

CBSE Class-12 Sociology Test Paper-04
Social institutions continuity and 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 are the basis for the formation of tribal identity today?
2. What are the important issues giving rise to tribal movements?
3. How can family be defined as a social institution on its own?
4. How does the different structures of family changes?
5. Define nuclear family and extended family.
6. By 1970s why were all the definitions of tribes shown to be faulty?
7. Colonialism has brought irrevocable changes in the world of the tribes. Use examples to explain what were these changes?
8. What was the famous isolation versus integration debate of the 1940s built upon?
9. Why was the change in the caste system during the contemporary period seen as significant yet paradoxical?
10. Classify the tribes on the basis of permanent traits.

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1. Tribal identities today are formed on the basis of interactional process rather than any primordial (original, ancient) characteristics peculiar to tribes. Because the interaction with the mainstream has generally been on terms unfavourable to the tribal communities, many tribal identities today are centred on ideas of resistance and opposition to the over.
2. Two broad sets of issues that have been most important in giving rise to tribal movements are issues relating to control over vital economic resources like land and specially forests, and issues relating to matters of ethnic-cultural identity differentiation of tribal society they may also diverge.
3. A family as a social institution on its own can be defined as nuclear or extended. It can be male-headed or female-headed. The line of descent can be matrilineal or patrilineal.
4. Families have different structures and these structures change. Sometimes these changes occur accidentally, as when a war takes place or people migrate in search of work. Sometimes these changes are purposely brought about, as when young people decide to choose their spouses instead of letting elders decide.
5. A nuclear family consists of only one set of parents and their children. An extended family (commonly known as the 'joint family') can take different forms, but has more than one couple, and often more than two generations, living together. This could be a set of brothers with their individual families, or an elderly couple with their sons and grandsons and their respective families.
6. By the 1970s all the major definitions of tribe were shown to be faulty due to the following reasons:
 - i. It was pointed out that the tribe-peasantry distinction did not hold in terms of any of the commonly advanced criteria: size, isolation, religion, and means of livelihood.
 - ii. Some Indian "tribes" like Santhal, Gonds, and Bhils are very large and spread over extensive territory.
 - iii. Certain tribes like Munda, Hos and others have long since turned to settled agriculture, and even hunting gathering tribes, like the Birhors of Bihar employ specialised households to make baskets, press oil etc.
 - iv. It has also been pointed out in a number of cases, that in the absence of other

alternatives, “castes” (or non-tribals) have turned to hunting and gathering.

7. Colonialism had already brought irrevocable changes in their world. The following are some of the changes:
 - i. On the political and economic front, tribal societies were faced with the incursion of money lenders.
 - ii. They were also losing their land to non-tribal immigrant settlers, and their access to forests because of the government policy of reservation of forests and the introduction of mining operations.
 - iii. Unlike other areas, where land rent was the primary source of surplus extraction, in these hilly and forested areas, it was mostly appropriation of natural resources – forests and minerals – which was the main source of income for the colonial government.
 - iv. Following the various rebellions in tribal areas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the colonial government set up ‘excluded’ and ‘partially excluded’ areas, where the entry of non-tribals was prohibited or regulated. In these areas, the British favoured indirect rule through local kings or headmen.
8. The famous isolation versus integration debate of the 1940s was built upon the standard picture of tribal societies as isolated wholes.
 - i. The isolationist side argued that the tribes needed protection from traders, moneylenders and Hindu and Christian missionaries, all of whom were intent on reducing these tribes to detribalised landless labour.
 - ii. The integrationists, on the other hand, argued that tribals were merely backward Hindus, and their problems had to be addressed within the same framework as that of other backward classes.
 - iii. This opposition dominated the Constituent Assembly debates, which were finally settled along the lines of a compromise which advocated welfare schemes that would enable controlled integration.
 - iv. The subsequent schemes for tribal development – five year plans, tribal sub-plans, tribal welfare blocks, special multipurpose area schemes all continue with this mode of thinking.
 - v. The integration of tribes however, has neglected their own needs or desires; integration has been on the terms of the mainstream society and for its own benefit.
 - vi. The tribal societies have had their lands, forests taken away and their communities

shattered in the name of development.

9. In contemporary period caste has tended to become 'invisible' for the upper caste, urban middle and upper classes.
 - i. For these groups, who have benefited the most from the developmental policies of the post-colonial era, caste has appeared to decline in significance precisely because it has done its job so well.
 - ii. Their caste status had been crucial in ensuring that these groups had the necessary economic and educational resources to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by rapid development.
 - iii. For this group, caste no longer plays part in their public lives and is limited to the personal sphere of religious practice or marriage and kinship.

However, for the so called scheduled castes and tribes and the backward castes has become all too visible.
 - iv. Indeed, their caste has tended to eclipse the other dimensions of their identities.
 - v. Because they have no inherited educational and social capital, and because they must compete with an already entrenched upper caste group, they cannot afford to abandon their caste identity for it is one of the few collective assets they have.
 - vi. Moreover, they continue to suffer from discrimination of various kinds. The policies of reservation and other forms of protective discrimination instituted by the state in response to political pressure serve as their lifelines. But using this lifeline tends to make their caste the all-important and often the only aspect of their identity that the world recognises.

The juxtaposition of these two groups – a seemingly caste-less upper caste group and an apparently caste-defined lower caste group – is one of the central aspects of the institution of caste in the present.
10. Permanent traits include region, language, physical characteristics and ecological habitat.:
 - i. On the basis of region, the tribal population of India is widely dispersed, but there are also concentrations in certain regions.
 - ii. About 85% of the tribal population lives in 'middle India', comprising of Gujarat and Rajasthan in the west to West Bengal and Orissa in the east, with Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh and parts of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh forming the heart of this region. Over 11% is in the North Eastern states, leaving only a little over

3% living in the rest of India.

- iii. If we look at the share of tribals in the state population, then the North Eastern states have the highest concentrations.
- iv. The ecological habitats covered include hills, forests, rural plains and urban industrial areas.
- v. In terms of language, tribes are categorised into four categories. Indo-Aryan and Dravidian, account for only about 1% of the former and about 3% of the latter. The other two language groups, the Austric and Tibeto-Burman, are primarily spoken by tribals, who account for all of the first and over 80% of the second group.
- vi. In physical-racial terms, tribes are classified under the Negrito, Australoid, Mongoloid, Dravidian and Aryan categories. The last two are again shared with the rest of the population of India.
- vii. In terms of size, tribes vary a great deal, ranging from about seven million to some Andamanese islanders who may number less than a hundred persons. The biggest tribes are the Gonds, Bhils, Santhals, Oraons, Minas, Bodos and Mundas, all of whom are at least a million strong.
- viii. The total population of tribes amounts to about 8.2% of the population of India, or about 84 million persons according to the 2001 Census.