

Section - II



Passages

* **Note :** Questions will be asked in relation to any one of the following passages. Teachers may frame questions based on the passages given below. However, they should not encourage students to borrow word-for-word from the given passages. The questions will be of an **applied** or **analytical** nature. Students are expected to understand the context of the question and respond in their own words. Their response must be relevant, systematic, backed by logical explanation and have a sense of continuity. The text will only serve as a stimulus for further thinking. (*Sample questions have been provided for the first passage.*)

(1)

This is a real life story of Rukmini Devi who lives in a small hut in Gaigotha Village in Wada Taluka of Palghar District in Maharashtra State. She belongs to the Warli tribe. Her husband is a marginal farmer who cultivates on two acres of land. They have two children, one daughter aged 10 years and a son aged 6 years. Both the children walk to school and back daily (located about 3 miles away).

When cultivation season is over, (or if the rice crop is damaged due to heavy rains or pests) they face many hardships. A section of the crop is kept for their personal use, for the year. Tur Dal (lentil) is also grown in one small area, again for personal use. In a small backyard, they grow vegetables like chillies, cucumber and bitter gourd (karela).

During the off-season, both husband and wife go to the brick kilns (about 7 miles away) to do piece-rate work (That is, they get paid for each brick that they make.) While the men earn Rs. 300 per day, the women earn Rs. 150-200. Rukmini Devi stated that they prefer to walk the 7 miles both ways because the bus fare is Rs. 35/- per head one way. They cannot afford it.

- (1) **Identify any three problems that the family of Rukmini Devi has to face.**
- (2) **Point out and discuss briefly, gender discrimination in this setting.**

(2)

Education, since the coming of the British to India has been secular in content. By this we mean, the content of education did not include the study of sacred texts. Schools were open for all - to learn and climb the ladder of vertical mobility. The study of English language as well as the opportunity to study in the English medium was available.

It is true that several Indians from certain social and economic strata were the first to access an English education. Many of them later constituted the intelligentsia of our society. We refer to many of them as social reformers, such as Raja Rammohan Roy, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, Pandita Ramabai, Maharshi Dhondo Keshav Karve. They worked for religious, social and educational reform in Indian society.

Such visionaries of society continue even in the post-Independence era, to the present time.

Educational opportunities have grown by leaps and bounds in the last 73 years since Independence. One questions if the educated have merely acquired education or if the education has helped citizens become gainfully employed and more importantly, enlightened enough to transform society at the micro level.

It is necessary for the government to consider the interests of all sections of society. Each citizen can play a dynamic role in the development of all people in our society.

(3)

Indian society is a melting pot of cultures. The history of Indian society gives enough evidence of the process of accommodation. From early times migrants integrated into Indian society and influenced its culture. Our historical past is testimony to this fact of cultural diffusion.

Today, we describe our society as a composite whole that includes tribal, rural and urban communities. The way of life in these segments have their unique characteristics. However, is it also an observation that no one segment or community can be seen in its “pure” state. On the one hand there is interdependence between communities and on the other this would imply a certain extent of loss of cultural elements such as language, beliefs, customary practices etc. Have we not seen how, for example, Warli or Madhubani Art has made it to T-shirts and wall hangings in many urban households? Also, how technology has reached the remotest corners of our country?

A question that may cross your mind may be, ‘Is there anything such as ‘pure’ culture? What constitutes “Indian culture”? ‘Can cultural extremism be valuable in the present world? These questions are valid as they set us thinking. Perhaps there is no single “answer”?

(4)

The causes of disharmony and strife are several-fold. Resistance to social change is one among many. Problems of contemporary Indian society include domestic violence, sexual abuse, child rights, problems of senior citizens, migrants, ethnocentrism, religious fundamentalism, linguistic fanaticism, environmental degradation, substance abuse and addiction to devices, mob lynching and so on.

Given the varied types of social problems and their changing nature, there emerges a need to examine them in a scientific manner. The applicability of Sociology in its widest sense, includes the exploration of various themes that cut across fields such as Masculinity Studies, Minority Studies, Film and Media Studies, Sociology of Sports, Environmental Sociology, Forensic Sociology, Gerontology, Sociology of Music, Medical Sociology, Marketing Sociology and so on.

Various government departments and voluntary organisations include sociologists on their panels to help steer policies and programmes. As Sociology is a people-centered discipline, it tends to create awareness and dialogue regarding human relationships. This is valuable asset in governance and conflict resolution.

(5)

Given below is a make-believe scenario.

Yogini and Yogita are twins of the Patkar family who live in a small room measuring 225 sq. ft. in a small town. Yogini is brilliant in studies and Kabbadi. Yogita is an outstanding cricketer who represents the Western India region; she also was a topper in the State-level Marathi language Competition.

Their parents come from a small village in Marathwada; they were farmers. For the sake of their daughters, they shifted to a small town to facilitate their children's further education and sports training.

Their relatives and others in their village have heard of the Patkar girl's' success and are also encouraged to send their children to big cities with the hope that they too will become successful and famous one day.

Today, if one visits the village you will notice that in many homes, there are only the elderly folk. The youth seem to have migrated to better their prospects. Can you imagine the effect of such migration on the local village community?

(6)

Social movements arise generally from needs felt by one or more members of any given society. Through social interactions these needs and concerns are communicated to many more persons. A network of people who share these concerns become the driving force for change in that particular society. Movements are usually guided by some underlying philosophies and goals. Indeed, several movements are associated with a founder or a core group. It can take several years, or even decades for a social movement to become very wide and expansive, across vast geographical territories.

Social movements such as the Social Reform Movement, Trade Union Movement, Tribal Movement, Dalit Movement, Women's Movement, Chipko Movement, LGBT Movement, Civil Rights Movement, Rationalist Movement and so many more have emerged and grown.

As a social movement gains momentum, greater awareness is created in society. In fact, the study of several movements have found their way into the academic curriculum as well as research. For example, courses on Labour Studies, Gender Studies, Minorities' Studies and Environmental Studies.

Social movements can stimulate critical thinking about social issues in the wider society of which we are a part. Some of these concerns lead to the passing of legislations. Every era or generation has its share of concerns from which may emerge new social movements.

(7)

Can human societies be flawless? What is considered as acceptable, desirable, valuable varies from time to time, place to place, and in different contexts.

There is sometimes a tendency to encourage excessive ethnocentric attitudes about one's culture or group to which one belongs. Ethnocentrism in its extreme form is an obstacle to social harmony. For the sake of social solidarity, respect of other cultures, self-criticism, critical appraisal, reflection and introspection is necessary. This may help to develop a pluralist way of appreciating the diversities within which we live. The life stories of people are a useful means to understand underlying feelings, beliefs, threats and so on.

Civil society can play a part in this process to eliminate or minimise factors that hinder progress, or those which divides us.

(8)

All of you have been studying Sociology for over a year. Sociology is the scientific study of human social behaviour. However it is not the only discipline that studies human behaviour. The study of human behaviour is of interest to historians, psychologists, sociologists, economists, political scientists etc. Surely, this question may have crossed your mind, or your family or friends might have asked you - 'What is the use of studying Sociology? What work will you do with a degree in Sociology? Perhaps you too have wondered about the same.

As a start you could surely consider a career in teaching. However you must be prepared to read extensively, be creative and develop a learner-centric personality. Indeed, you would have to be passionate about teaching and interacting with learners. For some, a career in research is another possibility, though that route is a long journey to attain the status of 'sociologist'. Many sociology students and others too, choose to offer Sociology as their subject of special study for Civil Service Examinations like UPSC (Central Services) and MPSC (in Maharashtra). To clear these highly competitive examinations, it is necessary to read widely and be well aware about the totality of Indian society - it's past, present; goals and plans for the future.

Then of course, there are many allied occupations where a degree in Sociology can provide insights that are useful to take on other people-oriented professions such as Policy and Programme Development, Social Work with specialization in Family and Child Welfare, Community Development, Medical and Psychiatric Social Work, School Social Work etc.

The fact remains: it is not merely an obtaining degree in sociology that matters today, but the skill sets, sensitivity and personality that you develop; your ability to modify and adapt to new needs and challenging situations of even daily living. Also, your ability to have a humanistic perspective whether dealing with research or creating empowerment programmes, or programmes for social change.

(9)

Read the make-believe speech made by a representative of the Governing Body to its Executive Committee meeting, in a well-known international firm located in Pune.

“Good morning. The Board of Directors has asked me to communicate with you all a policy decision that has been taken by the higher management. Two policies have been taken by our company. One, there shall be a confidential, two-way appraisal of all employees from the coming financial year. Every employee will be assessed by one’s immediate senior, one’s team members and by oneself through self-appraisal. Juniors will also assess the seniors to whom they report. There are specific criteria on which assessment will take place. A second policy decision is for the company to make every effort to ‘Go Green’ in keeping with the international commitment towards a cleaner and greener environment. You may please share this decision to members of your respective departments today, through our e-portal systems. Feedback from all employees are welcome but they must be made within a week from today, to the Human Resource Department, via the e-portal.”

(10)

Indian films have a history of their emergence, growth and development. There were the days of silent films where viewers interpreted visuals on screen and constructed their own understanding of what the films may have tried to communicate. Then came the days of audio-visual films, black and white films and later, colour films.

People who can afford to watch films at theatres and those who can do so on their television screens at home are entertained by the stories that films tell us. There are all kinds of ideas, ideologies, tragedies, themes and values that films communicate. Today one can watch films on the internet on one’s mobile phones. Sometimes the explicit and implicit messages are received by viewers, but they can also be lost on them.

Besides actors’ abilities to ‘play varied roles or characters, there are a whole lot of persons involved with the production process as well as its marketing. This may include the film director, screenplay writers, designers, sound engineers, make-up artists and stylists, casting experts, musicians and so on.

Fields like Visual Sociology, Sociology of Mass Communication, and Marketing Sociology have a role to play in the study of these varied dimensions. Films as a source of knowledge play multiple roles even today. The story lines and types of films are ever increasing. Films are not limited to nor bound by standard themes, love stories or gender stereotyping. Films can cause much upheaval on the one hand and generate much interest on the other. Regional films and international films have added to the list of viewing possibilities and multiple interests.

(11)

How does one tackle social problems? How do societies deal with the social problems that they have to confront? Why do social problems arise? These are some questions that learners of Sociology need to address.

Societies have culture; both of these are created by people, cumulatively, through the network of relationships over thousands of years. Every society has its normative system – customs, folkways, fashions, mores, taboos, fads, laws. Social norms are guidelines for human behaviour. They tell us what is expected of us and at the same time, what to expect from others.

Are these expectations permanent and unchanging? When can they change? Who changes them? Why must they change? Again, these are questions that one might ask. Social problems can arise when the expectations are not communicated effectively, or when individuals or groups choose to disagree with the expectation. This can lead to situations of conflict – not just ideological but also conflict that leads to hurting others' sentiments, abuse, violence, injustice, upheavals, normlessness, and even war.

(12)

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a Government of India programme that makes education for children between the ages 6-14 free and compulsory. This programme was pioneered by the former Indian Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee in 1993-94. It became totally operational since 2000-2001. This programme made education a Fundamental Right.

Along with this, the Government of India also launched the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) on 15th August 1995. From here emerged the concept of free 'Midday Meal' for children going to schools which were managed by local bodies like Gram Panchayats and Municipal Corporations. The Midday Meal is mandatory. It is taken for granted that the children should be given good, nutritious food on a daily basis. A lot of organisation goes into the cooking and delivering of these meals to the schools on time.

Universal Education goes hand in hand with Nutrition. Children of the village and municipal schools look forward to this meal. For several of them it is perhaps the main meal of the day.

