

CBSE Class-12 Sociology Test Paper-04
Social Inequality and Exclusion

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. Who are the other backward classes (OBC)?
2. Name the two commissions appointed by the Government to look into the measures for the welfare of the OBCs.
3. What does the term 'Adivasi' connote?
4. Being 'Adivasi' is about what?
5. What was the most significant achievement of Adivasi movements?
6. Why is the social and economic condition of tribes worse in the areas where tribal population is concentrated?
7. How did the women's question rise in modern India?
8. List down the declaration of the 1931, Karachi Session of the Indian National Congress whereby it committed itself to women's equality.
9. Describe the struggles by OBCs against social discriminations faced by them.
10. Describe the discrimination and exploitation faced by adivasis after independence.

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1. The Constitution of India recognises the possibility that there may be groups other than the Scheduled Tribes & Scheduled Castes who suffer from social disadvantages. These groups, which need not be based on caste alone, but generally are identified by caste, were described as the 'socially & educationally backward classes'. This is the constitutional basis of the popular term 'Other Backward Classes', which is in common use today.
2. The two commissions appointed by the Government to look into the measures for the welfare of the OBCs were the following:
 - i. The Kaka Kalekar Commission submitted its report in 1953
 - ii. The Mandal Commission implemented in 1990
3. The term Adivasi connotes political awareness and the assertion of rights. Literally meaning 'original inhabitants', the term was coined in the 1930s as part of the struggle against the intrusion by the colonial government and outside settlers and moneylenders.
4. Being Adivasi is about shared experiences of the loss of forests, the alienation of land, repeated displacements since Independence in the name of 'development projects' and much more.
5. The most significant achievements of Adivasi movements include the attainment of statehood for Jharkhand and Chattisgarh, which were originally part of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh respectively. In this respect adivasis and their struggles are different from the Dalit struggle because, unlike Dalits, adivasis were concentrated in contiguous areas and could demand states of their own.
6. In the areas where tribal populations are concentrated, their economic and social conditions are usually much worse than those of non-tribals due to the following reasons:
 - i. The impoverished and exploited circumstances under which adivasis live can be traced historically to the pattern of accelerated resource extraction started by the colonial British government and continued by the government of independent India.
 - ii. From the late nineteenth century onwards, the colonial government reserved most forest tracts for its own use, severing the rights that adivasis had long exercised to use the forest for gathering produce and for shifting cultivation.
 - iii. Forests were now to be protected for maximising timber production. With this policy,

the mainstay of their livelihoods was taken away from adivasis, rendering their lives poorer and more insecure.

- iv. Denied access to forests and land for cultivation, adivasis were forced to either use the forests illegally (and be harassed and prosecuted as 'encroachers' and thieves) or migrate in search of wage labour.
7. The women's question arose in modern India as part of the nineteenth century middle class social reform movements.
- i. The nature of these movements varied from region to region. They are often termed as middle class reform movements because many of these reformers were from the newly emerging western educated Indian middle class.
 - ii. They were often at once inspired by the democratic ideals of the modern west and by a deep pride in their own democratic traditions of the past. Many used both these resources to fight for women's rights.
 - iii. We can only give illustrative examples here. We draw from the anti-sati campaign led by Raja Rammohun Roy in Bengal, the widow remarriage movement in the Bombay Presidency where Ranade was one of the leading reformers.
 - iv. Jyotiba Phule's simultaneous attack on caste and gender oppression and from the social reform movement in Islam led by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.
8. In 1931, the Karachi Session of the Indian National Congress issued a declaration on the Fundamental Rights of Citizenship in India whereby it committed itself to women's equality. The declaration reads as follows:
- i. All citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sex.
 - ii. No disability attaches to any citizen, by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling.
 - iii. The franchise shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage.
 - iv. Woman shall have the right to vote, to represent and the right to hold public offices.
9. From the mid-fifties, the OBC issue became a regional affair pursued at the state rather than the central level. The southern states had a long history of backward caste political agitation that had started in the early twentieth century. Because of these powerful social movements, policies to address the problems of the OBCs were in place long before they were discussed in most northern states.
- The OBC issue returned to the central level in the late 1970s after the Emergency when

the Janata Party came to power. The Second Backward Classes Commission headed by B.P. Mandal was appointed at this time.

However, it was only in 1990, when the central government decided to implement the ten-year old Mandal Commission report, that the OBC issue became a major one in national politics. Since the 1990s we have seen the resurgence of lower caste movements in north India, among both the OBCs and Dalits.

The large disparities between the upper OBCs (who are largely landed castes and enjoy dominance in rural society in many regions of India) and the lower OBCs (who are very poor and disadvantaged, and are often not very different from Dalits in socio-economic terms) make this a difficult political category to work with.

However, the OBCs are severely under-represented in all spheres except landholding and political representation (they have a large number of MLAs and MPs).

Although the upper OBCs are dominant in the rural sector, the situation of urban OBCs is much worse, being much closer to that of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes than to the upper castes.

10. The Independence of India in 1947 should have made life easier for adivasis but this was not the case & adivasis continued to face discrimination & exploitation are given below: Firstly, the government monopoly over forests continued. If anything, the exploitation of forests accelerated.

Secondly, the policy of capital-intensive industrialisation adopted by the Indian government required mineral resources and power-generation capacities which were concentrated in Adivasi areas. Adivasi lands were rapidly acquired for new mining and dam projects. In the process, millions of adivasis were displaced without any appropriate compensation or rehabilitation.

Justified in the name of 'national development' and 'economic growth', these policies were also a form of internal colonialism, subjugating adivasis and alienating the resources upon which they depended.

Projects such as the Sardar Sarovar dam on the river Narmada in western India and the Polavaram dam on the river Godavari in Andhra Pradesh will displace hundreds of thousands of adivasis, driving them to greater destitution.

These processes continue to prevail & have become even more powerful since the 1990s when economic liberalisation policies were officially adopted by the Indian government. It is now easier for corporate firms to acquire large areas of land by displacing adivasis.