

SOCIOLOGY PAPER-2

B-4

Social Classes in India

- 1. Agrarian Class structure**
- 2. Industrial Class structure**
- 3. Middle Classes in India**

Agrarian Class structure

(In easy words -

Agrarian - Related to agriculture

Class -> similar eco. Position)

Emergence:

During the British period Factors were :

- Land Tenure system , idea of individual ownership of land
- Payment of revenue in cash led to commercialisation of agri --- moneylender landlord --- agri for profit purpose
- oppressive policies of britishers---- expansion of agri labourers -- new class of sharecroppers ---loss of patronage for artisans

Rk Mukherjee -> Dominant class & subordinate class increasing, because of decay of intermediary class.

Thus agrarian class structure included :

- landlords and rich tenants -- dominant class
- middle and lower tenants -- intermediate class
- artisans , sharecroppers --- subordinate class

In post independence period :

Factors that affected Agrarian Class structure also included:

- LRs
- GR
- Democratic political system
- Development of transport & communication.

www.YouTube.com/SleepyClasses
<https://testseries.sleepyclasses.com/>



Sleepy Classes

Hamza Alavi:

Major Agrarian Classes :

- Bourgeois landowners (Farmers high productivity)
- Colonial landowners (Absentee, low productivity)
- Sharecroppers (Payment in kind as were generally, subtenants)
- Agricultural labourers (Wage payment, no land ownership)

Daniel Thorner in 1973:

(Income/ownership/use)

One man can belong to all – 3 categories

3 criteria for dividing agrarian population :

1. based on income earned from land
2. nature of rights held in land
3. extent of field work actually performed.

Based on this criteria - 3 fold classification :

- Maliks - Owner (landlords)
- Kisans are working peasants - Use (Tenants)
- Mazdoors -- wage labourers or share croppers - Wage/Income (Labourers)

Andre Beteille : No single way of classifying ASS... he classified based on

- Ownership of land
- Control over land
- Use of land

Generalised view of agrarian classes has been identified as under:

- Rich farmers (Benefitted GR, LR| AB-> Progressive farmers | Rudolph & Rudolph -> Bullock capitalism)
- Middle farmers (Erstwhile tenants | After LR)
- Poor peasants (Landless earlier | LR Beneficiary)
- Landless labourers (Migration | Jan Breman -> Footloose labour)

www.YouTube.com/SleepyClasses
<https://testseries.sleepyclasses.com/>



Sleepy Classes

Bardhan and Rudra: 2 types of agri labourers -

Unattached : casual labourers without any bondage

Attached : association with a particular employer

- Extremely Attached : complete bondage without any specific boundaries
- Fully attached : specific sphere of activity
- Semi attached : seasonal association

Bondage : Indicates different degrees of attachment of a person with the other within the sphere of work.

(Report 2013 -> Most no. of slaves in India)

Bonded Labour : Indicates a particular situation in which a person is under a compulsion to be associated with other person .

This compulsion is enforced by coercion.

Extremely attached bondage indicates bonded labour.

However these are only broad framework.

The actual agrarian class relations differ from region to region.

The agrarian history of different regions in india has been quite different and the trajectories of development during post independence period (like abolition of zamindari , land tenure , GR etc.) have also been different.

ASS is not static but changes with changing nature of society at large.

Recent trends :

- Due to overall increase in wage level --- cost of labour input increased --- low profitability ---generating tensions b/w dominant and subordinate AC
- Improving economic conditions in non-GR areas---shortage of labourers in GR areas-- migration decreased
- trend towards developing policies for workers in the organised sectors.

www.YouTube.com/SleepyClasses
<https://testseries.sleepyclasses.com/>



Sleepy Classes

Industrial Class Structure

(It is pattern of relationship that exists b/w diff. classes in an Industrial society)

We'll study the ideas of - Bottomore, Marx, Weber, Daniel Bell

Bottomore : Social classes are characteristic feature of industrial societies . With the emergence of industrialisation , variously classes emerged , especially in urban areas , as :

- Capitalist
- educated classes
- petty traders and shopkeepers
- working classes

Marx : Bourgeoise and proletariat

Weber (used by AB):

- Propertied Upper Class
- White Collared Workers
- Petty Bourgeoise
- Manual Labourers

Impact on caste :

- **Harold Goulds study of rickshaw wallah of lucknow** : class structure has weakened caste structure in india. Cities provide them anonymity (upper caste doing menial jobs)

- **AB** : higher caste does not always imply higher class . This disharmony is found in indian cities where new jobs are opening. However this doesnot mean that caste system is disintegrating.

Earlier cumulative privileges. Now, dispersed.

Developed cracks but not collapsed.

- Caste has also become a basis for organisation of trade union

- Caste or kinship is used as a criteria for allotting seats or selecting people for jobs - i.e. a phenomena of sponsored mobility rather than contested mobility.

- In India with NIP and Globalisation this class structure is subjected to the most dynamic change

- entrepreneurship.

Post - Industrial Society

Daniel Bell : Book "*Post-Industrial Society* (1973)"

Bell predicted that we are **fast moving towards a society where services and knowledge related technologies would dominate rather than industrial production** that was conventionally viewed. He held that **postindustrial society would replace the industrial society as dominant mode.**

There are three components to a post-industrial society, according to Bell:

- a shift from manufacturing to services
- the centrality of the new science-based industries
- the rise of new technical elites and the advent of a new principle of stratification

Term used for **post-industrial society is 'information age'**, as another characteristic feature of post-industrial societies is the domination of information technologies and industries related to it.

Bells prediction of post-industrial society was based on already emerging patterns in America in the 1970s as:

- 1) Employment figures in 1950's: US became the first country to have a majority of its working population in services
- 2) Evidence showed that contribution to service sector to GNP was steadily mounting.
- 3) Increase in Financial allocation towards higher education i.e. theoretical knowledge

To bell post industrialization offers a **solution to many problems in industrial society** such as :
(Reform in MR TLC Alienation, creativity)

- ☐ Individual talks to individual rather than interacting with machines.
- ☐ Vision of new worker
- ☐ Performs interesting and varied jobs in pleasant surroundings
- ☐ Is engaged in production of a service and not in production of good.
- ☐ Interacts with life people and not mindless machines.
- ☐ As customer demands vary, offers personalized service

www.YouTube.com/SleepyClasses
<https://testseries.sleepyclasses.com/>



Sleepy Classes

- Service not fragmented to which there was lack of identification with product – there is a certain unity in service provided by worker
- Finally new work places is a pleasant office room and personal shop floor.

Some argue that post industrialism is unlike industrialism in its consequences for people. Industrialism promoted alienation as it made material affluence possible.

Benefits for workers (**De-Alienation**)

- Post industrialism in contrast allowed **individual to set its own pace**, instead of being paced by machines, by offering work i.e. **varied and interesting**.
- Worker does **complete jobs** instead of fragmented bits of work.

Hence post industrialism offers solution to the alienation of man.

Critics say that it is too rosy a picture. For them :

- **Marxist would not agree that is alienation can be solved within the frame work of capitalist system** of production. To them root cause of alienation is private ownership i.e. what robs worker of his control over tool and production.
- **Employment in service class implies that it is at the cost of agriculture.** It's fallacious to equate industrial employment with blue collar manual job services with white.
- **Many tasks involved in the provision of services** such as catering, cleaning, entertainment, and transportation or of manual or even menial kind **are not very different from general run of industrial jobs**.
- If industrial employment has remain stationary and many of the **new jobs created by the services are manual**, the optimistic claim that the alienating condition of industrial work now applies to fewer people would appear to be totally misplaced.
- The argument that whitecollar workers in the service sector perform varied jobs in a pleasant atmosphere and has come under severe attack. Vast **bulks of service sector employees are clerks who have been handed into large impersonal offices**. The

repetitiveness, division of labor, fragmentation of tasks and monitory that characterize industrial employment are to be found here as well.

- Finally, Bell's assertion that there is a growing proportion of professionals within the white collar has been questioned. The **expansion of professionals in the service sector is taking place at lowest levels. These people are assigned impressive littlest such as engineer and technologist. However, they hardly enjoy freedom on their job. Their actual job is to perform according to someone else's specifications.** They are more providers of information production of scientific knowledge itself has become an industry. With vast number of people performing fairly simple and regulated jobs for a coordinator who alone knows how the pieces fit together to make a whole.

Conclusion :

While there are many critiques to Bells's arguments and his prediction, we are indeed moving from a industry oriented economy to a post-industrial one. The **new technologies have definitely altered social structures, they have speeded up the globalization processes.**

1. Define Ind. Class
2. Aim -> Marxist (AR Desai) -> Maximising Profits. Functionalist - Meeting Demand, Giving employment.
3. Evolution ->
 - A. Pre – Independence -> started 1870 to swadeshi, during WWs demand increased
- Rise of AITUC, INTUC
 - B. Post – Independence -> Govt. Control increased, social welfare increased, Holmstorm (Holmstorm, Dev Nathan – Working Class in India is of 4 types –
 1. Gets more than a family wage (that is, more than the value of the labour power)
 2. Equal to family wage (equal to the labour power)
 3. Less than family wage (and has to suppress the standard of living to survive)
 4. Pauperised (not able to meet the immediate demands)
 - C. Post LPG -> Informal increased, Disparity increased, CSR increased, Social Innovation increased, Holmstorm 3,4 increased.
For working class. Weber's white collared increased.

www.YouTube.com/SleepyClasses
<https://testseries.sleepyclasses.com/>



Sleepy Classes

4. Conclude ->
Clark Kerr: convergence theory -> similar Economies produce similar stratifications. With time, globalization will remove deprivations.
5. Criticism ->
Keith Dan's -> Govt. Control, licence, quota Raj slowed growth
Sudipto kaviraj -> slow employment growth led to increased Poverty

Caste – class Nexus

Industry -> caste blind (still lesser no.of untouchables, and more of lower castes)

Industrial class features (additional points)

1. Ltd. Employment to women | children
2. workers have little or no land
3. Diverse background of workers

Middle classes in India

The Economist (Definition) – If more than $\frac{1}{3}$ rd income is left after paying for food & shelter.

B.B. Mishra | M.C. (Defn.) -> 75% to 125% of median salary

M.C. (Defn.) ->

- Either own MoP at a lower scale (as compared to Higher class)
- Sells his skilled labour (as compared to working class which is unskilled)

Evolution of Middle class in India

DL Seth analyses four different phases :

- I - colonial period , tax collectors etc (MNS – Primary, Secondary westernization)
- II – Indian Renaissance , modern edu , freedom mov
- III - Post Independence , jobs ,edu , reservations , green rev , -- all these numerically increased MC (farmers also showed up)
- IV - post LPG , the salaried classes increased.

DP Mukherjee (Marxist) -> Indian system (Thesis) -> British system (Anti – Thesis) [Synthesis of Middle class

Causes for the rise of MC :

Social : sanskritisation (Education , Administrative jobs, LR/GR)

Economic : Commercialisation and Industrialisation

Political : Democracy (Participation in Decision Making), universal adult franchise

B B Mishra in his work on "the middle classes in India" concluded that the british rule resulted in the emergence of a class intermediaries serving as **a link b/w the people and the new rulers**. MC continued to increase in strength and prosperity with the progress of british rule.

Sanjay Joshi articulated that definition and power of MC was from its **propagation of modern ways of life and heterogeneity was an attribute** of the MC.

AB views MC in India as a part of a relatively new social formation based on caste and kinship. In his opinion the **MC values are difficult to characterise because they are still in the process of formation** i.e. **transitional** and have not acquired a stable form . As such they are marked by contradictions & oppositions.

Y.Singh differentiates b/w rural and urban MC.

Similarity : Both share conservative & narrow utilitarian ethos.

Difference : RMC harbour intense antagonism & conflict with UMC due to historical reasons (Like slowdown in agri prod , post GR underdev in agri)

- In contemporary times , MC is not yet modern while there is modernity in consumption patterns it is still in the transition phase wrt interpersonal relation. ----> consumerism increased
- Man is still breadwinner , superficial emancipation of women - where they have freedom to choose their clothes but motherhood is still considered to be most important goal.

MC still not acquired stable form ..cannot be labelled as modern.

Rajesh Kochar -> Denationalised Middle class

McDonald -> Serving Indian Menu

Suhash Palshikar -> Bourgeoise class is dependent on Middleclass (because of spending power)

The Great Indian Middle Class

Political Repercussions because of education, awareness.

NCAER report -

2005 – 5%,

2015 – 20%,

2025 – 40% - It will have political repercussions.

The Indian middle class is not just growing at a rapid pace, it has also become the segment driving consumption of “luxury” goods like cars and air-conditioners, according to a survey by the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER)

The “middle class” households numbered 10.7 million in 2001-2; by 2009-10, they’re expected to rise to 28.4 million. **“The rich too are growing in numbers,” points out Rakesh Shukla, senior fellow and head of the survey team, NCAER.** From 0.8 million in 2001-02, they’re expected to grow to 3.8 million by the end of the decade

Values Related To Family, Marriage and Women’s Status Amongst the Middle Class

Even in the 21st century, **marriage is considered an important traditional social institution** that all are supposed to enter into. **Choices available with individuals, specifically women, are very few as marriage and motherhood are taken to be the ultimate goals.** A woman ’s identity is seen to be largely dependent on her marital status.

Marriage is still seen as a way of life through which an individual entered adulthood in both upper and upper middle classes of urban India, who outwardly appear to be modern. Particularistic criteria continue to provide the normative basis for the formation of intimate relations among people across all classes. Although **arranged marriages**, whereby parents choose the prospective mates for their children are the **preferred form of marriage**, in the upper and upper middle classes, **certain changes are observable. Semi- arranged marriages**, in which individuals choose their own life partners but marry only with the consent of their parents, **are also taking place.** In such marriages, **inter-caste and inter- religious marital alliances are being tolerated**, albeit conditionally. Hindu-Muslim and Hindu-Christian marriages are still taboo.

Wedding ceremonies are performed in a traditional way. Choices available with individuals are very few. In case of the lower middle class, such values and norms are comparatively more deep- rooted. Certain ambiguities are quite evident in the attitudes of those belonging to the middle class as they seem to be more open to change while responding to the same queries in questionnaires but adopt a more traditional viewpoint while narrating their life histories without being too conscious during in-depth interviews. Such contradictions are inherent in the set of social norms and values upheld by

them.

Furthermore, **the stereotypical roles of man being the ‘breadwinner’ and woman the ‘nurturer’ are perpetuated.** In the upper and upper middle classes, certain changes are observable. There is **‘superficial emancipation’ as women are choosing clothes** that are in tune with the latest in the world of fashion. Still **marriage and motherhood are considered to be the most important goals**, all decisions have to be in consonance with these.

Although women in the upper and upper middle classes in the contemporary age appear to be more autonomous compared to those belonging to the previous generations, they are **still considered to be appendages to men.**

Only in the realm of the size of the family, the former seem to have as much say as the latter. In the upper middle class, **parents lay emphasis on their daughters excelling in their studies** just as they would wish their sons to. However, emphasis is not laid on higher education as that is taken to be a hindrance in getting good matrimonial matches. A harmonious marital relationship is seen to be dependent on women occupying a sub-ordinate status to men.

In the **lower middle class, also, women appear to have limited choices in the sphere of education.** Education is considered important in order to enable them to be better wives and mothers. Significantly, most women are gainfully employed but they are compelled to join the work force to meet the economic needs of the family. Women are essentially **expected to remain within the domains of their households and cater to the needs of their families.**

This is viewed as a natural phenomenon. Women do not have absolute freedom to decide on matters concerning selves. Thus, it is quite apparent that women in the middle class, both upper and lower are still not self-determining individuals. Social roles continue to be defined in accordance with traditional expectations.

Also, **while forming friendships, particularistic norms continue to play some role as such relationships are usually based on class similarities** i.e. with similar economic background and value systems.

Thus, it is quite interesting to note that in contemporary times, the middle class in India has not acquired a stable form and cannot be labeled as ‘modern’.

(Thus, concludingly -

Marriage, motherhood still an important goal

Man – breadwinner

www.YouTube.com/SleepyClasses
<https://testseries.sleepyclasses.com/>



Sleepy Classes

Women –

- Nurturer
- Arranged to semi. Emerged, Inter caste allowed
- Still considered appendages to men, Higher education still not emphasized)

Extra Discussions -

Old MC – Small manufactures, artisans, independent Professionals etc

Vs

New MC – Related to technology (technocrats), bureaucrats, white collar employees, (managers)

Features of MC –

1. Tremendous growth in no.
2. Changed the class structure (3 classes now)
3. Role in P, E, S, T
4. Social transformation in policies

Role of MC in social change – 3Is – Initiator, Indicator, Integrator

- Indicator of social change
- Agent of modernization
- Stabilizing force (b/w top & bottom)
- Significant role in Freedom movement.
- Harbinger of social change through
- Press, media, law, medicine, political ideology, social activism

BB Mishra -> Member of MC predominantly higher caste (generally elitist) but due to protective discrimination policy of govt. -> Increasing no. of SC/ST in MC

Globalization & MC ->

1. Size increased
2. Development Indicator increased

Palshikar -> Increased Consumerism -> Bourgeoisie dependent on MC

MNS -> MC an outcome of erstwhile globalization when British arrived.

Y. Singh ->

www.YouTube.com/SleepyClasses
<https://testseries.sleepyclasses.com/>



Sleepy Classes

1. Homogenisation of MC
2. But cultural Identity maintained.

Rajesh Kochhar -> Denationalized MC | Globalisation becoming Glocalisation because of large MC (eg. McDonald local menu)

NCAER -> Civil society will increase. Political impact.

But: MC alienation because of ambitions. Nuclearisation. Denationalised. Consumerism of family.