



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

Unit 4: Challenges to Cultural Diversity

Grade XII Sociology



OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER:

- INTRODUCTION
- CULTURAL COMMUNITIES & THE NATION-STATE
- REGIONALISM IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT
- THE NATION-STATE AND THE RELIGION-RELATED IDENTITIES
- STATE & CIVIL SOCIETY

ANSWERS TO 2 MARK QUESTIONS:

Q1. What does the term cultural diversity mean? (2mks)

Ans: The term diversity implies differences rather than inequalities. When we say that India is a nation of great cultural diversity, we mean that there are many different types of social groups and communities living here. There are communities with different cultural markers like language, religion, sect, race or caste.

Q2. What are ascriptive identities? (2/4mks)

Ans: Community identities are based on birth and 'belonging' rather than on some form of acquired qualifications or 'accomplishment' are called ascriptive identities. It is what we 'are' rather than what we have 'become'. There are 2 features to ascriptive identities: - These kinds of ascriptive identities are determined by the birth and do not involve any choice on the part of the individuals concerned. - A second feature of ascriptive identities and community feeling is that they are universal. Everyone has a motherland, a mother tongue, a family, a faith. This may not necessarily be strictly true of every individual, but it is true in a general sense.

Q3. Define nation-states (2mks)

Ans: A nation is a large-scale community consisting of different communities. A state on the other hand refers to an abstract entity consisting of a set of political-legal institutions claiming control over a particular geographical territory and people living in it. Nation - states are thereby communities that have a state of their own in the modern world.

Q4. Why are states often suspicious of cultural diversity? (2mks)

Ans: • States try to establish their political legitimacy through nation-building strategies.
• They seek to secure the loyalty and obedience of their citizens through policies of assimilation or integration partly due to the fact that most states have generally been suspicious of cultural diversity and have tried to reduce or eliminate it. The states fear that the recognition of varied culturally diverse identities such as language, ethnicity, religion will lead to social fragmentation and prevent the creation of a harmonious society.

(Add these points for 4marks)

-Also, apart from the fear of fragmentation, accommodating these differences is politically challenging.

-Thus, so many states have resorted to either suppressing these identities or ignoring them in the political domain.

Q5. Who are minorities in a sociological sense? (2mks)

Ans: Minorities in the sociological sense involve some sense of relative disadvantage. The sociological sense of minority implies that the members of the minority form a collectivity i.e. they have a strong sense of group solidarity, a feeling of togetherness and belonging. Minorities may be subjected to prejudice and discrimination too. Thus, groups that may be minorities in a statistical sense, such as people who are left-handed or those born on 29th February are no minorities in the sociological sense as they do not form a collectivity.

Q6. Who are privileged minorities? (2mks)

Ans: A minority usually involves some sort of a relative deprivation. A minority group can be disadvantaged in one sense but not in another. For example, religious minorities like Parsis and Sikhs may be relatively well-off economically. But may be disadvantaged in a cultural sense because of small numbers.

Q7. How are minorities politically vulnerable? (2mks)

Ans: In democratic politics, it is always possible to convert a numerical majority into political power through elections. This means that religious or cultural minorities are politically vulnerable. In addition to this, minorities also face the risk that the majority community will capture political power and use the state machinery to suppress their religious and cultural institutions, ultimately forcing them to abandon their distinctive cultural identity.

Q8. What do you understand by the term communalism? (2mks)

Communalism refers to aggressive chauvinism based on religious identity. Chauvinism is itself an attitude that sees one's own group as the only legitimate or worthy group, with other groups being seen as inferior, illegitimate and opposed. • Communalism is an aggressive political ideology linked to religion. • This is a peculiarly Indian or South Asian meaning which is different from the ordinary English word 'communal' which means a positive bond to one's community.

Q9. Differentiate between western and Indian meaning of secularism (2mks)

Ans: **Western meaning** - · Separation of church and state. · Separation of religious and political authority. · Related to the arrival of modernity and the rise of science and rationality. **Indian meaning** - · Secular state / person is one that doesn't favour any particular religion over others. · Equal respect for all religions, rather than separation and distancing.

Q10. How can commitment to minorities also be a challenge for the state? (2mks)

Ans: The protection of minorities requires that they be given special consideration in a context where the normal working of the political system places them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis the majority community. But providing such protection immediately invites the accusation of favouritism or 'appeasement' of minorities. Opponents argue that secularism of this sort is only an excuse to favour the minorities in return for their votes or other kinds of support.

Q11. What is regionalism? (2marks) What factors is it usually based on? (4mks)

Ans. Regionalism in India is rooted in the country's diversity of languages, cultures, tribes, and religions. These identities are geographically concentrated in different regions, creating a strong regional identity. Feelings of regional deprivation strengthen regionalism. India's federal system accommodates these regional aspirations by giving powers to State Governments while maintaining national unity.

(for 4marks)

From Presidencies to States •After Independence, initially the Indian state continued with the British-Indian arrangement dividing India into large provinces, called Presidencies. Madras, Bombay and Calcutta were the three major presidencies. •Soon after Independence and the adoption of the constitution, all these units of the colonial era had to be reorganized into ethno-linguistic states within the Indian union in response to strong popular agitations. •Language coupled with regional and tribal identity and not religion has provided the most powerful instrument for the formation of ethno-national identity in India. •But this does not mean that all linguistic communities have got statehood. For example-Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand are states language did not play any role in their formation. A combination of ethnicity based on tribal identity, language, regional deprivation and ecology provided the basis.

Q12. State the features of an authoritarian state? (2mks)

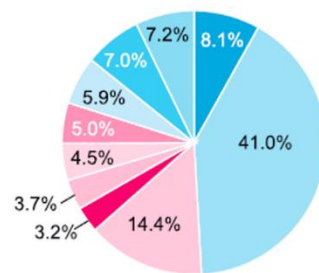
Ans: An Authoritarian state is a state in which the people have no voice and those in power are not accountable to anyone. Features of an authoritarian state are as follows: Authoritarian states often limit or abolish civil liberties like freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of political activity, right to protection from wrongful use of authority, right to the due processes of the law, and so on.

Q13. Ans. In my opinion the linguistic reorganization of states has helped India.

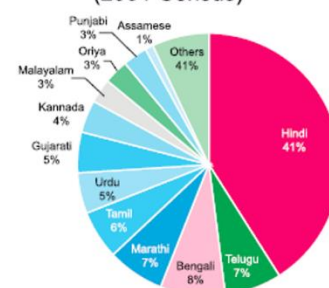
- In India, **language—more than religion—has been the strongest basis of ethno-national identity**, supporting communication and efficient administration.

3. In your opinion, the linguistic reorganisation of states has increased or damaged the unity of India.

Linguistic composition (2001)*



Linguistic Distribution in India (2001 Census)



- The **States Reorganisation Commission (SRC) Report of 1956** reshaped India's political and institutional structure through the creation of linguistic states.
- The principle of linguistic identity allows people to be **Kannadiga, Bengali, Tamil, Gujarati—and fully Indian at the same time**.
- The **death of Potti Sriramulu in 1953** after a fast sparked protests, leading to the creation of Andhra Pradesh and the formation of the SRC; today India has **28 states and 8 Union Territories**.

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Q14. Explain the characteristics of communalism and state whether it is a threat to Indian state

Communalism is about politics not about religion. Although, communalists are intensely involved with religion, there is no necessary relationship between personal belief and communalism. A communalist may or may not be a devout person, and devout persons may or may not be communalists.

- Communalists cultivate an aggressive political identity and are prepared to condemn or attack everyone who does not share their identity.
- One of the most important features of communalism is that religious identity overrides everything else, it, also, constructs large and diverse groups as singular and homogenous.
- Examples of communal riots in our country- Anti Sikh riots of 1984; the Gujarat riots.
- But, India also has a long tradition of religious pluralism, ranging from peaceful co-existence to actual mixing or syncretism. This syncretic heritage is reflected in the devotional songs and poetry of the Bhakti and Sufi movements.

Q15. What is civil society? What is its role and significance today? Support your answer with suitable examples. (6mks)

- Civil society is the non-state and non-market part of the public domain in which individuals get together voluntarily to create institutions and organizations.
- It is the sphere of active citizenship. Here, individuals try to take up social issues, try to influence the state or make demands on it, pursue their collective interests or seek support for a variety of causes.
- It consists of voluntary associations, organizations or institutions formed by groups of citizens, political parties, media institutions, trade unions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- Today, the activities of civil society organizations have a wide range, including advocacy and lobbying activity with national and international agencies as well as active participation in various movements.
- Diverse issues taken up by civil society -
 - Tribal struggles for land rights
 - Devolution in urban governance
 - Campaigns against rape and violence
 - Rehabilitation of those displaced by dams and other developmental projects
 - Fishermen's struggles against merchandised fishing
 - Rehabilitation of hawkers and pavement dwellers
 - Campaigns against slum demolitions and for housing rights
 - Primary education reform
 - Distribution of land to dalits
 - Keeping a watch on the state and forcing it to obey the law

Among the most significant recent initiatives is the campaign for the Right to information. It illustrates the crucial role of civil society in ensuring that the state is accountable to its nations and its people. The answer to the RTI has to be given within 30 days.

- According to this act, any person can demand allocation of funds, tax from the government and copy the fund document.
- People have the right to get information about the allocation of funds for various projects.
- Right to receive documents.
- Inspection of documents, works and records.
- Right to take certified samples of work materials; to collect citizen information through printouts, discs, floppy tapes, video cassettes and other electronic means.

Q16. What is the 'Right to information'? (2mks)

Ans: The Right to Information Act 2005 is a law enacted by the Parliament of India giving Indians (except in J&K) access to government records. Under the terms of the Act, any person may request information from a "public authority" which is expected to reply within thirty days. The act also requires every public authority to computerize their records for wide dissemination and to proactively publish certain categories of information so that the citizens need minimum recourse to request for information formally.

OBJECTIVE TYPE QUESTIONS

1. Which of these elements is an obstacle in the way of national unity?
 - a.All of these
 - b.Casteism
 - c.Communalism
 - d.Economic inequality
2. How many main languages are there in India?
 - a.18
 - b.20
 - c.24
 - d.22
3. ____ list is where both centre and state are allowed to operate.
 - a.Central list
 - b.State list
 - c.None of the above
 - d.Concurrent list
4. ____ is the non-state and non-market part of the public domain in which individuals get together voluntarily to create institutions and organisations.
 - a.Egalitarian society
 - b.Cooperative society
 - c.Exclusive society
 - d.Civil society
5. Born in a poor untouchable community, he spent his life fighting against untouchability and the caste system. He is ____
 - a.C. Jay Prakash Narayan
 - b.Mahatma Gandhi
 - c.Jawahar Lal Nehru
 - d.Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar
6. Which of the following does not stand for secularism?
 - a.Progressive retreat of religion from the public life
 - b.Not favouring a particular religion over the others
 - c.Separation of state and church
 - d.Religious identity overriding everything else
7. The process involves a continuous dialogue, negotiation and even struggle against significant others like our parents, family, kin group and our community. Our community provides us the language and the cultural values through which we comprehend the world. It also anchors our self-identity. It is ____

- a.Socialisation
- b.Liberalisation
- c.Privatisation
- d.Constitutional

8. Which of the following statements is not true about communalism in India?

- a.Communalists believe in a political identity based on religion.
- b.There were no communal riots in the pre-Independence times
- c.Religious identity overrides every other identity in communalism
- d.Communalism is a recurrent source of violence and tension in India.

9. Most ascriptive identities are accidental and _____

- a.Achieve
- b.Temporary
- c.Unconditional
- d.Conditional

10. States try to establish and enhance political legitimacy through:

- a.Singular National Identity
- b.Imperial Strategy
- c.Communist Strategy
- d.Nation Building Strategy

11. Which of the following is not true about cultural diversity?

- a.It can arouse intense passions in people
- b.Cultural diversity is only found in India
- c.It becomes a problem when resources are scarce
- d.It is sometimes accompanied by social and economic inequality

12. In _____ authority, rules are obeyed because their commands are within the impersonal, formally defined scope of their office.

- a.Societal
- b.Legal-rational
- c.Cultural
- d.Family

13. Everyone has a motherland, a mother tongue, a family, a faith. This signifies another feature of community identity i.e.,

- a.Universal
- b.Achieved
- c.Conditional
- d.Localised

14. ____ such as extremely wealthy people are not usually referred to as minorities.

- a.Linguistic minorities
- b.Numerical minorities
- c.Privileged minorities
- d.Religious minorities

15. What are the laws that allow citizens of a particular state to also
- simultaneously - be citizens of another state called?

- a.None of the above
- b.Cross-border citizenship laws
- c.Multiple citizenship laws
- d.Dual-citizenship laws

16. "When we say India is a nation of great cultural diversity, we mean that there are many different types of social groups and communities living here". The term diversity stands for:

- a.Difference rather than inequalities
- b.Difference and inequality both
- c.Inequalities rather than equalities
- d.Neither differences nor inequality

ASSERTION REASON

1.Assertion (A): In Indian nationalism, the dominant trend was marked by an inclusive democratic vision

Reason (R): It was democratic because it recognized diversity and plurality.

- a.Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- b.Both A and R are true but R is NOT the correct explanation of A
- c.A is true but R is false
- d.A is false and R is true

2. Assertion (A): Communalism in India is intertwined with politics

Reason(R): Communalism always leads to religious harmony

- a.Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- b.Both A and R are true but R is NOT the correct explanation of A
- c.A is true but R is false
- d.A is false and R is true

3. Assertion (A): Civil societies play a vital role in overseeing governmental actions

Reason (R): Civil societies have no power to question government decisions

- a.Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- b.Both A and R are true but R is NOT the correct explanation of A

- c.A is true but R is false
- d.A is false and R is true

4. Assertion (A): Minorities in India are protected under Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution.

Reason (R): Article 30 allows any religious group to establish educational institutions

- a.Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- b.Both A and R are true but R is NOT the correct explanation of A
- c.A is true but R is false
- d.A is false and R is true

5. Assertion (A): Secularism in Indian means religion is a private matter

Reason (R): The government observes the customs and holidays of the majority.

- a.Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- b.Both A and R are true but R is NOT the correct explanation of A
- c.A is true but R is false
- d.A is false and R is true

MCQ's on State and Civil Society

1. According to the text, what is the main characteristic of an authoritarian state?

- a) It has a strong civil society
- b) People have no voice and those in power are not accountable to anyone
- c) It promotes freedom of speech and press
- d) It encourages political activism

2. Civil society is defined as:

- a) The private domain of the family only
- b) Government institutions and state agencies
- c) The non-state and non-market part of the public domain where individuals act together voluntarily
- d) Commercial enterprises and businesses

3. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a component of civil society?

a) Political parties b) Trade unions c) Armed forces d) NGOs

4. The Emergency in India was enforced between:

a) June 1975 and January 1977 b) June 1974 and January 1976 c) July 1975 and December 1976 d) May 1975 and February 1977

5. During the Emergency in India, which of the following did NOT happen?

a) Parliament was suspended b) Civil liberties were revoked c) Elections were held as scheduled d) Censorship was imposed on media

6. What was the outcome when elections were held after the Emergency?

a) The ruling Congress Party won by a large margin b) The people voted overwhelmingly against the ruling Congress Party c) No clear majority emerged d) Elections were cancelled due to unrest

7. According to the text, civil society organizations can:

a) Only work in the private sector b) Replace the functions of the state completely c) Keep a watch on the state, protest against its injustices or support its efforts d) Only support government policies