



“बेटी बचाओ, बेटी पढ़ाओ”

**JAYOTI VIDYAPEETH WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR**  
**Faculty of Law & Management**

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**Academic Day starts with – August 2023**

- Greeting with saying ‘**Namaste**’ by joining Hands together following by 2-3 Minutes Happy session, Celebrating birthday of any student of respective class and **National Anthem**.

Vedas and Vedic literature declare that there is only ONE SOURCE for the universe and there are infinite manifestations of this ONE SOURCE. However, these infinite manifestations are described in many ways by the wise ones who have realized and experienced this ONE SOURCE. This is the of the well-known mantra “Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti”. For example, hunger is common for all beings; however there are infinite types of food that are used to satisfy hunger. Although there are diverse food types that people use to satisfy hunger but hunger itself is one. Another example is that of a tree. In a tree there are infinite leaves coming out of several branches. All the diverse designs of leaves with several branches together make up a tree.

## **THE FACTORS OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY**

We can discuss the following five factors of unity in diversity of India:

### **1. Geographical and Demographic Factors**

The first striking feature about India is its diversity because of India's *geographical environment* and numerous populations. It is difficult to imagine the vast territory that stretches from north to south and east to west as one continuous territory. It is nearly fourteen times as large as Great Britain and over ten times the size of the entire British Isles. The temperature varies from extreme heat to extreme cold. The temperate, the tropical and the polar climates are found in India. In terms of physical features of the population, there is diversity in appearance, skin colour, eye colour, height and figure.

However, geography seems to have played an important role in engendering Indian unity and the sense of Indianans. Shut off from the rest of Asia by the inaccessible barriers of the mighty Himalayas and with the seas and the ocean on all other sides, India is clearly marked out to be a Geographical entity. Not only are her territories thus sharply demarcated from the rest of the world, but nature has generously placed within her boundaries all resources that human beings need for developing a rich and creative life. Thus, Indian geography has facilitated unity and continuity of her history as a country. Attempts either to divide the country or to expand it beyond its natural frontiers have mostly failed.

The vastness of the land influenced the mind of Indians in two ways. The great variety in landscape, climate and conditions of life prepared in the mind a readiness to accept differences. Besides, the vast spaces offered room for slow infiltration by newcomers and allowed each locality unhampered scope of development along its own lines. The geographical unity of the country has had its effects on the economic life of the people. The size of the country and quality

of the land permitted gradual increase in population and expansion of cultivation. The fact that India has continually developed and maintained an agricultural economy for almost four or five thousand years explains in part the depth and tenacity of her culture and traditions. The primacy of agricultural economy led to the development of common characteristics and a common outlook. The geographical unity of India is easily missed in her vastness and variety. A permanent and characteristically Indian expression of unity is found in the network of shrines and sacred places spread throughout the country. The visit to holy places as an imperative religious duty has made travelling a habit for Indians. Similarly, the multitude of monuments associated with different religious communities which have adorned the land influence the geographical consciousness of a large number of people.

## **2. Religious Factors**

India is a multi-religious country. There are seven major religious groups in India according to 1991 census. The Hindus constitute the majority of Indian population; about 82 percent. The Muslims constitute the second largest religious group (about 12.12 per cent). The Christians (about 2.34 per cent), the Sikhs (about 1.94 per cent), the Buddhists (about 0.76 percent), the Jains (about 0.40 per cent) and others the Jews, the Zoroastrians or Parsis and the Animists (about 0.44 per cent) may not be numerically big, but their contribution to India is as significant as the other bigger groups. Religion is both a factor of unity and diversity in Indian society. All religious groups are differentiated internally. Caste or caste like status groups are found in Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Sikhism. Within a homogeneous society, religion plays a highly integrative role but by the same token in a multi-religious society religion can become an issue of contention and lead to conflicts.

Traditionally, different religious groups have lived in India in more or less peaceful coexistence. In recent years, however, harmony between religious

groups, which in India we refer to as communal harmony, has been under strain. There are two major aspects to any religion, the spiritual and the temporal. The spiritual aspect of religion is quite similar in all religions. In every religion an emphasis is placed on the moral conduct and transcendence of the selfish ego. While this aspect of religion is a matter of personal devotion, the temporal aspect of religion is always related with the group identity and solidarity is maintained by religious rituals and community's beliefs. At the temporal level, different religious groups differ from each other.

In India, there has not been only a great degree of religious tolerance among the different religious communities, but some religious places have acquired a character and popularity that goes beyond a single religious community. Similarly, some religious festivals are celebrated, at least in a limited way, by many religious communities. Places like Varanasi, Ujjain, Amritsar,

Mathura, Bodhgaya, Vaishno Devi, Tirupati and Ajmer Sharif are some such religious centers. For instance, a large number of Hindus also visit Ajmer Sharif, a Muslim pilgrimage place. Also, the economy of these religious centers often involves shopkeepers and service providers from other religions.

### **3. Cultural Factors**

The story of Indian culture is one of continuity, synthesis and enrichment. Culture is also a source of unity as well as diversity like religion. Powerful kingdoms and empires such as the Mauryas and the Guptas did not aggressively intervene in social and cultural matters; leaving much diversity intact. Although Islam was the politically dominant religion in large parts of the country for several centuries it did not absorb Hinduism, or disturb the Hindu social structure.

Nor did Hinduism, which was demographically and otherwise dominant, seek to eliminate the beliefs and practices, characteristic of other religions. Various

beliefs and practices are pursued and maintained by Hindus, Muslims and Christians alike. Over the time Indian society has come to be divided into innumerable tribes, castes, sub-castes, clans, sects and communities each of which seek to maintain their own style of life and code of conduct. Many sociologists have recorded in detail the immense variety in the habits, practices and customs of the people in different geographical regions. The distribution of material traits such as dress, habitation, arts and crafts, endless variety of food and their preparation makes India a living example of regional diversity.

The role played by Indian religion, philosophy, art and literature in bringing about unity is conspicuous. Social institutions like the caste system and the joint family, which are found throughout the length and breadth of the country, are typically Indian. The celebration of festivals is observed all over India in much the same manner. Likewise, similarities in art and culture engraved on the temple and palace walls all over India have generated the feeling of oneness. In spite of their distinctiveness the coexistence of cultures is celebrated.

#### **4. Political Factors**

It is generally believed that India's continuity as a civilization was social and cultural rather than political. Order and stability were maintained not by means of the state but through culture and society. The vastness of the country's extreme diversity of physical features, endless variety of races, castes, creeds and languages and dialects have made it difficult to establish an all-Indian empire. This also accounts for the fact that political unity is not the normal characteristic of ancient and medieval Indian history. However, the idea of bringing the whole country under one central authority has always been on the minds of great kings and statesmen of India. It was with this purpose that the kings of ancient India proclaimed the idea of 'Chakravarti'. Kings like Chandragupta Maurya, Ashoka, Samudragupta and Harshvardhana had put this idea into practice. The socio-political contributions of some Muslim rulers such

as Akbar and Jehangir were also highly commendable. Akbar's Din-e-elahi and Jehangir's emphasis on justice deserve special mention in this regard.

After the independence India was united politically and administratively but it was already divided between India and Pakistan. After the independence the unity of India is expressed in the institution of the nation. It is the product of the freedom movement as well as the constitutional legacy of the British rule. There is political and administrative unity today but there are different political parties and diverse political ideologies. Therefore, politics is both a factor of unity and diversity

## **5. Linguistic Factors**

India is a multilingual country. Language is another source of cultural diversity as well as unity. It contributes to collective identities and even to conflicts. Eighteen languages are recognized by Indian Constitution. All major languages have regional and dialectical variations, for example, Hindi has Awadhi, Brij, Bhojpuri, Magadhi, Bundeli, Pahari, Malwi and several other dialects. The situation is further complicated since 179 languages and 544 dialects are recognized in India.

These languages and dialects are divided into three linguistic families— Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Mundari. Indo-Aryan family of languages includes Sanskrit and other North Indian languages such as Hindi, Bengali, Oriya, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu, etc. and their dialects. The Dravidian family of languages includes Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam. The Mundari group of languages and dialects are found among the tribal communities of India.

Dravidian languages also have a number of Sanskrit words today. Persian, Arabic and English words too have become part of the Indian languages and dialects today. The spirit of accommodation, which united different ethnic groups into one social system, also expresses itself in the literatures of India.

Language is also a factor of diversity and separatism. Linguistic separatism has a strong emotional appeal. Political mobilizations and conflicts have arisen between different linguistic groups. However, it is important to note that neither political mobilization, nor linguistic antagonism flows naturally out of linguistic diversities. These political mobilizations and antagonisms are the product of modern historical circumstances. After independence linguistic problems of India were centred around issues:

1. The official languages issue,
2. The demands for the linguistic reorganization of the provinces of India whose boundaries during the British rule did not conform to linguistic division; and

The status of minority languages within reorganized states. After many deliberations, Hindi was made the official language of India but English was retained at least for a transition period. Earlier, this transition period was supposed to last for fifteen years. In 1965, English was given the status of an “associate additional official language” of the union and of inter-provincial communication. The major regional languages are used in their own provinces and recognized as other “national” languages through their incorporation into the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. Hindi is the official language of the country but the “associate additional official language” English has retained its power, status and glamour as well. Race and Ethnic Within sociology, the terms race, ethnicity, minority, and *dominant group* all have very specific and different meanings. To understand the sociological perspective on race and ethnicity, it is important to understand the meanings of these concepts.

An ethnic group is a social category of people who share a common culture, such as a common language, a common religion, or common norms, customs, practices, and history. Ethnic groups have a consciousness of their common cultural bond. An ethnic group does not exist simply because of the common

national or cultural origins of the group, however. They develop because of their unique historical and social experiences, which become the basis for the group's ethnic identity. For example, prior to immigration to the United States, Italians did not think of themselves as a distinct group with common interests and experiences. However, the process of immigration and the experiences they faced as a group in the United States, including discrimination, created a new identity for the group. Some examples of ethnic groups include Italian Americans, Polish Americans, Mexican Americans, Arab Americans, and Irish Americans. Ethnic groups are also found in other societies, such as the Pashtuns in Afghanistan or the Shiites in Iraq, whose ethnicity is based on religious differences.

A minority group is any distinct group in society that shares common group characteristics and is forced to occupy low status in society because of prejudice and discrimination. A group may be classified as a minority on the basis of ethnicity, race, sexual preference, age, or class status. It is important to note that a minority group is not necessarily the minority in terms of numbers, but it is a group that holds low status in relation to other groups in society (regardless of the size). The group that assigns a racial or ethnic group to subordinate status in society is called the dominant group.

### **The Main Features of Indian societies as a Caste-stratified Society are:**

Social Stratification in India has been basically a caste-based social stratification. The Indian society stands organized on the foundations of the caste-system. It involves the presence of social relations based upon a system characterized by several castes. The Indian society is usually described as a caste-based society.

While defining caste in the context of Indian social system, Ketkar has written, "A caste group is a group having two characteristics: i) Member is confined to those who are born of members and includes all persons so born, and (ii) The



members are forbidden by an inexorable, social law to many outside the group.

M. N. Srinivas writes, “Caste in India is a hereditary group having a traditional association within occupation and a particular position in the local hierarchy of castes. Relations between castes are governed among other things by concept of pollution or purity and generally, maximum commensality occurs within the caste. However, each caste is in itself stratified into sub-caste. A complex hierarchy of castes characterizes Indian social system.

### **1. Segmental Division of Society:**

The Indian society stands divided into several castes and the position of each caste is based on traditional importance. The position of each individual is related to the position of his caste group and right at the time of his birth he becomes a member of either a high caste or a lowcaste.

Each caste group has a definite and determinate set of rules in respect of relation with other castes. Usually inter-caste marriages are prohibited and no one can ever get out of his caste.

### **2. Social and Religious Hierarchy:**

Each caste group stands alone as a particular social group. For example, several castes are considered to be Brahmin castes while several others are considered to be Kashtriya castes.

Some castes are considered to be higher castes while others are considered to be lower castes. All the castes are bound by a well defined system of social and religious functions and relations. Social and religious hierarchy runs along the caste hierarchy.

### **3. Restrictions of Food-sharing and Social-intercourse:**

The members of each social group are involved in exchange of relations among themselves. The higher class always tries to secure the formal purity of his

caste. Each caste has its own caste culture which defines the food sharing and social intercourse rules which are to be followed by the members of the caste.

#### **4. Endogamy System:**

Each person gets placed in a particular caste at the time of his birth and he remains a member of his caste group throughout his life. Each member can marry persons belonging to his own caste groups. People of a Kshatriya caste can marry only in other Kshatriya castes. Usually no one can marry in his own sub-caste.

#### **5. Caste-based Occupational Groups:**

Traditionally castes in the Indian society have been inseparably associated with several professions. Parental occupation is always considered a good and essential occupation for the new generation. Only the son of a prophet or pundit can perform the functions of a prophet or pundit.

#### **6. Civil and Religious Disabilities:**

Right from ancient times, the member of each class, particularly the members belonging to the lower class have to live with certain disabilities. A system of civil and religious disabilities has been traditionally associated with different caste groups. In ancient India persons belonging to some low castes were even not allowed to enter the cities and they were even not allowed to enter the schools.

Even some people used to be denied the right to study Vedas and other religious scriptures. As such several civil and religious disabilities were part and parcel of the Indian caste system and consequently of the Indian system of social stratification.

The Constitution of India prohibits inequalities and discriminations based upon caste, colour, creed, religion, race, sex, place of birth and any similar factor.

Untouchability is a crime. Equal citizenship, equal rights and equal opportunities for development have been granted to all persons.

However, some Special protections have been given to the persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This has been done to secure social equality in Indian society.

Indian society has been traditionally a caste-based stratified society. In the past, such stratification acted as a source of inequalities and exploitation of members of some castes by the members of the so-called high castes.

Now the system has been changing and the Constitution of India has laid down several laws for securing the objective of social, economic political justice and equality of status and opportunity for all. Caste based rigid social stratification has been now undergoing changes and the role of the caste is getting diluted in the Indian society.