



# **CIVIL SERVICES ACHIEVERS' POINT**

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## **CSAP's SMART BOOK INDIAN SOCIETY**

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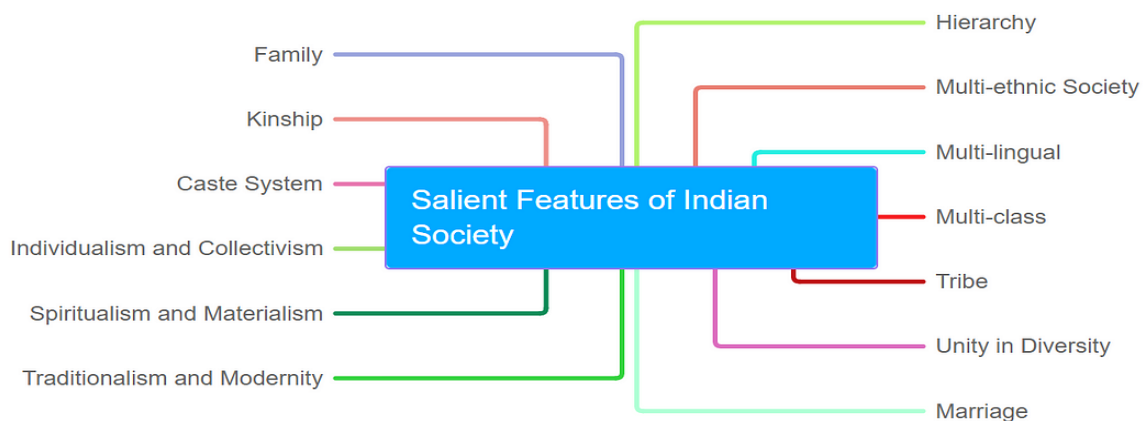
## CHAPTER 1

### SALIENT FEATURES OF INDIAN SOCIETY

Indian society is a pluralistic society with a complex social order characterized by a multitude of ethnic, linguistic, religions, and caste divisions. It comprises of people living in rural urban, tribal setting and all sections which carry the ethos of Indianness. Among the diversity of the nation, widely accepted cultural themes, feeling of oneness, brotherhood and values of contribution binds individual and enhance social order and harmony. A society is a

human product that continuously acts upon its producers.

Peter L Berger – defines society as a human product which continuously acts upon its producers. Society may be illustrated as economic, social, industrial or cultural infrastructure made up of a varied collection of individuals. → It is a web of social relations which is always changing. It consists groups of human beings who are linked together utilizing specific systems and customs, rites and laws which have a collective social existence.



### DATA AND FACTS ABOUT INDIAN SOCIETY

- **Population:** India is the second-most populous country in the world, with a population of over 1.40 billion people as of 2023.
- **Religion:** Hinduism is the majority religion in India, followed by Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism. There are also several smaller religious communities in India.
- **Religion-wise Population in India:**
  - Hinduism – 79.8%
  - Islam – 14.2%
  - Christianity – 2.3%
  - Sikhism – 1.7%
  - Buddhism – 0.7%
  - Jainism – 0.4%
  - Other religions – 0.9%
  - Atheists – 0.2%
- **Castes in India:** According to Census 1931 there were 4147 castes in India.
- **Languages:** India has over 22 official languages and more than 19,500 distinct dialects, making it one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world.

- **Sex Ratio:** As per the 2011 Census it is 943 which is expected to improve to 952 by 2036.
- **Education:** India has made significant strides in improving its literacy rate, which now stands at around 74%. However, access to education remains uneven, with many children, particularly girls, still out of school.
  - **Male Literacy:** 82.14%
  - **Female Literacy:** 65.46%
- **Diversity:** India is a diverse country, with a rich tapestry of cultures, languages, religions, and traditions. It is this diversity that gives India its unique identity and character.

### Some of the salient features of the Indian society can be discussed as follows:

- **Multi-ethnic society** - India is a home to almost all racial profiles. By multi-ethnicity we mean diversity in ethnolinguistic, ethno-national, ethno-racial, ethno-regional, ethno-religious etc. Indian society is also multi-lingual having diversity in languages. Despite Hindi being the official language, Constitution recognizes 22 languages in the schedule VIII of the Constitution. In India more than 600 languages are spoken. As per 2011 census, 122 languages are Indo-European, Dravidian, Austro Asiatic, Tibet Burmese etc.
- **Multi-class society** - The class system is a stratification of society based on education, property, business or work. In general, there are three classes. According to Karl Marx, man is a class animal. Indian society is a patriarchal society. It is a social system in which men hold primary power and enjoy greater status than women. In the system of patriarchy, men make all decisions.
- **Unity in Diversity** - It is a phrase implying unity among people with diverse cultural, religious and other demographic differences. It denotes the sense of oneness. Various factors which lead to UID can be geographical, cultural, religion, language.

- **Kinship, Marriage and Family** - In Indian society, blood relations and kinship ties enjoy a strong hold over other social relationship. In Indian society this plays a major role in the socialization of individuals and the maintenance of group solidarity. In the Indian society kinship relationship plays a major role in determining whom to marry, how to raise children, in which land to cultivate, where to live, which property to inherit etc.

**Marriage** is an important social institution in Indian society. It is a relationship which is socially approved and sanctioned by customs and law. The marriage system in India has undergone radical changes like change in form of marriage example, polygamy, polygyny are legally prohibited in India after Independence.

- Change in the age of marriage
- Increase in divorce rates
- Live in relationships

### DATA AND FACTS ABOUT MARRIAGE IN INDIA

- **Age of marriage:** The legal age for marriage in India is 18 years for females and 21 years for males. However, child marriages are still prevalent in some parts of India, particularly in rural areas. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) conducted in 2019-20, 23.3% of women surveyed got married before attaining the legal age of 18 years, down from 26.8% reported in NFHS-4.
- **Divorce rate:** The divorce rate in India is relatively low compared to other countries. According to data from the World of Statistics, the divorce rate in India is 1.1%. However, the divorce rate is increasing in urban areas due to factors such as changing social attitudes, economic independence, and better access to legal services.
- **Dowry system:** According to data shared by the Union Minister of State for Home in Rajya Sabha, 35,493 dowry deaths were reported in the country between 2017 and 2021.
- **Inter-caste and inter-religious marriages:** As per the Census 2011, 5.8% of the marriages in India were inter-caste marriages.

## TYPES OF MARRIAGE

- **Monogamous Marriage:** This is a marriage between two individuals, where each partner is allowed to have only one spouse at a time.
- **Polygamous Marriage:** This is a marriage in which one person is allowed to have multiple spouses at the same time. It can take different forms, such as polygyny (one man with multiple wives) or polyandry (one woman with multiple husbands).
- **Same-Sex Marriage:** This is a marriage between two individuals of the same gender. It is recognized as legal in some countries but not in others.
  - ✓ The Supreme Court of India ruled in August 2022 that same-sex couples can obtain rights and benefits as a live-in couple (analogous to cohabitation), even though India does not recognise registered marriage or civil unions for same-sex couples.
- **Arranged Marriage:** This is a marriage where the families of the two individuals arrange the marriage. The couple may or may not have a say in the matter.
- **Love Marriage:** This is a marriage where the couple chooses each other based on their own feelings of love and attraction.
- **Common Law Marriage:** This is a type of marriage in which a couple lives together for a certain period of time and is considered legally married without having gone through a formal ceremony. Common law marriage is recognized in some jurisdictions, but not in others.

**Family** - The family forms the basic unit of social organization in Indian society. There are various types of family on the basis of size and structure like nuclear family and joint family.

## DATA AND FACTS ABOUT FAMILY IN INDIA

- **Family Size:** The average family size in India is around 4.8 members, according to the NFHS.
- **Joint Families:** According to the 2011 Census, around 16% of households in India are joint families.
- **Nuclear Families:** According to the 2011 census, the share of nuclear families grew to 52.1% compared to 51.7% in the 2001 Census.

- **Ageing Population:** India is experiencing an ageing population, with the number of people over the age of 60 expected to increase from around 100 million in 2011 to over 300 million by 2050.
- **Family Planning:** According to the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5), the contraceptive prevalence rate in India is around 67%.

## TYPES OF FAMILY

**Nuclear family** - Consist of husband, wife and unmarried children, size is very small, autonomous unit. No control of elders.

**Extended family:** This family structure includes a nuclear family and other family members such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. It is usually larger in size than a nuclear family and can be found in many cultures around the world.

**Joint family:** This family structure includes several generations living together under one roof, with a patriarch or matriarch serving as the head of the family. It is common in some cultures in Asia and Africa.

**Single-parent family:** This family structure consists of one parent and their children, whether through divorce, death, or choice. It can be small or large in size, depending on the number of children.

**Blended family:** This family structure involves a remarriage or a new relationship where one or both partners have children from previous relationships. It can be small or large in size, depending on the number of children involved.

Some functions of family institution in Indian society are production and rearing of cultural, cultural transmission, provision of home, status ascribing, agency of social control and socialization. It also performs economic functions, educational, religious functions etc.

## Indian Society is a caste-based Society

A caste is a hereditary, endogamous group that has a common identity, a traditional occupation, a shared culture, is generally immobile, has a specific social status, and exists as a single, homogeneous community. The caste system is a

social structure that is prevalent in Hindu societies in India, Nepal, and other South Asian countries. It is a hierarchical system where individuals are divided into social groups based on their birth and occupation. The caste system has been in existence for over 2,000 years and has been a fundamental aspect of Hindu society. Caste system - India's caste system is among the world's oldest form of surviving social stratification. On India the caste system consists of 2 types –

1. **Varna:** - Even though it Literally means 'colour', It is the name given to a four-fold division of Hindu society into Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra.
2. **Jati:** - It is a general term that can refer to any type or sort of thing, including inanimate objects, plants, animals, and people

Generally, the caste system as per the Rig Veda there are 4 categories known as varna system –

- 1) Brahmins
- 2) Kshatriya
- 3) Vaishya
- 4) Sudras.

During colonial times in 1901 census its sought to collect census on social hierarchy, land revenue settlement gave legal recognition to the caste based rights of the upper caste that become land ownness in the modern sense.

Government of India Act, 1935 gave legal recognition to SCs and STs for special treatment by the states. During post-colonial times i.e. after, Mahatma Gandhi was able to work for the upliftment of the lowest castes i.e. Harijans and caste was considered as the social evil.

Further, policy of reservation along with growth of PVT industries, endogamy and democratic politics gave more prominence to the institution of caste.

### Some characteristics of caste system in India are-

- Segmental division of society
- Hierarchy with the notion of purity and pollution.
- Endogamy
- Untouchability
- Civil and religious disabilities

- Manual scavenging - It eventually become a caste-based occupation which involves the removal of untreated human excreta. It has been officially abolished by the prohibition of employment as manual scavengers and their rehabilitation Act, 2013.
- Caste based violence in India.
- Policy of caste-based reservation.

### Some of the changes in the caste system are –

- Trends of inter-caste marriage (exogamy)
- The challenge to orthodoxy like child marriage etc.
- New food habits.
- Improvement in the position of lower caste.
- Changes in occupation -manual scavenging.
- Political mobilization based on caste has been increasing.

### Some factors affecting the changes in the caste system:

- Sanskritization
- Modernization
- Westernization (imitating the west, example: Americanization, Colonialization, Mcdonalization)
- Industrialization
- Urbanization
- Democratic decentralization
- Caste and Politics (Dalit)
- Legislative measures like untouchability offence Act, 1953.

## UNITY IN DIVERSITY

"Unity in Diversity" is a phrase that is often used to describe India. India is a diverse country with many religions, languages, cultures, and ethnic groups. Despite this diversity, India has managed to maintain a strong sense of unity and coherence.

### Some factors leading to Unity and Diversity in India

- Constitution Identity: - Single Citizenship
- Inter-state mobility - The constitution guarantees freedom under Act 19(1) (d) which promotes the sense of unity and brotherhood among the masses.
- Religion co-existence (preamble /secular)
- Fairs and festivals

- Climatic integration by monsoon

### FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR INDIA'S DIVERSITY

1. **Geographical factors:** India is a large country with a diverse landscape, ranging from mountains to deserts to coastal areas. This diversity in terrain has contributed to the development of distinct cultures and ways of life.
2. **Historical factors:** India has a rich and complex history with various influences from ancient civilizations, invasions, colonialism, and more. This has led to the blending of diverse cultures and traditions.
3. **Religious factors:** India is home to several major religions, including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism, as well as many smaller religions. This has led to a diversity of customs, traditions, and practices.
4. **Linguistic factors:** India has over 1,600 languages and dialects, making it one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world. This diversity reflects the regional differences and unique identities of various communities.
5. **Cultural factors:** India has diverse cultures, including music, dance, food, and festivals, reflecting the country's history, geography, and religious diversity.
6. **Ethnic factors:** India is home to over 2,000 ethnic groups, each with their own distinct cultural practices, traditions, and beliefs.
7. **Caste system:** India's caste system, though controversial, has led to the formation of diverse communities, each with its own unique customs, beliefs, and practices.
8. **Political factors:** India is a federal democratic country with a diverse political landscape, comprising national and regional political parties representing different communities and interests.
9. **Economic factors:** India's economy is diverse, ranging from agriculture to technology, reflecting the country's different regions, natural resources, and development levels.
10. **Migration:** India has a long history of migration, both internal and external, which

has led to the mixing of different cultures and traditions, contributing to the country's diversity

### INDIAN SOCIETY AS A TRIBAL SOCIETY



Tribes in India are defined as the communities that have distinct cultures, languages, and social organisations. They usually live in isolated and remote areas of the country and maintain their traditional lifestyle, customs, and beliefs.

The government of India recognizes over 700 tribes in the country, which are classified as Scheduled Tribes (ST). The tribes in India are distributed throughout the country, but most of them live in the hilly and forested regions. The north-eastern region of India is home to the largest number of tribes, followed by the central and western regions.

### DATA AND FACTS ABOUT TRIBES

- Census of India 2011: There are 705 Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the country, with a population of over 104 million.
- The states of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, and Maharashtra have the largest tribal population.
- The tribal population in India constitutes about 8.6% of the total population of the country.
- According to the 2011 Census, the literacy rate among STs is 59.6%, compared to the national average of 73%.
- According to the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011, about 45% of the tribal households in India are below the poverty line.
- In the Budget 2023-24 the overall outlay for the Ministry of Tribal Affairs is Rs. 12461.88 crore, i.e an increase of 70.69% over the

previous year's Revised Estimate (RE) of Rs.7301.00 crore.

Region	Tribes
Northeast India	Naga, Khasi, Garo, Mizo, Bodo, Karbi, Angami, Hmar
Central India	Gond, Bhil, Santhal, Oraon, Kondh, Maria, Baiga, Kharia
Eastern India	Santal, Ho, Birhor, Munda, Kol, Khond, Juang
Western India	Bhil, Warli, Rathwa, Dangi, Konkana, Gond
Southern India	Todas, Irulas, Kotas, Kurumbas, Koragas
Northern India	Bhutia, Lepcha, Tharu, Bhotiya, Garhwali, Jaunsari

### CHARACTERISTICS OF TRIBES IN INDIA

- 1. Distinctive Culture:** Tribes in India have a unique culture that includes their customs, traditions, and way of life. They often have their own language, clothing, and food habits that set them apart from the mainstream population.
- 2. Occupation:** Many tribes in India are dependent on agriculture, hunting, and gathering for their livelihood. Some also practise pastoralism and trade with the neighbouring communities.
- 3. Social Hierarchy:** Most tribes in India have a hierarchical social structure, with the elder members of the community holding significant authority. The tribes also have their own social norms, values, and beliefs.
- 4. Animistic Beliefs:** Many tribes in India have animistic beliefs and worship nature. They believe that everything in nature has a spirit and must be respected and protected.
- 5. Isolation:** Many tribes in India live in remote and isolated areas, away from mainstream society. This isolation has helped them preserve their culture and tradition but has also made it difficult for them to access basic amenities like education and healthcare.
- 6. Oral Tradition:** Many tribes in India have an oral tradition of passing down their knowledge, beliefs, and customs from one generation to another. They have their own system of education, which includes storytelling, songs, and rituals.

- 7. Vulnerability:** Tribes in India are often vulnerable to exploitation, discrimination, and marginalisation. They are at risk of losing their land, resources, and culture due to development projects and other factors.

### CHALLENGES FACED BY TRIBES IN INDIA

- 1. Displacement:** Tribes in India are often displaced due to development projects like dams, mines, highways, and other infrastructure projects. The displacement often leads to the loss of their land, livelihood, and traditional way of life.
- 2. Lack of Education:** Many tribes in India lack access to education, which leads to a lack of skills, knowledge, and opportunities. This contributes to their socio-economic marginalisation and makes them vulnerable to exploitation.
- 3. Poor Health and Sanitation:** Tribes in India often lack access to healthcare and sanitation facilities, which leads to poor health outcomes and high mortality rates. The lack of adequate healthcare also makes them vulnerable to communicable diseases.
- 4. Discrimination and Marginalisation:** Tribes in India face discrimination and marginalisation due to their social, economic, and political status. They often face discrimination in accessing education, employment, and basic services.
- 5. Exploitation and Land Grabbing:** Tribes in India are often exploited for their labour, and their lands are grabbed by non-tribal communities and corporations. This has led to conflict and displacement of the tribal communities.
- 6. Climate Change:** Tribes in India are vulnerable to the impact of climate change, which affects their livelihoods and traditional practices like agriculture and pastoralism.
- 7. Loss of Cultural Identity:** Rapid urbanisation and globalisation have resulted in the loss of cultural identity for many tribal communities. The younger generation is often attracted to mainstream culture, and tribal culture is losing its significance and value.