

CBSE Class-12 Sociology Test Paper-04
Cultural Change

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. What has been the defining features of 'traditions' in India?
2. How has the advent of progress and the influences of modernisation changed the attitudes toward religion and celebrations of festivals?
3. Describe the secular dimension of rituals.
4. What is 'secularisation of caste'?
5. The ideas of equality and democracy made a huge impact. Explain.
6. The influence of westernisation had developed discriminatory and contradictory attitudes amongst Indians. Discuss.
7. Explain the term modernisation as understood in the western sense.
8. Explain how the processes of modernisation and secularisation are linked.
9. Describe the existence of modernity with mix of tradition even in today's time.
10. How is the understanding of secular dimension in India different from that of the west?

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1. The defining features of 'traditions' in India has been both plurality and a tradition of argumentation. It is the complex combinations of a mix of tradition and modernity as though tradition and modernity themselves are fixed entities.
2. The advent of progress and the influences of modernisation have changed attitudes to religion and to the celebration of the many festivals. Rituals, procedures of ceremonies, taboos associated with these ceremonies, the value and amount of sacrifices to be made, are now all subjects of constant change, especially in the mushrooming urban areas.
3. The secular dimensions of rituals mean they provide men and women with occasions for socialising with their peers and superiors, and for showing off the family's wealth, clothing and jewellery. During the last few decades in particular, the economic, political and status dimensions of ritual have become increasingly conspicuous, and the number of cars lined up outside a wedding house and the VIPs who attended the wedding, provide the index to the household's standing in the local community.
4. In traditional India caste system operated within a religious framework. Belief systems of purity and pollution were central to its practice. Today it often functions as political pressure groups. Contemporary India has seen such formation of caste associations and caste based political parties. They seek to press upon the state their demands. Such a changed role of caste has been described as secularisation of caste.
5. The ideas of equality and democracy made a huge impact as evident in both the reform movements and the nationalist movement. This led not just to adoption of western ideas, but also an active questioning and reinterpretation of tradition.
6. In some cases, westernisation simply involves the imitation of external forms of culture but it does not necessarily mean that people adopt modern values of democracy and equality as well. There are many Indians who are very western in their clothes and appearances but who do not have democratic and egalitarian values that are part of modern attitudes.

For example, we may find people who are western educated but holding very prejudiced

views about particular ethnic or religious communities.

A family can adopt external forms of western culture like the way the interiors of houses are done up but may have very conservative ideas about women's role in society. The practice of female foeticide combines discriminatory attitude towards women and the use of very modern technology.

7. The term modernisation in the western sense has a long history.

From the 19th and more so the 20th century, the term began to be associated with positive and desirable values. People and societies wanted to be modern. In the early years, modernisation referred to improvement in technology and production processes. Increasingly, however, the term had a wider usage. It referred to the path of development that much of west Europe or North America has taken. And suggested that other societies both have to and ought to follow the same path of development.

8. The two processes of modernisation and secularisation are linked:

- i. They are both part of a set of modern ideas.
- ii. For instance, people are influenced not just by local but universal contexts. How you behave, what you think is no longer decided by your family or tribe or caste or community. What job you wish to do is decided not by the job your parent does, but by what you wish to do.
- iii. Work gets based on choice, not birth. On who you are depend on what you achieve, not by who you are.
- iv. A scientific attitude gains ground. A rational approach matters.

9. The existence of modernity with mix of tradition is constantly being redefined even in today's time. This can be clearly seen across groups of people. For instance, in Arunachal Pradesh the process has been redefined in the following ways:

- i. With the advent of progress and the influences of modernisation, attitudes have changed towards religion and to the celebration of the many festivals.
- ii. Rituals, procedures of ceremonies, taboos associated with these ceremonies, the value and amount of sacrifices to be made, are now all subjects of constant change,

especially in the mushrooming urban areas.

- iii. These new pressures on the concept of tribal identity have meant that traditional practices and their preservation have become almost a necessary expression of being tribal.
 - iv. Festivals have emerged as an emphatic projection of that sense of a unified tribe identity. It is as if the collective celebration of the festival has become a fitting response to the clarion call of ‘Loss of Culture, Loss of Identity’ that is doing the rounds in today’s tribal society.
 - v. Traditionally, seasonal cycles determined the days of the celebration; now dates for the celebration have been formalised with each marked on the official government calendar. At these festival celebrations, flags of no definite design, chief guests and speeches, and Miss Festival contests have become the new necessities.
 - vi. With rational concepts and worldviews infiltrating the minds of the tribal people, the practice and performance of the old faith is under due and undue scrutiny.
10. In the modern west, secularisation has usually meant a process of decline in the influence of religion. It has been an assumption of all theorists of modernisation that modern societies become increasingly secular. Secularisation in the Indian sense has led to the emergence of new kinds of religious reform organisations. A considerable part of rituals in India has direct reference to the pursuit of secular ends. Rituals also have secular dimensions as distinct from secular goals. They provide men and women with occasions for socialising with their peers and superiors, and for showing off the family’s wealth, clothing and jewellery. During the last few decades in particular, the economic, political and status dimensions of ritual have become increasingly conspicuous. Caste also has secular dimensions apart from religion and rituals. Traditionally, the caste system operated within a religious framework. Belief systems of purity and pollution were central to its practice. Today it often functions as political pressure groups. Contemporary India has seen such formation of caste associations and caste based political parties. They seek to press upon the state their demands. Such a changed role of caste has been described as secularisation of caste.