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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA

M.S.O.-4

Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 100

Note : Answer five questions in all, selecting at least two from each section. All questions carry equal marks

SECTION-I

Q. 1. Trace the emergence of Sociology in India.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 1, 'The Historical Roots of Indian Sociology' and Page No. 6, Q. No. 1.

Q. 2. Discuss the place of social classes and gender hierarchy in Indian social structure.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 15, 'Social Structure of the Village: Caste, Class and Gender'.

Q. 3. Elaborate the relevance of the descent approach to understanding caste system in Indian society.

Ans. Kinship in our society is used for establishing clear-cut corporate social units. Each one of us is a member of such a co-operating and closely bound group of people. One can depend upon the help and support given by such people. Such co-operating local groups are always larger than elementary families of spouses and their children. When these groups are recognised or defined on the basis of shared descent, anthropologists call them descent groups. Formally speaking there are six possible avenues for the transmission of descent group membership, from parents to children.

Also Ref.: See Chapter-12, Page No. 81, 'Caste and Sub-caste' and Page No. 83, 'Marriages within Sub-caste'.

Q. 4. 'Green revolution has brought fundamental change in the agrarian class relations in India.' Explain.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-13, Page No. 96, 'Agrarian Social Structure and Change in India' and Page No. 98, 'Green Revolution and Social Mobility'.

Q. 5. Discuss the major approaches to the study of kinship system in India.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-12, Page No. 86, 'Approaches to the Study of Kinship System'.

SECTION-II

Q. 6. Discuss critically G.S. Ghurye's view on tribal question in India.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-19, Page No. 135, 'The Framing of the Tribal Question Elwin and Ghurye'.

Q. 7. 'Religion and culture are closely linked in Indian society.' Discuss.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-22, Page No. 155, 'Introduction', Page No. 156, 'Theoretical Explanation: Bond Between Religion and Culture', Page No. 159, 'Some Other Sociological Approaches to the Understanding of Culture and Religion'.

Q. 8. Discuss the changing facets of peasant movements in India.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-31, Page No. 234, 'Radical Peasant Movement and Reformatory Peasant Movement'.

Q. 9. Explain the impact of urbanisation on Indian society.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-25, Page No. 177, 'Urbanisation in India' and Page No. 179, 'Urbanization and Status of Women'.

Q. 10. Elucidate the significance of 'Commons' among the tribes in India.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-17, Page No. 127, 'Culture of the Commons'.

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QUESTION PAPER

December – 2022

(Solved)

SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA

M.S.O.-4

Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 100

Note : Answer five questions in all, selecting at least two from each section. All questions carry equal marks

SECTION-I

Q. 1. Discuss the major approaches to understand Indian society and culture.

Ans. The interpretation of Indian reality by the administrators, trained in British universities and indoctrinated by utilitarian rationalism, was more pragmatic and more matter-of-fact. Their purpose was to understand it in order to exploit its resources. Baden-Powell recognized that there were in general two claims on the produce of the soil, the state's and the landholder's. He postulated that the government derived its revenue "by taking a share of the actual grain heap on the threshing floor of each holding". In order to ensure the collection of this share a wide range of intermediaries between the state and the grain heap developed. They asserted in their turn varying degrees of control or ownership/possession right over land and its produce. In addition, rights over the land were established by conquest. Baden-Powell strongly contested Henry Maine's view that there was only one type of Indian village, i.e. politically autonomous and economically self-sufficient village community. The idea of the unchanging village community was incorporated into general social theory of the later nineteenth and also twentieth centuries. The Marxists viewed the British rule as an unconscious tool of history "breaking the stagnation Indian society founded on unchanging village communities. The Indian nationalists on the other hand came to rely on R. C. Dutt's *Economic History of India* to establish that it was the evils of British imperial rule which degraded India from this idyllic state of village republics with agricultural prosperity to the conditions of stagnated rural economy dominated by moneylenders and landlords. According to Baden-Powell, there were two distinct types of village in India: (i) "ryotwari" or non-landlord and (ii) landlord or joint-village. The types

and classifications of villages were also attempted in relation to the institution of caste. They were found advantageous by the administrators. They reduced the need for specific knowledge. To act in terms of categories was relatively convenient. Latently, the categorical or conceptual thinking about villages directed attention away from internal politics in villages and from the questions of the nature of actual social relations and economic conditions engendered by the colonial policy.

The Early Indian Thinkers phase was essentially a phase of multi-level fusion. It is not without significance that the twin disciplines of Sociology and Social Anthropology had their beginnings in the two cities of Bombay and Calcutta (Now Mumbai and Kolkata), which typically represented colonialism. These beginnings were more or less simultaneous in the second decade of the last century. Initially, more established and 'grown-up' social science partners treated Sociology and social anthropology as a 'left behind category' and as such these disciplines were relegated to a subordinate position in the organizational structure of Indian Universities. Most departments of Sociology in their premature phases began their journey with economics. Contributions of B.N. Seal, G.S. Ghurye, B.K. Sarkar, Radhakamal Mukherjee, D.P. Mukerji and K.P. Chattopadhyay during the pre-Independence period are particularly remarkable. Their intellectual interests, methods of data collection, and their interpretations of the Indian social system and social institutions were strongly influenced by the ethnographic works produced by scholar-administrators throughout the colonial period. Studies on caste, family, marriage and kinship, social stratification, tribal communities, rural and urban society figured prominently in this period. Ghurye introduced the down-to-earth empiricism in Indian

Sample Preview of The Chapter

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SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA

EMERGENCE OF SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA

Social Background of the Emergence of Sociology in India



INTRODUCTION

Sociology in India starts with the study of Social Anthropology. Both are assumed inter-related, but presently it is differentiated by the various scholars. In India, Sociology is very much related to the cultural approach. And this is the point where Indian Sociology differs from Western conceptions of Sociology.

The advantage lay in the fact that when Indian sociologists began their work in the 1920s and 1930s, they did not have to create a new all the tools of their trade, but found a readymade stock at their disposal that could be put to use in their work. But this meant two things. It stifled, at least to some extent, the creativity and innovativeness of Indian sociologists on the theoretical and methodological planes, encouraging the lazy habit of applying whatever was readily available to every kind of problem: Why, some of them must have asked, try to reinvent the bicycle? It also established a gap on the plane of concepts, methods, and theories between Western sociologists and their Indian counterparts. This gap still remains very wide, and some would say that Indian sociologists have failed to be innovative both theoretically and methodologically because of their passive dependence on the work of western scholars. The specificity of the Indian context raised many questions. First of all, if Western Sociology emerged as an attempt to make sense of modernity, what would its role be in a country like India? India, too, was of course experiencing the changes brought about by modernity, but with an important difference – it was a colony.

The first experience of modernity in India was closely intertwined with the experience of colonial subjugation. Secondly, if social anthropology in the West

arose out of the curiosity felt by European society about primitive cultures, what role could it have in India, which was an ancient and advanced civilisation, but which also, had 'primitive' societies within it?

Finally, what useful role could sociology have in a sovereign, independent India, a nation about to begin its adventure with planned development and democracy?

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF INDIAN SOCIOLOGY

Sociology is related to the norms, values, ideas, ideals etc., of the humans and their society. Thus every society has its distinct social culture so the theories or concepts of one society differ from the other society. Thus we can say that Sociology is hardly fit with the natural sciences. As on today, Indian Sociology or say Sociology in India (as these two expressions have been used interchangeably) is passing through a critical phase. It is still dominated by the changing paradigms of Western sociology and enamoured by their methodologies. It has not yet succeeded in making its contribution to social theory and conceptual development.

Sociology as a subject came into existence in West due to the intellectual response of problems which that society was facing as a result of industrialization and the type of social upheaval and transformation that were taking place. French Revolution and Industrial Revolution had taken the Western society into the enlightenment phase. The old aged feudal system and great importance of church had been abolished. Thus society become into a chaotic and uncertain situation. And at that time a group of scholars come to share a particular viewpoint towards the study of socio-cultural and other aspects of

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human life, a particular sociological approach emerges. Such an approach is accompanied by appropriate concepts, theory or theories, methods and techniques for studying society.

Sociological researches in India had already been initiated much before the advent of formal sociology by British administrators. Absence of proper grasp and appreciation of Indian social realities as also the inadequate, and often inaccurate, understanding of local customs and traditions and misjudgements about different institutional arrangements led the colonial administrators to make use of sociology and social anthropology to run the colonial administration smoothly.

THE HERITAGE OF SOCIAL THOUGHT IN INDIA

India has a rich cultural heritage. Thought has been subjected in a series of cultural invasions, yet it has retained its originality and traditional character even after absorbing the best of the external influences.

Cultural heritage stands for things such as works of art, literature, music, cultural achievements and customs that have been passed on from earlier generations to the present generations. Indians has a rich cultural heritage. There is a harmonious blend of art, religion and philosophy in the India cultural. Indian culture is actually an outcome of the continuous fusion of different cultures. World religions like Christianity, Buddhism, Islam and Zoroastrianism have coexisted with Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and others. From the dawn of the Indus Valley Civilization in 6000 BC, to the recent past, we have been exposed to a series of cultural invasions, it has retained its originality and traditional character even after absorbing the best of external influences. The Indian culture is unique in its character and it is this uniqueness which attracts the Western societies. Our ancestors excelled not only in philosophy but also in science. The Indian literary heritage is the oldest in the world.

The wisdom of our ancient epics like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* holds the eternal lesson of the victory of good over evil. The *Bhagwad Gita* is a book of full of philosophical principles. Lord Buddha preached that perfects happiness could be gained if one exercises control over one's passions. Hinduism has a vast number of gods and goddesses, besides the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu. It teaches the existence of one God but allows its followers to worship Him in any form they like. Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikhism preached against humbug and hypocrisy in religion. He laid supreme stress on true faith, simplicity and purity of life and religious tolerance. Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity and Islam are among the major religions followed in India. Traditionally, tolerance of all faiths is a part of our cultural heritage. India is a secular country and the State treats all religions equally.

Manu is considered a law giver in the Hindu tradition. *Manu Smriti* is one of the 18 *Smritis*. It is important to note that laws given by Manu, in *Manu Smriti* although followed in some form even today, are not considered divine, and may be modified by the society to keep up

with the times. Indeed, it has been speculated that in its current form, *Manu Smriti* represents laws that have been added or modified throughout the history. *Smritis* mean "that which has to be remembered". Unlike the Vedas which are considered of divine origin, the *Smritis* are of human compositions which guide individuals in their daily conduct according to time and place. They list the codes and rules governing the actions of the individual, the community, society, and the nation. They are also called Dharma Sastras or laws of righteous conduct.

Our ancestors excelled not only in philosophy but also in science. The Atharveda is a storehouse of information of the Ayurveda school of Medicine. Astrology and Astronomy were quite popular in ancient India. Aryabhatta precisely calculated the time of solar eclipse more than two thousand years ago. The concept of 'Zero' (0) was invented in India. Indian scientists like C.V. Raman, Chandrasekhar and Hargovind Khurana have won Nobel prizes of their contribution in science. There are certain aspects of our cultural heritage. Division of society on the basis of division of labour gave birth to the caste system.

SOCIOGRAPHY IN CLASSICAL AND ARAB-PERSIAN ACCOUNTS

The foreign accounts, while lacking native understanding of the complex culture of ancient Indians, do provide valuable objective documentation as also confirm some of the glories claimed in Indian inscriptions.

In 1017 A.D., at the behest of Sultan Mahmud of Persia, Alberuni (a.k.a. Al-Biruni) travelled to India to learn about the Hindus, "and to discuss with them questions of religion, science, and literature, and the very basis of their civilization". He remained in India for thirteen years, studying, and exploring. Alberuni was a true genius – he was renowned as a mathematician, and an astronomer prior to his India mission – and has successfully captured the time and meaning of India in his writings. Alberuni not only studied Sanskrit, but also met many Indian mathematicians and philosophers. It is rather ironic that some of the most comprehensive study of India of the middle ages is performed by an Islamic scholar. In his notes, we not only find elaborate descriptions of travel tables, but also discussions of divinity, literature and mathematical equations.

During A.D. 399-414, Chinese scholar Fa-Hien travelled to India in search of great Buddhist books of discipline. The faithful integrity of his notes and observations are an invaluable resource available to researchers of Buddhist period studies, and of ancient India. It provides exact dates of when Buddhism was introduced to China, the many Indian dynasties, and of the austere life led by the sages and monks of the period.

Huen-Tsiang (a.k.a. Huen Tsang, 603-664 A.D.) was one of the outstanding Chinese scholars who visited India in search of knowledge. He travelled extensively in India. He passed through Kashmir valley, visited Takshashila, and reached Mathura, where he saw the sacred traces of Lord Buddha at Kashi. He went to Kapilavastu, Kushinagar, Pataliputra, Vaishali, Mahabodhi, and stayed

at the famed Nalanda University. Tsinag then visited Rajgir and Nepal. He also toured South India and paid a visit to Sri Lanka.

The Early European Travellers

Duarte Barbose was a Portuguese writer and Portuguese Indian officer between 1500 and 1516-17, with the post of scrivener in Cannanore factory and sometimes interpreter of the local language (Malayalam). His "Book of Duarte Barbosa" is one of the earliest examples of Portuguese travel literature, written Circa 1516, shortly after the arrival in the Indian Ocean. Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605 - July ,1689) was a French traveller and pioneer of trade with India. Apart from these two scholars there are so many who provided the details of Indian society's culture, rituals and beliefs prevalent at that time.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF INDIA AT THE ADVENT OF BRITISH RULE

The socio-economic conditions of the 18th century India were infected by political convulsions and instability. The society in general retained most of its traditional features, but several changes were induced in the society. The European influence in the Indian society led to the alterations and changes all over India.

The institution of the castes was striking feature of the Hindu society of the time. Caste rules were extremely rigid in the matters of marriage, dress, diet and even profession. However economic pressure and administrative innovations introduced by the East India Company made the situation worse than before.

In the beginning of the 18th century, the basic unit of the Indian economy was the self-sufficient village economy. The income of the government came from the land revenues levied on each land granted. The village communities and the per centage of the land revenues remained unchanged with the change of the rulers and the dynasties. Town handicrafts in India had reached a high level of development and attracted world wide markets.

THREE MAJOR APPROACHES OF THE WESTERNERS TO INDIAN SOCIETY AND CULTURE

British Orientalism (1772 to 1835) was a unique phenomenon in British Indian history that was inspired by the needs of the East India Company to train a class of British administrators in the languages and culture of India. British officers serving in India, the orientalist were appreciative of the ancient religious and cultural traditions of classical India. Consequently, they made significant contributions in the fields of Indian philology, archaeology, and history. The idea that traditional oriental learning could be combined with the rationalism of the West was the inspiration of British orientalism. Intellectually, it was one of the most powerful ideas of 19th century India. The 'Missionaries' derived their paradigm from their own version of the normative principles of Christianity and judged most Indian socio-cultural institutions negatively. Their solution to India's problem was, therefore, its Christianization. The

view of social reality that it offered was mechanistic, segmentary and instrumental in nature. It constituted a typical 'colonial paradigm' for social analysis and offered a deeply fractured picture of Indian society and as such of Indian reality.

From the beginning of the creation of the Central Provinces in 1861 it was the main goal of the British administration to construct a governmental system providing for the improvement and development of the area.

The British inherited the institutional form of agrarian system from the Mughals. The British superimposed a system over the existing pattern in tune with British customs and laws relating land. Broadly, three principal types of land revenue system were introduced in British India. The basic characteristic of each system was the attempt to incorporate elements of the preceding agrarian structure. The interaction of colonial policy and existing systems produced widely different local results and hybrid forms. Different land revenue systems were introduced in various parts of British India, as the British annexed different parts of India in various periods. These land revenue systems are: (a) Zamindari System, (b) Ryotwari System and (c) Mahalwari System.

Apart from all these there were a concept existed at that time that there was only one type of Indian village, viz. the politically autonomous and economically self sufficient village community. Many scholars at that time studied about this concept including Henry Maine, Marx, Metcalfe etc.

OFFICIAL VIEW OF THE BRITISH REGARDING CASTES AND TRIBES

For the administrative purpose British officials started to collect the details of Indian families and their custom's detail. It has started in 1769 by Henry Vereist. Many prominent British officials followed the lead. Francis Buchanan has conducted first ethnographic survey of Bengal in 1807. Later French Missionary Abbe Dubois wrote '**Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies**' in 1816. Later many British officials used this data for the administrative purpose such as Munro in his land settlements in Madras and Elephinstone in his diplomatic work in Maharashtra.

It was 1861 when first all-India census had taken place and it was the beginning of more systematic attempts at gathering data. The fluidity of the caste system was affected by the arrival of the British. Prior to that, the relative ranking of castes differed from one place to another. The castes did not constitute a rigid description of the occupation or the social status of a group. The British attempted to equate the Indian caste system to their own class system. They saw caste as an indicator of occupation, social standing, and intellectual ability. During the initial days of the British East India Company's rule, caste privileges and customs were encouraged, but the British law courts disagreed with the discrimination against the lower castes. However, British policies of divide and rule as well as enumeration of the population into rigid categories during the 10 year

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census contributed towards the hardening of caste identities.

The British beginning in the 18th century added to the consolidation of feudalism in India, first under the Jagirdari system and then under the Zamindari system. Beginning with the Permanent Settlement imposed by the British in Bengal and Bihar, which later became the template for a deepening of feudalism throughout India, the older social and economic system in the country began to alter radically. Land, both forest areas belonging to adivasis and settled farmland belonging to non-advaisi peasants, was rapidly made the legal property of British-designated Zamindars (landlords), who in turn moved to extract the maximum economic benefit possible from their newfound property and subjects without regard to historical tenure or ownership.

Divide and Rule Policy of the British

Britishers started the recording of ethnographic survey of India through the census. At the one end it was a good step for the details of Indian society and its people, but on the other side Britishers used it as a tool of divide and rule policy. Because they used these data for creating divisions between Hindus and other groups and sections. Many Indian Nationalists condemned it and finally after independence India has ceased to record data on a caste basis.

GROWTH OF ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS PROMOTING SOCIAL INQUIRY

With the colossal development in science and technology Scientific Associations in British India became a common occurrence in the passing years of 19th century. India was by then a changed country, with numerous Western aspects making their presence felt still from resistance. On Jan. 1797, Sir William Jones founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta. He was a great Sanskritist and Indologist who has regarded History, Science and Art as a trinity of human knowledge. With the inspiration of Sir Jones many European and Indian scholars like Henry Derozio, Pyari Chand Mitra, Dakshina Ranjan Mukherjee and Rev. K.M. Banerjee etc., tried to explore the literary and philosophical issues as well as contemporary social problems. Tattwabodhini Sabha another notable society founded in 1839, also in Calcutta. It discussed social conditions and problems and questioned several established customs and institutions. The first Modern Man of India, Raja Rammohan Roy (1777-1833), was a great social thinker and reformer. Raja Rammohan was extremely learned and strongly influenced by Christianity. He disagreed with the doctrine of reincarnation and fought to abolish certain traditional practices, some of which had been grossly misused. These included caste, polygamy, image worship, sati, and child marriage. Other notable thinkers and reformers of the time were Akshay Kumar Dutta (1820-1886), Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917), Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928), J.G. Phoolley (1827-1888) and M.G. Ranade (1824-1901) and

several others in creating intellectual and social self-awareness in the country about India's cultural and civilisational strengths.

S.C. Dubey points out that the Literary Society of Bombay deliberated and published in 1929; Madras Journal of Literature and Sciences started in 1835, published historical and ethnographic studies and also surveys of cities and villages. The Benaras Institute founded in 1861; Oudh Scientific Society of Lucknow were also concerned with social problems.

The Bethune Society, established in 1851; a Society for Sociological Studies established in Jaipur in 1869 and the Bengal Social Science Association (1867-1878), contributed significantly to social science studies. It is important that Auguste Comte and his theory of Positivism and Herbert Spencer and his evolutionism were very much known to the Indian scholar. And in 1905, Shyamji Krishna Verma started publishing a journal, Indian Sociology, with the influence of Herbert Spencer.

RESPONSES AND REACTIONS OF THE INDIAN INTELLECTUALS

When we see the growth of associations and institutions in colonial period we found some interesting things. Most of the social reformers like Raja Rammohan Roy, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar and Jyotiba Phoolley wanted to change existing social institutions for a more humane condition, but in the Indian perspective and challenged the Western interpretation of Indian society. While on the other a small section of the Indian intellectuals were completely overwhelmed by the West. Bankimchandra, Bhudev, Brajendra Nath Seal and Benoy Kumar Sarkar all had interpreted the society in Indological perspective. Seal refuted attempts to interpret Indian social and cultural reality from a reductionist, unilinear, evolutionary frame of reference. While Sarkar always responded the challenge emerged from the biases of the orientalist frame of reference. Later many other social scientists such as S.V. Ketkar, A.R. Wadia, Bhupendranath Dutt and N.K. Bose created the ambience for teaching and research in Sociology and Social Anthropology in India. Their writings influenced the many young social scientists and created a new way to understand the Indian society in a different perspective. This perspective mainly developed against the criticism of Hinduism by European Missionaries and conversion of poor and lowly Hindus as well as the tribal people into Christianity. There was an urge for social and religious reform, a reinterpretation of the past, an assertion of identity and an examination of the present. The ground was being prepared for the emergence of sociology.

EARLY SOCIOLOGICAL BEGINNINGS

Analysis about the Indian society and culture was present in the writings of early European scholars such as Karl Marx, Max Weber and Durkheim. But the specific and intensive field work about the Indian society was done by W.H.R. River. His study **The Todas** (1906) was the first monograph on a people of India in the modern anthropological tradition. River's study was followed by