

**CBSE Class-12 Sociology Test Paper-05**  
**Social Institutions: Continuity and Change**

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**General Instruction:**

- Question 1-5 carries two marks each.
  - Question 6-8 carries four marks each.
  - Question 9-10 carries six marks each.
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1. Why was the 1901 Census under the direction of Herbert Risley important?
2. What was the Govt. of India Act of 1935?
3. How has the new middle class developed in tribal societies?
4. Give I.P. Desai's observation about the term "joint family".
5. Unlike patriarchy, why has matriarchy been a theoretical rather than an empirical concept?
6. Discuss about national development versus tribal development.
7. What is the ideology of tribalism and how does it get created?
8. Several scholars have highlighted the inherent contradictions in matrilineal systems. Explain one such contradictions.
9. What are the various rules which defines the diverse family forms in India?
10. Explain the structural tensions created by matriliney which affect both men and women in Khasi society in today's time.

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1. The 1901 census under Herbert Risley was important as it sought to collect information on the social hierarchy of caste – i.e., the social order of precedence in particular regions, as to the position of each caste in the rank order.
2. The Government of India Act of 1935 was about giving legal recognition to the lists or ‘schedules’ of castes and tribes marked out for special treatment by the state. This is how the terms ‘Scheduled Tribes’ and the ‘Scheduled Castes’ came into being. Castes at the bottom of the hierarchy that suffered severe discrimination, including all the so-called ‘untouchable’ castes, were included among the Scheduled Castes.
3. The middle classes in tribal societies are a consequence of modern education and modern occupations, aided in turn by the reservation policies. It is most visible in the North-eastern states, this is now a segment beginning to be seen in the rest of the country as well, particularly among members of the larger tribal communities.
4. I.P. Desai observes that the expression ‘joint family’ is not the translation of any Indian word like that. It is interesting to note that the words used for joint family in most of the Indian languages are the equivalents of translations of the English word ‘joint family’.
5. Matriarchy is a theoretical rather than an empirical concept because there is no historical or anthropological evidence of matriarchy – i.e., societies where women exercise dominance. However, there do exist matrilineal societies, i.e., societies where women inherit property from their mothers but do not exercise control over it, nor are they the decision makers in public affairs.
6. National development, particularly in the Nehruvian era, involved the building of large dams, factories and mines in the tribal areas that were located in mineral rich and forest covered parts of the country.
  - i. National development as such has benefited the mainstream at the expense of the tribes.
  - ii. The process of dispossessing tribals of their land has occurred as a necessary by-product of the exploitation of minerals and the utilisation of favourable sites for setting up hydroelectric power plants, many of which were in tribal areas.
  - iii. The loss of the forests on which most tribal communities depended has been a major blow.

- iv. The coming of private property in land has also adversely affected tribals, whose community-based forms of collective ownership were placed at a disadvantage in the new system.
- v. Many tribal concentration regions and states have also been experiencing the problem of heavy in- migration of non-tribals in response to the pressures of development.

This threatens to disrupt and overwhelm tribal communities and cultures, besides accelerating the process of exploitation of tribals.

- 7. The discussion on caste-tribe differences was accompanied by a large body of literature. This was based on the mechanisms through which tribes were absorbed into Hindu society.

The early school of anthropologists tended to emphasise the cultural aspects of tribal absorption into the mainstream. The later writers on the other hand, have concentrated on the exploitative and political nature of the incorporation.

Some scholars have argued that there is no coherent basis for treating tribes as “pristine” -i.e., original or pure - societies uncontaminated by civilisation. They propose instead that tribes should really be seen as “secondary” phenomena arising out of the exploitative and colonialist contact between pre-existing states and non-state groups like the tribals.

This contact itself creates an ideology of “tribalism” – the tribal groups begin to define themselves as tribals in order to distinguish themselves from the newly encountered others.

- 8. Several scholars have highlighted the inherent contradictions in matrilineal systems. One such contradiction arises from:

- i. The separation of the line of descent and inheritance on the one hand and the structure of authority and control on the other.
- ii. The former, which links the mother to the daughter, comes in conflict with the latter, which links the mother’s brother to the sister’s son.
- iii. In other words, a woman inherits property from her mother and passes it on to her daughter, while a man controls his sister’s property and passes on control to his sister’s son.
- iv. Thus, inheritance passes from mother to daughter whereas control passes from (maternal) uncle to nephew.

- 9. Studies have shown how diverse family forms are found in different societies.

With regard to the rule of residence, some societies are matrilocal in their marriage and family customs while others are patrilocal. In the first case, the newly married couple stays with the woman's parents, whereas in the second case the couple lives with the man's parents.

With regard to the rules of inheritance, matrilineal societies pass on property from mother to daughter while patrilineal societies do so from father to son.

With regard to the rule of authority and dominance, a patriarchal family structure exists where the men exercise authority and dominance, and matriarchy where the women play a similarly dominant role.

However, matriarchy – unlike patriarchy – has been a theoretical rather than an empirical concept. There is no historical or anthropological evidence of matriarchy – i.e., societies where women exercise dominance. However, there do exist matrilineal societies, i.e., societies where women inherit property from their mothers but do not exercise control over it, nor are they the decision makers in public affairs.

10. Khasi matriliney generates intense role conflict for men. They are torn between their responsibilities to their natal house on the one hand, and to their wife and children on the other.

In a way, the strain generated by such role conflict affects Khasi women more intensely. A woman can never be fully assured that her husband does not find his sister's house a more congenial place than her own.

Similarly, a sister will be apprehensive about her brother's commitment to her welfare because the wife with whom he lives can always pull him away from his responsibilities to his natal house.

The women are more adversely affected than men by the role conflict generated in the Khasi matrilineal system not only because men wield power & women are deprived of it, but also because the system is more lenient to men when there is a transgression of rules. Women possess only token authority in Khasi society; it is men who are the defacto power holders. The system is indeed weighted in favour of male matri-kin rather than male patri-kin.

In other words, despite matriliney, men are the power holders in Khasi society. The only difference is that "a man's relatives on his mother's side matter more than his relatives on his father's side".