



Social Problems in India

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Abstract

India is the second most populous country of the world and has changing socio-political demographic and morbidity patterns that have been drawing global attention in recent years. The present paper focuses on the historical background of India and social problems in Indian society. A social problem is an issue within the society that makes it difficult for people to achieve their full potential. Poverty, unemployment, unequal opportunity, racism, and malnutrition are examples of social problems.

1. Introduction

Historical background of India:

Historically, India is an ancient country known as Bharatvarsh. Since old times the country has been known by various names such as Aryavarta, Bharat, Hindustan, and currently it is known as India. According to the constitution of India, the country is known as Bharat or India. India is surrounded by the sea on three sides (Arabian Sea lies to its south west, the bay of Bengal to its south east and the Indian ocean to its south), separated from the rest of Asia by lofty mountain chain. Hence, it has become an independent entity called the Indian sub- continent. This sub-continent consists of the countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan includes Sri-Lanka and island narrowly separated by the Palk Strait. India alone covers about three fourths of the area of this sub-continent and has common frontier with each one of them. She along with her neighbours forms a clearly identifiable geographical unit. Inside, India is the seventh largest country in the world. It is a vast country characterised by great diversity in its physical feature. Therefore, it is necessary to acquire some knowledge about principle physical features.

India lies wholly in the northern hemisphere. The Indian mainland extends between 8° 4' North to 36° 6' North Latitudes and from 68° 7' East to 97° 25' East longitudes. Thus the

latitudinal and longitudinal extent of India is of about 29 degree. It measures 3.214 km from north to south and 2.933 km from east to west. The northernmost point of the Indian mainland in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the southernmost point is Kanyakumari in Tamilnadu. However, the southernmost point of the country as a whole lies further south in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It is now called the Indira point. It is situated at 6° 30', north latitude. The western most point of the India lies in Gujarat and the eastern most in Arunachal Pradesh.

2. Objectives

To highlight the impact of social problems on Indian society.

To analyze the causes of social problems in India.

3. Social Problems

A social problem is an issue within the society that makes it difficult for people to achieve their full potential. Poverty, unemployment, unequal opportunity, racism, and malnutrition are examples of social problems. So are substandard housing, employment discrimination, and child abuse and neglect. Crime and substance abuse are also examples of social problems. Not only do social problems affect many people directly, but they also affect all of us indirectly. The drug-abusing driver becomes the potential traffic accident that doesn't choose its victims by race, color, or creed but does so randomly. The child of abusive parents all too often becomes the victim or



perpetrator of family violence as an adult. Social problems tend to develop when we become neglectful and fail to see that serious problems are developing.

Many scholars have tried to define social problem but it is difficult to arrive at a commonly accepted definition. According to Fuller and Myers, a social problem is “a condition which is defined by a considerable number of persons as a deviation from some social norms which they cherish”. Similarly, Merton and Nisbet define social problem as “a way of behaviour that is regarded by a substantial part of society as being in violation of one or more generally accepted or approved norms”.

Social problems can also be divided into following types in relation to their causative factors:

- 1) Social problems due to social factors.
- 2) Social problems due to cultural factors.
- 3) Social problems due to economic factors.
- 4) Social problems due to political and legal factors.
- 5) Social problems due to ecological factors.

3.1 Gender Discrimination

Across Indian societies, women continue to struggle for gender equality and women’s rights issues. Particularly, Widows in India are facing a lot of problems and hardships in the family and society because of traditional norms, cultural practices and beliefs in the society. In India females are discriminated in various fields like health, education and jobs. The girls carry the liability of dowry on their head, and they have to leave their parents home after marriage. Besides, in order to safeguard their old age parents prefer to have male offspring. Many female babies are aborted, abandoned, deliberately neglected and underfed simply as they are girls. This is worst in the state of Rajasthan. But now there is a great change in this direction. In some states like Haryana where girl child ratio is very low, the government has taken out many schemes to promote education of girls. Reservation of jobs for women and even six months maternity leave is provided to them besides many others.

3.2 Dowry System

The practice of dowry is one of the worst social practices that has affected our culture. In India, the life of a woman changes a lot after marriage. She leaves her parents’ house after marriage and starts living with the groom’s family. Since childhood, she is socialized into thinking that she has to take up the food habits, dress, rituals etc of the new family. So, happily or grudgingly, she evolves her identity according to the demands of the groom’s family and the groom. A hefty sum of money is spent on her dowry. At times, the demand from the groom’s family continues even after marriage. When the bride’s family fails to satisfy their demands, the bride is tortured. Domestic violence is high in Indian homes. There is dowry deaths’ occurring every now and then. It has been pointed out that it is always the bride who is dying and not the women in the groom’s side when they are working in the kitchen. Many young brides die in the kitchen due to stove-burst, where the groom’s sides mask it as an accident.

3.3 Drinking and Smoking

Drinking or intake of liquor /alcohol is a very serious problem of the society. The easiest pastime is to drink and forget worries, frustrations, even though temporarily. Its addiction creates serious consequences. Even with meagre earnings, drunkards buy liquor keeping the family needs at stake. If they cannot afford the standard variety, which is expensive, they go for the cheap variety. At times they drink even the poisonous things. After drinking, they lose their senses. Sometimes it results in death or permanent disability. Most of the time, they ill-treat their wives and children after drinking. Smoking is a habit which is very harmful to health, even more than drinking. Not only does it harm the smokers themselves, but also the people around them who are affected by the smoke in the atmosphere. If we respect the rights of others, then we should not smoke in public places like buses, trains, markets, offices etc. Smoking is a major cause of pollution



and develops deadly diseases like cancer, heart diseases, breathing problems etc

3.4 Communalism

India is a country of different religious faiths. Persons belonging to different communities such as Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Parsees, etc. live in India. The aggressive attitude of one community towards the other creates tension and clashes between two religious communities. Hundreds of people die in communal riots.

3.5 Poverty And Unemployment

India is a large country in area. It is roughly 2.4 percent of the total area of the world. But do you know what percentage of the world's population it has? Well, it is about 16.7%. As per Census 2011, India's population is 121 million. With such a huge population, some economic problems have developed. These are the problems of unemployment, inflation, poverty and price rise. A large section of our population lives under the poverty line. There is a huge unemployment. Inflation and price rise has added to the problem. Unemployment is a situation where an able bodied person, willing to work fails to find a job to earn a living. Chronic unemployment and the consequent poverty are responsible for the erosion of human values. Under the compulsion of poverty, parents do not hesitate even to send their children to the labour market. Millions of children miss their childhood because of this phenomenon. They remain uneducated, and ignorant—which results in their unemployment or under-employment and consequent poverty.

Suggestion:

We work in the organizations that help people with social and emotional problems. I think we're pretty terrific people because we work at demanding jobs with great conviction and dedication, and although we're paid well, nobody gets rich being a social worker. Like most Indian, social workers represent a range of political and religious beliefs. We come from different social, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. We have differences of opinion about how best to help people, and we can be as

stubborn as any group of professionals in our beliefs.

Conclusion:

The paper starts with an introduction to the historical background of India and then attempts to define social problem. Social problems can be due to social, cultural, economic, political, legal, and ecological factors. Systemic factors leading to social problems can be due to social disorganisation or due to the deviant behaviour of the individual. The present paper also learnt about the approaches to study social problems.

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