



SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIAN SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT:

The article discusses social change in Indian Society broadly defined. Social change is a structural alteration of political, social, and economic systems and institutions to produce a more equal and just society. Social change is a universal process that happens in every society. In technical terms, social change is defined as a modification of a social order of a social group or society; a change in the nature, social institutions, social behaviors or social relations of a society. Change occurs in all disciplines and is unavoidable, as we all know. The concept of "social change" is frequently employed to denote alterations or variances in any aspect of social interaction, social patterns, social processes, or social organization.

Change is the internal law. It is abundantly clear from history and science that change is a necessary part of life. India is a well-known nation renowned for its historic geographical features, cultural legacy, customs, and culture. Therefore finding out Social change in Indian Society is the theme of this article.

Keywords: Social Change in India.

INTRODUCTION:

Change is the law of life and changes in society are always taking place. Some changes happen slowly enough for people to not even notice them, while other times they happen quickly and dramatically. Things are changing in all areas of life, including politics, the economy, education, and so forth. Education plays a major role in bringing about social changes.

The concept of social change can be associated with the idea of socio-cultural evolution or social development, which is the philosophical belief that society advances through dialectical or evolutionary processes. It could allude to a fundamental transformation of the socioeconomic system, such as a move from

feudalism to capitalism. Accordingly it may also allude to other social movements like the civil rights movement or women's suffrage, or to social revolutions like the socialist revolution described in Marxism. Social change can be driven by cultural, social, religious, economic, scientific or technological forces.

The concept of social change is used to indicate the changes that take place in human interrelations and human interactions. Society is a web of social relationships and hence social change means change in the system of social relationships. The two issues raised by the father of sociology, Auguste Comte, are what social dynamics is and how it changes, as well as the subject of social statics. In addition to outlining the social structure, sociologists also look for the root causes of social problems. Morris Ginsberg defines social change as an alteration to the social structure.

Certain concepts are employed to explain the path of social change in India; these terms are Westernization, Sanskritization, and Modernization. The various factors of social changes in India are religion, education, legislation, technology, economic factors, industrialization, urbanization, planning and mass media. Society has traditionally been strongly hierarchal and strongly patriarchal.

THE AIM OF THE ARTICLE:

The aim of this paper is to highlight the social change in Indian society. This research paper is also written for those who do not have a detailed knowledge of the social change in Indian society.

CONCEPT OF SOCIAL CHANGE:

In the scientific study of change, the most challenging question is perhaps what social change actually implies. It involves the often-neglected query of what kind and degree of change in what is to be considered social change. The majority of social change analysts deal with this question implicitly somewhere in their theoretical frameworks or in the context of the latter's application to some realistic case. In the scientific study of change, the most challenging question is perhaps what social change actually implies.

1. **Gillin & Gillin:** “Social changes are variations from the accepted modes of life; whether due to alterations in geographical conditions, in cultural equipment, composition of the population, or ideologies and whether brought about by diffusion or invention within the group.”
2. **P. Fairchild:** "Social change means variations or modifications in any aspect of social processes, patterns or form."
3. **MacIver and Page:** “Change in social structure is social change”. Social structure is the network of relationship in a society involving social status, social roles and social norms.”

After examining each of the definitions mentioned above, we conclude that the two kinds of changes ought to be viewed as two aspects of the same social phenomenon. There exist two categories of changes: (1) alterations to the social structure; and (2) modifications to the values and social norms that serve to preserve social order by uniting individuals. Nonetheless, it is inappropriate to handle these two kinds of changes independently as modifications to one inevitably impact modifications to the other.

MAIN THEORIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE:

Numerous theories exist on social change. In general, structural characteristics of change, social change processes and mechanisms, and change orientations should all be included in a theory of change. These two models are overly different for ideological reasons, even if they have a lot in common. The difference between agreement and conflict which is often used to counter pose the two models is, however, not complete. Numerous sociologists have pointed out that disagreement, as well as consensus, serves system-integrative purposes. Additionally, both models take an evolutionary perspective on change and, in some respects, both are based on an equilibrium model of society.

Interestingly, though, Indian sociologists who advocate for a standard Indian sociology also identify themselves methodologically as either functional or dialectical approaches. This demonstrates the degree of ambiguity as well as the contradiction in these sociologists' thoughts. Some examples of this can be

observed in their theoretical frameworks for analyzing social change in Indian society.

INDIAN SOCIETY:

Two distinct paths for these social changes may be seen if we evaluate the social transformations that have taken place in Indian society since the mid-19th century. Certain social reform movements, which had a minimal impact on society during the second half of the 19th century but gained momentum since the 1920s when the Indian National Movement became mass based, have resulted in changes to traditional values and conventions that have been quite positive.

The second set of changes, which have become more intense or widespread over the course of the 20th century, especially after Independence, are what have come to be considered the disturbing features of contemporary Indian society and have generally proved to be serious issues. These features include are increasing population, disorganization at all levels, crass materialism coupled with religiosity but without ethics, increase in sophisticated crimes and socio-economic crimes etc. Some of the major areas in which social change is important in the post-Independent India are the status of women, the status and role of backward classes, family, caste system, etc. Social change in India can be considered as a process through which definite changes in the structures and functions of a specific social system result. Depending on the observer's viewpoints and comprehension, a given social development may be good or bad, desired or undesirable, sacred or profane, progressive or regressive, etc. It is to be considering that when a specific social change occurs it will be evaluated in the light of the ideals, goals and theories of the observer.

We refer to something as "change" only when specific things situations, conditions, or things are partially altered. So change and continuity coexist. Any shift in society has the potential to cause noticeable and extensive changes in social structures, roles, behavior, attitudes, conventions, and ways of living. Sociologists have conducted extensive research on social changes and developed a number of ideas about the causes, places, factors and trends of change. Indians

are highly rank-and status-oriented due to the existence of the caste system. Social relationships frequently start with some degree of ranking based on caste, ethnic group, or rank and how they are related to one another in a certain way that is mandated by caste laws.

Three main societal structures. are the caste system, village community, and extended family. There are great contrasts between modern technology and traditional India and Westernized India. In the ancient period Indian society was dominated by a huge number of deprived people, with a small elite characterized by flamboyant maharajas and a middle class made up largely civil servants. All of these classes still exist today, with the exception that the middle class is larger and more diversified and the small elite is made up of large landowners, high tech entrepreneurs, and industrialists.

Hindus have generally looked to their religion and the caste system to establish structure and order in society. Traditionally, the idea of government has been seen as a means of preserving society and preventing chaos.

Indian civilization's ethnic and linguistic diversity is unlike that of any other single nation-state; rather, it resembles the diversity of a region as varied as Europe. There are many diverse regional, social, and economic groupings, each with its own cultural customs, living under the umbrella of the Indian nation. The distinctions between social structures in the north and the south are particularly notable, particularly with regard to kinship system. Religious divisions can be stark across the nation, particularly between the majority Hindu population and the sizable Muslim population. Buddhists, Christians, Jains, Jews, Parsis, Sikhs, and adherents of tribal religions are among the other Indian communities that take great pride in their uniqueness from adherents of other faiths.

RURAL LIFE IN INDIAN SOCIETY:

Rural system is a major feature of Indian society. Village organization, village structure and unity is an important part of it. Approximately three-fourths of India's people live in about 500,000 villages, where India's most basic occupational farming takes place. Most villages have less than 1,000 inhabitants,

but some have populations as high as 5,000. Indian villages are often very complex and not socially or economically distinct. Most villages include economic, caste, kinship, occupational and religious groups vertically linked within each settlement. Typically, residents include merchants, artisans, laborers, clerics, and cultivators. Various important horizontal linkages connect each village with many others and with nearby and distant urban areas. In spirited celebrations and rituals as well as in daily life, people from different groups provide each other with needs. The primary organizing bodies in rural community life are panchayats, or village councils. They assist in resolving conflicts involving anything from inheritance to transgressions of caste laws.

URBAN LIFE IN INDIAN SOCIETY:

The pace of urbanization is having a profound impact on the transformation of Indian society. A little more than one-quarter of the country's population is urban. Mumbai, with its 18 million residents, is currently the sixth-largest metropolitan region in the world; Kolkata, with its 13 million residents, comes in at number 14. India's biggest cities have expanded at a rate twice as fast as the country's smaller towns and villages in recent years, with a substantial portion of this growth being attributed to rural-urban migration. Large cities are teeming with people, clogged with traffic, noisy, dirty, and lacking in basic amenities like electricity, clean water, and good housing. Slums are everywhere, frequently teeming with opulent apartment complexes, and the streets are clogged with garbage, animals, cars belching diesel fumes, and pedestrians.

GAPS & DIFFERENCES IN INDIAN SOCIETY:

Access to capital and power varies significantly, and huge alterations in socio-economic status are apparent everywhere. In both urban and rural settings, the rich and the impoverished coexist. Urban-rural disparities can be very great. The majority of people in India live in villages, where agriculture is their primary source of income. However, in India's big cities, millions of people live in creaking vehicles, growing congestion, overcrowded apartment buildings,

busy commercial establishments, inhaling the toxins of industrial and vehicular pollution and loudspeakers playing movie tunes. In both urban and rural areas, there can be significant differences in the behavior expected of men and women.

The infiltration and permeation of all differences in region, language, wealth, status, religion, urbanization and gender is the special feature of Indian society that has received the most attention of observers is caste. India's population is divided into hundreds of hierarchically structured castes and caste-like groupings that are called after the castes into which members are born. It is customary for members of a caste to get married within the group and to abide by strict dietary guidelines, abstain from ritual defilement, and several other rules.

SALIENT FEATURES AND FACTORS OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA:

- To explain the direction of social change, three concepts are used: Westernization, Sanskritization, and Modernization. Technology, industrialization, urbanization, laws, education, economic factors, planning, religion and mass media are various factors of social change in India.
- Modern India is going through a transformation. Education in English and our interactions with foreigners have had a significant impact on our society. The educated class has assimilated not only Western ideologies but also its lifestyle, manners, attire, and culture. Speaking English is common in several states.
- Our traditions and customs are changing rapidly. Old beliefs are being replaced by new ones. Caste, colour, province, and religious barriers are progressively falling down. Inter-caste marriages are coming to stay.
- New cities are being planned on western lines. Markets are full of western goods. If we look at our daily routine, we will find that it has more in common with western countries than ancient India. Although the items of our daily life are taken from the western world, many of them are now manufactured in India.

FACTORS RESISTING SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA:

- Social barriers
- Cultural barriers
- Political barriers
- Economic barriers
- Psychological barriers
- Fear
- Shortage of inventions
- Isolation

FUTURE TRENDS IN INDIAN SOCIETY:

India's population, which is now over a billion, increased by more than 18 million people annually over the previous ten years, or the equivalent of an Australian. In ten years, the most populous state of Uttar Pradesh expanded by more than 25% to about 16.6 crore, which was 60% of the US population.

In an area about one-third the size, India supports more than three and a half times the population of the United States. The rate of population growth is progressively slowing down due to the growing popularity of family planning, but by 2050, India is expected to have surpassed China as the world's most populated country with a population of about 1.5 billion.

Different groups in India's vociferous democracy are calling for a larger piece of the country's limited resources and rewards. Forests, rangeland, and water tables are disappearing even as production in agriculture rises thanks to new crops and methods. Political, social, ecological, and economic issues are fiercely debated as competition increases. It is still difficult to achieve justice when it comes to issues of class, gender, and access to desirable resources.

India is hardly the only country dealing with these pressing issues, and it is not working alone to find solutions. For many centuries, the Indian people have demonstrated strength in breaking down complex situations into manageable order, uniting widely disparate groups in organized efforts to benefit society as a whole, promoting harmony among individuals with different interests, knowing that close friends and family can rely on one another,

assigning different tasks to individuals with different skills, and making an effort to do what is morally right in the eyes of the community and the divine. These are some of the great forces that Indian society can rely on to face future challenges.

CONCLUSION:

India is well known for having intricate social structures. Indian society has a multitude of facets that may not be found in any other great civilization in the globe. Any generalization made about Indian society does not actually apply to all the various groups in the country. Understanding the complexities of Indian social structure has challenged scholars and other observers for decades. An active approach to solving the issues is needed, not a reactive one. It is not the question of Indian or Western, ancient or modern, but the problem of value. Furthermore, the answer depends on the specific situation. It demands objectivity and a scientific attitude. The nation's culture is its vitality. It is the outcome of thousands of years of experience as a race residing in certain geographic environments. So we can conclude at the outset that India has to preserve its cultural heritage through all the changes.

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