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MA POLITICAL SCIENCE

MPS 105- SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

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SELF- LEARNING MATERIAL

M.A. POLITICAL SCIENCE

MPS 105

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

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This is the fifth paper of the M.A. first semester in the subject Political Science. The paper explores a general idea about social movement and theories to explain them. It also examines important concepts, providing necessary introductions and explanations. The course is designed with the needs of learners in mind who have been disconnected from traditional learning methods but remain interested in continuing their education. To make the material learner-friendly, we have attempted to recreate the traditional instructor-led experience through features like sticky notes on the 'utility of learning' each topic, 'let's rewind' sections for review, 'let's sum up' chapter summaries, and 'check your progress' quizzes with answers. Model questions are included at the end of each chapter and can be used as assignments. Learners can refer to the 'let's rewind' notes for clarification and are encouraged to consult the provided references for their assignments.

ABOUT THE CHAPTERS:

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The chapter tries to give a basic understanding about social movements including types and characteristics of the same. Attempt was also made to incorporate the connection between social movements and human rights in order to give a broader perspective of the area.

CHAPTER 2: THEORIES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

This chapter explores different theories of social movements. Learners from this chapter will be able to know different dimensions and social movements and reasons behind occurrence of those through the lenses of different theories like resource mobilization, relative deprivation and rational choice.

CHAPTER 3: SOCIAL MOVEMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA

This chapter focuses on social movements in India, describing various movements. For that matter, explanations on peasant movements, labour and trade union movements and tribal movements were made in a lucid manner incorporating various important aspects of those.

CHAPTER 4: NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

Social movements evolve over time. This chapter explores new social movements in India. With the passage of time, the patterns of social movements have undergone changes and hence new types of movements came to the forefront with new goals and interest areas. This chapter deals with this aspect of social movement with reference to ecological movements, women movements and ethnic movements.

This paper aims to equip learners with knowledge about their surroundings and foster critical thinking about social movements.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER STRUCTURE:

Learning Outcome

Utility of Learning the Topic

      1.1 Social Movements: Definitions, Characteristics and Types

      1.2 Social Movements and Distribution of Power in society

      1.3 Social Movements and Human Rights

Let's Sum Up

Further Reading

Answers to Check Your Progress

Model Questions/ Assignment

LEARNING OUTCOME:

After going through this lesson, students will be able to-

- Know the Definitions, Characteristics and Types of Social Movements
- Understand the Social Movements and Distribution of Power in society
- Learn the correlation between Social Movements and Human Rights

UTILITY OF LEARNING THE TOPIC:

Understanding social movements, power distribution, and human rights is essential for fostering informed and engaged citizens. By studying these areas, you will gain the tools to challenge inequalities, promote justice, and participate meaningfully in democratic processes. This knowledge empowers you to become agents of change, capable of critically analyzing societal structures, advocating for marginalized groups, and contributing to a more equitable and just world.

1.1 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: DEFINITION, CHARACTERISTICS AND TYPES

Meaning and Definition:

A social movement is a collective, sustained effort to promote or resist significant societal change. Unlike fleeting crowds or institutionalized groups like trade unions, social movements are characterized by spontaneity and a lack of formal structure. They arise from shared grievances or aspirations, often challenging existing power structures.

The International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (1972) defines a social movement as a variety of collective attempts to bring about change. The attempts may be to bring about change in certain social institutions and to create an entirely new social order. Or the attempts may represent a socially shared demand for change in some aspects of the social order. Turner and Kilhan define a social movement as a "collectivity which acts with some continuity to promote or resist change in the society or group of which it is a part" (cited by McLaughlen 1969: 27). Toch (1965) emphasizes that a social movement is an effort by a large number of people to solve collectively a problem they feel they share in common.

Key features of social movements include:

- **Collective Action**

Social movements are inherently collective endeavors. They involve groups of people, often large in number, working together towards a shared goal. This collective action is essential for generating the necessary force and visibility to bring about change. It also fosters a sense of solidarity and shared purpose among participants.

- **Sustained Effort**

Unlike spontaneous gatherings or short-lived protests, social movements are characterized by their endurance. They require sustained effort over an extended period. This persistence is crucial for maintaining momentum, overcoming obstacles, and achieving long-term goals. It also demonstrates the deep-rooted nature of the issues addressed by the movement.

- **Goal-Oriented**

Social movements are purposeful. They are driven by a specific aim or set of objectives. These goals can range from broad-based social change to more focused demands for policy reforms or institutional changes. A clear articulation of goals helps to unify participants and provide direction for the movement's activities.

- **Spontaneity**

While social movements often have structured elements, they also exhibit a degree of spontaneity. They are not rigidly controlled or hierarchical organizations. This flexibility allows for adaptability, creativity, and innovation in response to changing circumstances. It also enables a wider range of people to participate and contribute to the movement's goals.

It's important to note that social movements can be both progressive and regressive. While some strive for positive social change, others may seek to maintain or reinforce oppressive systems.

Ultimately, social movements are dynamic forces that shape society, reflecting the collective aspirations and struggles of people for a better future.

EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: SOME CONCRETE INSTANCES

We have so far attempted a definition of social movements. This should help us understand what social movements are and how they differ from other movements. However the discussion so far may appear somewhat abstract. Till now we only know some features of social movements. But what in concrete terms are social movements? Social movements are diverse and can address various societal issues. Here are some concrete examples:

Social Movements for Upward Mobility

- **Sanskritization:** This involves groups adopting the customs and practices of higher castes to elevate their social status. The Rajbanshi community's efforts to claim Kshatriya identity is a classic example.

- **Dalit Movements:** These movements aim to challenge caste-based discrimination and uplift the marginalized Dalit community.

Political and Social Protest Movements

- **Naxalite Movement:** Initially a rural-based armed struggle against perceived exploitation, it later evolved into a broader political movement.
- **Civil Rights Movement:** A struggle against racial segregation and discrimination, particularly in the United States.
- **Anti-Apartheid Movement:** A campaign to end racial segregation in South Africa.

Cultural and Identity-Based Movements

- **New Cinema or Parallel Cinema:** A movement in Indian film that focused on realism and social issues.
- **Feminist Movement:** Advocates for gender equality and women's rights.
- **Indigenous Rights Movements:** Fight for the preservation of indigenous cultures, land rights, and self-determination.

Religious and Reform Movements

- **SNDP Movement:** A social reform movement in Kerala focused on the upliftment of the Izhava community.
- **Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj:** Reform movements within Hinduism aimed at social and religious reforms.

These examples demonstrate the wide range of issues addressed by social movements and their potential to bring about significant societal change. They often challenge existing power structures and inequalities, promoting social justice and equality.

Note: It's essential to remember that social movements are dynamic and can evolve over time, leading to complex and multifaceted outcomes.

LIFE CYCLE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social movements typically progress through several stages:

- **Emergence**

Social movements often arise in response to perceived injustices or social problems. A sense of collective discontent and shared grievances emerges among a population. This initial phase involves the development of a shared consciousness and the identification of common enemies or obstacles.

- **Consolidation**

During this stage, the movement begins to organize and define its goals. Leaders emerge, and networks of activists are formed. Protest activities and public demonstrations may occur to draw attention to the movement's cause. The movement's ideology and core values solidify.

- **Institutionalization**

As the movement grows, it may become more formalized with a structured hierarchy and bureaucracy. It may establish formal organizations, develop strategies for long-term sustainability, and potentially incorporate into mainstream political processes. This stage often involves a shift from radical to more moderate goals.

- **Decline**

Social movements may experience decline due to various factors, including achieving their goals, internal conflicts, co-optation by mainstream institutions, or external repression. Some movements may undergo revitalization or transformation, while others may dissipate entirely.

Key Impacts of Social Movements

Regardless of their trajectory, social movements play a significant role in shaping society:

- **Social Change:** They drive shifts in social norms, values, and institutions.
- **Accelerated Change:** Movements can rapidly mobilize public opinion and pressure for reforms.

- **Widespread Influence:** They impact various aspects of life, including politics, culture, and morality.

While not all movements follow these stages precisely, this framework provides a useful lens for understanding their dynamics and evolution.

Note: The specific stages and outcomes of social movements can vary widely based on factors such as the nature of the issues, the political context, and the strategies employed by the movement.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

By far the most popular and currently widely used classification of themes of movements in types, are those of old and new social movements. The first refers to the conventional 'old' themes of peasant, tribe and industrial worker and other movements. The second orientation however, reveals the emergence of new types of movements such as, for example, those on the issues of identity, environment and collective mobilizations of people on the questions relating to gender and social justice etc.; Sometimes these two themes tend to overlap upon each other, blurring the line of their mutual separation. Some characteristics of these movements can be cited as below-

Old Social Movements

- **Class-based:** Primarily rooted in economic inequalities and the conflict between social classes (bourgeoisie vs. proletariat).
- **Ideological:** Often grounded in Marxist or socialist ideologies focused on revolution and overthrowing the existing system.
- **Clear adversaries:** Easily identifiable opponents, such as landlords or industrialists.
- **Localized:** Primarily focused on specific geographic areas and local issues.
- **Mass-based:** Often involving large numbers of people and aiming for widespread mobilization.

New Social Movements

- **Identity-based:** Focused on issues related to identity, culture, and quality of life, rather than solely economic concerns.
- **Post-materialist:** Emphasize values beyond material wealth, such as environmental protection, human rights, and self-expression.
- **Diffuse adversaries:** Opponents are often abstract entities like the state or corporations.
- **Networked:** Rely on decentralized networks and technology for mobilization.
- **Diverse:** Encompass a wide range of issues and identities, including feminism, environmentalism, and LGBTQ+ rights.

Old and new social movements differ from each other under the following themes-

- **Focus:** Old movements primarily centered on economic redistribution, while new movements address a broader range of social and cultural issues.
- **Ideology:** Old movements often adhered to rigid ideologies, while new movements are more flexible and diverse in their beliefs.
- **Organization:** Old movements tended to be hierarchical and centralized, while new movements are often decentralized and network-based.
- **Goals:** Old movements aimed for radical societal transformation, while new movements focus on specific issues and quality of life improvements.

Essentially, new social movements represent a shift from class-based, economically driven struggles to more diverse, identity-based, and culturally oriented movements.

TYPES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The classification of social movements is not easy as a movement may have a mixed nature or may change completely at different stages during its career. Social movements can be categorized based on their goals, scope, and tactics. Here are some common types:

Based on Scope and Goals

- **Reformative Movements:** Seek to change specific aspects of society without altering its fundamental structure. Examples include civil rights movements and environmental activism.
- **Revolutionary Movements:** Aim to overthrow existing social, political, or economic systems and replace them with new ones. Examples include the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution.
- **Redemptive Movements:** Focus on radical personal change, often based on spiritual or religious beliefs. Examples include the Salvation Army and the Hare Krishna movement.
- **Alternative Movements:** Seek limited changes in specific behaviors, often related to lifestyle or consumption. Examples include the anti-war movement and the organic food movement.

Based on Tactics

- **Protest Movements:** Employ public demonstrations, marches, and civil disobedience to challenge authority.
- **Resistance Movements:** Oppose specific policies or actions of a government or occupying force.
- **Reform Movements:** Work within the existing political system to achieve gradual change through legislation and policy reforms.
- **Revolutionary Movements:** Seek to overthrow the existing political system through violence or armed struggle.

Note: These categories are not mutually exclusive, and many social movements exhibit characteristics of multiple types. Additionally, the nature and goals of social movements can evolve over time.

LET'S REWIND:

Social movements are collective, sustained efforts to promote or resist significant societal change. They arise from shared grievances or aspirations, often challenging existing power structures. Key features include collective action, sustained effort, goal-orientation, and a

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degree of spontaneity. Social movements can be classified based on their goals (reformative, revolutionary, redemptive, and alternative) and tactics (protest, resistance, reform, revolution). They progress through stages of emergence, consolidation, institutionalization, and decline. While diverse in nature and scope, social movements play a crucial role in shaping society by driving social change, mobilizing public opinion, and influencing various aspects of life.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- Give an example of reformative social movement.
- Is individual pursuit a characteristic of social movement?

1.2 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND DISTRIBUTION OF POWER IN SOCIETY

Social movements are universal found in all societies in the past and present. They play an important role in distribution of power among various segments in society. Distribution of power in society means how the government distributes the resources and political power. In most of the society in India, we see uneven distribution of power because of which in every society a handful of people become more powerful than the rest. These people are also powerful because they have more access to government resources in comparison to other citizens.

Social movements are instrumental in redistributing power within society. They often emerge in response to unequal power dynamics, where a minority holds disproportionate control over resources and decision-making. For instance, historical and contemporary examples reveal concentrated power in the hands of landlords, industrialists, or specific social groups.

Social movements challenge these power imbalances by mobilizing marginalized groups to demand a fairer distribution of resources and influence. By organizing and advocating for their rights, these movements can shift power dynamics, leading to policy changes, institutional reforms, and even social revolutions.

Examples of such movements include peasant uprisings against landlords, labor unions demanding workers' rights, and civil rights movements fighting against discrimination. These

movements highlight the potential of collective action to challenge entrenched power structures and create a more equitable society.

The Role of the State in Social Movements

Social movements are a powerful force for change, but they don't operate in a vacuum. The state, as the governing body of a society, plays a crucial role in shaping the landscape for these movements. Here are three key strategies the state employs demonstrating the complex and multifaceted relationship between the state and social movements.

- **Suppression and Repression:** States often employ strategies to control or suppress social movements, ranging from surveillance and intimidation to violent crackdowns.
- **Co-optation:** Governments may attempt to absorb the demands of social movements by incorporating their goals into mainstream politics.
- **Facilitation:** In some cases, states may support or even initiate social movements to achieve their own political objectives.

The state's role in social movements is far from straightforward. It can act as an antagonist, attempting to stifle dissent through force or manipulation. On the other hand, the state can also be a facilitator, providing resources and legitimacy to movements that align with its own goals. Ultimately, the state's approach significantly impacts the success or failure of a social movement, shaping the course of social change.

Counter-Movements and Backlash

Social movements are agents of progress, pushing for change and challenging existing power structures. However, this pursuit of a more equitable world is rarely smooth sailing. Social movements often encounter resistance from those who feel threatened by the proposed changes.

- **Opposition to Change:** Social movements often face resistance from groups or individuals who benefit from the status quo.
- **Framing Contests:** Counter-movements may attempt to discredit or undermine the legitimacy of social movements through media manipulation and public opinion campaigns.

The emergence of counter-movements and backlash is a natural response to social change. Understanding their tactics allows social movements to develop effective counter-strategies. While these opposing forces can create roadblocks, they can also serve to galvanize social movements and highlight the importance of their goals. Ultimately, the interplay between social movements and counter-movements shapes the trajectory of social change, pushing society towards a more just and equitable future.

The Impact of Globalization

The interconnectedness of our world has fundamentally altered the landscape of social movements. Globalization, characterized by increased trade, communication, and cultural exchange, has empowered movements to transcend national borders. Two important aspects of this are-

- **Transnational Networks:** Globalization has facilitated the emergence of transnational social movements, enabling cross-border collaboration and information sharing.

- **Global Power Structures:** The increasing influence of multinational corporations and international organizations raises questions about the distribution of power on a global scale.

Globalization presents a double-edged sword for social movements. On one hand, it fosters collaboration and empowers movements to address global issues. On the other hand, the concentration of power in the hands of multinational corporations and international organizations necessitates new strategies for challenging existing power structures. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for navigating the complex and ever-evolving landscape of social movements in a globalized world.

Social Movements and Democracy

The relationship between social movements and democracy is a complex and symbiotic one. Social movements have historically been a driving force for expanding democratic ideals and practices. They push for greater political participation, challenge the status quo, and hold governments accountable.

- **Deepening Democracy:** Social movements can contribute to democratization by expanding political participation and holding governments accountable.

- **Challenges to Democracy:** However, some social movements may pose challenges to democratic principles if they resort to undemocratic tactics or seek to impose their views on the majority.

Social movements are a cornerstone of a healthy democracy. They act as a check on power, ensuring that the voices of the people are heard. However, it's important to recognize that not all movements operate within the bounds of democratic principles. Finding the balance between promoting social change and upholding democratic values is a crucial challenge for both social movements and democracies themselves. By fostering open dialogue and upholding the principles of inclusion and participation, both can work together to create a more just and equitable society.

The Role of Technology

The digital revolution has fundamentally reshaped the way social movements operate. Technology, with its vast reach and communication capabilities, has become a powerful tool for both activism and control.

- **Mobilization and Awareness:** Social media and other digital tools have empowered social movements by facilitating rapid mobilization, information dissemination, and global networking.
- **Surveillance and Control:** However, technology can also be used by governments and other powerful actors to monitor and suppress social movements.

Technology presents a double-edged sword for social movements. While it offers unprecedented opportunities for mobilization and global solidarity, it also creates new vulnerabilities to monitoring and control. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for navigating the complex digital landscape and ensuring that technology remains a force for positive social change. By harnessing the power of technology responsibly and developing strategies to counter surveillance, social movements can continue to be a driving force for progress in the digital age.

LET'S REWIND:

Social movements are catalysts for redistributing power within societies. They emerge in response to unequal power dynamics, challenging concentrated authority and advocating for marginalized groups. By mobilizing collective action, social movements can shift power balances, leading to policy changes and institutional reforms. Factors influencing this dynamic include state responses (suppression, co-optation, and facilitation), counter-movements, globalization, technology, and their impact on democracy. Ultimately, social movements have the potential to reshape power structures and create a more equitable society.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- What is the primary aim of social movement?
- What causes counter movements?
- What is the primary role of technology in social movements?
- How does globalization impact social movements?

1.3 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND HUMAN RIGHT

As understood above, Social movements are collective actions aimed at promoting or resisting social change. They are often driven by a shared sense of injustice or a desire to improve societal conditions. These movements can be local, national, or transnational, and their goals can vary widely.

Human rights are fundamental entitlements inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, gender, nationality, or any other status. These rights are universal, indivisible, and interdependent. They encompass civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights.

The concept of human rights emerged as a response to the atrocities of World War II and is enshrined in documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It provides a common language and framework for addressing inequality and injustice.

The Relationship between Social Movements and Human Rights

Social movements and human rights are deeply interconnected. They share a common goal of promoting justice, equality, and dignity. Here's how they interact:

- **Human rights as a mobilizing force:** Human rights principles often inspire and guide social movements. Movements for racial equality, women's rights, and LGBTQ+ rights, for example, are grounded in the universal principles of human dignity and non-discrimination.

- **Social movements as drivers of human rights progress:** Movements have been instrumental in shaping human rights discourse and law. They have played a pivotal role in securing rights for marginalized groups and holding governments accountable to human rights obligations.

- **Human rights as a tool for social change:** Human rights frameworks provide a powerful language and set of standards for social movements to use in their advocacy. By framing demands in terms of human rights, movements can gain legitimacy and broaden their support base.

- **Challenges and complexities:** The relationship between social movements and human rights is not always straightforward. There can be tensions between different rights, and movements may face backlash or repression from governments. Additionally, the global reach of human rights can sometimes overshadow the specific needs of local communities.

Key Roles of Social Movements in Human Rights Advancement

- **Advocacy and mobilization:** Social movements raise awareness of human rights issues, mobilize public opinion, and pressure governments to take action.
- **Norm-setting:** Movements contribute to the development and evolution of human rights norms and standards.
- **Monitoring and accountability:** They monitor government compliance with human rights obligations and expose violations.
- **Capacity building:** Social movements empower individuals and communities to claim their rights and participate in decision-making.

- **Alternative service provision:** In many cases, movements fill gaps in government services by providing essential support to marginalized populations.

Social movements and human rights are inseparable. Movements are the driving force behind human rights progress, while human rights provide a powerful framework for social change. Their ongoing interaction is essential for building a more just and equitable world.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS: THE CASE OF INDIA

India presents a rich and complex tapestry where social movements and human rights intersect deeply. Let's delve into this relationship by exploring two specific cases:

1) **Dalit Movement and Human Rights in India**

Dalits, historically known as "untouchables," have faced centuries of discrimination and oppression based on the caste system. The Dalit movement emerged as a powerful force demanding social, economic, and political equality. This movement is a prime example of how social movements are intrinsically linked to human rights struggles.

Key Issues Addressed by the Dalit Movement:

- **Caste-based discrimination:** The movement has fought against untouchability, caste-based violence, and discriminatory practices in education, employment, and social life.
- **Economic marginalization:** Dalits often face extreme poverty and lack of access to resources. The movement has demanded land reforms, employment opportunities, and social welfare programs.
- **Political representation:** The Dalit movement has struggled for political empowerment, including reservation of seats in legislatures and government jobs.
- **Human rights violations:** The movement has documented and protested against atrocities like caste-based killings, rape, and violence against Dalit women.

The Role of Human Rights in the Dalit Movement:

- **Framing the struggle:** The language of human rights has been instrumental in framing Dalit issues as violations of universal principles of equality, dignity, and non-discrimination.
- **Mobilizing support:** Human rights discourse has helped to garner international attention and solidarity for the Dalit cause.
- **Legal recourse:** Human rights laws and mechanisms have provided Dalits with legal avenues to seek justice and redress.
- **Empowerment:** The recognition of Dalit rights as human rights has contributed to building a sense of agency and empowerment among Dalit communities.

Challenges and Opportunities:

While significant progress has been made, challenges persist. Deep-rooted caste prejudices, economic disparities, and political obstacles continue to hinder Dalit advancement. However, the movement has also demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and a capacity to innovate.

2) The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA): A Case Study

The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA), or the Save Narmada Movement, is another compelling example of how social movements intersect with human rights in India. It highlights the complex interplay between development, environment, and human rights.

The Narmada Dam Project

The NBA emerged in opposition to the Sardar Sarovar Dam project on the Narmada River. This mega-dam project was envisioned to provide irrigation and hydroelectric power to a vast region. However, it would also displace millions of people, primarily tribal and rural communities.

Human Rights Implications

The NBA raised critical human rights concerns:

- **Right to livelihood:** The displacement of communities threatened their traditional livelihoods, including agriculture and fishing.

- **Right to housing and adequate living standards:** The lack of proper rehabilitation and resettlement plans for displaced people violated their right to housing and adequate living standards.
- **Right to food and water:** The dam's impact on the river's ecosystem raised concerns about food security and access to clean water for downstream communities.
- **Right to self-determination:** The project was seen as imposing a development model without considering the needs and aspirations of affected communities.
- **Right to information and participation:** The NBA emphasized the importance of informed consent and public participation in decision-making processes.

The Movement's Impact

The NBA became a powerful force, galvanizing public opinion and international support. Through its struggles, it highlighted the human cost of large-scale development projects and the importance of considering the rights of affected communities. The movement contributed to:

- **Strengthening human rights discourse:** The NBA brought attention to the human rights implications of development projects, influencing policies and practices.
- **Empowering marginalized communities:** The movement empowered displaced people to assert their rights and demand accountability from the government.
- **Promoting environmental justice:** The NBA raised awareness about the environmental impacts of dams and the importance of sustainable development.

The Narmada Bachao Andolan demonstrates how social movements can effectively challenge powerful forces and contribute to the protection of human rights. It serves as a reminder that development projects must be undertaken with due regard for the rights and livelihoods of affected communities.

LET'S REWIND:

Social movements and human rights are deeply intertwined. Social movements often emerge in response to human rights violations, using these violations as a rallying point for change. Conversely, human rights frameworks provide a powerful language and set of standards for social movements to employ in their struggle for justice. The Dalit movement in India, fighting against caste-based discrimination, and the Narmada Bachao Andolan, opposing the

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displacement of communities due to dam construction, are prime examples of this interplay. Both movements have effectively used human rights discourse to mobilize support, challenge government actions, and demand accountability, ultimately contributing to broader social and political change.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

- Give a best suitable description of the relationship between social movements and human rights.
- How do social movements contribute to progress of human rights?
- What was the prime focus of Narmada Bachao Andolan?

LET'S SUM UP:

Social movements are collective efforts driven by shared goals to bring about societal change. They often emerge in response to inequality and injustice, challenging existing power structures. These movements can be categorized based on their objectives and strategies. Their impact is significant, shaping societies by influencing public opinion, policies, and institutions.

Human rights and social movements are closely intertwined. Human rights principles often inspire and guide movements, while movements contribute to the evolution of human rights norms. Movements like India's Dalit and Narmada Bachao Andolan exemplify this relationship, using human rights to mobilize support, challenge government actions, and demand accountability, ultimately contributing to broader social progress.

FURTHER READING

- Rao, M.S.A. 1979, Social Movements in India, Manohar Publications New Delhi

- Shah, Ghanashyam, 1990, Social Movements in India, Sage Publications

ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

- Give an example of reformative social movement.
  - ➤ The Women's Suffrage Movement.

- Is individual pursuit a characteristic of social movement?
  - No.
- What is the primary aim of social movement?
  - Redistribute power within society.
- What causes counter movements?
  - The success of social movements.
- What is the primary role of technology in social movements?
  - Facilitating mobilization and communication.
- How does globalization impact social movements?
  - Creating opportunities for transnational collaboration.
- Give a best suitable description of the relationship between social movements and human rights
  - Human rights provide a framework for social movements, while movements contribute to the evolution of human rights.
- How do social movements contribute to progress of human rights?
  - By monitoring government compliance with human rights obligations.
- What was the prime focus of Narmada Bachao Andolan?
  - Fighting for the rights of those displaced by the Sardar Sarovar Dam project.

MODEL QUESTIONS/ ASSIGNMENT:

1. What do you mean by social movement? What are its major characteristics?
2. What is the role of social movement in distribution of power in the society?
3. What role social movement plays in protecting the human rights of the people?

CHAPTER 2: THEORIES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

CHAPTER STRUCTURE:

Learning Outcome

Utility of Learning the Theories

2.1 Resource Mobilization Theory

2.2 Relative Deprivation Theory

2.3 Rational Choice Theory: Marxist and Post- Marxist

Let's Sum Up

Further Reading

Answers to Check Your Progress

Model Questions/ Assignment

LEARNING OUTCOME:

After going through this lesson, students will be able to-

- Know the concept of Resources Mobilization Theory
- Understand the concept of Relative Deprivation Theory
- Grasp the Rational Choice Theory in context of the Marxist and Post Marxist approaches

UTILITY OF LEARNING THE THEORIES:

Learning theories offer invaluable insights into the dynamics of social movements. By understanding how individuals and groups learn within these contexts, we can decipher the mechanisms driving mobilization, the evolution of movement goals, and the strategies employed. These theories illuminate the role of education, communication, and collective action in fostering social change, enabling us to develop effective interventions and support movements towards their objectives.

2.1 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION THEORY:

Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) emerged in the 1960s as a response to the limitations of earlier theories on social movements. These earlier theories often focused on psychological factors, such as frustration and deprivation, as the primary drivers of collective action. However, the wave of social movements in the 1960s, including the civil rights movement and anti-war protests, challenged this perspective.

Resource Mobilization Theory posits that the success of social movements hinges on the ability to acquire and effectively utilize resources. RMT shifted focus to the rational and organizational aspects of social movements. Pioneered by sociologists like Charles Tilly, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, this theory underscores the importance of tangible (money, infrastructure) and intangible (skills, knowledge) resources in facilitating collective action.

RMT theorists observed that while grievances and deprivation might be widespread, they did not necessarily translate into sustained social movements. Instead, they emphasized the importance of resources in mobilizing people for collective action. This shift in focus from individual psychology to organizational and structural factors marked a significant departure from previous theoretical frameworks.

Central to RMT is the idea that grievances alone are insufficient for movement emergence. Instead, it emphasizes the role of organized structures, leadership, and communication networks in mobilizing people and resources. These components, combined with external support from media, sympathetic elites, and the broader public, contribute to a movement's capacity for sustained action and achieving its goals.

Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) revolves around the central idea that the success of a social movement is contingent upon its ability to acquire and effectively utilize resources. These resources can be categorized into two main types:

Types of Resources

- **Tangible Resources:** These include financial resources, infrastructure, and material assets. For instance, a movement might require funds for organizing events, office space, and equipment.
- **Intangible Resources:** These encompass human capital, social networks, media attention, and public support. Skills, expertise, and leadership are crucial intangible resources.

Key concepts of the theory are-

- **Resource Acquisition:** This involves identifying, securing, and managing various resources to support the movement's goals.
- **Resource Allocation:** Effective distribution of resources is essential for optimizing their impact.
- **Organizational Capacity:** A well-structured organization is crucial for managing resources, coordinating activities, and maintaining momentum.
- **Political Opportunity Structure:** RMT acknowledges the importance of the broader political context, including government policies and the openness of the political system, in shaping a movement's success.
- **Mobilization:** The process of activating supporters and channeling their energy towards collective action is central to RMT.
- **Framing:** Constructing and communicating a compelling message that resonates with the public is vital for gaining support and legitimacy.

By focusing on these core concepts, RMT provides a framework for understanding how social movements can overcome challenges, build momentum, and achieve their objectives.

Resource mobilization is the process of getting resources from the resource provider, using different mechanisms, to implement an organization's predetermined goals. It is a theory that is used in the study of social movements and argues that the success of social movements depends on resources (time, money, skills, etc.) and the ability to use them. It deals in acquiring the needed resources in a timely, cost-effective manner. Resource mobilization advocates having the

right type of resource at the right time at the right price by making the right use of acquired resources thus ensuring optimum usage of the same.

It emphasizes the ability of a movement's members to acquire resources and to mobilize people towards accomplishing the movement's goals. In contrast to the traditional collective behaviour theory, which views social movements as deviant and irrational, resource mobilization sees them as rational social institutions that are created and populated by social actors with a goal of taking political action. According to resource mobilization theory, a core, professional group in a social movement organization works towards bringing money, supporters, attention of the media, alliances with those in power, and refining the organizational structure. The theory revolves around the central notion of how messages of social change are spread from person to person and from group to group. The conditions needed for a social movement are the notion that grievances shared by multiple individuals and organizations, ideologies about social causes and how to go about reducing those grievances.

The theory assumes that individuals are rational: individuals weigh the costs and the benefits of movement participation and act only if the benefits outweigh the costs. When movement goals take the form of public goods, the free rider dilemma must be taken into consideration. Social movements are goal-oriented, but organization is more important than resources. Organization means the interactions and relations between social movement organizations (SMOs) and other organizations (other SMOs, businesses, governments, etc.). The organization's infrastructure efficiency is a key resource in itself.

Resource mobilization theory can be divided into two camps:

John D. McCarthy and Mayer Zald championed an economic perspective, arguing that resources, like in a marketplace, determine a movement's trajectory. They emphasized the role of entrepreneurs in mobilizing resources and framing issues to attract support.

Conversely, Charles Tilly and Doug McAdam placed greater emphasis on political factors. They viewed resource mobilization as a political process, highlighting the interplay between social movements and the broader political environment. This perspective underscores the importance of political opportunities, coalitions, and strategic actions in achieving movement goals.

While both camps agree on the centrality of resources, they differ in their emphasis: one on economic factors and entrepreneurship, the other on political dynamics and opportunities.

Resource Mobilization Theory: An Example

The Arab Spring uprisings are a notable example of Resource Mobilization Theory in action. These widespread protests across the Middle East and North Africa were fueled by a combination of factors, including economic inequality, political repression, and social grievances. However, it was the strategic mobilization of resources that transformed these widespread discontents into a powerful force for change.

Social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter served as crucial intangible resources, enabling rapid information sharing, coordination of protests, and the creation of a sense of collective identity. Additionally, existing networks within civil society, trade unions, and religious organizations provided organizational structures, leadership, and financial support. The ability to harness these resources effectively was instrumental in the success of these movements in toppling authoritarian regimes.

> **LET'S REWIND:**
>
> **Resource Mobilization Theory** posits that the success of social movements hinges on their ability to acquire and effectively utilize various resources, such as money, people, skills, and organizational structures. This theory emphasizes the rational and strategic aspects of movement building, focusing on how groups organize, mobilize supporters, and leverage external support to achieve their goals. Rather than solely relying on grievances or psychological factors, it highlights the importance of tangible and intangible assets in driving social change.

2. 2 RELATIVE DEPRIVATION THEORY:

The roots of relative deprivation theory can be traced back to the mid-20th century. While the concept of deprivation has long been recognized, the specific focus on relative deprivation emerged in the context of understanding social unrest and collective action.

Key figures in the development of the theory include:

- **Robert K. Merton:** His study of American soldiers during World War II highlighted the role of relative deprivation in explaining differences in morale and satisfaction among soldiers with varying opportunities for promotion.
- **Walter Runciman:** He formalized the concept of relative deprivation, outlining specific conditions for its occurrence: a person lacks something, is aware of others possessing it, desires it, and believes it is attainable.

The theory gained prominence in the 1960s and 1970s as sociologists sought to understand the factors driving social movements and civil unrest. It provided a framework for analyzing the psychological and social conditions that contribute to collective action.

Relative deprivation theory posits that social movements arise when individuals or groups perceive a discrepancy between their actual conditions and their expected or entitled conditions. This perceived gap, rather than absolute deprivation, fuels discontent and motivates collective action.

Core Concepts of the theory:

- **Relative Deprivation:** This is the perception of inequality and injustice based on comparisons with others. It's about what people believe they *should* have compared to what they actually have.
- **Reference Groups:** These are groups with whom individuals compare themselves to assess their relative deprivation. They can be real or imagined groups.
- **Grievances:** These are the specific complaints or injustices that arise from perceived relative deprivation.
- **Collective Action:** This is the coordinated effort of a group to bring about social change to address their grievances.

Types of Relative Deprivation

- **Egoistic deprivation:** Focuses on individual feelings of deprivation compared to others in similar positions.
- **Fraternalistic deprivation:** Involves a sense of deprivation felt on behalf of a group to which the individual belongs.
- **Collective deprivation:** Refers to a shared sense of deprivation within an entire group.

Mechanisms of Relative Deprivation

- **Rising expectations:** When expectations for a better life increase faster than actual conditions, it can lead to relative deprivation and social unrest.
- **Decreasing gratifications:** A decline in living standards or opportunities can also contribute to relative deprivation.
- **Vivid comparisons:** The visibility of disparities between groups can magnify feelings of deprivation.

Applications of Relative Deprivation Theory

The theory has been applied to understand various social movements, including:

- **Civil rights movement:** African Americans' perception of inequality compared to white Americans fueled their struggle for equality.
- **Women's suffrage movement:** Women's realization of their unequal political status compared to men drove their demand for voting rights.
- **Student movements:** Students' perception of a gap between their aspirations and opportunities can lead to protests and demands for reform.

Criticisms

While influential, relative deprivation theory has limitations:

- **Not all deprivation leads to action:** Individuals may experience relative deprivation without engaging in collective action due to factors like apathy, fear, or lack of resources.

- **Overemphasis on psychological factors:** The theory may neglect structural factors like power inequalities and political opportunities.
- **Difficulty in measuring deprivation:** Comparing subjective perceptions of deprivation across groups can be challenging.

Despite these criticisms, relative deprivation theory remains a valuable tool for understanding the conditions under which social movements emerge. By highlighting the role of perceived inequality, it offers insights into the dynamics of collective action and social change.

LET'S REWIND:

Relative deprivation theory suggests that social unrest and movements arise when individuals or groups perceive a gap between their actual conditions and what they believe they deserve or are entitled to. This perceived inequality, rather than absolute poverty, fuels discontent and can lead to collective action. People compare their situations to others and when they feel unjustly deprived, they may mobilize to address the perceived injustice.

2.3 RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY: MARXIST AND POST MARXIST

Rational choice theory has its roots in classical economics and political philosophy. Its core principles can be traced back to thinkers like Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham. However, its application to social movements is a more recent development.

The theory gained prominence in the latter half of the 20th century as sociologists and political scientists sought to understand the motivations behind individual participation in collective action. By focusing on individual decision-making processes and the calculation of costs and benefits, rational choice theory offered a new perspective on the dynamics of social movements.

Rational choice theory posits that individuals are rational actors who make calculated decisions based on weighing costs and benefits. Applied to social movements, it suggests that people join and participate in movements because they perceive potential benefits that outweigh the costs. These benefits might include achieving personal goals, gaining social status, or contributing to a

cause they believe in. Conversely, individuals will avoid participation if the costs, such as time, effort, or potential risks, outweigh the perceived benefits.

Key elements of rational choice theory in the context of social movements include:

- **Individual rationality:** People make decisions based on their self-interest and perceived utility.
- **Cost-benefit analysis:** Individuals weigh the potential rewards and drawbacks of participating in a movement.
- **Collective action problem:** This addresses the challenge of motivating individuals to contribute to a collective goal when they can benefit from the outcome without participating (free-rider problem).
- **Selective incentives:** To overcome the collective action problem, movements often offer selective incentives, such as exclusive benefits or social rewards, to encourage participation.

Rational choice theory offers a framework for understanding why individuals join or avoid social movements. However, it also faces criticisms for oversimplifying human behavior and neglecting emotional, ideological, and social factors that influence participation.

APPLICABILITY OF THE RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY:

Rational choice theory has been applied to understand various aspects of social movements under the following grounds:

Individual Participation

- **Cost-benefit analysis:** Individuals weigh the potential benefits, such as personal satisfaction or social change, against the costs, like time, effort, and potential risks.
- **Selective incentives:** Movements often offer exclusive benefits or rewards to encourage participation and overcome the free-rider problem. For instance, membership perks, access to exclusive information, or social recognition can motivate involvement.

Movement Organization and Strategy

- **Resource allocation:** Movements allocate resources, such as time, money, and personnel, based on their perceived effectiveness in achieving goals.
- **Strategic decision-making:** Movement leaders make calculated choices about tactics, alliances, and targets based on their assessment of costs and benefits.

Collective Action Dilemmas

- **Free-rider problem:** Rational choice theory helps explain why individuals might be reluctant to contribute to a collective effort when they can benefit from its outcome without participating.
- **Overcoming collective action challenges:** The theory highlights the importance of providing selective incentives, building social networks, and creating a sense of group identity to mobilize individuals.

Examples of Social Movements

- **Civil rights movement:** Individuals weighed the risks of participation (e.g., arrest, violence) against the potential benefits of achieving racial equality.
- **Environmental activism:** People might join environmental groups because of personal beliefs but also due to social pressures and the potential benefits of being associated with a socially responsible cause.

While rational choice theory provides valuable insights into individual and organizational behavior in social movements, it's essential to recognize its limitations. It may oversimplify complex motivations and neglect the role of emotions, ideology, and social identity in driving participation.

Criticisms of Rational Choice Theory in Social Movements

While rational choice theory provides valuable insights into social movements, it faces several criticisms:

- **Overemphasis on Individual Rationality:** The theory often assumes that individuals act solely based on rational calculations, neglecting the role of emotions, beliefs, and social identities.
- **Neglect of Structural Factors:** Critics argue that the theory underemphasizes the impact of broader social, economic, and political structures on individual choices and collective action.
- **Difficulty in Measuring Costs and Benefits:** Accurately quantifying the costs and benefits associated with social movement participation is challenging, as these factors can be subjective and vary across individuals.
- **Ignoring Non-Rational Behavior:** The theory struggles to explain altruistic or selfless actions, which are common in social movements.
- **Limited Explanation of Collective Action:** While it can explain individual participation, rational choice theory has difficulty accounting for the emergence and dynamics of collective action itself.

Despite these criticisms, rational choice theory remains a valuable tool for understanding certain aspects of social movements. By acknowledging its limitations and integrating it with other theoretical perspectives, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the complex factors driving collective action.

LET'S REWIND:

Rational choice theory suggests that individuals make decisions based on weighing potential benefits against costs. When applied to social movements, it proposes that people join because they believe the advantages outweigh the drawbacks. This theory emphasizes the role of individual rationality and strategic thinking in driving participation.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

- Which theory emphasizes the role of resources in the success of social movements?
- What is the central reason of participating movements as per the rational choice theory?
- What is the core concept of relative deprivation theory?

- Which theory highlights the importance of factors like leadership, communication networks, and organizational structures in social movements?
- The free-rider problem, where individuals benefit from collective action without contributing, is a challenge addressed by which theory?
- Which theory focuses on the role of psychological factors and perceived injustice in driving social movements?

LET'S SUM UP:

Resource mobilization theory suggests that social movements emerge and succeed based on their ability to gather and effectively use resources such as people, money, and organizational structures. **Relative deprivation theory** proposes that social movements arise when individuals or groups feel deprived compared to others. This perceived inequality motivates people to collectively challenge the status quo. **Rational choice theory** views individuals as rational actors who weigh the potential benefits and costs of joining a social movement. It suggests that people participate when they believe the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

FURTHER READING:

- Oomen, T.K. 1990, Protests and Change: Studies in Social Movements, New Delhi, Sage.

- Rao, M.S.A. 1979, Social Movements in India, Manohar Publications New Delhi.

- Shah, Ghanashyam, 1990, Social Movements in India, Sage Publications.

ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

- Which theory emphasizes the role of resources in the success of social movements?
  - ➢ Resource Mobilization Theory.
- What is the central reason of participating movements as per the rational choice theory?
  - ➢ The idea of weighing costs and benefits.
- What is the core concept of relative deprivation theory?

- ➤ The perception of inequality compared to others, leading to discontent and potential social unrest, is a core concept of the theory.
- Which theory highlights the importance of factors like leadership, communication networks, and organizational structures in social movements?
  - ➤ Resource Mobilization Theory.
- The free-rider problem, where individuals benefit from collective action without contributing, is a challenge addressed by which theory?
  - ➤ Rational Choice Theory.
- Which theory focuses on the role of psychological factors and perceived injustice in driving social movements?
  - ➤ Relative Deprivation Theory.

MODEL QUESTIONS/ ASSIGNMENT

- What do you mean by Resource Mobilization theory?
- How relative deprivation theory explains social movement?
- Discuss about the Marxist and post Marxist views on social movements.

CHAPTER 3: SOCIAL MOVEMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA

CHAPTER STRUCTURE:

Learning Outcome:

Utility of Learning the Topic

LEARNING OUTCOME:

After going through this lesson, students will be able to-

- Understand the conceptual framework of Peasants Movements
- Know about the Labour and Trade Union Movements
- Understand the concepts of Tribal Movements

UTILITY OF LEARNING THE TOPIC:

Studying social movements like peasant, trade union, and tribal movements offers a rich tapestry of insights into societal dynamics, power structures, and resistance strategies. These movements serve as living laboratories, demonstrating how marginalized groups mobilize, articulate demands, and challenge the status quo. By understanding their histories, ideologies, and outcomes, we gain invaluable tools for analyzing contemporary social issues, developing empathy, and fostering critical thinking. Moreover, such knowledge equips us to participate meaningfully in processes of social change, empowering us to contribute to a more just and

equitable society.

3.1 PEASANT MOVEMENTS

Peasant movements in India have been a powerful force in shaping the country's agrarian landscape and political discourse. Rooted in the harsh realities of rural life, these movements primarily emerged as responses to oppressive land revenue systems, exploitation by landlords, and the crushing burden of indebtedness.

Characterized by their economic, social, and cultural dimensions, these movements varied significantly across India's diverse regions. While often triggered by economic grievances, they frequently intersected with broader issues of caste, religion, and gender inequality. The leadership of charismatic figures, religious leaders, or intellectuals played a crucial role in mobilizing the masses and giving voice to their demands.

From the 18th and 19th century rebellions against colonial exploitation to the more organized and politically conscious movements of the 20th century, peasants have consistently challenged the status quo. The Tebhaga movement in Bengal, the Kisan Sabha in Punjab, and the Telangana armed struggle are notable examples of these struggles.

The impact of peasant movements has been profound. They have contributed significantly to land reforms, shaping India's agrarian policies and influencing the trajectory of the freedom struggle. However, the legacy of these movements is complex. While progress has been made, challenges such as land fragmentation, indebtedness, and farmer suicides persist, underscoring the ongoing struggle for agrarian justice in India.

Some examples of peasant movements are-

- **The Santhal Rebellion (1855)**

The Santhal Rebellion, a significant tribal uprising, erupted in the regions of present-day Jharkhand and West Bengal in 1855. Primarily targeting the British colonial administration and

the exploitative zamindari system, the Santhals rebelled against heavy taxes, land alienation, and the oppressive practices of moneylenders.

The Santhal people, traditionally cultivators, faced severe hardships due to the colonial revenue system and the activities of dikus (outsiders), including moneylenders and zamindars. Forced into debt bondage and dispossessed of their land, they were driven to desperation. Led by the Murmu brothers, Sidhu and Kanhu, the Santhals declared independence in July 1855, attacking British officials, zamindars, and moneylenders.

Though initially successful, the rebellion was brutally suppressed by the British military due to the disparity in weaponry. Despite the defeat, the Santhal Rebellion remains a powerful symbol of tribal resistance against colonial exploitation.

- **The Deccan Riots (1875)**

The Deccan Riots, also known as the Ryotwari Rebellion, occurred in the regions of Pune, Ahmednagar, Sholapur, and Satara in 1875. The uprising was primarily a response to the oppressive revenue system imposed by the British, coupled with the exploitative practices of moneylenders.

The ryots, or peasant cultivators, were burdened with excessive land revenue demands, often leading to indebtedness. Moneylenders, taking advantage of the situation, charged exorbitant interest rates and eventually acquired control over the peasants' land. This led to widespread discontent and social boycott of moneylenders.

The rebellion, characterized by attacks on moneylenders' property and the burning of debt bonds, was eventually suppressed by the British government. The Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act of 1879 was passed as a conciliatory measure, but it failed to address the root causes of the uprising.

- **The Champaran Satyagraha (1917-18)**

The Champaran Satyagraha was a significant peasant movement led by Mahatma Gandhi in the Champaran district of Bihar. It focused on the plight of indigo cultivators who were subjected to exploitative contracts and forced cultivation.

The British indigo planters enforced the 'teen kathia' system, compelling farmers to cultivate indigo on a portion of their land at low prices. The system, coupled with the decline in indigo demand, led to immense hardship for the peasants.

Gandhiji's intervention marked a turning point, as he employed the principles of non-violent resistance to mobilize the peasantry. The movement culminated in the abolition of the 'teen kathia' system, although the broader issues of agrarian distress persisted.

- **The Moplah Rebellion (1921)**

The Moplah Rebellion, primarily a peasant uprising with religious overtones, occurred in the Malabar region of Kerala. The Moplah Muslim tenants rebelled against their Hindu landlords, known as jenmis, due to oppressive land tenure practices and high rents.

The rebellion, fueled by factors like economic exploitation and religious tensions, led to widespread violence and attacks on landlords and government officials. The British colonial administration swiftly suppressed the uprising, resulting in heavy casualties among the Moplahs.

- **The Tebhaga Movement: A Peasant Uprising**

The Tebhaga movement, a significant chapter in India's agrarian struggles, unfolded in Bengal between 1946 and 1947. At its core was the demand for a fairer share of the crop for sharecroppers, known as bargadars. Traditionally, these cultivators received only half the produce, with the remaining portion going to the landlords or jotedars. The movement, named after the Bengali term for 'two-thirds share', sought to rectify this inequitable distribution.

Spearheaded by the Bangiya Pradeshik Kisan Sabha (BPKS), a peasant organization affiliated with the Communist Party of India, the movement gained widespread support. The dire

conditions faced by sharecroppers, exacerbated by the devastating Bengal famine of 1943, created a fertile ground for discontent. Regions like Kakdwip in South 24 Parganas emerged as epicenters of the struggle.

The Tebhaga movement was more than an economic demand; it represented a broader assertion of peasant rights and a challenge to the landlords' dominance. Women played a pivotal role, actively participating in protests, providing leadership, and even engaging in direct confrontations. The movement marked a significant shift in the political consciousness of the peasantry.

- **The Telangana Movement (1946-52)**

The Telangana Movement was a peasant uprising against the oppressive feudal system prevalent in the Hyderabad State. Led by the Communist Party of India (CPI) through its peasant wing, the Kisan Sabha, the movement challenged the exploitative land tenure systems, namely, Khalsa and Jagirdari.

Under these systems, peasants faced exorbitant taxes, forced labor (vetti), and debt bondage. The Jagirdari system, in particular, empowered intermediary landlords (jagirdars and deshmukhs) to exert immense control over the peasantry.

Originating in Nalgonda district, the movement rapidly spread across Telangana, demanding debt relief and land reforms. By 1948, it had transformed into an armed struggle, with peasants establishing People's Committees to govern liberated areas.

The movement faced brutal repression from the Nizam's forces (Razakars), resulting in significant casualties. While ultimately suppressed by the Indian Army in 1950, the Telangana Movement remains a symbol of peasant resistance and struggle for agrarian justice.

- **The Naxalite Movement (1967-71)**

The Naxalite movement emerged in Naxalbari, West Bengal, as a response to the continued exploitation of sharecroppers despite land reforms. The failure of the government to effectively implement land redistribution laws led to widespread eviction and impoverishment of peasants.

Inspired by Maoist ideology, the movement, led by Kanu Sanyal and Charu Majumdar, aimed to overthrow the existing social order through armed struggle. Key demands included land redistribution, debt cancellation, and the elimination of landlords.

While the movement initially gained momentum, it was swiftly suppressed by the government. Despite its short-lived nature, the Naxalite movement had a profound impact on subsequent left-wing politics and agrarian struggles in India.

Changing Patterns in Contemporary Indian Peasant Movements

The trajectory of peasant movements in India has undergone significant transformations since the colonial era. British economic policies, such as the commercialization of agriculture and the introduction of cash crops, disrupted traditional agrarian structures, leading to widespread peasant unrest. These movements played a pivotal role in post-independence land reforms, culminating in the abolition of the zamindari system and empowering the peasantry.

However, the Green Revolution, globalization, and economic liberalization have reshaped the rural landscape. The integration of agriculture into the market economy has blurred the rural-urban divide, altering the composition and consciousness of the peasantry. Agricultural laborers are increasingly becoming wage-dependent, weakening traditional patron-client relationships.

Contemporary peasant movements have adapted to these changes. New farmers' organizations, with a strong political presence, have emerged, advocating for remunerative prices, subsidies, and infrastructure development. Their demands extend beyond agrarian issues, encompassing broader development concerns.

Furthermore, the post-liberalization era has witnessed a surge in protests against land acquisition for industrial and developmental projects. These movements, often supported by NGOs and amplified by media, highlight the ongoing challenges faced by rural communities in the face of rapid development.

In essence, while the core issues of land, water, and livelihood remain central, the nature of peasant struggles has evolved in response to the changing agrarian dynamics of contemporary India.

LET'S REWIND:

Peasant movements in India have been a cornerstone of the country's history, evolving in response to changing agrarian structures and socio-economic conditions. From the colonial era's exploitative land revenue systems and commercialization of agriculture to post-independence land reforms and globalization, these movements have shaped India's rural landscape.

Early peasant rebellions focused on resisting colonial oppression and exploitative land tenures. Post-independence, movements like the Tebhaga and Telangana agitations aimed at land redistribution and challenging feudal structures. However, the Green Revolution and subsequent economic liberalization transformed rural dynamics, leading to the emergence of new agrarian issues and forms of protest.

Contemporary peasant movements grapple with challenges like market forces, land acquisition, and indebtedness. While traditional forms of protest persist, new organizations have emerged, demanding policy changes and greater equity in the agricultural sector. Overall, the history of peasant movements in India reflects a continuous struggle for agrarian justice and empowerment, adapting to the evolving complexities of rural society.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

- What was the primary cause of peasant unrest during British colonial rule?
- What was the primary aim of the Tebhaga movement?
- What was the prime reason of naxalite movement?
- Name some challenges faced by contemporary Indian farmers.

3.2 LABOUR AND TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The labour movement is a collective effort by workers to improve their economic and working conditions. Trade unions are organizations that facilitate this collective action. Born out of the

harsh realities of the Industrial Revolution, unions initially fought for fundamental rights like unionization, fair wages, and safer working environments.

The trade union movement in India has a long and significant history, playing a crucial role in advocating for the rights and welfare of workers. Here are some key points regarding the trade union movement in India:

- **Early Trade Unionism:** The organized labor movement in India traces its roots back to the late 19th century, with the formation of early trade unions such as the Bombay Mill Hands Association (1890) and the Madras Labour Union (1918). These unions emerged in response to exploitative working conditions and low wages faced by workers during the colonial era.

- **Formation of National-Level Unions:** In the early 20th century, national-level trade unions started to emerge. The All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) was formed in 1920, playing a significant role in mobilizing workers across various industries and advocating for labor rights.

- **Influence of Political Movements:** The trade union movement in India has often been closely associated with political movements and ideologies. During the struggle for independence, trade unions actively participated in the freedom movement and voiced workers' concerns within the broader political context.

- **Legal Framework:** The Trade Unions Act of 1926 provided legal recognition and protection for trade unions in India. The Act outlined provisions for the registration, internal governance, and collective bargaining rights of trade unions.

- **Major Trade Union Federations:** Several national-level trade union federations exist in India, representing different political ideologies and sectors. Some prominent ones include the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), affiliated with the Indian National Congress party, the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), affiliated with left-leaning political parties, and the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), affiliated with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

- **Collective Bargaining and Strikes:** Trade unions in India engage in collective bargaining with employers to negotiate wages, working conditions, and other employment-related matters. Strikes and protests are common methods employed by trade unions to press for their demands and draw attention to labor issues.

- **Legal Protection and Welfare Measures:** Trade unions in India have been instrumental in securing legal protections and welfare measures for workers. They have advocated for the enactment and implementation of labor laws, including those related to minimum wages, working hours, safety and health standards, and social security benefits.

- **Challenges and Issues:** The trade union movement in India faces several challenges, including fragmentation along political and ideological lines, low membership density in certain sectors, and difficulties in organizing informal sector workers. Additionally, labor rights violations, contract labor exploitation, and the need for effective implementation of labor laws remain significant concerns.

As the goals were achieved in many developed nations, the labour movement expanded its focus to include broader social and economic issues like welfare programs, income distribution, and public services. Unions primarily function through collective bargaining, advocacy, and member support services.

However, the contemporary labour movement faces challenges posed by globalization, technological advancements, and changing work structures. The rise of the gig economy and anti-union sentiments further complicate the landscape.

Despite these challenges, trade unions continue to play a vital role in representing workers' interests, negotiating with employers, and advocating for improvements in labor conditions and social welfare in India.

Prominent Trade Union Movements in India

India has a rich history of labor activism, marked by several significant movements:

Early Labor Organizing

- **Bombay Mill Hands Association (1890):** Pioneered by N.M. Lokhande, this union represented the concerns of textile workers in Bombay, addressing issues like long working hours and low wages.
- **Madras Labour Union (1918):** Founded by B.P. Wadia, this union focused on the rights of workers in the Madras Presidency, laying the groundwork for organized labor in southern India.

Post-Independence Struggles

- **Textile Strikes in Bombay (1982):** A prolonged struggle by textile workers against mill closures and job losses, highlighting the challenges of industrial decline.
- **Railway Workers' Agitations:** Repeated strikes by railway workers have drawn attention to issues like wages, working conditions, and job security in the vital transportation sector.
- **Coal Miners' Protests:** Miners in coal-rich regions have historically fought for better working conditions, safety measures, and fair wages, often facing hazardous work environments.
- **IT Sector Unionization:** While relatively recent, the growth of IT unions reflects changing employment dynamics and the need for workers' rights in the knowledge-based economy.

These examples represent a small fraction of the numerous trade union struggles in India. The movement has been diverse, encompassing various sectors and reflecting the evolving challenges faced by workers in different periods.

LET'S REWIND:

India's trade union movement originated in the late 19th century, primarily in response to harsh working conditions in industries like textiles and railways. Early unions like the Bombay Mill Hands Association and the Madras Labour Union laid the foundation. Post-independence, the movement expanded, with major strikes and agitations in sectors such as textiles, railways, and coal mining. While facing challenges like fragmentation and organizing informal workers,

trade unions continue to play a crucial role in advocating for workers' rights and improving labor conditions in India.

3.3 TRIBAL MOVEMENT

Tribal movements in India represent a rich history of resistance against colonial exploitation, marginalization, and environmental degradation. These movements have been driven by the need to protect ancestral lands, preserve cultural identity, and demand greater autonomy.

Early tribal uprisings like the Santhal Rebellion were primarily responses to colonial policies and the exploitation of tribal resources. Later movements, such as those led by Birsa Munda, focused on social and religious reforms within tribal communities.

In post-independence India, tribal movements have continued, often centered around issues of land rights, forest conservation, and development-induced displacement. These movements have been instrumental in bringing attention to the marginalized condition of tribal communities and advocating for their rights.

Tribal movements in India have been primarily driven by the erosion of traditional livelihoods and cultural identity. Key factors include:

- **Land Alienation:** The loss of ancestral lands due to colonial policies, post-independence development projects, and encroachment by outsiders.

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- **Forest Rights:** Restrictions on forest access and the exploitation of forest resources have severely impacted tribal livelihoods.
- **Economic Disparity:** Lack of development, unemployment, and indebtedness have contributed to widespread poverty among tribal communities.
- **Cultural Erosion:** The imposition of dominant cultures and the weakening of traditional practices have threatened tribal identity.
- **Political Marginalization:** Lack of representation and decision-making power in governance has fueled discontent.

These factors have led to a variety of tribal movements, ranging from agrarian uprisings to demands for autonomy and self-governance.

Tribal movements in India have followed two primary paths: non-violent and violent. Non-violent movements often involve negotiations, protests, and legal challenges, while violent movements resort to armed struggle. Both forms have been instrumental in addressing tribal grievances.

The spectrum of tribal movements is vast, encompassing various goals and strategies. While some movements aimed for cultural preservation and reform, others focused on land rights and political autonomy. The interplay of historical, economic, and socio-cultural factors has shaped the nature and outcomes of these movements.

Major Tribal Movements in India

India has a rich history of tribal uprisings against colonial oppression, exploitation, and cultural erosion. These movements were often driven by economic exploitation, land alienation, and attempts to preserve traditional ways of life.

Pre-Independence Movements

- **Santhal Rebellion (1855):** A major uprising against British colonial rule, zamindari oppression, and moneylenders in Bengal and Bihar.

- **Kol Rebellion (1831-32):** A revolt against the exploitative practices of the local king and subsequent British interference in Chotanagpur.
- **Chuar Revolt:** A resistance against heavy taxation imposed by zamindars during British colonial rule in Midnapore.
- **Munda Rebellion (1899):** Led by Birsa Munda, this movement aimed to revitalize Munda culture and challenge colonial authority.

Post-Independence Movements

- **Jharkhand Movement:** A prolonged struggle for a separate state for the tribal-dominated region of Jharkhand, culminating in its formation in 2000.
- **Naga National Movement:** A movement for self-determination and autonomy for the Naga people in Northeast India.
- **Bodo Movement:** A movement for a separate Bodoland state in Assam, based on the demands of the Bodo people.
- **Tribal Movements in Central India:** Uprisings against displacement, land alienation, and environmental degradation in states like Chhattisgarh and Odisha.

These movements highlight the enduring struggles of tribal communities for their rights, identity, and resources. They continue to shape the political and social landscape of India.

Tribal movements in India have been a continuous struggle for survival, identity, and justice. From the pre-colonial era to the present day, these movements have evolved in response to changing socio-political and economic landscapes. While the specific demands and strategies have varied, a common thread underlying these movements is the quest for self-determination, resource control, and cultural preservation.

The history of tribal resistance is marked by both triumphs and setbacks. While some movements have achieved significant gains, such as the formation of Jharkhand state, many challenges persist. Issues like land alienation, displacement, and marginalization continue to plague tribal communities.

Understanding the complexities of tribal movements is crucial for crafting effective policies and strategies for the empowerment and development of these marginalized groups. Recognizing their unique identities, aspirations, and contributions to India's rich cultural tapestry is essential for building an inclusive and equitable society.

LET'S REWIND:

Tribal movements in India have a long history marked by resistance against colonial exploitation, land dispossession, and cultural erosion. From the Santhal Rebellion to contemporary struggles, these movements have evolved in response to changing socio-political and economic conditions. While facing ongoing challenges, tribal communities continue to fight for their rights, preserving their identity and safeguarding their natural resources.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

- Who led the tribal movement that aimed to revitalize tribal identity and challenge colonial authority?

- What was the primary cause of the Santhal Rebellion?

LET'S SUM UP:

Peasant, labor, and tribal movements in India share a common thread of resistance against exploitation and marginalization. Peasant movements primarily fought against oppressive land revenue systems, exploitation by landlords, and indebtedness. Labor and trade union movements focused on securing better wages, working conditions, and rights for workers. Tribal movements centered around preserving cultural identity, protecting ancestral lands, and gaining autonomy. All three categories have faced significant challenges, including colonial oppression, post-independence economic policies, and ongoing issues of inequality. These movements have been instrumental in shaping India's social and political landscape, influencing policies, and empowering marginalized groups.

FURTHER READING

- Desai, A.R. Ed, 1983 Peasants Struggle in India, Oxford University Press

- Singh. K.S. 1982, Tribal Movements in India, Manohar, New Delhi.

ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

- What was the primary cause of peasant unrest during British colonial rule?

➢ Commercialization of agriculture.

- What was the primary aim of the Tebhaga movement?

➢ Demanding a larger share of the crop for sharecroppers.

- What was the prime reason of naxalite movement?

➢ Failure of land reforms.

- Name some challenges faced by contemporary Indian farmers.

➢ Lack of access to modern technology, Low minimum support prices for crops, and increasing input costs.

- When did the organized labor movement in India begin to emerge?

➢ Late 19th century.

- Name one of the earliest trade unions in India?

➢ Bombay Mill Hands Association.

- What was the significant challenge faced by the trade union movement in India?

➢ Organizing informal sector workers.

- The trade union movement in India has been closely linked to the independence struggle. True or false?

  ➢ True.

- Who led the tribal movement that aimed to revitalize tribal identity and challenge colonial authority?

  ➢ Birsa Munda.

- What was the primary cause of the Santhal Rebellion?

  ➢ Loss of traditional land rights, Forced conversions to Christianity, Imposition of heavy taxes.

MODEL QUESTIONS/ ASSIGMENT

1. What do you mean by peasant movement? Discuss important peasant movements of India?
2. Write a note on labour and trade union movements in India.
3. Critically examine major tribal movements in India.

CHAPTER STRUCTURE:

Learning Outcome

Utility of Learning the Topic

4.1 Ecological and environmental movement in India

4.2 Women Movement

4.3 Ethnic Movement with special reference to North East India

Let's Sum Up

Further Reading

Answers to Check Your Progress

Model Questions/ Assignment

LEARNING OUTCOME:

After going through this lesson, students will be able to-

- Understand the ecological and environmental movement in India
- Know about the Women's Movement
- Understand the Ethnic Movement with special reference to North East India

UTILITY OF LEARNING THE TOPIC:

Social movements like environmentalism, ethnic rights movements, and feminism are like crash courses in social evolution. Studying them throws open the windows on current events, revealing the roots of inequalities and the ongoing fight for a more just and sustainable world. It equips us with critical thinking skills to analyze power dynamics and empowers us to decide where we stand on these issues. This knowledge translates into action, allowing us to become active participants in shaping a future that reflects the values we believe in.

India's social landscape is constantly evolving, and new social movements (NSMs) have emerged alongside these changes. Distinct from traditional class-centered movements, NSMs prioritize social and cultural issues, with a wider range of participants compared to the past.

Features of NSMs in India

- **Social and Cultural Focus:** Caste discrimination, environmental protection, women's rights, and indigenous rights are some of the core concerns addressed by NSMs in India.
- **Diverse Voices:** Unlike the past, participation in NSMs extends beyond specific social classes or groups. Students, professionals, intellectuals, and activists from various backgrounds come together in these movements.
- **Decentralized Structures:** NSMs often function with less rigid structures compared to older social movements. Social media and online platforms play a crucial role in mobilizing support and organizing protests.
- **Local Impact, Global Reach:** While many NSMs address issues specific to their communities, they can also be part of larger national or even international networks, fostering a sense of solidarity.

Some Notable Movements in Modern India

- **Dalit Movement:** Fighting against caste discrimination and untouchability, the Dalit movement has secured notable victories, such as the enactment of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.
- **Women's Movement:** Championing gender equality and women's rights, the women's movement in India has driven significant progress in areas like education, employment, and political participation.
- **Adivasi Movement:** Representing the interests of indigenous communities in India, the Adivasi movement advocates for their rights to land, resources, and self-determination.
- **Environmental Movement:** Working towards environmental protection and promoting sustainable development, the environmental movement in India has played a key role in raising awareness and influencing government policies.

These are just a few examples of the numerous NSMs actively contributing to India's social landscape. They play a vital role in advocating for social change and building a more just and equitable society in India.

4.1 ECOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

India's vibrant social movement tapestry boasts a rich history of ecological and environmental activism. These movements, distinct from traditional class-based struggles, address a range of environmental concerns with far-reaching social implications.

Roots of Ecological Activism

The seeds of ecological consciousness in India were sown much earlier than the formalization of social movements. Traditional communities have long held reverence for nature, evident in their worship practices and sustainable resource use. However, the colonial era saw a shift towards resource extraction and exploitation, leading to the emergence of early ecological resistance. The Bishnoi community's legendary sacrifice in 1730, where villagers embraced trees to prevent felling, exemplifies this spirit.

Post-Independence Upsurge: Landmark Movements

The post-independence period witnessed a surge in organized ecological movements. Here are some notable examples:

- **The Chipko Movement (1973):** This iconic movement, led by activists like Chandi Prasad Bhatt and Gaura Devi, put the world spotlight on India's environmental issues. Villagers in the Himalayan region, particularly women, famously "embraced" trees (chipko means 'to stick') to prevent their felling by contractors. The movement's success led to a ban on commercial forestry in the region and highlighted the vital role of local communities in forest conservation.
- **The Narmada Bachao Andolan (1985):** This movement, spearheaded by Medha Patkar, emerged in response to the construction of the Narmada Dam project. The movement

raised concerns about the displacement of indigenous communities, environmental degradation, and the economic viability of the project. While the dam was eventually built, the Narmada Bachao Andolan's relentless advocacy brought national and international attention to the human and environmental costs of development projects.

- **The Silent Valley Movement (1970s):** This Kerala-based movement successfully opposed the construction of a hydroelectric project that threatened the ecologically sensitive Silent Valley rainforest. The movement's victory underscored the importance of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development practices.

Beyond the Headlines: A Diverse Movement Landscape

The ecological and environmental movement in India is not monolithic. It encompasses a wide range of issues and actors:

- **Grassroots Initiatives:** Local communities across India are actively involved in protecting their natural resources. From saving rivers and wetlands to combating deforestation, these initiatives often involve traditional ecological knowledge and community-based solutions.
- **Environmental NGOs:** Numerous non-governmental organizations (NGOs) work tirelessly on environmental issues like pollution control, wildlife conservation, and promoting renewable energy sources.
- **Environmental Justice Movements:** These movements address the unequal distribution of environmental burdens. Communities living near industrial zones or facing the consequences of climate change are increasingly mobilizing to demand environmental justice and policy changes.

Challenges and the Road Ahead

Despite their achievements, ecological and environmental movements in India face challenges. These include:

- **Balancing Development and Conservation:** Finding a sustainable balance between economic development and environmental protection remains a complex issue.

- **Land Acquisition and Displacement:** Large-scale development projects often lead to land acquisition and displacement of communities, creating social and environmental conflicts.
- **Climate Change:** India is one of the countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The movement needs to adapt and strategize to address this growing threat.

Conclusion

The ecological and environmental movement in India is a constantly evolving story. From iconic movements like Chipko to local struggles for clean air and water, these movements play a crucial role in shaping India's environmental future. As the country grapples with the challenges of development and climate change, a strong and inclusive ecological movement will be vital in ensuring a sustainable future for all.

LET'S REWIND:

India has a long history of ecological activism, with movements addressing a variety of environmental concerns. Some notable examples include the Chipko movement, which prevented deforestation by hugging trees, the Narmada Bachao Andolan, which fought against the construction of a dam that would displace indigenous communities, and the Silent Valley movement, which successfully opposed the construction of a hydroelectric project that threatened a rainforest. These movements are not monolithic and encompass a wide range of issues and actors, including local communities, NGOs, and environmental justice movements. Despite their achievements, these movements face challenges such as balancing development and conservation, land acquisition and displacement, and climate change.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

- What is the main focus of the ecological and environmental movements in India, as opposed to traditional class-based struggles?
- Is Green Revolution an ecological movement?
- What is the significance of the Chipko Movement?
- What are the challenges faced by the ecological and environmental movements in India?

- How do grassroots initiatives contribute to the ecological and environmental movement landscape in India?

4.2 WOMEN MOVEMENT

The narrative of the women's movement in India is a testament to unwavering determination and remarkable progress. It's a story woven over centuries, constantly adapting to address the evolving challenges faced by women in Indian society.

Early Strides: Reforming the Social Landscape

The 19th century witnessed the germination of the women's movement with the rise of social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar. They bravely challenged social evils like sati (widow burning) and child marriage, laying the groundwork for a more equitable society for women. Education emerged as a central theme, with Savitribai Phule establishing India's first girls' school in 1848. This period saw the rise of prominent women leaders like Jyotirao Phule and Pandita Ramabai Saraswati, who became vocal advocates for women's rights and social reforms.

National Movement and Beyond: A Shift in Focus

The Indian independence movement provided a platform for women to actively participate in the national struggle. Leaders like Sarojini Naidu, Annie Besant, and Kasturba Gandhi played pivotal roles. However, the post-independence era witnessed a shift in focus, with nation-building taking precedence over specific feminist agendas.

The Second Wave: A Resurgence for Equality

The 1970s marked a resurgence of the women's movement in India. This "second wave" tackled issues of violence against women, discriminatory laws, and economic disparities. The Mathura rape case (1972) and the Shah Bano case (1985) served as catalysts, highlighting the urgent need for legal reforms to safeguard women's rights.

Contemporary Concerns: A Multifaceted Approach

The contemporary women's movement in India is multifaceted, addressing a diverse range of issues:

- **Combating Violence:** Rape, domestic violence, and sexual harassment remain major threats. Movements like #MeToo have empowered survivors to speak out and pushed for stricter laws and improved enforcement mechanisms.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Ensuring equal access to education, employment opportunities, and property rights is a key focus area.
- **Political Participation:** Increasing women's representation in government bodies and political spheres is crucial for achieving gender equality.
- **Bodily Autonomy and Reproductive Health:** Access to safe abortions, affordable contraception, and comprehensive sex education are critical for women's health and well-being.

Strategies for Change: A Multi-Pronged Approach

The women's movement in India utilizes various strategies to achieve its goals, including:

- **Public Protests and Rallies:** Raising public awareness and garnering support for their causes.
- **Lobbying and Advocacy:** Influencing government policies and legislation to promote women's rights.
- **Legal Aid and Support Services:** Providing legal assistance and counseling to women facing discrimination or violence.
- **Grassroots Mobilization:** Empowering women at the local level through community organizing and awareness campaigns.

Milestones Achieved: Paving the Way for Progress

The movement has secured significant milestones:

- **The Dowry Prohibition Act (1961):** Made the giving or taking of dowry a punishable offense.

- **The Hindu Succession Act (1956):** Granted women equal inheritance rights.
- **The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005):** Provided legal recourse for victims of domestic violence.
- **The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act (2013):** Established a framework to address workplace sexual harassment.

Challenges Remain: The Road Ahead

Despite the progress made, significant challenges persist:

- **Deep-Rooted Patriarchy:** Entrenched patriarchal norms continue to restrict women's opportunities and perpetuate gender discrimination.
- **Implementation Gap:** Effective implementation of existing laws to ensure women's safety and rights remains a hurdle.
- **Economic Disparity:** The gender pay gap persists, and women are often overrepresented in low-paying jobs.

A Force for an Equitable Future

The women's movement in India is a dynamic and ever-evolving force for positive change. It continues to strive for a society where women have equal opportunities, are free from violence, and can participate fully in all spheres of life. The movement's success depends on building solidarity across social classes, castes, and religious divides, and forging alliances with men who champion gender equality. As India aspires towards a more inclusive and just future, the women's movement plays a critical role in shaping a society where women can thrive.

LET'S REWIND:

The women's movement in India has a long history of fighting for equality. It began in the 19th century with efforts to end social evils like sati and promote education for girls. After a lull following independence, the movement gained new momentum in the 1970s. Today, it tackles issues like violence against women, economic disparity, and lack of political participation. Through protests, legal advocacy, and community organizing, the movement has

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secured legal rights for women but still faces challenges from entrenched patriarchy and economic inequalities. As India moves forward, the women's movement remains a crucial force for building a more just and equitable society.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

- What social evils did early reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar challenge in the 19th century?

- Name an event in the 1970s that is credited with reigniting the women's movement in India?

- What strategy does the women's movement use to raise public awareness and garner support for their causes?

4.3 ETHNIC MOVEMENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NORTH EAST INDIA

India's social landscape boasts a rich and vibrant tapestry woven from a multitude of ethnicities. Each thread, representing a distinct culture, language, and tradition, contributes to the nation's unique identity. However, this very diversity has also fueled numerous ethnic movements, where communities strive for recognition, autonomy, or self-determination. Let's explore the factors that drive these movements and the challenges they present.

Seeds of Discontent: Why Ethnic Movements Emerge

Several factors contribute to the emergence of ethnic movements in India:

- **Historical Marginalization:** Certain communities may have faced historical oppression or neglect, leading to a sense of injustice and a desire for greater recognition. This could stem from colonial policies or persistent socio-economic disadvantages.

- **Unequal Development:** Disparities in development between different regions or communities can fuel feelings of alienation and exclusion from India's economic growth story.

- **Cultural Assertion:** In a rapidly modernizing India, some ethnic groups may feel threatened by the homogenizing forces of globalization. Ethnic movements can be a way to assert their unique cultural heritage and preserve their traditional ways of life.
- **Demand for Political Participation:** Ethnic groups may feel inadequately represented in government or decision-making processes. Movements can be a way to claim a greater political voice and influence policies that affect their communities.

Expressions of Identity: Diverse Forms of Ethnic Movements

Ethnic movements in India manifest in various forms, reflecting the specific needs and aspirations of each community:

- **Demand for Autonomy:** Several groups advocate for greater autonomy within the Indian federation. This allows them to manage their own internal affairs to a certain extent, while remaining part of the larger nation. Examples include movements in Bodoland (Assam) and Darjeeling (West Bengal).
- **Statehood Movements:** Some ethnic groups with distinct cultural and linguistic identities aspire for separate states. This grants them greater control over their political destiny and socio-economic development. The creation of states like Telangana (2014) and Jharkhand (2000) are outcomes of such movements.
- **Tribal Movements:** Indigenous communities (tribals) often face issues like land alienation and displacement due to development projects. Movements aim to protect their rights, preserve their traditional way of life, and ensure equitable benefits from development. Examples include movements by the Jarawa and Bhil communities.
- **Dalit Movement:** The Dalit movement fights for social justice, equal rights, and an end to caste-based discrimination. Dalits, formerly known as "untouchables," have faced social exclusion and marginalization for centuries.

Challenges and the Path Forward

Ethnic movements in India navigate several challenges:

- **Internal Divisions:** Ethnic groups themselves may have internal sub-divisions or conflicts, hindering a unified movement and making it difficult to present a cohesive set of demands.
- **Security Concerns:** Some movements, particularly those advocating secession, can resort to violence. This creates a security threat and hinders constructive dialogue.
- **Balancing Unity and Diversity:** The Indian government needs to find a delicate balance between accommodating the aspirations of diverse communities and maintaining national unity and integrity.

Building a More Inclusive Future

Building a more inclusive India that addresses the concerns of ethnic movements requires a multi-pronged approach:

- **Decentralization of Power:** Devolution of power to local governments can give ethnic communities a greater say in decision-making that affects their lives.
- **Affirmative Action:** Policies that promote education, employment, and political participation of disadvantaged communities can foster a sense of inclusion and belonging.
- **Inter-cultural Dialogue:** Promoting dialogue and understanding between different ethnic groups is crucial for building bridges and fostering social harmony.
- **Equitable Development:** Investing in development projects that benefit all communities, particularly those in marginalized regions, can address inequalities and reduce grievances.

Illustrative Examples

- **Dravidian Movement:** A social and political movement in South India that challenged Aryan dominance and advocated for the rights and recognition of Dravidian languages and cultures.
- **Gorkhaland Movement:** A movement demanding a separate state of Gorkhaland for the Gorkha people in West Bengal.

- **Bodo Accord (2003):** A landmark agreement that granted autonomy to the Bodoland Territorial Council in Assam, addressing some of the concerns of the Bodoland movement.

Conclusion

Ethnic movements in India are a complex phenomenon with historical roots and contemporary manifestations. Recognizing the underlying issues and aspirations of these movements is crucial for building a more just, equitable, and inclusive society. By fostering dialogue, promoting cultural understanding, and ensuring equitable development, India can strive towards a future where its rich tapestry of ethnicities thrives in harmony.

Ethnic Movement and North East India:

North East India, a land renowned for its vibrant cultural tapestry and breathtaking landscapes, also grapples with the complexities of ethnic identities. This rich mosaic has fueled numerous ethnic movements, each seeking recognition, autonomy, or self-determination. Let's delve deeper into these movements and understand the underlying currents.

Seeds of Discontent

Several factors have sown the seeds of discontent that have germinated into ethnic movements in North East India:

- **Colonial Legacy:** The lingering impact of the British policy of "divide and rule" exacerbated existing ethnic differences. Artificial boundaries often divided communities, creating a sense of fragmentation.
- **Migration and Identity Concerns:** Influx of people from other parts of India has led to anxieties among indigenous communities. They fear a loss of their cultural identity and political marginalization.
- **Uneven Development:** Disparities in development compared to other parts of India foster feelings of neglect and exploitation of resources by the central government.

Expressions of Identity: Types of Movements

Ethnic movements in North East India can be broadly categorized into three categories:

- **Autonomy Movements:** Several ethnic groups, particularly those concentrated in specific geographical areas, advocate for greater autonomy within the Indian federation. This allows them to preserve their unique cultural practices and have a greater say in local governance. Examples include the Bodoland movement in Assam and the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council in Meghalaya.
- **Statehood Movements:** Some ethnic groups with distinct cultural and linguistic identities aspire for the creation of separate states. This grants them greater control over their political destiny and socio-economic development. The creation of Nagaland in 1963 and Mizoram in 1987 are testaments to the success of such movements.
- **Secessionist Movements:** Representing a more extreme stance, these movements seek complete separation from India. The insurgency in Nagaland is a well-known example, though a peace accord in 2015 offers a glimmer of hope for a permanent resolution.

Challenges and the Path Forward

Ethnic movements in North East India navigate several challenges:

- **Internal Divisions:** Ethnic groups themselves may have internal sub-divisions or conflicts, hindering a unified movement and making it difficult to present a cohesive set of demands.
- **Government Response:** The Indian government's approach has oscillated between security measures, negotiations, and development initiatives. Finding the right balance between these approaches is crucial.
- **Impact on Development:** Unrest and violence associated with some movements can create a climate of instability, deterring development and investment in the region.

Building a Shared Future

The future of ethnic movements in North East India hinges on several key factors:

- **Inclusive Development:** Addressing development disparities and ensuring equitable distribution of resources across all communities is essential for fostering a sense of belonging and reducing grievances.
- **Recognition of Identities:** Acknowledging and respecting the cultural and linguistic identities of various ethnic groups is vital for building trust and fostering a sense of national unity within diversity.
- **Peaceful Dialogue:** Continued dialogue between ethnic communities, civil society organizations, and the government is essential for finding lasting solutions that address the root causes of discontent.

Illustrative Examples

- **Naga Movement:** One of the oldest insurgencies in the region, demanding a sovereign Nagaland. A peace accord in 2015 offers a chance to heal old wounds and build a more peaceful future.
- **Assam Movement:** A complex web of movements involving Assamese ethnic identity, and protection from illegal immigration and finally signing of the historic Assam Accord.
- **Mizo Movement:** Achieved statehood for Mizoram in 1987 after a period of insurgency. This movement highlights the possibility of peaceful resolution through dialogue and political negotiation.

Conclusion

Ethnic movements in North East India are a complex phenomenon rooted in historical grievances, identity politics, and aspirations for equitable development. Recognizing the diverse motivations behind these movements and pursuing inclusive solutions are critical for ensuring lasting peace, prosperity, and a sense of belonging for all communities in the region.

LET'S REWIND:

Driven by historical marginalization, uneven development, and a desire to preserve cultural identity, various ethnic movements exist in India. These movements take many forms, from demanding autonomy within the nation (Bodoland) to seeking separate states based on cultural identity (Telangana). Tribal communities fight for land rights and traditions, while the Dalit

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movement challenges caste-based discrimination. Internal divisions, potential violence, and balancing national unity with diverse needs pose challenges. To move forward, India can decentralize power, promote inclusion through affirmative action, and ensure equitable development for all communities. Recognizing these movements is key to building a more just and inclusive India that celebrates its vibrant ethnic diversity.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- What is a major factor contributing to the emergence of ethnic movements in India?

- What are the challenges faced by many ethnic movements in India?

- The British policy of "divide and rule" is considered a factor contributing to ethnic movements in North East India. True or False?

- How do some ethnic movements in North East India express their desire for greater autonomy?

- What is the challenge specifically faced by ethnic movements in North East India?

- The Bodo Accord of 2003 aimed to address some concerns of the Bodoland movement in Assam by granting Autonomy to the Bodoland Territorial Council. True or false?

LET'S SUM UP:

India boasts a remarkable legacy of social activism. From environmental movements like Chipko's tree-hugging protests and Narmada Bachao Andolan's fight against displacement, to the women's movement's struggle for equality, these groups have consistently championed a more just and sustainable future. Their paths are not without hurdles. Striking a balance between progress and environmental protection, and overcoming entrenched social inequalities remain formidable challenges. However, their unwavering efforts are fundamental to India's advancement. Further enriching the landscape are various ethnic movements, addressing issues of marginalization and cultural identity. Whether advocating for autonomy or separate states, tribal communities fighting for their rights, or the Dalit movement challenging caste discrimination, these movements, while sometimes sparking friction, hold immense value. Recognizing their needs is crucial for building an India that is truly inclusive and celebrates its vibrant social tapestry, from environmental consciousness to gender equality and cultural diversity.

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- Rao, M.S.A. 1979, Social Movements in India, Manohar Publications New Delhi

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- Singh. K.S. 1982, Tribal Movements in India, Manohar, New Delhi.

ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- What is the main focus of the ecological and environmental movements in India, as opposed to traditional class-based struggles?
- ➢ Environmental concerns with social implications
- Is Green Revolution an ecological movement?
- ➢ Green Revolution focused on agricultural practices, not ecological activism
- What is the significance of the Chipko Movement?
- ➢ It emphasized the role of local communities in forest conservation.
- What are the challenges faced by the ecological and environmental movements in India?
- ➢ Lack of public awareness about environmental issues b) Finding a balance between economic development and environmental protection and c) Limited access to advanced technologies for pollution control.
- How do grassroots initiatives contribute to the ecological and environmental movement landscape in India?
- ➢ By implementing community-based solutions for resource conservation
- What social evils did early reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar challenge in the 19th century?
- ➢ Sati (widow burning) and child marriage.
- Name an event in the 1970s that is credited with reigniting the women's movement in India?
- ➢ The Shah Bano case.

- What strategy does the women's movement use to raise public awareness and garner support for their causes?
- ➢ Organizing public protests and rallies.
- What is a major factor contributing to the emergence of ethnic movements in India?
- ➢ Historical marginalization of certain communities
- What are the challenges faced by many ethnic movements in India?
- ➢ Lack of media coverage, b) internal divisions within the ethnic group and c) only having support from other countries.
- The British policy of "divide and rule" is considered a factor contributing to ethnic movements in North East India. True or False?
- ➢ True.
- How do some ethnic movements in North East India express their desire for greater autonomy?
- ➢ By seeking control over local governance within the Indian federation.
- What is the challenge specifically faced by ethnic movements in North East India?
- ➢ Impact of unrest and violence on development.
- The Bodo Accord of 2003 aimed to address some concerns of the Bodoland movement in Assam by granting Autonomy to the Bodoland Territorial Council. True or false?
- ➢ True.

MODEL QUESTIONS/ ASSIGNMENT

1. How new social movements arises in India?

2. Write a note on women's movement in India.

3. Why North-East India witnessed many ethnic movements? Discuss few important ethnic movements.