Original Article

A Study on Awareness about Social and Cultural issues in India among B.Ed. Student-teachers

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Abstract

This research paper focuses on social and cultural issues in India and as we know that Indian culture is the heritage of social norms and technologies that originated in or are associated with the ethno-linguistically diverse India, pertaining to the Indian subcontinent until 1947 and the Republic of India post-1947. India's languages, religions, dance, music, architecture, food, and customs differ from place to place within the country. India is characterised by more ethnic and religious groups than most other countries. Aside from the roughly 2000 castes, there are eight 'major' religions and 22 official languages. Culture plays an important role in the development of any nation. It represents a set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices. Culture and creativity manifest themselves in almost all economic, social and other activities.

A country as diverse as India is symbolized by the plurality of its culture. India has one of the world's largest collections of songs, music, dance, theatre, folk traditions, performing arts, rites and rituals, paintings and writings that are known, as the 'Intangible Cultural Heritage' (ICH) of humanity. At present, people of India like to celebrate the merging of India's multicultural landscape and deep artistic and intellectual heritage with the dawning of the Information Age and the expansion of mass media, which have made it one of the world's 21st-century cultural powerhouses. In India many social and cultural issues have been risen and every Indian should not neglect it but have to come together with proper solutions. In the words of Mark Twain- "India is, the cradle of the human race, the birthplace of human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legend, and the great grandmother of tradition. Our most valuable and most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India only."

Introduction:

India is now officially the fifth largest economy in the world, India presents immense opportunities to open up socially. Indians are warm, hospitable people. Traditionally Indians have been considered as family oriented, religious, impatient, corrupt, group-dependent, time-insensitive, hierarchal and status conscious. These perceptions are being challenged as Indians move from age-old joint family systems to nuclear families and assume leadership roles in global businesses. However, in every society there are socio-cultural issues that need to be addressed and tackled. Security of people, particularly of the vulnerable sections, such as women, children and the elderly people are a major concern in the contemporary Indian society. In this lesson, we will read about the major socio-cultural issues that need our immediate attention, if we have to preserve our social and cultural values. Some of the important socio-cultural issues that need to be addressed today are casteism, dowry, communalism, drinking, drug addiction, etc. The issues discussed here are not comprehensive. There are many other issues faced by the nation in general and regions and communities in particular, that all of us should think about. India is a diverse country with a rich cultural heritage, but it also faces numerous cultural problems that affect its social fabric.

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Here are some of the significant social and cultural problems in India

Social Issues

1. Caste System: The caste system is a deep-rooted cultural problem in India, leading to social inequality, discrimination, and violence.

2. Dowry System: The dowry system is another significant cultural problem, where the bride's family is expected to pay a large sum of money to the groom's family, leading to financial burdens and exploitation.

3. Child Marriage: Child marriage is a cultural problem that persists in some parts of India, where girls are married off at a young age, leading to health complications, education deprivation, and social isolation.

Gender-Related Issues

1. Patriarchal Society: India is a patriarchal society, where men hold significant power and influence, leading to gender inequality, discrimination, and violence against women.

2. Female Foeticide: Female foeticide is a cultural problem in India, where the preference for male children leads to the abortion of female fetuses, resulting in a skewed sex ratio.

3. Domestic Violence: Domestic violence is a significant cultural problem in India, where women are subjected to physical, emotional, and psychological abuse within their homes.

Communal and Religious Issues

1. Communal Tensions: Communal tensions between different religious groups, particularly Hindus and Muslims, are a significant cultural problem in India, leading to violence, riots, and social unrest.

2. Religious Fundamentalism: Religious fundamentalism is a cultural problem in India, where some groups promote intolerance, extremism, and violence in the name of religion.

3. Cultural Homogenization: Cultural homogenization is a problem in India, where the dominant culture suppresses or erases the cultural identities of minority groups.

Other Issues

1. Corruption: Corruption is a significant cultural problem in India, where bribery, nepotism, and cronyism are widespread, leading to social and economic inequality.

2. Superstition and Blind Faith: Superstition and blind faith are cultural problems in India, where people often prioritize religious or cultural beliefs over scientific evidence and rational thinking.

3. Lack of Education and Awareness: Lack of education and awareness is a cultural problem in India, where many people lack access to quality education, leading to social and economic disparities.

Facts in Indian society:

Prevalence of Domestic Violence: - According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)2019-21, 29.3% of ever-married women aged 15-49 have experienced physical, emotional, or sexual violence from their spouse. The NFHS survey also found that 14.6% of women reported experiencing physical violence, 13.1% reported emotional violence, and 5.4% reported sexual violence.

Statistics on Violence against Women

Dowry deaths: 1 every 78 hours; Sexual harassment: 1 every 59 minutes; Rape: 1 every 34 minutes; Torture: 1 every 12 minutes; Domestic violence: 1 in 3 married women.

Review of Related Literature:

Biswajit Ghosh (2017) Conducted a study on Cultural Changes and Challenges in the Era of Globalization: The Case of India Contemporary globalization has produced many changes in our economy, society, culture, and politics. To many, the quality of resilience that Indian culture had shown earlier is slowly diminishing now. But, this article argues that globalization is not a unidirectional process and there are several contrary trajectories, which have generated opposite reactions.

Renu Batra (2016)

India struggles with gender inequality issues beyond just equal economic growth and access to educational resource opportunities. Gender inequality exists in the form of socially constructed, predefined gender roles firmly anchored in India's sociocultural fabric that has deep cultural and historical roots. Sociocultural influences have spillover effects across all domains, including the organizational workforce, and social and political contexts. This unquestionable influence is still accepted as the norm within the societal and familial periphery.

1. Rationale: India is a country rich in diversity, but it also faces numerous social challenges. These issues, ranging from gender inequality to healthcare access, affect millions of lives and require urgent attention. Understanding these social problems is

essential for fostering a fair and just society. social issues in India are complex and deeply rooted in the country's history and culture. From education and health to gender equality and caste discrimination, these challenges affect millions of lives. While the government has made strides in addressing these problems, much work remains to be done.

2. Theoretical base: This research study has the base of psychological theory of Tajfel & Turner's **social identity theory** and Baron, Byrne, and Suls (1989) it deals with social psychology as "the scientific field that seeks to understand the nature and causes of individual behaviour in social situations" social psychology is the scientific study of how people's thoughts, feelings, beliefs, intentions, and goals are constructed within a social context by the actual or imagined interactions with others. It, therefore, looks at human behavior as influenced by other people and the conditions under which social behavior and feelings occur.

3. Statement of Problem: "To Study on Awareness about Social and Cultural issues in India among B.Ed. Student-teachers"

4. Operational Definitions:
a) **Awareness:** Knowledge of student-teachers toward Social and Cultural issues.
b) **Social issues:** problem that affects many people within a society.
c) **Cultural issue:** covers a broad range of concerns including race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and disability.
d) **B.Ed.:** Well-designed Professional course gives knowledge to become a teacher.
e) **Student-Teachers:** A trainee who studies the professional teacher education course.

5. Objectives:
1) To find out the knowledge of Social and cultural issues among student-teachers.
2) To make student-teachers more aware about Social and Cultural issues.
3) To suggest and inculcate the sense of being social and cultural sensitive.

6. Scope: A research is related to student-teachers of B.Ed. College in Maharashtra state.

7. Limitations:
1) Sample was selected from one B.Ed. College from the Maharashtra State.

2) The results of research are depended on the responses received from student-teachers.

8. Delimitations:
1) Present Research study is delimited only for Social and cultural issues in India.
2) Student-teachers who study in college of Education were considered for the research.

9. Methodology:
Survey method was used for the present study which is a type of Descriptive research.
Procedure: Selection of Research area---review of related literature---defining the Problem---Developing the data collection tool---Data collection--- data analysis---Results---Report writing.

10. Population & Sample: Student teachers from one B.Ed. college of Maharashtra State.
Sample: 01 B.Ed. college has been selected by using purposive sampling method for the data collection. Total 20 student-teachers have been selected by using incidental sampling method.

11. Tools of Data Collection:
A questionnaire is developed by researcher, 15 multiple choice questions were included in the questionnaire. Around 30 minutes were allotted to student teachers to place right tick mark for appropriate answer. But only few questions have been included in this paper.

12. Data Analysis: The data of this study analyzed by the researcher using tabulation techniques and percentage in the following way….

Table 1. The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021 in India the Bill Increases the minimum age of marriage for females to …. years

No.	Answer	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	18	11	55%
2	20	00	00%
3	**21**	09	45%

Observation: 45% Student-teachers know about the age of marriage for females.

Table 2. In India there are 3,000 castes and …. sub-castes in India.

No.	Answer	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	**25000**	14	70%
2	4000	03	15%

3	8000	03	15%

Observation: 70% Student-teachers have the knowledge about Indian castes.

Table 3. Dowry Prohibition Act, Indian law, enacted on ….intended to prevent the giving or receiving of a dowry.

No.	Answer	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	**May 1, 1961**	10	50%
2	May 5 1998	07	35%
3	May 1 1969	03	15%

Observation: 50% Student-teachers know about Dowry prohibition Act.

Table 4. Poverty is one of the important characteristics of India, and nearly ….of rural people are below poverty line.

No.	Answer	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	**45%**	03	15%
2	40%	07	35%
3	56%	10	50%

Observation: 15% student-teachers know about the status of poverty.

Table 5. Violence occurs in about …. per cent of women globally in their lifetime.

No.	Answer	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	**35**	04	20%
2	34	07	35%
3	33	09	45%

Observation: 20% Student-teachers are aware about the women related violence.

Table 6. India is the … least corrupt nation out of 180 countries, according to the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index reported by Transparency International

No.	Answer	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	**93**	11	55%
2	80	06	30%
3	12	03	15%

Observation: 55% student-teachers have idea about Indian corruption.

Table 7. In …. Maharashtra enacted the Maharashtra Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifice and Other Inhuman, Evil and Aghori Practices and Black Magic Act, which banned the practice of human sacrifice in the state.

No.	Answer	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	**2013**	10	50%
2	2012	06	30%
3	2021	04	20%

Observation: 50% student-teachers know about this act.

Table 8. According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), India currently produces more than ……tonnes of plastic waste every day on average

No.	Answer	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	**25000**	12	60%
2	2000	04	20%
3	20000	04	20%

Observation: Almost all student-teachers know about this open truth of pollution.

Table 9. In 2014, there were only around 9,622 cases of cybercrime, but by the end of 2024, this number is projected to exceed…illustrating the severity of the issue.

No.	Answer	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	**80000**	12	60%
2	40000	05	25%
3	50000	03	15%

Observation: Almost all student-teachers aware about the threat of cybercrime.

Results:

1) All student-teachers don't have much knowledge of social and culture issues in India.

2) Student-teachers are not much aware about Dowry prohibition act.

3) Student-teachers know that at present also there is no any control on child marriages.

4) Student-teachers are not much aware about that women are direct victim of violence.

5) Student-teachers are not aware about the cyber crime and its effects in coming days.

Conclusion:

1) Legal education to the students should be started from the High school level.
2) Awareness programmes on *beti bachao beti padao* should be organised.
3) There should be direct eradication of dowry system from the society.
4) Proper orientation about cybercrime and digital literacy should be transferred among students.
5) These is need of inculcation of work place-based values, & National integration.

Discussion of the Results:

Social and cultural issues in India are complex and deeply rooted in the country's history and culture. From education and health to gender equality and caste discrimination, these challenges affect millions of lives. While the government has made strides in addressing these problems, much work remains to be done. It is crucial for society to come together to find solutions that promote equality and justice for all. By focusing on education, healthcare, and social reforms, India can pave the way for a brighter future. Everyone has a role to play in this journey towards a more inclusive society. This research will be helpful for Indian Government to implement new policies to maintain the social and cultural integration.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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