

## **Sociology Generic Elective (GE) 03**

### **Understanding Indian Society**

#### **Course Objectives:**

The Course is an interdisciplinary course on Indian society. The course throws light on different dimensions of Indian social life including institutional structures, processes and contemporary issues and challenges. The students will also engage with the historical processes and ideological tensions underlying the diversity and uniqueness of various social formations. Institutions and concepts like village, town, caste structure and politics, class dynamics, religion, tribes, family, gender and political economy in the context of India are also discussed. These building blocks and core processes of Indian Society are considered relationally and as intersecting fields. It will help students enables the capacity to invoke scientific and analytical attitude toward one's own society and its ongoing workings and evolution. It provides the cultural knowledge and research skills that would be necessary for problem-solving in the Indian context.

#### **Course Learning Outcomes**

1. Develops a reflexive and nuanced understanding of Indian Society
2. Enables an understanding and sensitivity towards India's diversity and uniqueness.
3. Helps to analyze complex social phenomena, their arrangement and processes.
4. Provides an intersectional understanding of complex social processes.

#### **Course Outline:**

##### **Unit I. Indian Society: Historical and Social Foundations**

##### **Unit II. Foundational Institutions and emerging inter-sectional dynamics**

- a. Caste, Class, Religion and Scheduled Tribes
- b. Gender and Family
- c. Village and Cities
- d. Culture and Political

##### **Unit III: Emerging Issues and Challenges**

## **Course Content:**

### **Unit I Indian Society: The Historical and Social Foundations (Weeks 1-3)**

Stern, Robert W. (2003). *Changing India* (pp. 16-31). Cambridge University Press.

Beteille, Andre. (2000). *Antinomies of Society: Essays on Ideologies and Institutions* (pp. 198-207). Oxford University Press.

### **Unit –II Foundational Institutions and Emerging Dynamics (Weeks 3-11)**

#### **a. Caste, Class, Religion and Scheduled Tribe**

Zelliot, Eleanor. (2004). 'Caste in Contemporary India' (pp. 243 – 268). In Robin Rinehart (ed).

*Contemporary Hinduism: Ritual, Culture, and Practice*. ABC-Clio.

Fernandes, Leela. (2016). India's Middle Classes in Contemporary India (pp. 332-340). In Knut A. Jacobsen (ed). *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary India*. Routledge.

Xaxa, Virginius. (2005). Politics of Language, Religion and Identity: Tribes in India, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 40 (13), 1363-1370.

Madan T.N. (2001). Religions of India; Plurality and Pluralism (775-801). In Veena Das (ed.) *The Oxford India Companion to Sociology and Social Anthropology*. Oxford University Press.

#### **b. Family and Gender**

Diane P. Mines and Sarah Lamb (Eds.) *Everyday Life in South Asia* (pp. 9-25). Indiana University Press.

Dube, Leela. (1988). On the Construction of Gender: Hindu Girls in Patrilineal India, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 23 (18) April 30. WS11-WS19.

#### **c. Village and City**

Srinivas, M.N. (1998). The Changing Village (pp. 138-162). In *Indian Society through Personal Writings*. Oxford University Press.

Gooptu, Nandini. (2016). Divided We Stand: Indian City after Economic Liberalization (pp. 216-228). In Knut A. Jacobsen (ed). *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary India*. Routledge.

#### **d. Political Economy**

Stuart Corbridge and John Harriss. (2000). Sovereign, Democratic, Federal, Socialist, Secular': The Invention of Modern India (pp. 38-57). In Stuart Corbridge and John Harriss(ed.) *Reinventing India*. Polity Press.

Metcalf, Barbara D. and Thomas R. Metcalf. (2006). *A Concise History of Modern India*. (pp. 265– 295). Cambridge University Press.

#### **Unit III. Emerging Issues and Challenges**

Hamza Alavi and John Harriss. (1989). *Sociology of Developing Societies: South Asia*. (pp. 213-221). Macmillan.

Kumar, Radha. (1993). *The History of Doing: An Illustrated Account of Movements for Women's Rights and Feminism in India 1800-1990: Women's Movement in India*. Kali for Women. Pp. 1-6

Oommen, T.K. (1997). *Citizenship and National identity: From Colonialism to Globalism* (pp.143-172). Sage Publications.

#### **Suggested Readings:**

Ambedkar, B.R., (1971 [1936]). *Annihilation of Caste* (pp. 1-29). Bheem Patrika. Baruah, Sanjib.(2001). 'Cultural Politics of Language, Subnationalism and Pan-Indiansim' (pp. 69-90). In *India Against Itself: Assam and the Politics of Nationalism*. Oxford University Press.

Chatterjee, Partha. (1997). *State and Politics in India* (pp. 1-39). Oxford University Press.

Das, Veena.(1989). Difference and Division as Design for Life (pp. 45-56). In Veena Das, *Contemporary Indian Tradition: Voices on Culture, Nature, and the Challenge of Change*. Smithsonian Institute Press.

Gail Omvedt. (2001). Ambedkar and After: The Dalit Movement in India,(pp. 143–59). In Ghanshyam Shah (ed.), *Dalit Identity and Politics*. Sage Publications .

Oommen, T.K. (2019). Religious Pluralism (pp. 259-282). In T.K.Oomen and C.N.Venugopal (ed.) *Sociology*. Eastern Book Company.

Kothari, Smitu. et al. (2001). Social Movement Politics in India: Institutions, Interests and Identities (pp. 242-269). In Atul Kohli (ed.) *Success of Indian Democracy*. Cambridge University Press.

Mencher, Joan P. (2008). Ecology and Social Structure: A Comparative Analysis (pp. 42-76). In Ramachandra Guha (ed.) *Social Ecology*. Oxford University Press.

Mencher, J. (1991). The Caste System Upside Down (pp. 93-109). In D. Gupta (ed.), *Social Stratification*. Oxford University Press.

Menon, N. (ed.). (1999). *Gender and Politics in India* (pp. 342-369). Oxford University Press.  
Robb, Peter. (2002). *A History of India* [Chapter.1: Introduction: Region and Civilization, (pp.1-26)]. Palgrave.

Singh, K. S. (1982). Transformation of Tribal Society: Integration vs Assimilation, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 17 (33 & 34) August.14 . 1318-1325, 1376-1384.

Stern, Robert W. (2003). *Changing India* (pp. 56--87). Cambridge University Press.

**Teaching-Learning Process:**

The teaching, learning process for this paper involves lectures, presentations, projects and film screenings. The focus will also be on peer learning.

**Assessment Methods:**

Recommended evaluation is one assignment that tests the conceptual grasp based on prescribed readings and one project that demonstrates competence to grasp a contemporary social issue, cultural feature or a trend in India.

**Keywords:**

India, Civilization, Colony, Society, Village, Town, Region, Caste, Class, Religion, Family, Gender, Economy, Politics. Civilization.