committee noted that the consumption patterns of people had changed and it was important to add more items than just calories needed for basic nutrition.
 - » It also recommended the addition of various intoxicants, education, fuel, medical and sanitation.
 - » Uniform poverty line - it did away with the system of having different approaches for the urban and rural

areas of different states.

- » Private expenditure on health and education.
- **Rangarajan committee report (2012):** It set the poverty line at Rs 47 in urban areas and Rs 32 in rural areas as a poverty line per day per person as a poverty line. **The international poverty line set up by the World Bank is USD 1.90 per individual in a day.**

Reasons for poverty

There are many reasons for poverty in India. Here, we shall list out certain reasons:

- **Historical reasons:** In his book 'Poverty and UnBritish rule in India', **Dadabhai Naoroji** explains that the very nature of British rule in India has encouraged poverty and impoverished the masses. The decimation of the rural handicrafts and artisan communities, backwardness of agriculture and expenditure on the company officials are described as some of the reasons.



- **Unemployment:** The present COVID-19 has resulted in an unemployment rate which is at a historic high. Lack of income or even lack of steady income results in poverty.

- **Illiteracy and lack of quality education:** Despite more than 15 million graduates being produced every year, there are no jobs available for them due to lack of quality of education. Most of these graduates are studying outdated educational syllabus and hence cannot be productively employed anywhere.
- **Sub-standard health outcomes:** More than 60% of the Household incomes in many families is devoted towards health expenditure.
- **Certain government policies that favour one sector over the other**
- **Lack of rule of law and enforcement of laws such as the Minimum Wages Act.**
- **Income Inequality**
- **Discrimination**
- **Nature of job:** Approximately 56% of the total working population is in the agricultural sector.

Government intervention

The government has actively alleviated poverty in recent times. **The Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index released by Oxford Institute and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)** acknowledges this fact. However, a large number of individuals are still living a life in poverty.

Here are some of the government schemes that have helped the people :

- **National Mission on Foundational literacy and numeracy,**
- **Ayushman Bharat Scheme,**
- **Skill India Mission,**
- **PM Awaas Yojana,**
- **MGNREGA**

5 Population and Its Issues

India is the second most populous nation in the world and its growing population is soon expected to overtake China by 2024.

What is the demographic profile of India? What are the various issues faced by the different segments of the society and what are some of the governmental policies in this regard?

Let us take a look at some of these issues in this module.

Demographic Profile of India

The population of India as per the 2011 Census stands at 1.21 billion. This number has expanded ever since and is presently estimated to be approximately 1.37 billion. However, the upcoming 2021 census will reveal the actual numbers and the growth rate of the population.

Presently, we shall look into some of the aspects of the 2011 census.

- Males were 51.54% and females were 48.46% of the total population.
- The population growth from 2001-2011 stands at 17.7% as opposed to 21.5% in the previous decade.
- The Sex ratio defined as the number of females/ 1000 males stood at 940. Kerala (1084) and Haryana (879) were the best and worst performers.
- As of 2019, the following is the demographic profile of India:
 - » 26.62% of the population belonged to the age group of 0-14,
 - » 67% in the age group of 15-64 and
 - » 6.38% were above the age of 65.

Hence, we can see a large demographic dividend in India. This refers to a large number of people who are in the working age population of 15-64 and are also considered to be 'Youth'.

Demographic Dividend and issues associated with it

- Ideally, demographic dividend is considered to be an advantage for any country as it is the time when the economic productivity is the most and it is enhanced to a great extent. Having a youthful nation changes the outlook of the nation and energizes it from within and outside.
- If played right, India can develop itself

into a super power using its advantages of having a young population in the working age category (demographic dividend).

- However, India has some unique issues that prevent it from using its demographic dividend effectively. Rather, it can become disastrous- socially and economically, if the government doesn't intervene and fix these issues.
- We have already seen agitations demanding reservation for certain castes in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Haryana.

Some of the issues associated with the demographic dividend in India are the following:

- **Asymmetric population:** Most of the states such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh with its large populations are the states expected to be experiencing the demographic dividend. However, these states are under development in many aspects and many of the new jobs are expected to be created in the more prosperous states of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana. This will entail large scale inter-state migration and this will complicate further issues related to migration. Many of the Southern and North-Eastern states are experiencing stagnant population growth and this may lead to various changes which will have economic and social consequences. These states which are underdeveloped will have to urgently create new jobs and exhibit economic and social growth.
- **Lack of skill development:** A World Bank report in 2016 had stated that India is expected to lose more than 67% of its jobs due to automation. This will have severe consequences for the economic development of

the country. Most of the new jobs are expected to be created in the social sectors, artificial intelligence and machine learning amongst others. With more than a crore graduates passing out every year, the task of creating jobs is a headache for the government and an added issue, is the lack of work appropriate skill set amongst these graduates. The Indian educational system with its outdated syllabus is unable to provide the industry with the required skill sets. However, the government has in recent times launched many schemes including the New Education Policy of 2020 to tackle this issue.

- **Lack of attention towards human development:** India ranks 130 out of 180 in the Human Development Index and various other indices. These indices measure the educational outcomes and health parameters of the nation. India needs to invest more in its health and educational systems and alleviate poverty through the capability approach, as given by Noble Laureate Amartya Sen.



- **Informal nature of the economy:** With a little more than 93% of the economy considered to be a part of the informal sector, any meaningful policy intervention is tough. The overall economic development too suffers as most of its beneficiaries are outside the well-established system of the government.

- **Jobless growth:** In recent times, India has been experiencing jobless growth. The lack of creation of jobs has not been the priority of the government and this is hampering the development of the nation.

Growing Population and issues associated with it

A nation with a growing population has several issues. Here are some of the issues associated with it, as far as India is concerned:

- **Competition for resources:** We know that India is a resource starved nation. Various resources such as education, medical facilities, housing, water, jobs, electricity and transport facilities amongst others are in short fall. This prompts the spirit for survival of the fittest and in the process; the weaker sections of the society are left out. In the process, people often look for shortcuts and the rules-based society is unable to function effectively. A simple example in our day to day life is the phenomenon of traffic jams. The road space is limited, yet the number of vehicles increases every day. Hence, drivers often violate all known traffic laws and etiquettes to reach their destination at the earliest. The government has not kept up with the increasing demand for resources.
- **Growing social disorder:** It is a well-known fact that where there exists a population, crimes of different nature grows. Law and order issues continue to disturb India's development story. Lack of communal and social harmony is yet another issue which is developing due to the growing population.
- **Inequality of development:** With limited fiscal resources at its command, even the government and the private sector may neglect those areas of the country which are deemed to be

unprofitable or even neglect it based on other parameters.

- **Deterioration of environment and urban areas:** To accommodate and feed a growing population, forests will have to be cut down, lakes and rivers encroached upon and agricultural production will have to increase. We see the state of the environment in India. In the Environmental Performance Index released jointly by the Yale and Columbia Universities, India ranks 168th out of 180 nations.

National Population Policy

This policy was launched in the year 2000 and hopes to achieve population stability by the year 2045.

In recent times, the government has set up a committee to review the legally permitted age to marry for women. At present, it is 18. The government hopes to raise this to 21.



6 Urbanization in India

Census 2011 revealed that India is urbanizing at a quick pace and this is only expected to grow in the future. With the cities being seen as the epicentres of growth, jobs and a better standard of living, we are going to witness more rural to urban migration within the country.

Let us explore some of the issues of migration in India.

Concept of Urbanization

- It is a phenomenon in which a large number of people inhabit a small geographical area, called a city. It often becomes an epicentre of secondary, tertiary, quaternary and quinary sectors of the economy.
- The above-mentioned aspect could vary between nations from developed nations to developing nations.
- The positive aspects of urbanization include better standard of living in terms of good quality education and other services, better opportunities for personal and professional growth amongst other factors.
- However, some of the negative aspects include environmental degradation, social isolation, strain on the resources amongst others.
- Urban towns could include notified areas to mega cities.

Urbanization in India

- The UN World Urbanization prospects report 2018, reports that approximately 34% of the total population of India lives in urban areas.
- This number is only expected to increase. The World Economic Forum reports that 70% of the future employment growth by 2030 will be in the urban areas.
- Further, more than 40.76% of the total population is expected to stay in urban areas by the year 2030.
- Five cities of Ahmedabad, Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Mumbai are expected to generate a good portion of the total GNP.

In this context, let us understand what constitutes an urban area, in the Indian context.

According to 2011 census, an urban area is:

- All towns that have corporations, notified area committees and cantonment boards etc,
- A minimum population of 5000
- Atleast, 75% of the male population engaged in non-agricultural tasks,
- A population density of at least 400 per square kilometer.

Accordingly, population wise, the cities are classified into:

- Metropolitan areas: Cities with a population of 10 Lakhs and above
- Tier 1- 100,000 and above
- Tier 2- 50,000-99,999
- Tier 3- 20,000-49,999
- Tier 4- 10,000-19,999
- Tier 5- 5000-9999
- Tier 6- Less than 5000.

Goa has the greatest percentage of its population living in urban areas, according to the 2011 census.

Issues associated with urbanization in India

There are very many issues associated with urban areas in India. Some of them are the following:

- **Strain on the resources:** With increasing urbanization in India, there are issues associated with shortages in various resources such as water, electricity, transport facilities, housing, entertainment and educational facilities amongst others.
- **Congestion of cities:** Most of the urban centres in India are congested and this shortage of various resources has resulted in slum development, illegal electricity connections and congested transport facilities.



- **Law and order issues:** Crime has been on the rise in the various cities. With the expectations of the society changing and competition for various resources, law and order has taken a back seat. This has also led to issues pertaining to the growth of communalism and regionalism in certain areas.
- **Psychological dimension:** Inhabitants of the city often lead busy lives and hence have little time to socialize with their neighbours. This leaves many other inhabitants vulnerable in the psychological sense. According to one report that was mentioned in the media, close to 43% of the population suffers from depression in India.
- **Environmental issues:** Encroachment of National Parks (Sanjay Gandhi National Park in Mumbai), Lakes (in Bengaluru) and rivers (Yamuna Bank in New Delhi) and Mountains (Aravalli in Gurugram) have become a common sight in India.

Government intervention

The Government of India has launched many schemes to ensure that there is planned urbanization in India.

Some of these schemes include:

- Smart Cities Program
- Shyama Prasad Mookerjee Rurban Scheme to provide urban facilities in rural areas.
- Rajiv Awaas Yojana
- JNNURM
- National Transit Oriented Development Policy
- AMRUT
- HRIDAY

7 Globalization

It is a misnomer that the process of globalization in India began with the New Economic Policy of 1991. This is incorrect. Once we understand the meaning of globalization, we will understand that India has always supported the process of globalization but has only benefited from this process, in recent times.

Concept

- The concept of globalization is the integration of one's nation in the realms of economy, technology, and politics, social amongst others with that of other nations or the global community at large.
- In recent times, this has even included cross border data exchanges and free movement of ideas and other intellectual property rights.
- To conclude, the concept signifies integration of a nation with that of the global community.
- As far as India is concerned, it has been a part of this globalization since the ancient times and played a critical role in deciding global commerce.
- However, in modern times, India lost out as it became a colony of the British and other European powers who only exploited its resources and people.
- It was finally in the year 1991 that India took advantage of this process and integrated its economy and society to benefit from it.



- There have been certain benefits to India, as a nation. However, there have also been certain setbacks in this regard.
- **Globalization = International Trade, Relations and Economy+ Technology and communication including data+ Social and cultural dimensions**

- Globalization in a way does reflect a loss of a nation's sovereignty.
- In this past decade and during the COVID-19 pandemic, nations have sought to abandon the process of globalization and fortified the concept of national boundaries.

Evaluation of Globalization

This has both benefitted as well as affected nations. Here are some of the dimensions of it:

- **Market:** When the whole world is one, there are larger markets for your goods and services. Indian IT and ITes products, agricultural items and industrial appliances have found diverse markets which have resulted in better incomes, national income growth and job creation. At the same time, it has also resulted in many Indian enterprises losing out to foreign enterprises (Diwali crackers market has been taken over by cheap Chinese imports).
- **Resources:** This interdependence between nations for resources has resulted in nations becoming vulnerable to geo-political, ecological and health shocks. A simple rise in the prices of crude oil can result in India's Balance of Payment situation being affected. In the same manner, the entire world including India is now suffering the impact of COVID-19. Many of the countries are dependent on China for the supply of various raw materials and industrial goods. However, nations are diversifying their supply chain networks to negate China's aggressive policies.
- **Technological:** With the integration of various technological devices and dependence on other nations', the world has become more integrated. Information and communication technology have brought the world

together. India's **One Sun, One World and One grid** scheme hopes to create a single energy grid across the world which is renewable and clean. Presently, nations are also cooperating with each other in the 5G trials.

- **Social:** The cross-border flow of ideas has also resulted in better integration of the global communities. This has impacted the way we dress, the movies we watch, travel and tourism amongst others. Even the languages we speak have undergone a change. Many native Indian languages are on the verge of extinction such as Nicobarese.

Effect on Education in India

- From a traditional method of education of Gurukuls and Madrasas, the British set the motion rolling on Western education with the Macaulay Minutes on education.
- Since 1991, India has focused on securing English medium education. There is a proliferation of many English medium schools in India.
- The newly announced **New Education Policy of 2020** emphasises on mother tongue languages.
- Also post 1991, more Indian students are enrolling in various foreign universities in increasing numbers.
- There is also the growth of the ed-tech sector following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- IT has bridged the gap between India and the world.

Shrinking space of globalization

- With the victory of US President Donald Trump in 2016, there is a feeling amongst scholars that the space for globalization is shrinking and this

has been accelerated further by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The US and other nations have in recent times re-imposed trade curbs, restricted flow of data, enacted tower laws to curb immigration (US, Kuwait and Oman amongst others) and have also vowed to become self-reliant.
- India will have to find new opportunities in this changing world order and will have to pursue an active economic diplomacy to benefit from these changes.
- External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar has mentioned in this book that the entire theory of International Relations that remained dominant during the second half of the 20th century and in the first decade of the 21st century is now giving way to a new architecture and India will have to find new opportunities and create ones where they don't exist.
- India and Indians need to have a more meaningful dialogue on this concept of globalization and assess their actions and seek to benefit from this phenomenon.
- As more Indians work for companies abroad, live in foreign nations, interact and marry foreign nationals, the government of the day will have to be more active to ensure that Indian nationals and their interests are protected.
- The recent initiatives of the government of India to reskill members of the diaspora who returned as part of the Vande Bharat Mission and the compulsory registration of NRI marriages and policy decision to cancel the passports of NRI's involved in domestic violence cases are some of the positive steps.
- There will be challenges along the way but it is an inevitable process which India should welcome with open arms.

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