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FEATURES OF CASTE SYSTEM

1. There was a segmental division of society in which they were classified in several units called as caste. The term caste used to present race or breed of a person. There have been 2800 different castes found in India and they have their own set of norms and beliefs.
2. Hierarchy system was evolved in those times. There has been the degree of highness and lowness amongst people.
3. Endogamy can be seen as a vital feature of the caste system. Endogamy is practicing marriage function in the same caste and it has been followed in India till now up to maximum extent. For example, even if anyone wishes to marry someone of other caste and class, he/she can face a powerful opposition and sometimes it can lead to Honor Killing. Honor killing is practicing death of people in love with different castes. In UP a couple was killed brutally just to satisfy caste ego which does not permit people to marry someone from other castes.
4. Hereditary Status and Hereditary occupation are some of the basic features which can be called as an ascribed status of a person. It clearly means that caste is not something which is achieved by a man on the basis of merit. Indeed it is clearly a place which cannot be altered or switched. For example, a person born in Shudra category will do chores like cleaning toilets till his/her death. Likewise, a Brahmin's son was bound to follow the priest culture; he was not allowed to go to his career choices.
5. One of the most negative influences of the Caste system is also counted in its feature that is Food and Drinks indifference attitude by upper-class people. For example, if a Shudra prepared food and a Brahmin arrived at a temple where he is hungry. He will die of hunger but will not touch the food prepared by the lower class people. Such was the influence of caste practice in India. They were considered some garbage of society whose presence can be infectious to other people of society.
6. Cultural Difference lingered in every caste and this cultural difference led to some of the major differences. For example in Brahmins, the people do not even touch meat or other non-veg materials but in other cases, people were interested in eating meats which acted as a barrier to cultural practice in different castes.
7. Social segregation was also a deciding factor. It differentiated people on the basis of their economic status. For example, poor people were obliged to stay away from some of the richest people. For example, there was a different path for lower caste people; it was a general practice to not even have a tinge of a shadow of lower caste people.
8. Ascribed status was one of the most fundamental characteristics of a caste system. The caste of a person was assigned to him and this will not change no matter he/she achieves any other things in life or not.

functions of the caste system

A society which had been trapped in the claws of stratification experienced advantages and disadvantages both at the same time. The advantage was that due to caste system peculiarity, Hindu religion saved itself from falling into the trap of changing its religion. It was a popular practice in which other religions forced people of different to change their religion. The beliefs, ideas, knowledge and skills transfer took place for generations in a caste.

We have seen the impact of the caste system in ancient times but the dysfunction of caste system was that it made many people of lower caste suffer a lot. Today's world is full of technology and new ideation, thus dysfunction of the caste system and its practice is highly demotivated and many sociologists agreed that it is the root of the evil destruction of any society.

The functions of caste system were broadly affecting three major aspects of social life which is considered below:-

1. Effect on Individual's life
2. Effect on community or society
3. Effect on Social life

The effects should be cover in a detail view to know how and where it affected the society as a whole or on an individual level.

EFFECT ON INDIVIDUAL LIFE

It is a proven fact that a person caste comes under ascribed status. His caste had decided from the point he enters this world and sticks around till its death. Due to different castes, there are different ways of adaptation. Thus a person caste plays an important role in describing his habits, hobbies, interests, and occupation. For example, a Brahmin boy has seen his family members getting a bath at an early hour to perform some rituals, thus he also set this habit in his behavior. This set the pattern of social behavior of a human being.

Moreover, he knows the pattern of occupation he will be going to involve, thus he follows and observe the details regarding his occupation from a tender age.

Endogamy has been practiced from old times, thus a person knows that his/her partner will be belonging to his/her caste only. Thus, on one hand, it gave a tension free life of not thinking about this function of life but on the other hand, it withdrew the rights of a person to choose a person of his/her choice.

EFFECT ON COMMUNITIES

Communities comprised of many people of the same caste making them connected by an entity. Religion is one of the prime reasons of division and caste makes it's an equivalent factor to divide. Caste makes it possible to keep any religious ideas and beliefs intact. For example, a man practicing azaan in mosque is driven by religious aspect, but a man offering coconut in front of god can be of any caste but the priest receiving at the end of God's image should be a Brahmin, this factor is caste driven which is followed till date in many places of India.

EFFECT ON SOCIAL LIFE

Social life follows a set pattern of caste in which people are generally surrounded by people of their caste only. So in social gatherings and meet up caste plays a vital role. For example, when Indian origin castes meet anywhere, there is a tradition to say Namaste, but when castes of foreign meet up, there is generally cheek kiss two times for greeting.

class system definition, meaning, characteristics, examples

Society has always been stratified and the stratification takes place in the order of subgroup or class. The class in which different kind of people is placed according to their occupation, economy, caste and wealth is termed as a class system. This class system is a global phenomenon in which people of the same order are placed in a particular group which makes it different and specifies relation with other subgroups. This system was first believed to be classified majorly because of economic strength but then sociologists claimed that there are other factors too.

A basic characteristic of the Class system was that it was not political or religious defined, unlike the Estate system. More than economy other factors also came into the picture in the 17th century. Many sociologists agreed that the class system is purely maintaining an order of groups in a hierarchical manner keeping its classification based on many factors. Within the time, class system emergence, development, and importance emerged as differently by scholars.

Ogburn and Nimkoff explained this system as the union of different people belonging to the same level by any factor, be it caste, wealth or occupation. For example in a school where some of the students belong to age 16 and 17 respectively study and sit in 11th and 12th class respectively due to their age factor. Hence a class system is observed in the above example where people are divided into subgroups.

Father of Conflict Perspective gave another opinion in which he stated that the class system is a relationship between influential people and lower class people in which the former takes the maximum usage of later by any means. Marx claimed that the production rate is in a proportional relation with people in subgroups. More the people have a higher position in the group, more they are accountable for wealth and production rate. For example, a steel company is run by industrialist Naveen Jindal, his position is the highest in the company thus his wealth and production rate is higher than any other employee at any level.

Marxist also studied the pattern of class division and stated that the power lies in the hand of those handful people who can control the production rate. And also there are some people who are a part of production but they are not the controlling factor. Apart from these he also cleared that class system has just modified with passing time, for example, that in the 13th century a peasant who worked day and night to earn some money from the leader of this group is similar to the person working as an employee in any company in the 21st century.

Weber also put his point on the class system that the person who is willing to achieve more and has achieved much than other people gradually becomes the person ruling the class system, whereas the person who lacks behind in the race becomes a commoner. He put this differentiation on the basis of achieved status.

Maclver also put his point on the class system that society will always have a social class that is the society will always be stratified under the notion of high-class people and low-class people.

