

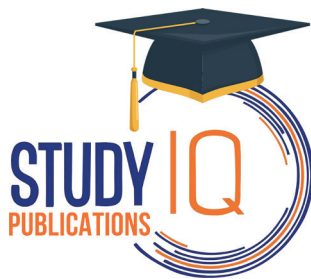


# INDIAN SOCIETY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

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FOR UPSC CSE &  
STATE PCS EXAMS

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# **Indian Society and Social Justice**

A Complete Guide on the Concepts of Indian Society and Social  
Justice for UPSC CSE and State PCS Examinations

**Study IQ Education Pvt. Ltd.**

Indian Society and Social Justice by Study IQ Publications

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# From the Editorial Board

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## Dear Aspirants,

We are incredibly grateful for the wonderful response we received for our Polity, History, Economy, and Geography books. Inspired by this positive feedback, we are thrilled to announce the release of the First edition of our book titled 'Indian Society and Social Justice'.

Indian Society and Social Justice has gained prominence in the UPSC examination, especially in Mains stage. Its weightage in the exam has been steady; despite this, there is a dearth of consolidated and updated material on the same subject. Students have to rely on multiple sources making their preparation more difficult.

This book was created taking into account the concern and challenges which the students face during preparing for the subject. The book aims to tackle all these problems, and along with this, it improves students' knowledge base thus saving their precious time and eliminating many academic misunderstandings that they encounter.

## Special Features of this Book

This book aims to make your preparation focused and relevant based on UPSC's current trend and pattern, it is revision-friendly, and up-to-date.

- The most highlighted feature of this book is that, that we have given Indian Society and Social Justice partwise in this book so that aspirants do not have to refer different resources and waste time in searching different sources.
- The requirements of the UPSC Civil Services Examination are the exclusive focus of this book.
- We have taken great care to ensure that the materials are written in a clear and easy-to-understand, so that students may learn and recall the concepts to their advantage.
- Wherever necessary, we've incorporated diagrams and pictorial representation of various concepts to make learning interactive and easy.
- We have incorporated the relevant previous year's questions so that the students can test their knowledge while understanding the trend of the question.

With all sincerity and humility, the Study IQ team wishes you the best in your preparation, and we hope this book will help you in your journey.



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# **PART - A**

# **INDIAN SOCIETY**

# Salient Features of Indian Society

According to the Oxford Dictionary of Sociology, society refers to ‘a group of people who share a common culture, occupy a particular territorial area and feel themselves to constitute a unified and distinct entity.’ Some thinkers have also argued that society is formed by a network of relationships which enable people to recognize each other and thereby influence their own behavior through such mutual awareness. For example, One’s behavior in an examination hall will be markedly different from one’s behavior in a market-place. What changes one’s behavior in both settings is the difference in social relationships and one’s perception of others’ expectations.

Society, thus, is not a concrete or fixed concept. It consists of territorial, cultural and psychological components. Most importantly, it is built with institutionalized relationships which guide people to behave in accepted and familiar ways.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF ANY SOCIETY

- **Abstractness:** There is no concrete form or shape of society. It exists as a combination of social interactions, relationships, groups, institutions, associations, ideologies, etc. While it is man-made, it also exists separately as a reality even without any physical presence.
- **Kinship:** Every society has a system which determines how people relate to each other – whether on the basis of marriage or through birth. These relations have further determined the rules of marriage and finally, created the near-universal institution of family.
- **Culture:** Every society has its own shared beliefs, values and norms. These determine how people live their everyday lives and the choices that they make. The culture is reinforced by rituals, practices and conversations.
- **Likeness and Differences:** Every society has elements which unify people into bonds of similarity, and other elements which separate them into groups. For example – The identity of being ‘Indian’ unites all citizens of India. Within the society, however, people are different from each other on the basis of caste, religion, class, ethnicity etc.
- **Socialization:** Every society has institutions, both formal and informal, to condition its members. Modern societies rely on family, education, law etc to prepare members for their roles, traditional societies, besides family, relied on community for such purposes. For example – the Kibbutz in Israel.
- **Hierarchy and Stratification:** All societies have a system of dividing its constituent members in some form of hierarchy. The resultant stratification could lead to an unequal society in some cases. For example, tribal societies, though egalitarian in nature, have an authoritarian Chief. Caste system in Indian society divides members into four varnas (Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra) and further jatis.
- **Social Change:** All societies go through a period of transition – demographic, economic, political or cultural. For example, Society in China, though rooted in the ideology of communism, embraced capitalism after it opened its economy in the 1970s.
- **Cooperation and Conflict:** Every society is characterized by processes of cooperation and conflict depending on the situation. For example, in times of disaster, all sections of society cooperate with

each other to extend help, on the other hand, conflict-based situations such as riots; internal civil wars etc., highlight unmet needs of different sections.

- **Social Control:** Every society has a mechanism to exert social control on its members. For example, modern societies have law and courts as institutions to enforce order and punish the deviant. In certain tribal societies, this control was exercised through public disapproval in informal evening meetings.
- **Political system:** Even though not all societies have the authority of 'state', all have been found to have some form of political system to govern their affairs. For example, in the earlier societies of East Africa, Cheyenne of America, political control was vested in age-set systems. Later on, in traditional societies, the authority transferred to the king, priest and the council of advisors. In democratic modern society, political control rests with elected representatives.

## BACKGROUND

### Ancient Indian Society

- **Indus Valley Phase (3300 -1300 BC):** The mature phase of this civilization lasted from 2600 to 1900 BC. This period also saw the first phase of urbanization in India. During this time, the society evolved to the agricultural and pastoral stage with prominent Bronze culture. Remnant artifacts suggest that people were fashion conscious, carried out trade overseas and practiced some form of religion. The layout of towns and certain burial practices hint at some form of political and social stratification respectively.
- **Early Vedic Period (1500 – 1000 BC):** During these times, the four prominent Vedas – Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sam Veda and Atharva Veda were composed. Polity as a concept emerged during this time with jana, vis, grama, kula as different modes of habitation. The period saw Aryan migration and emergence of social divisions. Slavery was prevalent and further distinctions arose due to Purusha Sukta hymn. Kinship formed the basis of social structure, which was essentially patriarchal and martial in nature. Both polyandry and widow remarriage existed. There was no private property. Religion was naturalistic and polytheistic. Major deities included – Indra, Varuna, Aditi, Agni, Prithvi, etc. Polity was modeled on tribal lines, headed by a chief called Rajan.
- **Late Vedic Period (1000 – 700 BC):** This period saw the development of formal polities called janapadas and monarchy. The Varna system strengthened and became more rigid. Brahmanas and Kshatriyas were often against each other, competing for higher status. Shudras and women were neglected. Cross-varna marriages did happen and certain craftsmen could acquire a higher status. Rituals were stressed as solutions to every kind of problem, leading to creation of a materialist society. Family became more structured, patriarchal, hierarchical and patrilineal.
- **Emergence of Territorial Kingdoms and New Religions (600 – 400 BC):** The janapadas transformed into larger kingdoms called mahajanpadas and they fought with each other over resources. Untouchability grew in practice and as a result of degeneration in religion new philosophies of Ajivikas, Lokayats, Jainism and Buddhism emerged. During this time, new classes of merchants, bankers, traders, etc., sought a higher socioeconomic status.
- **Empires, Invasions, Trade and Culture (400 BC – 6th century AD):** Starting from Nandas, Mauryas, Guptas in the North to the Sangam Polity, Satavahanas, Chalukyas and Pallavas in the South, this



period saw the expansion of empires. Indian society developed in different ways due to increased immigration, more trade activities, developments in art and culture and more complex forms of administration. Inequality increased and merchants became a prominent class. Feudalism emerged during the Gupta rule and women saw a decline in status.

### **Medieval Indian Society**

- **Early Medieval Period (6th – 13th century AD)** : This period began with the fall of the Gupta empire. What ensued was the rise of multiple dynasties vying for political power. As a result, this period was characterized by turmoil and uncertainty. Buddhism declined, Hinduism re-emerged and starting in the 8th century, in South India, the Bhakti movement took roots. Social disparities worsened as the upper class indulged in luxuries while the peasant class bore the burden of taxes. Restrictions on women increased and access to education was confined to select sections. With the Arab invasion of Sindh in 8th century AD, Islam was introduced. However, no additional taxes were introduced on Hindus and administration was conducted in a peaceful way. The two religions engaged in healthy exchanges during this time.
- **Late Medieval Period (13th – 16th century AD)**: This period began with the establishment of Delhi Sultanate. The rulers of medieval India came from different regions and ethnicities- Arabs, Turks, Persians, and Central Asians. The period saw a series of military campaigns and developments in Indo-Islamic architecture. As a result, there was large-scale migration across empires. Slavery was prevalent and there was a widespread gap between rich and poor. The 14th century saw the beginning of a non-agricultural economy. The Bhakti movement matured during this period. As a result, women and people of lower strata found access to an inclusive path of spiritual development. The conflicts between Muslims and Hindus lessened and many sufi saints emerged with large following.
- **Indian Society during the Mughal Period (16th – mid 19th century)**: This period saw the introduction of many economic reforms such as the jagirdari system, mansabdari system etc. During Akbar's reign, he propagated the philosophy called Sulh-i-kuhl (peace to all). He also preached a new sufi order -Tauhid -i - Ilahi or Din - i - Ilahi (divine monotheism) and aimed to establish a state based on secularism, tolerance and equal respect. During this period, agriculture was the chief occupation and village community was the chief institution of social organization. The Middle class consisted of shopkeepers, musicians, small mansabdars, hakims etc. There was wide inequality between the privileged mughals and the lower classes. Zamindars belonged to certain dominant clans and castes and could evict peasants for default in payment of rent. Caste system was a dominant institution. Hindu women had limited rights of inheritance. Widow re-marriage was not permitted among upper caste women. Mughal administration discouraged the practice of sati. Muslim brides were entitled to receive mehr (money mandatorily paid by the groom) and could also inherit property, though not in equal measure.

### **Modern Indian Society**

The beginning of modern Indian society coincides with the beginning of modern Indian history from around 1850 AD. This time marked the start of British rule in India and brought widespread changes in its social landscape.

### First Phase : Pre-Independence Society and the Impact of British rule (1850-1947)

The onset of British rule brought unprecedented changes in Indian society. These can be summarized in the following categories:-

**Regional changes:** Britishers expanded and consolidated different territories under their rule. This led to the introduction of uniform military rules, stationing of British residents with local rulers and gradually connecting all regions. This led to migration of people across regions. Many local rulers had to accept British suzerainty and as a result, the artisans, craftsmen, weavers, etc lost their patronage. They were forced to return to their villages and take up less profitable ventures. For their own benefit, the British also partitioned Bengal, an event which caused huge uproar throughout the society.

#### Economic changes

- **Industrialization and urbanization:** Capitalism led to new industries in India, such as cotton mills, jute mills, coal mines, and rubber, tea, and coffee plantations. The objective was to turn India into a raw material exporter and import cheap finished goods for European manufacturers' profit. This disrupted India's self-sufficient economy and worsened conditions for Indian laborers. Port cities like Bombay, Surat, and Kolkata emerged for export purposes, and railways connected them to the hinterlands in the 1850s, leading to uneven urbanization and massive disparities.
- **Agricultural reforms and disruptions:** The British introduced new systems for collection of land revenue which introduced numerous middlemen in the agricultural system. As a result, the peasants suffered and the rural community in general grew poorer. The farmer who was owner of his land in the initial stages soon became a tenant on the same. Food crops were replaced with cash crops which harmed people's food security and led to increasing commercialization.
- **Deindustrialization:** Britishers prioritized extraction of raw materials and discouraged the development of manufacturing in India. They imposed high taxes and trade restrictions on Indian industries and merchants which resulted in the transfer of capital from India to Britain, further weakening the Indian economy.
- **Rise of the middle class:** The colonial economy created new opportunities for employment. The rise in commercial enterprises expanded bureaucracy and as a result, there was an increased need for Indian administrators, clerks, teachers, lawyers, doctors, and other professionals to assist in the administration and management of the country. This middle class emerged in the cities and towns. Besides becoming a market for consumption of British goods, this class also went on to form professional associations of its own.
- **Poverty and famines:** The disruption in traditional agricultural practices, destruction of handicrafts, exploitative land revenue systems, switch to cash crops and existing drought conditions all led to some of the worst famines, which killed millions of people. Some key examples include – the Bengal famine of 1770, Orissa Famine of 1866, Bihar Famine of 1873-74 and the Great Bengal Famine of 1943.

#### Political changes

- **Administrative changes:** The British centralized the administrative system in India. District became the primary unit in the organizational hierarchy. They also imported English common law and statutes, besides establishing courts to administer justice. . The Indian Civil Service (ICS) was introduced to recruit and train a select group of British and later Indian officials. They also formalized local self-

government systems, such as municipalities and local boards to provide limited representation and autonomy to Indians.

- **Rise of modern nationalism:** In opposition to the British forces, a new section of Indian intellectuals rose in resistance. They belonged to the new middle class and were divided into segments – one that believed that the British rule was good for India, like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Justice M.G. Ranade and the others that resisted it, like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, J.L. Nehru, etc. They developed a distinct type of love for their country, which was more territorially united than before.
- **Impact of formation of Indian National Congress:** Founded in 1885, the INC initially gave voice to the concerns of the educated middle class. However, it later became a political organization that championed the cause of independence and represented broader nationalist aspirations. It soon emerged as the party which could resist the British in its own legislature and vote on controversial laws.
- **Militant nationalism:** A different version of nationalism was also espoused by leaders such as Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev, Sachin Sanyal, the Ghosh brothers and others. They represented the voice of the disgruntled youth who advocated using violence in their fight against the British. They were able to put forward issues such as labour exploitation, tax concessions, land reforms, socialism, etc for wider debate and discussion.
- **Mass mobilization:** The era of mass mobilization which began with Gandhi's entry post 1915, brought together hitherto untouched sections of Indian society into the fold of freedom struggle. These included women, labourers, peasants, mill workers and other grassroots workers. This not only strengthened the movement but also empowered people to resist unjust laws, resort to indigenous manufacturing, open domestic units and even consume Indian products.
- **Socialist ideas and trade unionism:** The reigning ideology of British capitalism was resisted through the ideology of socialism, whose early proponents included Bhagat Singh, J.L. Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose. Formation of trade unions 1918 onwards sought to curb the massive exploitation of workers. This laid the foundation for a socialistic vision of Independent India later on.
- **Divisive politics:** The British resisted Indian efforts for autonomy tooth and nail by resorting to all sorts of tactics. The "divide and rule" policy was a key component of this strategy. They fostered divisions among different religious, linguistic, and caste groups to weaken potential sources of unity and resistance against British rule.

### Social and cultural changes

- **Socio-religious reform movements:** During this time, many social reforms such as abolition of Sati pratha and discrimination against unprivileged sections, widow remarriage, education for women, Muslims, Untouchables and others found vocal support from the new intellectual class. Societies such as the Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, Satyashodhak Samaj, Theosophical Society etc extensively worked for people. This started the process of reforming the traditional Indian society from within. While there was backlash from some quarters, such efforts eventually led to concrete results such as the Bengal Sati Regulation of 1829, Widow Remarriage Act of 1856 among others.
- **Western education and its impact:** The exposure to Western political ideas, such as liberalism, freedom, equality, democracy, and nationalism, through education and the spread of print media, influenced many Indian intellectuals and inspired them to seek political change and self-determination.

Thinkers such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dadabhai Naoroji, Mahatma Gandhi had seen the Western landscape and found British conduct in India quite hypocritical to their own native country.

- **Communalism:** The British stoked communal tensions between religious communities, particularly Hindus and Muslims. They came up with policies such as separate electorates and communal representation, which sharpened religious identities and sowed political divisions. These policies aimed to prevent a united front against British rule. Christian missionaries, operating under British colonial rule, sometimes were accused of communal disharmony due to their proselytizing efforts. Emergence of certain religious organizations for promotion of their own interests at the expense of others also added fuel to the fire.
- **Revival of Indian tradition:** In opposition to the British notion of self-superiority, Indian intellectuals like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, and Rabindranath Tagore, among others, sought to revive and celebrate Indian culture, literature, art, and music. This led to what is referred to as the Bengal Renaissance of the 19th century. Bal Gangadhar Tilak used traditional festivals to spread his messages against the British and reaffirm pride in India's traditional culture. Indian scholars also emphasized the importance of Indian languages, such as Sanskrit, Hindi, and other regional languages. Figures like Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa played a significant role in popularizing texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, and Bhagavad Gita.

### Phase two : Indian society at the time of Independence

After efforts spanning across almost two centuries, India eventually found its freedom from the British yoke on August 15, 1947. The Indian society had gone through many changes during colonial rule. At the time of Independence, it represented some major challenges as well as opportunities for the new legislature. This can be gauged from the following:-

- **Economic challenges:** At the time of independence, India was predominantly an agrarian society, as industrialisation remained under-developed and the majority of the people were concentrated in rural areas engaged in agriculture. The country faced several economic challenges such as extreme poverty, low industrial development, low levels of urbanization, low capital investment and limited infrastructure. Economic disparities were quite stark, with a small elite class controlling maximum wealth and resources.
- **Communal Tensions:** Communal tensions between different religious communities, especially Hindus and Muslims, were at a peak during the time of independence. The partition of India into India and Pakistan had led to violent communal riots and mass migrations across the new borders, resulting in immense human suffering and discord.
- **Education and Literacy:** The overall literacy rate in India at the time of Independence was quite low, around a mere ~ 12%. A relatively small section of Indians had access to education and there was a need for spreading the educational resources to marginalized communities. The efforts to promote education and literacy were recognized as essential for social and economic progress.
- **Diversity and Pluralism:** Owing to centuries of immigration and inter-mingling, India's population now consisted of people from various linguistic, religious, and ethnic backgrounds. The country had become home to multiple religions, including Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Christianity, and others, fostering a culture of religious diversity and pluralism. While maintaining harmony in this heterogeneity was a challenge in the new set-up, it also represented a unique situation.

- **Political awakening:** This was perhaps the most distinct feature at the time. With the British handing over the charge of governing India to Indian representatives, there was a sense of political awakening all over the country. It was an opportunity for the leaders and masses alike to build a new nation that will take care of the interests of all citizens and actualize the principle of self-determination. The new legislature truly represented the diverse sections of society and instilled confidence among the people for a better future.

### Phase three: Post – Independence Indian Society

The Indian society as we know of today is a result of the transformation it experienced in the post-Independence period. The Indian Constitution, as was enacted in 1950, brought about major changes in the political and social sphere. The new economic policies and technological advancements changed the growth structure of the society. These changes can be summarized as the following:-

- **Democracy and grassroots development:** The new Constitution declared India as a 'democratic' country wherein the real power vests with the people. This provision has made Indian society the largest democracy known to the world today. The amendments introduced in 1992 made local self-government at the level of villages and cities a Constitutional obligation. This has led to grassroots development, providing access to services and resources to the deprived sections.
- **Social justice and equality:** The Indian Constitution ensures equality of treatment and better distribution of resources through provisions such as the Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles of State Policy, Reservation etc. This has ensured that the historically discriminated sections get a fair chance to rise up the social ladder and that no one is discriminated against on the basis of birth, caste, religion, race or sex, in matters of access to law or public opportunities.
- **Education and literacy:** As of 2022 India's literacy rate stands at ~77%, according to a report published by the National Survey of India. India has made significant progress in expanding access to education since independence. Besides improvement in literacy rate, efforts have also been made to bridge the gender gap in education. Though there are regional disparities and questions on quality, with initiatives such as the National Education Policy, steps are underway to improve the situation further.
- **Women's Empowerment:** Since Independence, women's status in the country has considerably improved. With the opening up of the economy, they have a significant presence in all sectors today, besides agriculture. They enjoy relatively more freedom and are able to exercise more choices than before. However, much remains to be done in this area. India is constantly under scrutiny for crimes against women, low labour force participation rate and patriarchal structures that pervade its culture in different ways.
- **Technological advancements:** India has emerged as a net provider of services to the world due to rapid advancements in its technological sector, particularly the information technology and telecommunications. According to a report, more than 50% of India's population comprises active Internet users as of 2023. The digital penetration has transformed Indian society into an attractive consumer base and also empowered the citizens to use the Internet as a source for their own growth.
- **Urbanisation:** As of 2021, a third of India's total population lived in the cities and by 2035, this percentage of population is set to increase to ~43%, according to a report of the United Nations. The changing profile of Indian society, from rural to urban, is reflective of India's growth story. People migrate to cities for access to better education and livelihood opportunities. More investments are being made to develop more sustainable cities.



- **Demographic dividend:** Indian society holds the advantage of currently being one of the youngest in the world. This has the potential of making India

However, despite the above accomplishments, Indian society remains marred with an equal number of challenges. For instance, though the service sector contributes the most to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it employs the least number of people. Majority still remain in the agricultural sector. The available jobs in the market do not match up to the number of applicants and India's population remains both an economic and administrative concern. Discrimination against Dalits and Tribals still make regular headlines and crimes against women remain worrisome.

## FEATURES OF INDIAN SOCIETY

- **Hierarchy:** India is a hierarchical society. People are classified according to various essential qualities. The groupings that all Indians belong to, known as castes and caste-like groups, have hierarchy. Throughout India, individuals are also ranked according to their wealth and power. Within families and kinship groupings, there are many distinctions of hierarchy.
- **Caste and its offshoots in Indian society:**
  - **Notion of Purity:** In Indian society, many status inequalities are reflected in terms of ceremonial cleanliness and pollution. High status is linked to purity, while low status is linked to pollution.
  - **Societal Segmentation:** It implies that caste is a major factor in societal stratification. A person becomes a member of a caste group by birth, based on how they are rated in relation to other caste groups.
  - **Endogamy:** Members of a particular caste need to marry within their caste only. Inter-caste marriages are prohibited and frowned upon. However, in urban areas, the phenomenon of inter-caste marriage is increasing.
  - **Untouchability:** It is the act of isolating a group from society's mainstream through social custom. The caste system had a corollary known as "untouchability," where people from the lowest caste groups were seen as undesirable and polluted.
  - **Civil and religious disabilities:** These apply to all caste groups and include limitations on contact, attire, speech, ceremonies, etc. It was carried out to preserve the purity of particular caste groups. For instance, lower caste people were prohibited from accessing temples and did not have access to wells.
- **Multi Religious Society:** India is known as the "cradle of world religions" due to the fact that most of the world's major faiths have been spread and practised by its ancestors, which has led to the emergence of several international institutions, doctrines, customs, ceremonies, and rituals. It is home to various religions such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism.
- **Multilingual Society:** According to the census from 2011, 121 languages are spoken in India. A mother tongue is the first language a person learns and uses. In India, languages are divided into families according to their many linguistic origins, which frequently also include several scripts. The principal linguistic families are Sino-Tibetan, Indo-Aryan, and Dravidian.
- **Patriarchal Society:** India is a society wherein the system values men more than women and gives them more power. India and the rest of the globe have both historically discriminated against women.

As a result, the Indian Constitution permits the government to create special protections for women while also outlawing gender discrimination. Exception: However, a matrilineal system exists in the small, hilly Indian state of Meghalaya, where property names and money descend from mother to daughter rather than father to son. Similar examples can be given of Nairs and Ezahavas in Kerala; Bunt and Billava community in Karnataka.

- **Multi-ethnic society:** Indian society is multi-ethnic in nature due to the coexistence of a wide variety of racial groups in India. India is home to almost all the racial profiles prevalent in the world. Some of the major ones include – Indo-Aryans, Dravidians, Mongoloids, Tibeto-Burmans, Indigenous Tribes and Anglo - Indians.
- **Kinship System:** The transmission of property and family status from one generation to the next depends heavily on kin relationships. Similar to this, a strong social group is necessary for both collaboration and conflict. It is crucial to determine the type of descent or method of tracing one's relationships in order to obtain the benefits mentioned above. To trace one's relationships, it is necessary to follow the principles of descent, and to do this, it is crucial for a person to comprehend kin groups. These are: Family, Lineage, Clan or Sib, Phratry, Moiety.
- **Unity in Diversity:** The term unity of diversity signifies the unity between people with different cultural, religious faiths, social status and other demographic variations. For Instance, the epic war for independence, in which the entire nation stood on one platform while belonging to many castes and religions, was a prime example of India's unity in diversity. The struggle for India's independence has included participants from a variety of ethnicities and backgrounds.
- **Co-existence of traditionalism and modernity:** India is a country with rich history and culture, which has also embraced modernity. Traditional values and customs can be preserved, while also embracing modernity. This has allowed India to progress and compete in the global economy, while also retaining its unique culture and history. For instance, we are also going back to Yoga and AYUSH despite having modern medicine; existence of traditional homes in villages along with modern apartments; machines rule the market yet people also have handmade clay pots and utensils.
- **The balance between Individualism and collectivism:** The balance between individualism and collectivism is one of the things that makes Indian society so special. It allows for a wide range of individual expression, while also ensuring that the community as a whole is taken care of. For instance, there is an existence of the nuclear family as well as collective joint family tradition; opening up to an individual's society's preference to heteronormativity; individual expression of views but conforming to societal ethics.
- **Pluralistic Society:** India is known for its pluralism, namely religious pluralism, cultural pluralism, linguistic pluralism and ethnic pluralism. Pluralism is a mechanism where it recognizes the interest of diverse groups and sees to it that no single group dominates the region. In this context, pluralism can be said to be a diffusion of power among many special interest groups which prevent any one group from gaining control of the government and misusing it in the power structure.

## CASTE SYSTEM IN INDIA

Caste is a **system of social stratification** lying at the root of social structure of most social groups in India. It refers to a pattern of social behavior and interactions in which groups and individuals are guided by certain norms, values and sanctions. The groups and individuals occupy certain statuses in