

National Slum Development Programme

On the basis of the fact that the slum population of India had touched 46.78 million by 1991 and the conditions of urban slums in most of the States and towns in the country were very unsatisfactory, it was deemed appropriate by the Government of India to introduce a special central assistance to States for upgradation of urban slums under the heading of National Slum Development Programme in 1996. The programme focused on

(a) upgrading of physical amenities like water supply, storm water drainage, community bath, widening and paving of existing lanes, sewers, community latrines, streetlight etc.;

(b) improving community infrastructure including provision of community centres to be used for pre-school education, non-formal education, adult education, recreational activities etc.; and provision of Community Primary Health Care Centre Buildings.

Difference between Tribal Society, Rural society and Urban Society			
	Tribal Society	Rural society	Urban Society
1	Small in size	Small in size	Big in size
2	Tribal society is homogenous.	Rural society is homogenous.	Urban society is heterogeneous.
3	It is dominated by blood relationships.	It is dominated by primary relations.	It is dominated by secondary relations.
4	Informal means of control	Informal means of control	Formal means of control
5	Hunting, gathering and pastoral activities.	Main occupation is Agriculture.	Urban community is known for non-Agricultural pursuits.
6	Close contact with nature.	Close to nature.	Out of touch with nature.
7	Illiteracy	Less stress on education	Mass education
8	People are known for their simplicity.	People are known for their simplicity and hospitality.	People are known for their artificiality, narrow mindedness.
9	People are conservative and dogmatic.	People are conservative and orthodox.	People are progressive.
10	Simple division of labour based on sex.	Simple division of labour	Large scale division of labour

☐

Conclusion

To sum up, in this lesson, the concepts of urban society, urbanisation, urbanism and features of urban society have been discussed. It has also discussed the urban issues of housing and slums. The present chapter also highlights the distinction among Tribal, Rural and Urban societies. It must be kept in mind that despite their differences, all three types of communities are an equally important and integral part of a society.

Glossary

- **Housing:** It is one of the primary necessities of any civilised society, since, it provides shelter to the people.
- **Poverty:** Condition where people's basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter are not being met.
- **Slums:** A slum is a heavily populated urban informal settlement characterised by substandard housing and squalor. While slums differ in size and other characteristics from country to country, most lack reliable sanitation services, supply of clean water, reliable electricity, timely law enforcement and other basic services.
- **Urban society:** It is heterogeneous, dominated by secondary relations, artificial, more mobile, and non-agricultural based. It is big in size and the people are progressive.
- **Urbanisation:** Urbanisation is the movement of the people from rural to urban areas, and the resulting growth of cities. It is also a process by which rural areas become transformed into urban areas.
- **Urbanism:** Urbanism represents a way of living. It also denotes the diffusion of urban culture and the evolution of urban society.



I. Objective Type Questions

A. Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which are the causes for homelessness in urban society?
(a) Shortage of housing (b) Entitlement of housing
(c) Entitlement of Land (d) All of the above
2. The movement of the people from rural area to urban area is called:
(a) Urban Society (b) Rural Society
(c) Urbanism (d) Urbanisation
3. Which are the causes for the growth of slums?
(a) Poverty (b) Poor Housing Planning
(c) Both a and b (d) None of the above
4. Which is not the feature of slum area:
(a) Acute overcrowding (b) Inadequate lighting
(c) Urbanism (d) No sanitation system

5. Which is the cause of homelessness?
 (a) Shortage of housing (b) Self-sufficiency
 (c) Development (d) Market oriented

B. True/False

1. Urban society is small in size.
2. Trade, industry and commerce are the chief marks of the urban economy.
3. The Chances for social mobility are less in urban society.
4. Mega cities are suffering from acute housing problem.
5. Slums are part of rural life.

C. Fill in the Blanks

1. Urban society is _____ in size and _____ in nature.
2. _____ means of social control found in urban society.
3. An urban community is known for its _____ division of labour.
4. Housing problem is also known as _____.
5. _____ represents an urban way of living.
6. _____ and _____ are the issues of urban society.

D. Match the columns.

Column A

Formal relation
 Shortage of housing
 Urban way of living
 Informal housing structure
 Intermixture of people from different background

Column B

Homelessness
 Slum
 urban society
 Heterogeneity
 Urbanism

II. Very short answer type questions

1. What is a district of a city marked by poverty and inferior living conditions called?
2. Poor ventilation, acute overcrowding, faulty alignment of streets and inadequate lighting are the features of which type of society?
3. Large-scale division of labour and specialisation are found in which society – urban or rural?
4. An attitude in which the interests of the individual take precedence over the interests of the group is called ;
5. The state of being unknown to most people is called;

6. Urban society is dominated by which relations?
7. Which type of economy is found in a tribal society?
8. What is the size of urban population?
9. As per Census of India, what is urban Society ?
10. Housing problem is also known as?
11. Slums are known in India by which different names?
12. Name two types of deviant behaviours existing in slum areas.

III. Short answer type questions

1. What do you mean by Urban Society?
2. What is non-agricultural occupation?
3. What is Individualism?
4. What do you mean by housing?
5. What is Congestion?
6. What is a slum?
7. What do you mean by urbanisation?

IV. Long answer type questions

1. Explain two characteristics of urban society.
2. Write down the three causes of housing.
3. Write the three causes responsible for slum areas in urban society.
4. Write any two social changes in urban society.
5. Write a short note on urban society.
6. What do you mean by urban society? Discuss its characteristics in detail.

V. Very long answer type questions

1. Write a detailed note on urban society.
2. What is housing? What are the causes responsible for housing problems?
3. What do you mean by slums? Write a detailed note on it.
4. Write down about social changes which occur in urban society.
5. Differentiate between tribal, rural and urban societies.

PROJECT

Make a Project Report on which cities are suffering from acute housing problem and find out its reasons.

UNIT 2

2

Unit



Inequalities in Indian Society



Caste Inequalities

4 Chapter

Highlights

- 4.1 Concept
- 4.2 Characteristics
- 4.3 Caste and Social Stratification
- 4.4 Theories of Origin of Caste
- 4.5 Caste Inequality and Indian Society

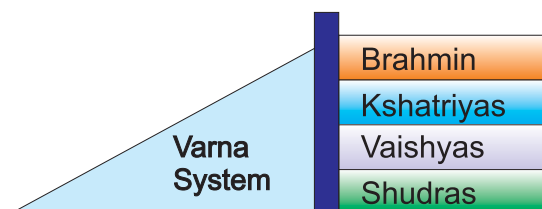
Introduction

In this chapter we will make an attempt understand what the caste system is and why it is one of the unique phenomena of Indian society in general and Hindu society in particular. On the basis of course content of class XI, you have already understood that family (i.e., joint family), religion, class and tribe are key organs of India's social structure. Caste is yet another integral aspect of the Indian society. The term caste is used to distinguish an individual from another. An individual is born in a caste and remains in it forever. Members of a caste used to have a particular occupation on a hereditary basis.

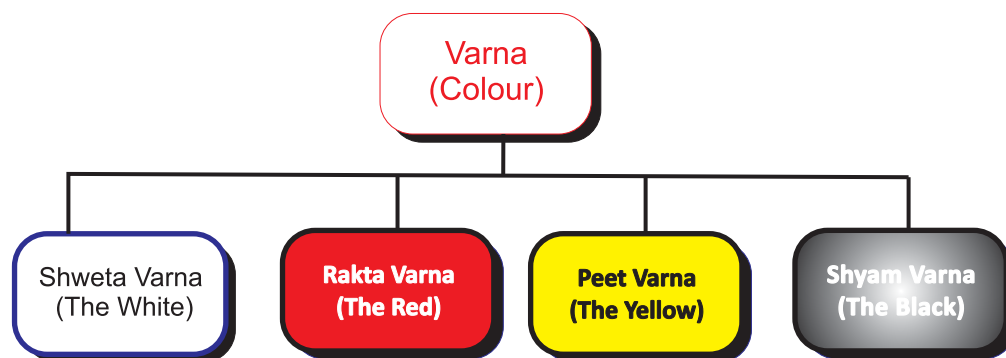
Concept of Caste and Varna

In the process of socialisation at childhood stage you already make several encounters with the term caste. It is an important part of Indian society. You might have also heard about the term 'Varna'. The term 'Varna' refers to a social division of labour based on achievement. In Hindu social system, there are four Varnas such as Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra.

1. **Brahmins** were associated with the performance of religious rites, rituals and with imparting education.
2. **Kshatriyas** were associated with defence services, that is, protection of people from enemies.
3. **Vaishyas** were associated with trade and business
4. **Shudras** were there to serve the above mentioned three 'Varna'.



In Varna model, one could have the possibility of mobility. In the field of Sociology, Varna indicates structural differentiations having dynamism. However, slowly and gradually, the mobility of the person from one occupation to another not only became restricted but completely forbidden and gave rise to caste system. In other words, when Varna model becomes immobile caste structure comes into existence. Such caste system is also known as 'Jati' – an indigenous term. Caste refers to the structural division of Hindu society on the basis of Varna model in which ascriptive status, inherited occupations, restricted mobility and social discrimination to the extent of untouchability prevail.

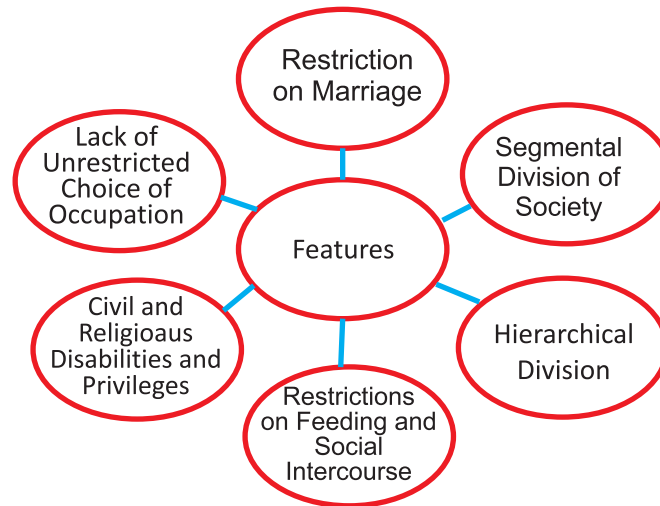


These four ranked social groups are known in Sanskrit language by the word 'Varna', which primarily means 'colour'. The colours were apparently symbolic. The classical texts associate 'White' with Brahmin, 'Red' with the Kshatriya, 'Yellow' with the Vaishya and 'Black' with the Shudra. The meaning of Varna sometimes establishes the relationship between caste and race. In the process of development, the caste based on Shudra Varna was further divided into touchables and untouchables. The untouchable castes are also known as 'Antyaj' (the outcaste).

Herbert Risley (1851-1911) defines caste as a collection of families or group of families bearing a common name, claiming a common descent from a mythical ancestor human or divine, professing to follow the same hereditary calling and regarded it by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogeneous community. This definition of Risley expresses the following facts:

1. Caste is a group of families, meaning it is based upon blood and marital ties.
2. Caste possesses a common name, implying that each caste is a distinctive group.
3. Caste is a hereditary group. Such hereditary makes caste group homogeneous.

The most comprehensive view in the field of Sociology about caste is given by G. S. Ghurye. He has examined caste system in India by giving importance to occupational structures, hierarchies and culture dominated by religion and tradition. He elaborates caste on the basis of six features:



1. **Segmental Division of Society:** Each group of caste (segment) is ascriptive, that is based upon birth.
2. **Hierarchical Division:** Ranking system is a basic feature of caste, which gives rise to the concept of dominant caste (high placement in hierarchy) and authority system.
3. **Restrictions on Feeding and Social Intercourse:** Restrictions give rise to purity-pollution principles, which defines what kind of food is to be eaten and with whom it can be shared.
4. **Civil and Religious Disabilities and Privileges:** Civil and religious privileges and disabilities lead to untouchability, as well as, other forms of social discriminations. It also becomes a cause for intra-caste marriage, that is, endogamy.
5. **Lack of Unrestricted Choice of Occupation:** Restrictions on occupation create non-competitive solidarity and barter exchange known as 'Jajmani system'.
6. **Restriction on Marriage:** Restrictions on marriage indicate that caste becomes homogeneous due to role of restrictive forms of kinship. However, in caste system one can find the presence of 'Anuloma Vivah' (Hypergamy) and 'Pratiloma Vivah' (Hypogamy).

These features of caste are still part of the mindset of the people. In Hindu society caste system still prevails. However, due to social interaction some features of caste have made impact on Non-Hindu groups (Jain, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim etc.). It can be said that caste has acquired dominance if one wishes to examine the continuity

and change of Indian society and the inherited occupations or work activities in relation to caste are not only economic but religious and moral also. Thus, caste system in India goes beyond several boundaries. It can also be used for conceptualising social exclusion and poverty.

Box. 1



Louis Dumont (1911-1998) was an eminent sociologist. He was primarily concerned with the ideology of the caste system. For him, caste is a set of relationships of economic, political and kinship systems, sustained by certain 'values', which are mostly religious in nature.

Dumont says that caste is not a form of stratification but a special form of inequality. He identifies 'hierarchy' as the essential value underlying the caste system, supported by Hinduism.

Concept of Pure and Impure

A caste is considered to be pure and impure on the basis of the way of life. This distinction is further substantiated on the basis of cleanliness maintained, occupation followed, access to reading of scriptures and temples etc. For instance, the Brahmins, assigned with the priestly functions, occupied the top rank in the social hierarchy and were considered 'pure' as compared to the untouchables, being 'impure', and segregated outside the village. The untouchables were not allowed to draw water from the wells used by upper castes. Besides this, they did not have any access to Hindu temples, and suffered from various other restrictions.

Characteristics of Caste

The following are some of the characteristics of caste:

1. **Caste is a Dominant Social System:** Caste is a dominant social system of Indian society. Because of spatial mobility and religious and cultural interface between people, caste system has gone beyond the Hindu social group.
2. **Ascriptive Status:** Caste is an ascriptive status group. Individual is known by the caste in which he/she is born.
3. **Hierarchy:** Caste is based upon Varna model of hierarchy. In this hierarchy, Brahmins are at the top, followed by Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. Untouchables are termed as 'Antyaj' (out caste).

4. **Occupations:** The occupations of these caste groups are decided as – teaching educational and preaching religious values by Brahmins, protection of people and activities as warriors by Kshatriyas, trade and business activities by Vaishyas and serving the above three varnas by the Shudras. Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra get linkage with inherited occupations. Inherited occupations create relative immobility in terms of occupation. As a result, caste system becomes a fixed occupational group.
5. **Each Caste Possesses Sub-Castes:** In each caste one can find several sub-castes known as 'Jati' and 'Upjati'.
6. **Distinctive Culture:** Each caste group possesses a real or imaginative ancestor and distinctive culture system.
7. **Endogamous:** Caste is an endogamous group. At the time of marriages the notion of gotra gives rise to severe restrictions. Inter-caste marriage is permissible but intra-gotra marriage is prohibited. In fact, it is taboo.
8. **Purity-Pollution:** Caste system also incorporates purity-pollution. Caste-system establishes Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas as twice-born. These castes are pure while castes related to Shudras are polluted. The division of labour, thus, based on caste model is also characterised by intellectual labour (twice born) and manual labour (Shudra). The term twice-born expresses second birth. The birth is biological, while second birth is of religio-cultural nature based on 'Upnayana Samskar' (thread bearing ceremony). Shudras are not allowed to perform these religious rites.
9. **Privileges-Disabilities:** The privileges-disabilities model creates several kinds of dos and don'ts. The disability goes to the extent of untouchability. The castes related to Shudra particularly the 'Antyaj' still reside in the outskirts. Several forms of social restrictions are still prevalent. For example, in various states of India the groom related to Antyaj is not allowed to ride on horse during marriage procession. These categories cannot enter temples and cannot fetch water from the well. Such restrictions are now an anti-constitutional offence under the Untouchability Offences Act, 1955.
10. **Rules and Regulations:** Each caste group operates on the basis of certain rules and regulations of informal character. They are monitored by caste Panchayats/caste associations. These caste Panchayats/caste associations continuously make efforts for enhancing caste consciousness. They are also involved in their own communitarian welfare in order to establish caste solidarity.

On the basis of these features it can be said that caste system is a dominant feature of Indian society and plays a significant role in shaping way of life.

Caste and Social Stratification:

Caste system in India, as we have pointed out earlier also, constructs the notion of hierarchy in which Brahmins are at the top and Shudras are at the bottom. The history of Indian society indicates that the prestige of Brahmins was the highest. They were honoured by various caste segments because of their occupation and value system. M. N. Srinivas argues that element of pollution is the basic feature of caste system. This element or feature controls each and every type of caste relations. It means the theory of Karma and Dharma along with purity-pollution principle provides base to caste stratification.

Box 2

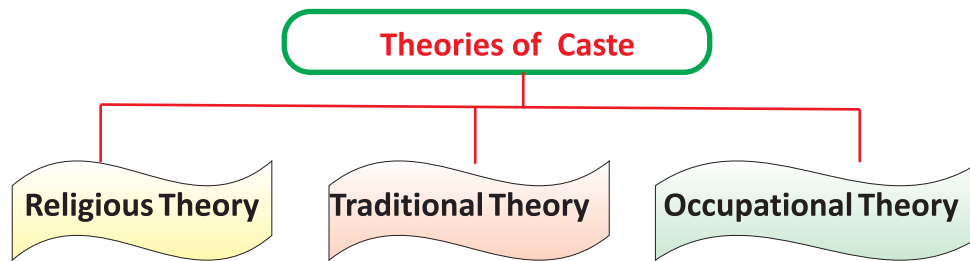
T. B. Bottomore has discussed slavery, estate, caste and social class as four forms of social stratification. In simple words, stratification is a system of ranking in which social groups are placed in terms of high/super-ordinate and low/subordinate. He points out that Indian caste system is unique. In caste system one can observe economic differences. The dominant caste associated with Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vaishya Varna by and large control the means and relations of production. At one stage, the caste system can be compared with the estate in which status group in form of nobility, clergy, traders and serfs can be compared with Varna model on which caste operates. The element of privileges and disabilities further perpetuate caste system and its hierarchical arrangement. The differences in dress patterns and food habits express the way in which stratification operates. The hierarchical system of caste order is transcendental. This opinion is the part of Hindu mindset due to the theory of 'Karma and Rebirth'.

Theories of origin of caste:

How did caste come into existence is a question which has given rise to various theories of origin of caste system. In the field of Sociology we generally discuss six theories of origin of caste. They are (1) Traditional Theory (2) Political Theory (3) Evolutionary Theory (4) Racial Theory (5) Religious Theory and (6) Occupational theory. Here we will concentrate upon Religious theory, Traditional theory and Occupational theory. Controversies prevail among the scholars regarding the origin of caste.

Activity 4.1

In your classroom you may find students belonging to different caste groups. List ten caste groups.



- 1. The Religious Theory:** This theory of Caste is linked with worshiping of Gods and Goddesses and religious rites and rituals. It is believed that Gods and Goddesses also observe hierarchy in their transcendental spaces. In the evolution of society the small groups or the subordinate caste started worshiping of local gods and Goddesses (the local/little traditions) while larger groups who believed in great traditions worshiped Gods and Goddesses of great nature and performed rites and rituals accordingly. This theory believed that subordinate groups in the process of evolution acquired the status of lower caste while the larger group having belief system related to great tradition acquired the status of upper caste. This theory is based upon several mythical perceptions and does not have any scientific-rational support. Religious theory is non-scientific because it is not supported by empirical evidences or historical facts. Classical text, no doubt, provides rationale and logic but they are either mythical or imaginary.
- 2. The Traditional Theory** of caste is based upon ideas of D. N. Majumdar. According to him the caste system in India is based upon philosophical understanding of the supernatural. According to Purushsukt of the Rig-Veda, the four varnas originated from the different parts of the *Prajapati Brahma* (Supreme Being). Hindu religious group believes that 'Brahma' has created Brahmins from his 'mouth', Kshatriyas from his 'arms', Vaishyas from 'thighs' and Shudras from his 'feet'. These body organs also express the occupation of respective castes. In the process of evolution, these Varna which were based on 'Guna' and 'Karma' (characteristics and action) converted into caste. He accepts the logic and argues that Varna refers to division of labour. Slowly and gradually, division of labour became complex due to specialisation. Such specialised skill became closed as people related to specialised act of intellectual labour did not share their secrets. Thus, Varna model converted into that complex division of labour in which skill tactics could not be shared. Like religious theory, this theoretical perspective also lacks scientific rationalities. But to an extent, it indicates that religious beliefs and division of labour have played an important role first, in the origin of Varna and later on of caste.
- 3. The Occupational Theory** of caste origin is basically associated with the ideas of J. C. Nesfield. Nesfield states that like other societies, in India too there was the presence of division of labour. Each group was engaged with specific economic/occupational activities. These activities were transmitted from one

generation to another generation. These groups became dependent on each other for satisfying their respective needs. In fact such a state reveals interdependence as well as dependence. Initially such division of labour gave rise to Varna model since each occupation associated with one Varna also incorporates plurality within it. Nesfield, argued that only occupation is responsible for the origin of caste structure. As per occupational theory inherited occupations are major characteristics of caste order. But it is also a reality that in different parts of India one can find the difference between (general) Varna hierarchy and local caste hierarchies. This theory, in this way, fails to explain how dominant castes came into existence and how inter-caste mobility occurred.

Thus, it can be said that the origin of caste is based upon multifactor propositions. Caste can be elaborated by introducing racial propositions, occupational propositions, political propositions and religious propositions etc but caste cannot be examined systematically without giving importance to religion, marriage and family. Caste with these components can be pointed out as extended kinship. Even today intra-caste marriage, generally, takes place because of religio-cultural acceptability.

Caste Inequality and Indian Society

Caste inequality in social sciences can be elaborated as sets of institutional discrimination between and within castes which reveal inferiority-superiority syndromes relating to the fields of culture, polity and economy. In fact, the use of the terms upper castes and lower castes express caste inequality. One can observe unequal distribution of wealth, prestige and power in relation to different caste groups located in various regions. However, one can find various changes in Indian society which have challenged the existence of caste inequality. In fact, democracy, social justice, equality and tolerance are those values which have threatened caste inequalities everywhere even though this process of change is uneven.

We have already mentioned the features of Indian caste system. These features have undergone the process of change because of industrialisation, urbanisation, secularisation, democratisation and globalisation. Prior to these causes several indigenous causes also led to dynamics in caste system. Romila Thapar, a well known historian, has commented that caste was never static. It happened because of dynamics (of course, slow) in relations of production. The interface between varnas created mobility. It can be said that caste both at the macro and micro levels has experienced various systems of dynamism. The changes in power relation also led to changes in caste society. The role relationship between castes introduced modifications in power relationship. In ancient India Kshatriya kings entered into alliances with the priests. These alliances gave rise to dominant caste in various areas including villages. In these processes lower caste imitated various aspects of way of life of Brahmins and other upper castes respectively and upgraded themselves from existing caste status which is generally accepted after two or three generations. The process of industrialisation encouraged or compelled people to migrate from rural to urban spaces. Various castes left their traditional occupations and entered into new

occupations based on achievement orientations. The process of westernisation changed food habits and dress patterns of various caste groups. This process also questioned the purity-pollution principle. The constitution of India includes many laws which help protect and improve the socioeconomic conditions of the lower caste population. Education also weakened the traditional form of stratification. We have already pointed out that these aspects weaken the purity-pollution principle. The ascriptive status of caste lost its earlier significance and achieved statuses acquired utmost importance in determining the prestige of a person. Traditional occupations have been replaced by new professions. Due to spatial mobility and educational achievements inter-caste marriages have come into existence.

Conclusion

Due to secularisation, the practice of untouchability has weakened. In villages, people born in low castes are now allowed to enter temples and can fetch water from the public wells. It is, in fact, their fundamental right. On account of protective discrimination policy the lower castes got equal opportunity in government services and public sector employments. Their political participation in legislative assemblies and in Lok Sabha is now assured due to protective discrimination policy. Their presence in education is also significant. Nevertheless, caste dominance still prevails. Casteism-caste consciousness-caste identity interplay can be felt in all micro and macro realities of Indian society.

Glossary

- **Casteism** It refers to those activities by which one caste prefers own-self by undermining interest of other castes.
- **Caste consciousness** It refers to deeper understanding of own caste identity.
- **Dominant caste** A caste group having numerical strength and control over the resources in the locality.
- **Endogamy** The practice of marrying within one's own group/caste.
- **Exogamy** The practice of marrying outside of the own group/caste.
- **Prejudice** The holding of preconceived ideas about an individual or group, idea which are resistant to change. Prejudice may be positive or negative.



I. Objective type questions

A. Multiple choice questions

1. Which is not the features of caste:
(a) Achieved status (b) Hereditary occupation
(c) Profane-sacred distinction (d) Endogamy
2. Traditional theory of caste is based upon the idea of:
(a) G.S. Ghurye (b) D. N. Majumdar
(c) Louis Dumont (d) J. H. Hutton
3. Which caste is not considered as twice born:
(a) Brahmin (b) Kshatriya
(c) Vaishya (d) Shudra
4. According to Bottomore which one is not the features of social stratification:
(a) Slavery (b) Caste
(c) Class (d) Gender
5. The samskar that makes person twice born:
(a) Jatakaram (b) Janam samskar
(c) Upnayan samskar (d) Nama-karana
6. The term 'Antyaj' refers to:
(a) Touchable shudras (b) Untouchable shudras
(c) Landless agriculturist (d) Tribals
7. Which section of the society is linked with protective discrimination policy?
(a) Upper castes (b) Middle castes
(c) Scheduled castes (d) Dominant castes

B. Fill in the blanks

1. refers to deeper understanding of own caste identity.
2. Caste is an..... status.
3. In caste system there are and types of marriage .
4. The term twice-born express.....birth.
5. Occupational theory is associated with the idea of.....

C. True/False

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | In varna system, individual could not have possibility of mobility. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | The untouchable castes are also known as Antyaj. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | Caste is a dominant social system of Indian society. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | Caste is an endogamous group. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | Civil and religious disabilities do not lead to untouchability. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

D. Match the Columns:

Column A

Vaishyas

Brahmins
Exogamy
Rakta Varna
Traditional Theory

Column B

Based upon philosophical understanding of supernatural
Marrying outside the caste
The red
Trade and business
Performance of religious rites, rituals.

II. Very short type questions

1. A social division of labour based on achievement is called?
2. Who were associated with defence services?
3. The practice of marrying within one's caste/ group is known as?
4. Caste system is based upon which model of hierarchy?
5. Second birth of religio-cultural nature is based on which samaskar?
6. What is Varna?
7. What is purity-pollution principle?
8. Identify that term from which caste has originated.
9. Name that Varna which is considered outcaste.
10. Define Varna model of hierarchy.

III. Short answer type questions

1. What is caste system ?
2. What is ascriptive status?
3. Mention those occupations which are traditionally associated with Varna.
4. What is caste mobility?