# Department of Sociology

## Maulana Azad College

# SOCIOSCOPE

# CONTENT

# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

With great delight, I extend my warmest greetings to all members of our esteemed institution as we present the latest edition of our Sociology Magazine. Witnessing the dedication and enthusiasm of our students and faculty in curating this publication fills me with immense pride.

Sociology is more than a subject; it's not just about memorising facts, but rather a lens through which to critically analyse and understand the complex social structures, patterns, and interactions within society. In this edition, you will discover a diverse range of articles, problems, and insights that highlight the scientific nature of sociology and its applications across various fields in society.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the editorial team, comprised of both students and faculty members, for their tireless efforts in bringing this magazine to life. Their unwavering commitment to promoting sociological knowledge and fostering a love for the subject within our community is truly commendable.

May this magazine serve as a source of inspiration, igniting curiosity and a passion for the endless possibilities within the realm of sociology. I hope it not only deepens our understanding of the subject but also strengthens the bonds among us, fostering a sense of camaraderie.

Let us celebrate the achievements of our students and faculty, and continue to nurture a culture of learning and excellence in our institution. Thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to witnessing the ongoing growth and success of our sociology community.

Dr.S.DUTTA (Principal)
Maulana Azad college

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT
## DR. SHAMPA DATTA GUPTA, MAULANA AZAD COLLEGE, KOLKATA

# Dear Readers,

It is with immense pleasure that I extend a warm welcome to all of you to the vibrant realm of our College Sociology Magazine. As the Head of the Sociology Department, I am thrilled to witness the launch of this remarkable initiative that celebrates the diversity, interconnectedness, and intellectual richness of the sociological world.

Our College Sociology Magazine is not just a publication; it is a testament to the passion, curiosity, and brilliance that define our sociology community. Sociology, as we know, is not merely a subject but a window into understanding the intricate web of human relationships, social structures, and cultural dynamics. Through this magazine, we aim to cultivate a deeper appreciation for the profound insights and transformative power sociology brings to our lives and society.

Within these pages, you will discover a diverse collection of articles, features, and reflections that highlight the extraordinary achievements of our students and faculty. This magazine serves as a platform to showcase the exceptional talent and creativity that thrive within our department.

I encourage each of you—whether a seasoned sociologist or someone just beginning to explore the fascinating world of human behavior and social systems—to actively engage with the content. This magazine is designed as a space for everyone to learn, question, and be inspired by the boundless possibilities of sociology.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated team of students and faculty members whose hard work and enthusiasm have brought this publication to life. Your unwavering commitment to excellence is evident on every page, and I am confident that this magazine will be a source of pride and inspiration for our sociology community.

As we embark on this exciting journey together, let us celebrate the relevance of sociology and the intellectual curiosity that drives us to explore its infinite depths. May this magazine be a source of inspiration, motivation, and a shining example of the enduring spirit of the Sociology Department at Maulana Azad College.
Wishing you all a fantastic experience as you delve into the pages of our inaugural Sociology Magazine!

*Head*
*Department Of Sociology*
*Maulana Azad College*

# TEACHER'S EDITORIAL

Dr. DEBAPRASHAD CHATTERJEE

Dr. ADITI BASU

Dr. MAHUA PATRA

## Dear Readers,

It is with great joy and a sense of fulfillment that we present to you the latest edition of the Sociology Magazine. As mentors and facilitators, we take immense pride in witnessing the intellectual growth, creativity, and enthusiasm of our students, which are beautifully reflected in the pages of this magazine.

Sociology, at its core, is the study of society, relationships, and the structures that define our existence. It is a discipline that encourages critical thinking, empathy, and the exploration of diverse perspectives. This magazine stands as a testament to the dedication and curiosity of our students, who have delved deep into these themes to create content that is both engaging and insightful.
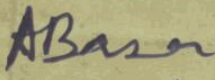
In this edition, you will find a rich collection of articles, research discussions, and reflections that explore a wide array of sociological topics, ranging from inequality and cultural dynamics to globalization and technological shifts. These contributions are not just academic exercises but meaningful explorations of the world we live in, aimed at inspiring critical dialogue and thought.

Beyond the written content, this issue also highlights the vibrant initiatives and activities organized by our Sociology Department, which serve to connect theoretical learning with real-world applications. These programs exemplify the transformative potential of sociology as a tool for understanding and improving society.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the student editorial team for their tireless efforts in bringing this publication to life, as well as to our contributors, whose work enriches this magazine with their passion and insights. Most importantly, we thank you, our readers, for your continued support and engagement, which inspire us to strive for excellence.
We hope that this edition of the Sociology Magazine sparks curiosity, encourages meaningful conversations, and serves as a source of inspiration for all who read it

Associate Professor
Department of Sociology

Associate Professor
Department of Sociology

Associate Professor
Department of Sociology

# STUDENT'S EDITORIAL

## Dear Readers

It is with immense pride and excitement that we, the student editorial team, present to you the latest edition of the Sociology Magazine. This publication is more than just a collection of articles; it is a reflection of the passion, curiosity, and collaborative spirit that thrives within our sociology community.

As students, we are constantly navigating a world shaped by diverse cultures, evolving norms, and pressing societal challenges. Sociology gives us the lens to critically analyze these phenomena, encouraging us to question, learn, and grow. With this magazine, we aim to share that experience with you—to spark conversations, provoke thought, and inspire a deeper understanding of the society we inhabit.

In this edition, you will find an eclectic mix of thought-provoking articles, research pieces, and creative works that explore themes ranging from social justice and inequality to globalization and cultural transformations. Each contribution is a testament to the dedication and intellectual curiosity of our peers and mentors who have worked tirelessly to bring this vision to life.
We also take this opportunity to highlight the vibrant extracurricular activities and initiatives undertaken by the Sociology Department. From interactive workshops to insightful guest lectures, these endeavors reinforce the importance of applying sociological perspectives to real-world issues.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our faculty mentors for their guidance, our peers for their incredible contributions, and you, the readers, for your continued support and enthusiasm. We hope that this magazine serves as a source of inspiration, a platform for learning, and a celebration of the ever-evolving field of sociology.

*Rehan Mukerji*
Deparment of Sociology
SEM I

*Adwitiya Sengupta*
Deparment of Sociology
SEM I

# Student's Corner

# Crime, Deviance, and Social Response

*By Rehan Mukerji*

Crime and deviance provide a central concept in sociology that provides a wide-ranging understanding of what norms are in society and
the means that create and perpetuate conformity. These phenomena are dynamic-
they can arise from different cultures, vary depending on history, and even change.
This analysis delves into the complexity of crime and deviance, the sociological theories
explaining the behaviours observed, and the responses that societies make to counter these
phenomena.

## Conceptualization of Crime and Deviance

### Crime

Behavior which violates formal enacted laws of a governing power and can be
punished wit fines, incarceration, or community service.

### Deviance

Behavior or action which violates social norms and could not be specifically wri
tten in law.
For example, stealing is a criminal act and deviant behavior, but wearing uncon
ventional clothes is considered as deviant without necessarily being a crime.

It does not have a line of distinction between crime and
deviance. That which would be considered criminal or deviant in
one culture is something that would be accepted or even encouraged in
another culture. For example, alcohol consumption is legal
in various places around the world, but it is strictly prohibited
in certain cultural or religious communities.

Theories of Crime and Deviance

Sociologists have developed different theoretical frameworks to explain why individuals
engage in criminal and deviant activities. These frameworks can be broadly categorized
into three: structural-functional, conflict, and symbolic interactionist perspectives.

# Structural-Functional Perspective

This view implies that deviance is an integral component of social organization and that it is a very important function in the overall balance of
society. The functionalist theorist Emile Durkheim argued that
deviance explains what is normal in society, creates social cohesion by
defining the boundaries, makes social change easy by challenging the old norms, and provides jobs for those who administer deviance, such as police officers and social workers.

According to the conflict theory, which was highly inspired by Karl Marx, crime and deviance result from social inequality and differences
in power. The theory stipulates that the powerful make the laws and regulations in order to get their interest fulfilled and criminalize the powerless in the same instance. A street crime may attract a much harsher sentence compared to the case of the crime committed by
the rich.
Symbolic Interactionist Perspective

This micro-level framework places a high emphasis on the meanings and interpretations that individuals attribute to their social interactions. It is basically the labelling theory that states that deviance is
not a characteristic of certain actions but rather is a result of societal labels placed on certain behaviours. The process of identifying a person as deviant usually triggers a self-fulfilling prophecy whereby the individual begins labelling himself and continuing deviant behaviours.

# Responses of Societies to Criminality and Deviance

Societies have developed several mechanisms of regulating criminal activities and deviant behaviours, including formal judicial structures and informal social
controls. Their effectiveness and fairness are the subject of constant debate and demands for change.

Judicial and Legal Frameworks

# Criminal Justice Institutions

The principal institutional response to criminal behaviour has been the criminal justice system comprising law enforcement, judicial bodies, and
correctional facilities. These institutions are therefore designed to provide a deterrent function, punish perpetrators, and promote rehabilitation for integration into society upon release. Challenges such as racial profiling, mass incarceration,
and capital punishment however remain highly controversial and expose inequality in the criminal justice application.

# Punishment versus Rehabilitation

The debate over the criminal justice system focuses on whether it should be focused on punishment or rehabilitation. The rehabilitationists claim that if the causes of criminal behavior are addressed—poverty and deprivation or addiction and drug dependency—the rate of reoffending could be reduced. The punitive
supporters, on the other hand, claim that high penalties act as a deterrent for would-be criminals.

# Community-Based Approaches

Community-based initiatives such as neighborhood watch schemes and restorative justice approaches provide alternative strategies for dealing with criminals as well as deviant behavior. There, restorative justice focuses on restoring the harm caused by criminal actions as mediated discourses between offenders and victims aim at reconciliation and mutual accommodation .

# Socialization and Informal Controls

Socialization processes and the informal controls, including family, schools, and peer groups, are vital in preventing deviant behavior. These social structures provide norms and values that promote appropriate conduct through incentives for correct behavior and penalties for deviant behaviors. For instance, a child brought up in a supportive environment with constructive role models is less likely to engage in criminal conduct.

# The Changing Landscape of Crime and Deviance

As societies evolve, so do their perceptions of crime and deviance. Technological advancements, for instance, have led to the emergence of new forms of deviance, like cybercrime and online harassment. Similarly, social movements and changing cultural outlooks have brought about the criminalization of some acts, including the legalization of same-sex marriage and the decriminalization of marijuana in many parts of the world.

Globalization has also affected crime and deviance, leading to transnational crimes such as human trafficking, drug smuggling, and terrorism. These issues require international cooperation and a review of the traditional approaches to law enforcement and justice.

# Conclusion

Understanding crime and deviance is a complex interaction between personal behavior and social norms. The theoretical approaches in sociology help analyze the reasons behind criminal activity or deviant acts, while reactions from society are the overall values and power structures. With the changing nature of societies, so will the ways they address crime and deviance, finding a balance between justice, equity, and social stability.

*"The measure of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable, including those who deviate from its norms."*

# The Dynamic Relationship Between Society and Tourism

*By Fiza Khatun*

The interaction between society and tourism is intricate and reciprocal, with both influencing each other in profound ways. Tourism can serve as a powerful driver of economic, cultural, and social transformation, while society shapes the nature, trends, and impacts of tourism. This relationship, however, carries both opportunities and challenges. Understanding and managing this connection is essential to ensure that tourism benefits society while mitigating its adverse effects.

## Positive Impacts of Tourism on Society

1. **Economic Growth and Development:**
   Tourism generates significant revenue, creates jobs, and stimulates local economies. By supporting businesses such as hospitality, transportation, and retail, it helps elevate living standards in host communities and reduces poverty in many regions.

2. **Cultural Exchange and Awareness:**
   Tourism fosters cross-cultural interaction, encouraging mutual understanding and appreciation between tourists and local communities. It enables societies to share their traditions, heritage, and way of life, creating bonds across borders.

3. **Infrastructure Improvements:**
   The growth of tourism often spurs investments in public infrastructure, including transportation systems, communication networks, and public amenities. These developments benefit not only visitors but also local residents, improving overall quality of life.

4. **Support for Conservation Efforts:**
   Tourism can play a critical role in funding and promoting the preservation of cultural heritage and natural ecosystems. Many tourist destinations, such as national parks and heritage sites, thrive on the support generated through eco-tourism and sustainable tourism initiatives.

## Negative Impacts of Tourism on Society

1. **Cultural Commodification:**
   While tourism can celebrate cultural heritage, it can also lead to the commodification of traditions and practices. This often diminishes the authenticity of cultural expressions, reducing them to mere products for tourists'

consumption.Displacement of Communities:
In areas with high tourist demand, local communities may be displaced to make way for hotels, resorts, and other tourism infrastructure. This displacement often leads to the loss of ancestral homes and traditional ways of life.

2. Environmental Challenges:
Tourism often contributes to environmental degradation, including pollution, deforestation, and excessive consumption of natural resources. Popular destinations sometimes suffer from overtourism, which strains ecosystems and jeopardizes their sustainability.

3. Social Inequalities and Exploitation:
When tourism revenue is concentrated in the hands of a few stakeholders, local communities may see limited benefits despite providing the labor and resources that fuel the industry. This creates economic and social inequalities, often leaving host communities marginalized.

# How Society Influences Tourism

1. Demographic Shifts:
Changes in population demographics, such as aging populations, urbanization, and the rise of middle-income groups, significantly impact tourism trends. For example, senior travelers may prefer wellness tourism, while younger generations gravitate toward adventure or experiential travel.

2. Technological Advancements:
Society's embrace of technology has revolutionized tourism. Social media, online booking platforms, and virtual reality experiences have transformed how people choose, experience, and share their travel adventures.

3. Evolving Societal Values:
Growing awareness of sustainability, climate change, and ethical consumption has led to a surge in demand for eco-friendly and socially responsible tourism practices. Travelers today are more conscious of their environmental footprint and the impact of their choices on host communities.

4. Policy and Governance:
Societal values often drive the policies and regulations that shape tourism. Governments and local authorities are increasingly prioritizing sustainable tourism development, environmental conservation, and equitable benefits for host communities.

# Strategies to Balance Society and Tourism

1. ## Promoting Sustainable Tourism:
   Encouraging eco-tourism and responsible travel ensures that tourism activities have minimal environmental and cultural impacts while maximizing benefits for host communities.

2. ## Empowering Communities Through Tourism:
   Community-based tourism enables local residents to actively participate in and benefit from tourism development. This approach fosters inclusion, ensures fair compensation, and gives locals a voice in shaping tourism practices.

3. ## Effective Policy Frameworks:
   Governments must implement policies that promote sustainable tourism, manage overtourism, and prioritize infrastructure investments that benefit both tourists and residents. Proper planning is essential to strike a balance between tourism growth and societal needs.

4. ## Stakeholder Collaboration:
   Collaboration between governments, businesses, local communities, and tourists is essential for building trust and fostering mutual benefits. Open dialogue ensures that tourism development aligns with societal values and addresses concerns such as cultural preservation and environmental protection.

# Conclusion

The relationship between society and tourism is a dynamic and evolving partnership that requires careful management. When thoughtfully developed, tourism can enrich societies by fostering economic growth, cultural exchange, and conservation. However, it also poses risks such as cultural commodification, environmental harm, and social displacement if left unchecked.

By promoting sustainable practices, empowering local communities, and aligning tourism development with societal values, the tourism industry can serve as a force for positive change. This balance is essential to create a harmonious coexistence between society and tourism in the years to come.

# Role of Media in Social Change

*By Alifa Parvez*

## Introduction

Media holds a distinctive place in society, serving as a dynamic force for communication and awareness. It plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinion, influencing social norms, and driving transformation. By disseminating information, educating the masses, and fostering dialogue, media serves as a catalyst for societal change. Recognized globally as the fourth estate, it bridges the gap between the governed and the governing, making it an indispensable part of modern society (McQuail, 2010).

## Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to examine the role of media in driving social change. A descriptive methodology has been employed, analyzing data from secondary sources, including books, research reports, theories, and news media. This study explores how media, both directly and indirectly, influences societal structures and mindsets.

### Analysis and Interpretation

Media's impact on society can be examined from multiple perspectives. Its influence extends beyond information dissemination, shaping societal structures, attitudes, and behaviors.

- **Direct Impact:** Media actively highlights social issues, challenges traditional norms, and advocates for change, empowering marginalized voices.

- **Indirect Impact:** By consistently providing diverse narratives, media nurtures intellectual growth, reshapes perceptions, and fosters behavioral shifts.

Through its content, media stimulates cognitive, emotional, and intellectual development, leading to clarity of thought and progressive changes in societal outlook. These subtle yet profound influences contribute to long-term social transformation.

## Media as a Source of Knowledge

Media, in its various forms—traditional, modern, and digital—serves as an essential tool for mass communication. Its evolution, from Gutenberg's printing press to today's digital networks, underscores its critical role in spreading knowledge. Milestones in media development include:

- **Print Media** (Post-1455): Revolutionized the spread of information with the advent of printing technology.

- **Radio** (1920s): Provided real-time access to news and entertainment.

- **Television** (Post-1926): Offered a visual dimension to storytelling and news.

- **Digital Media** (Post-1970s): Transformed communication with the advent of the internet, making information more accessible, affordable, and widespread.

Media not only delivers facts but also fosters intellectual curiosity and critical thinking. It bridges the gap between information and knowledge, equipping individuals with tools to understand truths and realities.

The Multifaceted Role of Media

- **Information Dissemination**: Keeping society informed about current events, policies, and global issues.

- **Education**: Providing knowledge and fostering awareness about rights, responsibilities, and societal concerns.

- **Entertainment**: Offering content that entertains while reflecting cultural and social values.

- **Inspiration**: Motivating individuals to act on social issues through impactful narratives and campaigns.

# Conclusion

Media has become an indispensable part of modern life, integral to information sharing, education, and knowledge creation. In the fast-paced, interconnected world of the 21st century, media's role extends beyond communication—it is a force for change, empowerment, and innovation. By understanding and leveraging this power, society can continue to drive progress toward a more informed, equitable, and inclusive future.

.

# Urbanization and Its Impact on Society

*By Anam Khan*

"***Cities are the engines of growth, but are they leaving anyone behind?***" –

## What Is Urbanization?

Urbanization is the process where populations migrate from rural areas to urban centers, leading to the expansion and growth of cities. It is driven by the allure of better job prospects, education, and living standards. Currently, over 56% of the global population resides in urban areas, a figure that continues to grow as cities expand their influence and opportunities.

## The Driving Forces of Urbanization

1. **Economic Opportunities**
   Cities act as hubs for industries, offering diverse job opportunities and higher earning potential.

2. **Education and Healthcare**
   Urban centers provide better access to high-quality schools, universities, and advanced medical facilities.

3. **Infrastructure and Connectivity**
   Advanced transportation, communication networks, and utilities make cities well-equipped to support large populations and businesses.

## Positive Impacts of Urbanization

- **Economic Growth**
  Urbanization accelerates industrialization and facilitates global trade, driving national economies forward.

- **Cultural Exchange**
  Cities bring together people from diverse backgrounds, fostering creativity, innovation, and multiculturalism.

- **Improved Living Standards**
  Access to modern amenities like clean water, electricity, and healthcare improves quality of life for many urban dwellers.

# Challenges of Urbanization

1. **Overpopulation**
   Rapid urban growth often outpaces infrastructure, leading to overcrowding, housing shortages, and inadequate basic services.

2. **Environmental Issues**
   Cities face challenges like air and water pollution, inefficient waste management, and the loss of green spaces.

3. **Social Inequality**
   Wealth and poverty coexist in stark contrast, with luxurious skyscrapers often standing alongside overcrowded slums.

4. **Stressful Lifestyles**
   Fast-paced urban life can lead to mental health issues, heightened stress, and reduced work-life balance.

# Urbanization and Society

- **Changing Family Structures**
  Urbanization has contributed to the shift from joint families to nuclear families, with a growing focus on individualism.

- **Cultural Shifts**
  Cities often blend traditional and modern values, creating dynamic but sometimes conflicting cultural landscapes.

- **The Rural–Urban Divide**
  As resources and opportunities become concentrated in cities, disparities between urban and rural areas widen.

# Sustainable Urbanization: The Way Forward

1. **Smart Cities**
   Leveraging technology to efficiently manage resources and improve urban living.

2. **Green Spaces**
   Incorporating parks, vertical gardens, and urban forests to enhance air quality and provide recreational areas.

3. **Affordable Housing**

   Developing policies that ensure access to housing for all, reducing the prevalence of slums.

4. **Eco-Friendly Public Transport**

   Expanding sustainable transit systems to reduce traffic congestion and lower pollution levels.

## Did You Know?

- Tokyo, Japan, is the world's most populous city, home to over 37 million residents.

- Urban areas cover only 3% of the Earth's surface but contribute a staggering 80% of the global GDP.

*"The city is not a concrete jungle; it is a human zoo." – Desmond Morris*

# Same-Sex Marriages in Society



*By Gunjan Nayak and Noor Alam*

## Understanding Same-Sex Marriage

Same-sex marriage refers to the legally recognized union between two individuals of the same sex. It grants them the same rights, benefits, and responsibilities traditionally afforded to heterosexual couples. This definition challenges the conventional notion of marriage as solely a union between a man and a woman, expanding it to acknowledge and validate diverse relationships and family structures.

## Same-Sex Marriage in India

Same-sex marriage in India remains a contentious issue. Currently, Indian law does not recognize or legalize such unions. In 2013, the Supreme Court of India overturned a lower court's ruling that had recognized same-sex marriages, citing the lack of constitutional provisions for such unions. This decision underscored the traditional alignment of Indian legal and cultural norms with heterosexual unions.

The debate around same-sex marriage in India reflects deeply rooted societal and cultural divisions. Advocates argue that legalizing same-sex marriage would foster equality and provide legal recognition and protection for same-sex couples. Opponents often contend that such marriages conflict with traditional Indian values and religious teachings, particularly those rooted in Hinduism.

## Broader Effects of Same-Sex Marriages

### On the Institution of Marriage

1. **New Identities:** According to symbolic interactionists like Gagnon, LGBTQ+ individuals often face societal stigmatization. The recognition of same-sex marriages enables homosexual couples to establish new identities within a predominantly heteronormative framework.

2. **Redefining Marriage:** Same-sex marriages challenge traditional notions of marriage by prioritizing love, commitment, and equality over gender roles and procreation.

3. **Changing Social Attitudes:** The visibility of same-sex marriages promotes greater acceptance and tolerance of diverse family structures, fostering a more inclusive society.

4. **Egalitarian Partnerships:** Same-sex marriages often encourage an egalitarian approach to relationships, emphasizing shared responsibilities and decision-making.

## On the Institution of Family

1. **Evolving Gender Roles:** Same-sex couples often share domestic responsibilities and childcare more equitably, promoting gender equality within the family and society at large.

2. **Challenges and Stigma:** Despite progress, same-sex families may encounter social stigma and discrimination, which can impact their well-being and necessitate resilience in overcoming societal prejudices.

3. **Legal Recognition and Benefits:** Legalizing same-sex marriage can enhance the mental health and well-being of couples by providing security and formal recognition. It also opens access to rights related to property ownership, inheritance, and parenting.

## Conclusion

The discussion around same-sex marriage is multifaceted, shaped by cultural, religious, and societal factors. While some view legalization as a step toward equality and inclusivity, others see it as a challenge to traditional values. As society evolves, there is a growing movement advocating for acceptance and equal recognition of same-sex marriages. This reflects a broader trend toward embracing diversity in relationships and family structures.

# The Impact of Globalization and Multiculturalism on Faith in the Today's World

*By Jumaniah Gazi*

Historically, most societies were culturally and religiously homogenous, with shared beliefs and values providing a strong sense of social cohesion-a concept by sociologists. Émile Durkheim referred to as the collective conscience. In small villages or towns, religion wasn't just a personal belief system but an integral part of community life, reinforcing norms and ensuring social order. People rarely encountered beliefs outside their own, and religion functioned as the primary framework for understanding the world. The sacred canopy, *as* Peter Berger termed it, shielded communities from competing ideologies by presenting religion as the ultimate truth.

However, the post-World War II era lead in rapid globalization, mass media, and technological advancements, which disrupted this sacred canopy. With globalization came cultural diffusion-the spread of ideas and practices across borders-resulting in cultural pluralism, where diverse belief systems coexist within a single society. Today, classrooms, workplaces, and neighborhoods are small-scale representation exposing individuals to a variety of faiths, lifestyles.

Sociologist Zygmunt Bauman described this phenomenon as liquid modernity, where traditional structures and norms dissolve, leaving individuals to navigate a multiplicity of choices.

This unique exposure to diversity poses significant challenges to religious belief. For many, it becomes harder to accept the exclusivity of their faith when they see good, moral people from other religions leading fulfilling lives. The cognitive dissonance arising from these encounters often weakens the faith of individuals who lack a strong understanding of their religious teachings. When beliefs are not deeply rooted, exposure to alternative worldviews can lead to secularization-the process by which religion loses its influence in daily life.

In pluralistic societies, moral relativism becomes increasingly common. This is the idea that all faiths and moral systems are equally valid, which is often reinforced by cultural

relativism, where respecting diverse perspectives is prioritized over asserting absolute truths. For many, this results in religious indifference, where faith is seen as a personal choice rather than a universal necessity. The idea of only one path leads to salvation-becomes particularly challenging to uphold when individuals are surrounded by friends, neighbors, and colleagues who adhere to other belief systems yet live ethically and compassionately.

Despite these challenges, globalization and multiculturalism also present opportunities for faith. The interconnectedness of the modern world, described by Anthony Giddens as time-space compression, allows for instantaneous communication and the sharing of ideas. This creates new avenues for interfaith dialogue, enabling religious communities to engage with people from diverse backgrounds and present their beliefs in a meaningful way.

Exposure to diverse perspectives can also strengthen religious identity. When individuals encounter different worldviews, they may engage in reflexivity, critically examining their own beliefs and deepening their commitment to faith. For those with a solid foundation in religious teachings, these interactions can lead to greater clarity and resilience.

Religious communities continue to play a vital role in providing social capital, offering networks of support and shared values in an increasingly fragmented world. These communities act as mediating structures, bridging the gap between individuals and the broader, often secular, society. However, to remain relevant, they must address anomie- a sense of normlessness that arises when traditional structures are disrupted. Strengthening catechesis, fostering respectful engagement with other beliefs, and emphasizing the universal relevance of faith are crucial strategies for maintaining cohesion and relevance.

It's tempting to romanticize the past as a time of unshakable religiosity, but such nostalgia oversimplifies history. While homogeneity provided stability, it also created mechanical solidarity, where conformity often stifled intellectual and spiritual growth. Today's world,

characterized by organic solidarity, offers a more dynamic environment that requires adaptability. The challenges of globalization are not unbeatable they simply require religious communities to approach faith with renewed energy and thoughtfulness.

The decline in religiosity is not solely due to exposure to diversity but rather to indifference,

weak catechesis, and the inability to adapt to rapid socio-cultural changes. Globalization and multiculturalism challenge traditional frameworks, but they also create opportunities for dialogue and personal growth. By embracing these challenges and strengthening their internal structures, religious communities can thrive in a pluralistic world. As Durkheim might suggest, the sacred is not disappearing; it is evolving to meet the needs of a more complex and interconnected society.

# Social Stratification: A Comprehensive Exploration

*By Md Asim*

Social stratification refers to the hierarchical arrangement of individuals in society based on attributes such as wealth, power, education, occupation, and social status. This classification system often results in unequal access to resources, opportunities, and privileges, creating a structured hierarchy that impacts nearly every aspect of life. Found in virtually all societies, albeit in varying forms and degrees, social stratification highlights the existence of inequality and its profound effects on relationships, opportunities, and experiences within communities.

## Forms of Social Stratification

Social stratification manifests in various forms, each with unique characteristics and implications for social mobility and inequality:

### Caste System

The caste system rigidly categorizes individuals based on birth, assigning roles and statuses that often disregard personal abilities or ambitions. Despite legal reforms in countries like India, caste-based discrimination persists, reflecting the enduring nature of this form of stratification and its detrimental effects on social justice and equality.

### Class System

Predominantly seen in capitalist societies like the United States, the class system organizes people into strata such as upper, middle, and lower classes. While it theoretically allows for mobility, significant disparities in access to resources and opportunities often make upward movement challenging, perpetuating cycles of inequality.

### Estate System

Historically prevalent in feudal societies, the estate system assigned individuals roles and privileges based on birth, with little chance for mobility. Over time, this system transitioned to a class-based structure, driven by industrialization and shifts in economic power and wealth distribution.

### Meritocracy

Meritocracy, an idealized form of stratification, ranks individuals based on their abilities, achievements, and efforts rather than their background or inherited wealth. In a meritocratic society, opportunities are ostensibly equal, and rewards are tied to performance, promoting the potential for social mobility.

Factors Influencing Social Stratification

Several factors sustain and perpetuate social stratification, including:

## Economic Factors

Wealth and income significantly influence social standing. Higher incomes provide access to superior education, healthcare, and housing, paving the way for greater opportunities. Conversely, those with limited financial resources often face systemic barriers that reinforce their disadvantaged status.

## Education

Education is a key driver of social mobility. Advanced education often leads to better job prospects and higher earnings. However, disparities in access to quality education can perpetuate inequality, as those from disadvantaged backgrounds face greater challenges in achieving academic success.

## Occupation

An individual's occupation is a critical determinant of their social status. High-skill, high-paying professions are often associated with greater prestige and privilege, while lower-paying jobs involving manual labor or services are typically linked to lower social standing.

# Consequences of Social Stratification

The effects of social stratification are profound and far-reaching, influencing individual and societal outcomes:

- ## Limited Access to Resources
  Individuals in lower strata often face restricted access to essential resources such as healthcare, education, and housing. This perpetuates cycles of poverty and inequality, hindering upward mobility.

- ## Inequality of Opportunity
  Stratification creates systemic barriers that limit opportunities for those in lower social positions, restricting their potential to improve their circumstances and achieve their aspirations.

# Conclusion

Social stratification remains a pervasive and complex phenomenon shaping societies worldwide. While it can serve organizational purposes, its role in perpetuating inequality and limiting mobility cannot be overlooked. Addressing the challenges posed by social
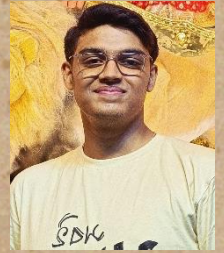
stratification requires systemic efforts to reduce barriers, promote equitable access to resources, and foster a fairer distribution of opportunities. By doing so, societies can move closer to achieving greater social mobility, inclusivity, and fairness.

# Religion in Indian Society: A Multifaceted Influence

*By Suvorup chakraborty*

Religion has been a cornerstone in shaping societies throughout history, and India exemplifies this influence. As a land of immense diversity and spirituality, India's social fabric is deeply interwoven with religious beliefs, practices, and values. The impact of religion on Indian society is profound, shaping culture, politics, social norms, and even economic behavior. This influence, however, is multifaceted, bringing both positive and negative consequences.

## Positive Impacts of Religion in Indian Society

1. ### Cultural Identity and Unity
   India, a melting pot of religions such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism, thrives on its rich religious diversity. This plurality has enriched Indian culture, giving rise to festivals, rituals, and traditions that define its heritage. Celebrations like Diwali, Eid, Christmas, and Gurpurab foster communal harmony, reinforcing unity amidst diversity.

2. ### Ethical and Moral Framework
   Religious doctrines in India often serve as a moral compass, guiding individuals and communities. Hinduism's *dharma*, Islam's *Sharia*, and Christianity's Ten Commandments, among others, promote values such as charity, compassion, honesty, and justice, encouraging a sense of collective responsibility and welfare.

3. ### Social Welfare
   Religious institutions play a pivotal role in social service. Temples, mosques, gurdwaras, and churches frequently provide food, education, and healthcare to the underprivileged. Initiatives like the Sikh tradition of *langar* (community kitchens) exemplify selfless service and inclusivity, addressing hunger and promoting equality.

4. ### Preservation of Heritage
   Religion has significantly contributed to India's artistic, architectural, and literary heritage. Iconic monuments like the Taj Mahal, Qutub Minar, and Brihadeeswarar Temple are not just architectural marvels but also symbols of spiritual devotion. Similarly, religious texts like the Vedas, Quran, Bible, and Guru Granth Sahib enrich India's literary legacy.

5. ### Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding
   Many religious teachings emphasize non-violence and peace. For instance, Mahatma

Gandhi, inspired by Hindu, Jain, and Christian principles, led India's freedom struggle through *ahimsa* (non-violence), showcasing religion's capacity to inspire justice and harmony.

6. ## Strengthening Family and Community Bonds
Religious practices often revolve around family and community, strengthening social ties. Events such as weddings, funerals, and festivals bring people together, reinforcing a sense of belonging. The joint family system, common in India, is deeply rooted in religious teachings that emphasize respect for elders and familial duties.

# Negative Impacts of Religion in Indian Society

1. ## Communalism and Sectarian Violence
Religion has often been manipulated to foster divisions. Communalism, evident in events like the Partition of 1947, the 1992 Babri Masjid demolition, and the 2002 Gujarat riots, highlights how religious identities can be exploited to incite hatred and violence.

2. ## Caste-Based Discrimination
The caste system, rooted in Hindu traditions, has perpetuated inequality and exclusion for centuries. Although officially abolished, caste-based discrimination persists, with marginalized groups such as Dalits still facing prejudice and systemic barriers.

3. ## Gender Inequality
Religious interpretations have often reinforced patriarchal norms. Practices like child marriage, dowry, and restrictions on women's rights find their origins in conservative ideologies. While strides have been made in gender equality, these entrenched beliefs continue to influence societal attitudes.

4. ## Religious Intolerance
India's secular ethos is sometimes challenged by religious intolerance. Minority communities, including Muslims and Christians, occasionally face discrimination and violence. Hate speech and propaganda further deepen divisions, undermining the constitutional promise of religious freedom.

5. ## Hindrance to Scientific Progress
Superstitions rooted in religious beliefs, such as astrology or black magic, often clash with scientific reasoning. This resistance to rationality can impede innovation and modernization, limiting societal progress.

6. ## Exploitation and Corruption
Religion is sometimes exploited for political or personal gain. Instances of corruption within religious institutions and the misuse of donations undermine the spiritual essence of religion, eroding trust among followers.

# Religion and Politics in India

Religion and politics in India are deeply intertwined. Despite the Constitution declaring India a secular state, political entities often leverage religion to mobilize voters. The rise of ideologies like Hindutva, emphasizing Hindu cultural dominance, has sparked debates on secularism and pluralism. Issues such as the Ram Mandir construction, cow slaughter bans, and religious laws highlight the politicization of faith, raising concerns about the rights of minorities.

# Religion as a Catalyst for Social Reform

Religion has also been a powerful force for social change. Reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda, and B.R. Ambedkar used religious principles to combat regressive practices such as *sati*, untouchability, and caste discrimination. Movements like the Bhakti and Sufi traditions emphasized universal values of love, equality, and devotion, transcending societal barriers.

# Contemporary Trends

In a rapidly evolving society, religion in India is adapting to urbanization, education, and globalization. While some embrace progressive and inclusive practices, others cling to traditional interpretations. Interfaith marriages, the global popularity of yoga, and spiritual tourism reflect the dynamic nature of religion in modern India. However, the resurgence of religious nationalism poses challenges to the country's secular identity.

# Conclusion

Religion in India remains a powerful force, capable of uniting and dividing. Its influence on society is shaped by the interplay of tradition, modernity, and politics. By fostering interfaith dialogue, promoting education, and emphasizing shared values like compassion and tolerance, India can harness the positive aspects of religion while mitigating its negative effects. Striking a balance between tradition and progress is key to building a harmonious and inclusive society.

# Gender Discrimination and the Need for Gender Equality in Society

*By Sukanya Bhattacharya*

Gender discrimination, defined as any form of exclusion, restriction, or bias based on gender, has deep-rooted consequences on individuals' ability to enjoy their full human rights. It creates barriers for women, men, girls, and boys, limiting their potential and perpetuating inequality across social, economic, and cultural dimensions. While progress has been made in promoting gender equality, significant challenges remain, particularly in societies where patriarchal norms and traditions persist. Addressing gender discrimination is not just a moral imperative but also critical for societal growth and development.

## The Prevalence of Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination manifests in various ways, from unequal access to education and employment to widespread gender-based violence. Girls, in particular, face numerous challenges, including child marriage, teenage pregnancies, limited education opportunities, sexual abuse, and social exploitation. As they grow older, gender-based inequalities deepen, restricting their access to decision-making, financial independence, and personal autonomy.

In India, while some women have risen to become global leaders and influential voices, the majority of women and girls still face systemic inequalities. Deeply ingrained patriarchal views, cultural norms, and gendered societal expectations create barriers that prevent women from reaching their full potential. Achieving gender equality is not only essential for empowering individuals but also for fostering social and economic development.

## Key Issues and Challenges

1. ### Access to Education
   Globally, significant strides have been made in closing the gender gap in education. However, certain regions still lag behind, with girls facing barriers such as poverty, societal norms, and lack of access to schools. Women remain more likely to be illiterate compared to men, particularly in developing countries. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated educational inequalities, disrupting learning

opportunities for millions of girls. Education is a critical tool for gender equality, empowering girls to break free from cycles of poverty and dependence.

## 2. Maternal Mortality

Maternal mortality, defined as deaths caused by complications during pregnancy or childbirth, is a stark indicator of gender inequality in healthcare. While global maternal mortality rates decreased by 38% between 2000 and 2017, many of these deaths remain preventable. Inadequate access to healthcare, especially in developing nations, continues to endanger women's lives. Addressing maternal health is a fundamental step toward gender equality.

## 3. Informal Employment

Women disproportionately work in the informal economy, where jobs are often unstable, unregulated, and low-paying. In low-income countries, 92.1% of employed women work in informal sectors compared to 87.5% of men. This gender imbalance exacerbates financial insecurity for women and highlights the need for formal employment opportunities and labor protections that ensure fair treatment for all genders.

## 4. Unpaid Labor

Globally, women perform 3.2 times more unpaid labor than men, including childcare, household chores, and elder care. This "invisible work" is crucial for families and communities but remains undervalued and unrecognized. It limits women's ability to pursue education, career advancement, and financial independence, perpetuating cycles of poverty and inequality.

## 5. Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap remains a persistent challenge worldwide. Women of working age face unequal economic opportunities, with many earning significantly less than their male counterparts for the same work. Factors such as unpaid labor, discrimination, and lack of legal protections contribute to this disparity. Eliminating the gender pay gap could halve poverty rates for working women, improving economic outcomes for families and societies.

## 6. Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

GBV is a global epidemic, with 30% of women experiencing physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes. Domestic violence, sexual harassment, and intimate partner violence remain widespread issues, often exacerbated during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts to combat GBV must focus on prevention, legal protections, and support systems for survivors.

## 7. Human Trafficking

Human trafficking disproportionately affects women and girls, who account for 60% of all victims. Many are subjected to extreme violence and exploitation, including forced labor and sexual slavery. Addressing trafficking requires understanding the

gendered dynamics of exploitation and ensuring survivors receive adequate protection and support.

8. ## Discriminatory Laws
Legal systems often reinforce gender inequality, with women receiving fewer rights than men in areas such as mobility, marriage, property ownership, and workplace protections. According to the World Bank, women globally enjoy only 75% of the legal rights granted to men. Reforming discriminatory laws is essential for empowering women and ensuring equal opportunities.

9. ## Mental Health Disparities
Mental health issues impact men and women differently due to societal expectations and gender norms. Women are more likely to report depression and anxiety, while men are less likely to seek help due to stigmas around masculinity. Addressing mental health requires gender-sensitive approaches that acknowledge these differences and provide inclusive support.

10. ## Racialized Gender Inequality
Women of color face compounded discrimination at the intersection of race and gender. While white women may face gender bias, their racial privilege shields them from the systemic oppression experienced by Black, Indigenous, Latina, and Asian women. Recognizing and addressing these layered inequalities is essential for achieving true gender equality.

# Empowering Girls and Women: A Path to Equality

Achieving gender equality requires transforming societal perceptions, empowering girls and women, and addressing systemic barriers. Here's how we can take action:

1. ## Education for All:
Investing in girls' education is one of the most effective ways to achieve gender equality. Education not only equips girls with the skills and knowledge they need but also empowers them to make informed decisions and become leaders in their communities.

2. ## Healthcare Access:
Providing comprehensive healthcare, including maternal care and mental health support, ensures that women can lead healthy and productive lives. Strengthening healthcare infrastructure is critical in reducing maternal mortality and addressing gendered health disparities.

3. ## Economic Empowerment:
Creating opportunities for women in formal employment, addressing the gender pay gap, and recognizing unpaid labor are essential steps toward economic equality.

Policies that ensure fair wages, labor protections, and workplace equality can help women achieve financial independence.

4. ## Combating GBV and Human Trafficking:
Governments and organizations must strengthen laws, provide support for survivors, and raise awareness about gender-based violence and human trafficking. Prevention and intervention programs can protect vulnerable populations and reduce these injustices.

5. ## Reforming Discriminatory Laws:
Legal reforms are necessary to eliminate gender discrimination in all forms. Policies must ensure equal rights for women in education, employment, property ownership, and decision-making.

6. ## Engaging Men and Boys:
Changing societal attitudes toward gender equality requires involving men and boys in the conversation. Gender equality benefits everyone, and inclusive approaches can foster a culture of mutual respect and shared responsibilities.

# Conclusion

Gender equality is not just a women's issue; it is a societal imperative that impacts everyone. A fair and just society values the contributions of all its members, regardless of gender. Empowering girls and women through education, healthcare, and economic opportunities can transform communities and drive progress.

India, like the world, cannot achieve its full potential until every individual—regardless of gender—is given the chance to thrive. By addressing systemic discrimination, investing in women and girls, and fostering inclusive policies, we can create a future where gender equality is not just a goal but a reality.

# Understanding Social Movements

*By Shaili Roy Choudhury and Amrisha Thakur*

Social movements represent collective efforts by groups of people who work together to create or resist changes in society, politics, or culture. These movements often challenge the status quo, advocating for transformation in systems of governance, societal norms, or power structures. Throughout history, social movements have been pivotal in shaping nations and societies.

Below is an in-depth exploration of social movements, categorized into key sections for a clearer understanding.

## 1. Types of Social Movements

### I) Reform Movements
These movements seek to make gradual improvements within existing systems without aiming for their complete dismantling.
Examples: Civil Rights Movement (USA), Women's Suffrage Movement.

### II) Revolutionary Movements
These movements call for the complete overhaul of societal structures, often aiming to establish entirely new systems.
Examples: The French Revolution, The Russian Revolution.

### III) Resistance Movements
These movements oppose certain social, political, or cultural changes, often striving to preserve traditional norms or values.
Examples: Anti-globalization movements, Pro-life movements.

## 2. Key Historical Social Movements

### I) Civil Rights Movement (1950s-1960s)
**Objective**: End racial segregation and discrimination against African Americans in the United States.
**Key Figures**: Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks.
Impact: The movement led to landmark legislation, including the Civil Rights Act (1964) and the Voting Rights Act (1965).

## II) Women's Suffrage Movement (19th-20th Century)

Objective: Secure voting rights for women worldwide.

Key Figures: Susan B. Anthony, Emmeline Pankhurst.

Impact: Achieved women's right to vote in multiple countries, notably through the 19th Amendment in the U.S.

## III) Anti-Apartheid Movement (1948-1994)

Objective: Dismantle the apartheid system in South Africa.

Key Figures: Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu.

Impact: Contributed to the end of apartheid, leading to the establishment of a democratic South Africa in 1994.

# 3. Modern Social Movements

## I) Black Lives Matter (2013-Present)

Objective: Address police brutality and systemic racism.

Achievements: Brought increased awareness to issues of racial injustice and contributed to policy changes in police practices and public attitudes.

## II) LGBTQ+ Rights Movement

Objective: Achieve equality and social acceptance for LGBTQ+ individuals.

Milestones: Legalization of same-sex marriage in many countries, significant strides in societal acceptance and anti-discrimination laws.

# Impact of Social Movements

Social movements have had a profound and far-reaching impact on politics, society, and economies. These movements can alter policies, shift societal norms, and influence economic practices, often reshaping the future of nations.

## 1) Political Impact

### I) Policy Changes

Social movements often lead to significant reforms in the form of new laws or policy amendments.

Example: The Civil Rights Movement resulted in the Civil Rights Act (1964) and Voting Rights Act (1965), while global environmental movements like the climate change advocacy helped influence international agreements like the Paris Agreement.

### II) Democratic Participation

Movements encourage widespread civic engagement, including activism, voting, and public

discourse.
Example: Women's suffrage movements expanded voting rights, increasing democratic participation across the globe.

## 2) Social Impact

### I) Shift in Norms and Values
Social movements challenge deep-seated societal prejudices, gradually altering public attitudes.
Example: LGBTQ+ rights movements have played a key role in normalizing same-sex relationships and marriage. The #MeToo movement has raised awareness of workplace harassment and pushed for stronger legal protections.

### II) Inclusion and Representation
Movements often seek to increase the visibility and representation of marginalized communities, promoting greater inclusivity.
Example: The feminist movement has pushed for gender equality in leadership and decision-making roles.

## 3) Economic Impact

### I) Wage and Labor Reforms
Labor movements have fought for fair wages, better working conditions, and reasonable working hours.
Example: The fight for the eight-hour workday led to global labor reforms.

### II) Corporate Accountability
Environmental and human rights movements often press corporations to adopt more ethical and sustainable business practices.
Example: Pressure from environmental movements has led to greater corporate responsibility concerning climate change and resource conservation.

# Social Movements in India

India has been the birthplace of numerous transformative social movements that have addressed issues of inequality, oppression, and justice. These movements have significantly shaped the nation's political and social landscape.

## 1) Historical Social Movements

### I) Indian Independence Movement (1857-1947)
Objective: Secure independence from British colonial rule.
Key Events:

- Revolt of 1857: The first major uprising against British colonial rule.

- **Non-Cooperation Movement (1920**): Led by Mahatma Gandhi, advocating nonviolent resistance.

- **Quit India Movement** (1942): A mass civil disobedience movement demanding immediate independence.

  Impact: India achieved independence in 1947, transitioning into a democratic republic.

## II) Dalit Movement (19th Century-Present)

**Objective:** Fight against caste-based discrimination and secure equal rights for Dalits (formerly untouchables).

**Key Leaders**: B.R. Ambedkar, Jyotirao Phule, Periyar E.V. Ramasamy.

## 2) Post-Independence Social Movements

### I) Green Revolution and Farmer Movements

**Objective**: Enhance agricultural productivity and address rural distress.

**Farmer Protests**: The 2020-2021 farmer protests raised critical concerns regarding farm laws and the plight of rural farmers.

### II) Women's Movements

Objective: Address gender inequality and promote women's rights.

Milestones:

- **1970s**: Campaigns against dowry practices and domestic violence.

- **2010s**: Protests following the Nirbhaya case (2012) led to more stringent laws against sexual violence.

# 3) Recent and Ongoing Social Movements

## I) Anti-Corruption Movement (2011)

Leader: Anna Hazare.

Objective: Implement the Jan Lokpal Bill to curb government corruption.

Impact: Brought national attention to the issue of corruption and pressured the government to consider anti-corruption legislation.

## II) Environmental Movements

Movements like the Save Aarey protests in Mumbai and the Anti-Sterlite Protests in Tamil Nadu have challenged environmentally harmful policies. These movements have been instrumental in raising awareness about sustainable development and corporate accountability.

# Conclusion

Social movements in India, from the fight for independence to contemporary struggles for gender equality, environmental sustainability, and social justice, have profoundly shaped the country's socio-political landscape. Despite their successes, ongoing challenges such as state suppression, societal fragmentation, and evolving dynamics continue to test their effectiveness. However, with the advent of digital platforms and the increasing awareness of interconnected global issues, social movements in India remain a potent force for change.

These movements remind us of the enduring power of collective action—showing that ordinary citizens have the capacity to drive extraordinary change. They continue to pave the way toward a more inclusive, equitable, and just society.

# Multiculturalism and Pluralism

*By Rishabh Mazumder*



## 1. Introduction

Multiculturalism and pluralism are interconnected yet distinct social concepts that play vital roles in shaping inclusive societies. Multiculturalism refers to a social framework where multiple cultures coexist alongside a dominant culture, emphasizing the right of every group to maintain its unique identity and traditions. This principle values diversity and fosters respect for cultural differences. Pluralism, on the other hand, is a cornerstone of democratic societies, promoting the public expression of diverse cultural practices and treating all cultural traditions as equal. It extends the idea of inclusivity by encouraging active engagement among diverse groups in public spaces.

## 2. Key Differences Between Multiculturalism and Pluralism

While both concepts are closely linked, they differ in significant ways:

1. **Dominance of Culture**: Multiculturalism acknowledges the existence of a dominant culture alongside other cultures, while pluralism thrives even without a dominant culture.

2. **Scope of Practice**: Multiculturalism often confines cultural practices to private or designated spaces, whereas pluralism encourages their open expression in public domains.

3. **Societal Evolution**: Societies may transition from pluralism to multiculturalism if the dominant culture's influence diminishes over time.

## 3. Global Examples

Several nations exemplify the principles of multiculturalism and pluralism, often evolving to support both concepts:

## The United States

The United States stands as a quintessential example of a multicultural and pluralistic society, with a population representing diverse nationalities, cultures, and ethnicities. Urban hubs like New York City illustrate pluralism in action, where communities freely express their cultural heritage through festivals, cuisines, and traditions in public spaces.

For instance, Asian communities in New York celebrate events such as:

- **Korean Festivals**: Lunar New Year, Chuseok

- **Chinese Festivals**: Spring Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival, Lantern Festival
- **Indian Festivals**: Diwali, Holi, Durga Puja, and Baisakhi

Such celebrations highlight the acceptance and integration of diverse cultures, demonstrating a harmonious coexistence within a broader societal framework.

## 4. Multiculturalism and Pluralism in India

India offers a remarkable example of a society rooted in both multiculturalism and pluralism, encapsulated by the concept of "Unity in Diversity." As a nation with immense religious, linguistic, and cultural diversity, India provides a living example of harmonious coexistence amidst vast differences.

Key aspects of India's pluralistic society include:

- **Religious Diversity**: Major religions such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism are practiced openly, contributing to the nation's vibrant cultural fabric.
- **Linguistic Diversity**: With 22 officially recognized languages, India reflects its regional variations through linguistic pluralism.
- **Cultural Practices**: Festivals like Diwali, Eid, Christmas, and Guru-Purab are celebrated nationwide, often involving cross-community participation.
- **Cuisines and Architecture**: From Mughal architecture in the north to Dravidian styles in the south, and from Gujarati thalis to Kerala's seafood delicacies, India showcases its diversity through its culinary and architectural heritage.

Despite challenges such as communal violence, caste-based discrimination, and regional disparities, India's deep-rooted traditions in multiculturalism and pluralism have endured.

## 5. Conclusion

Multiculturalism and pluralism underscore the strength of diverse societies in fostering unity amidst differences. While multiculturalism celebrates unique identities, pluralism ensures their active participation in the public sphere. In the Indian context, "Unity in Diversity" serves as a guiding principle, reinforcing the nation's resilience against anti-pluralistic forces.

Although challenges persist, such as socio-economic inequalities and regional tensions, India's history of migration, cultural exchange, and constitutional safeguards ensures the preservation of its pluralistic ethos. This interplay between diversity and democracy highlights the enduring power of multiculturalism and pluralism in building inclusive, dynamic societies

# Alumni Corner

Leisure as a Site of Struggle

→ Tanisha Kar

Muslim Women, Academia, and the Public Sphere

→ Teesta Chandra

Civil Service Through The Lens Of Sociology

→ MD Waqas

# Lesiure as a Site of Struggle

*By Tanisha Kar*
*Batch – 2019-22*
*Designation – M.A. in Sociology,*
*Savitribai Phule Pune University.*

Leisure has evolved over time due to societal changes, technology, and cultural norms. Ancient civilizations intertwined leisure with religious practices, while medieval times were influenced by social class. The Renaissance saw a shift towards individual pursuits, while the Industrial Revolution led to long hours in factories and the concept of weekends and holidays. The 20th century saw democratization with mass media and technological advancements, bringing entertainment to households globally. The digital age has brought new avenues for entertainment and socialization, with contemporary leisure characterized by diverse choices catering to individual preferences and lifestyles. Understanding leisure and its different forms is essential for understanding its capitalist notion.

Marginality is a complex condition of disadvantage that individuals and communities may experience because of vulnerabilities arising from unequal or inequitable environmental, ethnic, cultural, social, political and economic factors. A typology of marginality is based on two primaries. The primary forms are contingent and systemic. Contingent marginality is a condition that results from competitive inequality in which individuals and communities are put at a disadvantage because of the dynamics of the free market that's uncertain and stochastic outcomes affect them adversely. Systemic marginality is a socioeconomic condition of disadvantage created by socially constructed inequitable non-market forces of bias (A. Mehretu et. al: 2000). In contemporary times, urban marginality has become an area of concern along with aspects of its rise and factors.

Ever since 2500 BC, urban places have played an important role in the evolution of India's cultural, political, economic and social life. Urbanisation is a process which has existed for many years and is an impressive fact of modern times, which has changed many aspects of social life. The word urban is related to cities and modernization, and experience of the modern cities is fascinating and compelling. As we all know, every coin has two sides, positive and negative.

Though modern cities are a beguiling mixture of great buildings, libraries, theatres, streets, lights and many emotions of different people, it also has a negative side, which is prominent in developing countries. The negative side is composed of the disadvantaged and the marginalised section of society, who are neglected by the bright lights and astonishing infrastructures of modern cities. The marginalised section of the urban population comprises the slum-dwellers and the poor.

The poor and the slum-dwellers are more or less the same people in the urban setting. In India, slums are found in all urban settlements, large or small, old or new, unplanned or planned. The slum problem is ubiquitous in cities all the world over, although with variable dimensions. Does it then mean that slums are a necessary concomitant of urbanisation? But the mere prevalence of slums, no matter how wide a scale, does not signify that they are inevitable in all urban communities unless it can be shown that their causes are inevitably related to some general aspect of urbanisation (Victor S. D'souza:1979). While discussing the marginalised section of society, often individuals ignore their lives and how they spend them; instead main focus is always on the difficulties and wrongdoings of the society towards them. There are different aspects to observing the lives of the poor and the slum dwellers. One of the aspects that can be taken into consideration is their social life, how they spend their spare time in a society that can be at times cruel and unjust to them, and different from the capitalist point of view.

Leisure is notoriously difficult to define. Some sociologists treat it as a portion of one's time. Others regard it as a quality of experience unconfined to a particular time. The technological advances of post-industrial society have created unprecedented opportunities to escape the necessities of daily toil. Concomitant cultural changes have shifted attention away from work and achievement toward status and taste and have engendered a new ethos dominated by consumption for pleasure rather than production for utility (J. Wilson: 1980). Leisure and free time and ideas of it among different groups in the society are vital. Free time, like almost every other scarce resource, is distributed unequally among the population. Referring to *Urban Marginalised Women's* section of society is huge and that is what builds the society. The women section of the urban marginalised are the ones mostly seen in every household as residential aides. They spend 2-3 hours of their lives in others' houses making others' lives trouble-free, not in one house but many like that. Balancing work life and leisure is difficult indeed for them while trying to some

extra to support the family in this highly capitalist era, where the prices of different essential commodities are rising by degrees.

Leisure is an alien term for the women of the slums, like many other women in different class strata spend their whole day doing house chores and do not know or understand the term leisure. For instance, most of the *Women Slum-Dwellers* wake up at 5 or 6 in the morning, work the whole day and sleep around 11-midnight. Doing house chores and child-rearing is what they prefer to do 8 in their daily lives besides earning for the family. To explain critically, the women in society, especially in the marginalised section working for the whole day and living for others is the reality, and they don't even count it as work most of the time. They consider looking after the house, children and the men of the family as their leisure experiences. Such examples bring forward the lives and the struggle of the women in general, as well of the women in different slums across the country in their daily lives. Though leisure is a foreign term which has its spotlight mainly owing to capitalism, free time for women still in 21st Century is hard to believe and understand by the majority of the people.

Due to cultural conventions, technological advancements, and societal shifts, leisure has changed over time. While medieval ages were governed by social class, ancient civilizations combined leisure with religious and civic rituals. Individual endeavours were encouraged by the Renaissance and Industrial Revolution, but mass media and technical developments in the 20th century brought about democracy. With the advent of video games, social networking, and online streaming services, the digital age opened up new possibilities for social interaction and enjoyment. Although there are many options for modern leisure that suit different tastes and lifestyles, marginalization is still an issue. Sociologists frequently concentrate on social issues while ignoring the lives of the underprivileged

# Muslim Women, Academia, and the Public Sphere

*By Teesta Chandra (B.A. Sociology 2018 – 2021)*

## Introduction

Education as an institution, holds immense power in its ability to initiate social change, through subversive practices that challenge injustice and social exclusion. Institutional structures of learning through knowledge creation shape reasoning and a potential for collective mobilization. Jurgen Habermas, a German philosopher and sociologist, proposed the concept of the public sphere in his seminal work The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere published in 1962. According to Habermas (1962), the public sphere is a space where private citizens can come together to engage in rational-critical debate on matters of public concern, free from coercion and domination by the state or other powerful entities. Individual demands are kept aside, in favor of collective goals and mobilization, to challenge the state. In this context, universities initiate "a kind of social intercourse that, far from presupposing the equality of status, disregarded status altogether." It possesses a tendency to replace "the celebration of rank" with the "parity of common humanity" (Habermas, 1989, p. 36). However, to initiate social change, one must consider the question of group and individual identity often takes center stage. Discourses related to the social exclusion and discrimination faced by individuals, based on religion, caste, sex, gender, etc., are often initiated and carried out in institutions of higher education. Representation of diverse and marginalized perspectives in higher education leads to the formation of subversive forms of knowledge that catalyze the process of social change and transformation. Hegemony in academic and literary spaces can be challenged with increased visibility of diverse, marginalized

perspectives in the process of knowledge creation. The following paper will deal with universities

as an extension of the public sphere, and the subsequent representation of Muslim women in institutions of higher learning, as a medium to increase their presence in the public sphere. In terms of the methodological considerations of this paper, secondary data is used for the analysis, gathering data from newspaper articles and research papers.

## Higher Education And Public Sphere

The institution of education is a space for both the creation of knowledge and the creation of sensibilities related to democracy and critical thinking. Education, as an integral part of the public sphere, is imperative for socioeconomic and cultural transformation. Educational institutions and academia serve as a site, where students engage themselves with questions and discourses related to exclusion, oppression, democracy, and human rights. In the Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, Jurgen Habermas (1962) describes the public sphere as a space in eighteenth-century England where discussions, debates, and public opinion are expressed and formed. He argued that the public sphere emerged in Europe during the eighteenth century due to the rise of print media, coffeehouses, and other spaces where individuals would come together to discuss and debate political and social issues. Pusser (2006) argues that universities as the public sphere, are institutional spaces for reasoned argument and contending values. Institutions of higher education, like, universities have historically been an integral medium for movements that have led to structural changes in society. Transformative movements like the civil rights movement, the Paris Commune of 1968, the 1970s feminist movement, queer liberation, etc, were all rooted in university spaces, where students and activists challenged and criticized existing systems of power and injustice. Universities, serving as a site for the nurturing of democratic ideals and values, further emphasizing questions about identity and representation. It is imperative for institutions of higher education, as a site for both knowledge

creation and collective mobilization, to not let hegemonic ideals dominate. The inclusion and representation of marginalized identities and perspectives in higher education is imperative for the restructuring of our ontological and epistemological understandings. "Learning spaces in India have been seen as political institutions as well as educational since the politicization of education is directly concerned with students and their academic activities" (Babu, 2020). In post-colonial India, institutions of higher education have served as active sites for political debates, with the voices and rights of marginalized sections, highlighting themselves, in issues related to the state and its policies. In the context of Muslim women in higher education and academia, their representation holds significant implications for the promotion of gender equality and the creation of a knowledge system that promotes an egalitarian worldview.

## Muslim Women And Academia

Academia and universities have been dominated by members who are largely upper-caste and privileged. According to an article published by The Hindu in 2018 on the reporting by the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE, 2020-21) only 4.9% of higher education teachers are Muslims. The socioeconomic and political barriers to the exclusion of Indian Muslims have led to their lower representation in higher education. Kumar (2019) in his survey, conducted from a sample of 348 people in eightresidential coloniesin Delhi,found that gender, caste, class, and religion make a difference in educational attainment and lead to social exclusion in higher education. In this context, Muslims were more excluded than members of other religions. Academic conferences are one of the key sites for the creation of new forms of knowledge and the advancement of academic careers. However, Sabharwal and Henderson (2020) in their research found that participation in academic conferences was proportionally lower for both women and scheduled-caste academics, compared to men and upper-caste academics. Their research also revealed that accessto conferences was dependent on relational processes of social exclusion, which

operate within academia, irrespective of formal practices in place. According to a report by the All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2020-21, the number of Muslim students enrolling for higher education in India has dropped in the 2020-21 academic year compared to the previous year. The study showed that the number of students from the community decreased to 19.21 lakh (4.6 percent) in 2020-21 from 21 lakh (5.5 percent) in 2019- 20. Further, the low literacy rate among Muslim women in India is a significant barrier to their participation in higher education. According to the Census of India 2011, the literacy rate among Muslim women was 62.8%, which is lower than the national average of 65.5%. The low literacy rate may be attributed to various socio-economic factors, including poverty, lack of access to quality education, patriarchal oppression, religious discrimination, etc. These challenges can limit the participation and success of Muslim women in higher education and can hinder their ability to fully engage in the public sphere. Apart from socioeconomic hindrances, the cultural and political barriers existing both outside and within academia pose challenges for Muslim women in India. Contemporary discourses on the identity of Indian Muslims, are reduced to either the community's socio-economic performance in various developmental indices, or their inclination towards fundamentalism. Narratives such as these are dominant, and further push the Muslim community towards marginalization. On the other end of the spectrum, Muslim women have been portrayed as being voiceless, often as "victims" of their own religion's orthodoxy. The participation of Muslim women in the public sphere has been related mostly to questions about their right to protect their religious identity or citizenship. Questions related to their agency in the creation of subversive perspectives and forms of knowledge are rarely a part of scholarly discourse. Spaces of knowledge creation often reflect and perpetuate the dominant narrative prevalent in the social world. The cultural production of knowledge has wide-ranging implications for both the structural and the everyday life

consequences of marginalized identities. Orientalist knowledge has portrayed Muslims as barbaric, backward, and orthodox, with Muslim women portrayed as burqa-clad "victims" of Islamic male domination. This has led to the "othering" of the Muslim community in both literary or academic and popular narratives. Unmasking the discursive politics and dimensions of authority in the accounts produced of marginalized women is an important project concerning developing an anticolonial and antiracist feminist critique (Zine, 2020). Muslim women need to locate their political agency to critique existing systems of knowledge. Increased representation of Muslim women in institutions of knowledge production will enable them to challenge dominant narratives and the inevitable "othering."

## Conclusion

Overall, while the concept of universities as an extension of the public sphere holds significant promise for promoting gender equality and empowering Muslim women in higher education and universities in India, there is a need for concerted efforts to address the various challenges and barriers that hinder their participation and success. Imagining the university and academia as an extension of the public sphere, and as a site for creating and contesting systems of knowledge, enables posing questions related to the agency and visibility of marginalized groups. The recent controversy surrounding the hijab ban in educational institutions of Karnataka, India, is reflective of the discriminatory politics executed by aggressive and majoritarian forces against minority communities. The presence of hegemonic practices both within and outside academia creates a need for the increased participation of Muslim women in the public sphere. Production of knowledge in academia from the perspectives of Muslim women themselves, will create new forms of subversive practices and discussions within the public sphere, leading to a more inclusive and emancipatory dimension of higher education.

# References:

- *Babu, G. S. (Ed.). (2020). Education and the Public Sphere: Exploring the Structures of Mediation in Post-colonial India. New York, NY.*

- *Habermas, J. (1991). The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society. MIT press.*

- *• https://indianexpress.com/article/education/enrolment-of-muslim-students-for-highereducation-dips-to-4-6-aishe-2020-21-8413124/*

- *Pusser, B., Kempner, K., Marginson, S., & Ordorika, I. (Eds.). (2012). Universities and the public sphere: Knowledge creation and state building in the era of globalization. Routledge.*

- *Pusser, B. (2006). Reconsidering higher education and the public good. Governance and the public good, 11-28.*

- *Sabharwal, N. S., Henderson, E. F., & Joseph, R. S. (2020). Hidden social exclusion in Indian academia: Gender, caste, and conference participation. Gender and Education, 32(1), 27-42.*

- *• https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/only-49-of-higher-education-teachersmuslims/article22431446.ece#:~:text=At%204.9%25%2C%20Muslim%20representat ion%20among,in%20India's%20population%20(14.2%25).*

- *Zine, J. (2002). Muslim women and the politics of representation. American Journal of Islam and Society, 19(4), 1-22.*

# Civil Service Through The Lens Of Sociology

**By MD Waqas**

*B.A. in Sociology from Maulana Azad College (2018)*

*M.A. in Sociology from University of Cacutta (2021)*

*PhD. Scholar in Presidency University, Kolkata (Ongoing)*

CW Mills brilliantly states, "The sociological imagination enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society." The power of sociological imagination is unparalleled in the sense that, when used correctly, it gives us numerous remedies to various social problems and patterns in our society.

Civil Service is one such area that needs to be looked through the lens of Sociology. It refers to the group of government personnel employed on merit to execute and administer public policies, services, and programs. It is an important pillar of the Indian government system that ensures policy execution and maintains administrative continuity smoothly across political changes. The Civil Service Examination (CSE) is conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) every year. The UPSC CSE has a very low success rate that hovers below 1%. It is believed that only approximately 0.1% to 0.3% of applicants pass all three parts of the test i.e., prelims, mains, and interview. The reasons why many aspirants fail in the exam can be attributed to various personal and external factors but it is much more than that. As a sociologist, the task is to not focus only on the personal issues of the aspirants failing but to consider it as a broader public issue at large. One of the main causes of India's rising civil service aspirant population is unemployment. There is a high rate of underemployment and unemployment particularly among young population in India with an ever-increasing complex labour

market. Many young minds consider civil service as a viable and feasible career choice in the current scenario. A significant population of India's workforce is employed in the informal sector, which consists of gig workers, daily wage workers, and other employment categories which are insecure in nature. The absence of proper legal framework, job stability, and employee benefits in the informal sector is the result of low pay and abuse. The opportunity to escape the unorganized sector and get employment with a decent salary, benefits, and job stability is provided by pursuing a career in the civil service.

Systemic failures are another reason for people joining civil service. A lot of failures in important sectors like agriculture, health, education, infrastructure, etc. motivate many aspirants to enter public service with the goal of correcting systemic issues in these areas. Many public service candidates are particularly interested in making a difference in rural development, health reforms, and quality education, areas where government initiatives frequently fail to reach the most vulnerable citizens.

Another important variable in Sociology is gender. The gender gap in the UPSC CSE is steadily diminishing. Historically, male applicants surpassed females, but the number of female aspirants has progressively increased in recent years. For women, the appeal of civil services is multifaceted. The conventional notion of women as housewives and men as breadwinners is losing traction. A job in CS provides prospects for empowerment and a road to independence, ensuring that individuals are not entirely dependent on family or spouses for a living. It also serves as a tool for respect and recognition which women have been denied since time immemorial. Participating in nation-building and contributing to national changes enables women to find more significance and happiness in their

work.

The role of status and power is another factor that draws lakhs of aspirants for civil service. Many aspirants belong to families that have long aspired to the status and respect that a civil service position provides. There is often some kind of family pressure and cultural expectations that drive a lot of people to join the civil service, even if they are not completely dedicated or prepared.

The UPSC exam is known for its rigor, and people dedicate years to it, even without a guarantee of success. The prime years of their youth are either perfectly utilized as a result of success in the exam or is considered to be a waste because of their failure. But there is always a latent function that is neglected. Civil service preparation creates personality if done with honesty without caring about the result. It builds individual character, develops mental toughness, emotional intelligence, and the ability to bounce back from failures. Years of constant consistency and attempts teaches the importance of persistence. There is a stigma of rejection that is attached to civil service failure. The ability to face this stigma and handle disappointment develops a growth mindset. Even though the failure in the civil services exam is undoubtedly a tough and humbling experience, it provides number of different opportunities to bloom and grow in life.

# Picture Gallery

# Thank You

Dear Readers,

As the final page of this edition turns, we want to pause and acknowledge the most vital part of our journey—you. By choosing to spend your precious time with us, you have not only supported our vision but also given life to the words, stories, and ideas we pour our hearts into.

In a world buzzing with endless distractions, your decision to engage with our magazine is a testament to your curiosity, your thirst for understanding, and your belief in the power of meaningful content. You remind us why we do what we do—to inform, inspire, and ignite conversations that matter.

This magazine isn't just ours; it's yours too. Every article, every page is a bridge connecting us to you—a community that values depth, thoughtfulness, and creativity. We hope the stories within these pages have sparked new ideas, stirred emotions, or simply brought a smile to your face.

As we continue to grow and evolve, we promise to uphold the trust you've placed in us. Your journey with us fuels our determination to bring you even more impactful content in the future

.

Thank you, from the depths of our hearts, for being part of this incredible story. Together, we're building something extraordinary.

With immense gratitude,