

What Does It Mean to Be Marginalised?

To be marginalised means being pushed to the edge of society — not having access to resources, respect, or voice. In class, this may happen if your language, interests, or clothes are different from others. You may feel excluded or ‘not one of them.’

 **Marginalisation** – A process where a group or community is pushed to the edge and denied full participation in society.

In society, entire communities can face exclusion because of their language, religion, customs, poverty, or perceived lower social status. This exclusion causes them to lose opportunities and feel powerless.

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Dadu's Story: An Adivasi Perspective

Dadu's family was displaced from their village in Odisha when a company came to mine iron ore. They lost their land, forests, and freedom. Though some were promised jobs, most were left with nothing. Many migrated to cities and lived in poverty.

This story reflects the experience of millions of Adivasis in India.

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Who Are Adivasis?

 **Adivasi** – Literally means "original inhabitants." Refers to tribal communities who live close to forests and nature.

- About 8% of India's population
- Live in states like Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Northeast, Maharashtra
- Over 500 distinct tribal groups

Their society is unique — many Adivasis follow nature-based religions, speak different languages (like Santhali), and have no caste hierarchies.

 **Scheduled Tribes** – The official term used by the Indian government for Adivasi groups.

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Adivasis and Stereotyping

Often, Adivasis are only shown dancing or wearing tribal clothes during Republic Day floats or in movies.

📖 **Stereotyping – Creating a fixed image about a group without knowing their true lives.**

This portrayal hides the richness of Adivasi culture and leads to discrimination.

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🏗️ **Adivasis and Development**

In earlier times, Adivasis had deep knowledge of forests and managed vast forest lands. They were not ruled by empires, but helped supply forest resources (timber, herbs, animals, etc.).

📖 **Industrialisation changed this:**

- Forests were cleared for mining and industries
- Adivasis were displaced from their land
- They lost access to resources, jobs, and culture
- Forced migration began — to plantations, factories, cities



📷 Fig. – Niyamgiri Hills (Odisha), sacred to Dongarria Konds, threatened by mining project

🎵 **Folk Song: “Come Mini, let’s go to Assam...” – Shows hope and betrayal of migrant Adivasis working in tea plantations.**

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📊 **Impact of Displacement**

- Tribals are 50% of people displaced due to mining
- 79% of displaced people in AP, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand are Adivasis
- Lost lands for dams, wildlife parks, and industries
- Labeled “encroachers” on their own land
- End up working as cheap labour in cities

📖 **Result: Malnutrition, poor health, low literacy, and poverty**



Fig. – Cycle of poverty due to loss of land and livelihood

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Minorities and Marginalisation

Minority – A group that is numerically smaller and may be culturally or socially disadvantaged.

Why are minorities given special safeguards?

- Because the majority's culture can dominate public life
- Minorities may feel insecure or excluded
- Safeguards help preserve diversity and ensure equality

Constitutional Rights – Protect cultural, linguistic, and religious minorities

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Muslims and Marginalisation

Muslims make up 14.2% of India's population. However, data shows they are economically and socially disadvantaged.

Data Snapshot:

I. Access to Basic Amenities (2009):

Community	Pucca House	Electricity	Tap Water
Hindus	65.4%	75.2%	43.7%
Muslims	63.8%	67.5%	35.8%
Sikhs	91.3%	96.0%	49.3%

II. Literacy Rate (2011):

Community	Literacy %
Muslims	57%
Hindus	63%
Jains	86%

III. Public Jobs (IAS, IPS, etc.):

Muslims are only 2–4% of high-ranking jobs, though they form 13.5% of the population.

📖 **Sachar Committee (2006)** – Government committee to study Muslim status. Found Muslims were like other marginalised groups.

📖 **Ghettoisation** – When a community lives in one area, cut off from others, often due to fear or discrimination.



 Fig. – Women's education, low school enrollment, stereotyping of Muslim appearance

Only 4% of Muslim children study in Madarsas; most go to government or private schools.

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Conclusion

Marginalisation affects many communities in different ways:

- Adivasis – due to displacement and resource loss
- Muslims – due to prejudice, low access to services
- Others – like Dalits and women (covered in other chapters)

 **Marginalisation is linked to:**

- Disadvantage
- Prejudice
- Powerlessness

But change is possible. These communities have resisted, protested, and are still fighting for their rights and identity.

 **Key Message – Diversity, equality, and justice must be protected through laws, policies, and public support.**

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Glossary

Term	Meaning
Marginalisation	Being pushed out of the centre of society
Scheduled Tribes	Official term for tribal communities
Stereotyping	Forming fixed, often wrong, images of groups
Ghettoisation	A community living in isolation due to exclusion
Displaced	Forced to move from one's home or land
Malnourished	Not getting enough nutrition or food
Militarised	Area with heavy army presence
Hierarchy	Ranking where some have more power than others
Mainstream	Dominant or central part of society