



MAINS 2025 GS-1 SOCIETY PREDICTIONS & THEIR 1-PAGER NOTES

1. Women Issues – Working Women, Maternity/Menstrual Leaves, POSH etc.

What (Nature of Women's Issues in the Workforce)

1. Women face **triple burden** – productive, reproductive, and community work, with unequal division of labor.
2. Inadequate access to **maternity/menstrual leave** restricts women's participation in the formal economy.
3. Workplace harassment persists despite legal frameworks like **POSH Act, 2013**.
4. **Wage gap**, glass ceiling, and feminization of certain sectors show horizontal and vertical segregation.
5. Informal sector women face greater vulnerability due to lack of institutional safety nets.

Why (Structural and Cultural Roots of Issues)

1. **Patriarchal mindset** defines women primarily as caregivers, restricting their career aspirations and progression.
2. **Occupational sex segregation** limits women to low-paying, low-skill jobs (nurses, teachers, garment workers).
3. Male-dominated institutions foster a culture of silence around workplace sexual harassment.
4. Lack of gender-sensitive policy design ignores biological realities like menstruation or maternal health.
5. **Social reproduction theory** explains undervaluation of care work primarily performed by women.

How (Policy, Legislation, Activism Responses)

1. **Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017** provides 26 weeks of paid leave in formal sector.
2. Some states (e.g. Bihar, Kerala) offer **menstrual leave**, sparking national-level debate and policy interest.
3. **POSH Act, 2013** mandates Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs) in workplaces to address harassment.
4. Judiciary has expanded definitions—e.g., **Vishaka Guidelines, SC ruling in Medha Kotwal Lele case**.
5. Grassroots movements like **Women in Cinema Collective (WCC), Kerala** challenged patriarchal norms in media.

Positive Developments (+ve)

1. Increasing number of **women-centric policies** show state's move towards **gender-responsive governance**.
2. **Digital literacy campaigns** empower women entrepreneurs through platforms like SHGs and e-commerce.
3. WCC influenced **gender-neutral grievance redressal system** in Malayalam film industry post 2017.
4. Inclusion of **paternity leave** in policy discourse fosters shared domestic responsibility.
5. Women's labour participation in **gig economy and start-ups** shows new occupational mobility.

Negative Trends (-ve)

1. Maternity leave compliance is poor in small firms; many avoid hiring women of reproductive age.
2. Only **16% organisations** comply fully with POSH norms (NITI Aayog, 2023).
3. Informal workers like **ASHA, anganwadi** receive no menstrual or maternity protections.
4. Backlash against **menstrual leave policy** reflects cultural taboos and institutionalised misogyny.

Recent Government Initiatives (Last 1–2 Years)

1. **Code on Social Security, 2020** extends maternity benefits to gig and platform workers (not yet enforced).
2. **Mission Shakti 2.0 (2023)** integrates safety, empowerment, and grievance redress under one umbrella.
3. Kerala's **Menstrual Benefit Policy (2023)** offers menstrual leave to girl students in state universities.
4. **Digital Gender Atlas** launched to track state-level performance on women-centric indicators.
5. POSH e-Box portal revamped to strengthen workplace grievance redressal for women.

Current Affairs (Last 1 Year)

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1. Malayalam actors reignited debate on workplace harassment and POSH compliance.
2. Supreme Court's **gender-neutral ICC ruling (2024)** made POSH applicable to all genders.
3. Bihar and Kerala led demand for **nationwide menstrual leave policy** in Parliament debates.
4. NCRB 2023 report showed increase in workplace harassment cases, revealing weak implementation of POSH.
5. Women-led protests in tech companies over **lack of menstrual health infrastructure** made national headlines.

Challenges That Remain

1. **Cultural taboos** around menstruation deter institutional adoption of menstrual leave policies.
2. **Maternity benefits exclude informal sector**, where majority of women workers are concentrated.
3. Implementation gap—only 50% workplaces have functioning **Internal Complaints Committees** under POSH.
4. Persistent **glass ceiling** in judiciary, military, STEM—vertical occupational segregation remains entrenched.
5. Gig and platform work lacks protective labour rights for women (Uber, Zomato, etc.).

Way Forward

1. Enforce POSH via **labour audits** and linking ICC formation to business licensing.
2. Extend maternity/menstrual benefits to informal workers via **universal social security coverage**.
3. Include **gender budgeting** in corporate ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) reporting mandates.
4. Introduce **gender-sensitisation modules** at workplace, especially in STEM and armed forces.
5. Promote **shared domestic responsibilities** through paternity leave and flexible work for both genders.

2. Marriage-related Issues in Indian Society—focusing on Maintenance, Alimony, Live-in Relationships (UCC), Marriage Age (Himachal Pradesh), and Marital Rape.

What (Nature of Marriage-Related Issues in India)

1. Marriage intertwines legal, religious, and social norms, influencing personal laws and societal expectations.
2. Maintenance and alimony are governed by personal laws, leading to varied interpretations and applications.
3. Live-in relationships challenge traditional norms, prompting legal debates on their recognition and rights.
4. Child marriage persists despite laws, with states like Himachal Pradesh raising marriage age to 21.
5. Marital rape remains a contentious issue, with ongoing debates about its criminalization in India.

Why (Underlying Causes of These Issues)

1. Patriarchal structures perpetuate gender inequalities in marriage, affecting women's rights and autonomy.
2. Diverse personal laws create inconsistencies in marriage-related rights across different religious communities.
3. Societal stigma around live-in relationships hinders their acceptance and legal recognition.
4. Economic dependence often forces women to remain in unfavorable marital situations.
5. Lack of awareness and education contributes to the continuation of child marriages in certain regions.

How (Legal and Policy Responses)

1. The Hindu Marriage Act and Special Marriage Act provide frameworks for marriage and divorce.
2. Supreme Court guidelines standardize alimony calculations, considering factors like income and duration.
3. Uttarakhand's UCC mandates registration of live-in relationships, granting them legal recognition.
4. Himachal Pradesh amended laws to increase women's marriage age to 21, promoting gender equality.
5. Courts emphasize maintenance obligations, ruling that personal financial commitments don't override spousal support.





Positive Developments

1. Legal reforms are increasingly recognizing women's rights within marriage and upon dissolution.
2. Raising marriage age aims to empower women through extended educational and personal development opportunities.
3. UCC initiatives strive for uniformity in personal laws, promoting secularism and equality.
4. Judicial interventions ensure fair maintenance and alimony, reflecting changing societal norms.
5. Recognition of live-in relationships provides legal protection to partners and their children.

Negative Aspects

1. Implementation gaps persist, with many unaware of their legal rights and protections.
2. Resistance from conservative groups hampers the adoption of progressive laws like the UCC.
3. Live-in relationship regulations may infringe on privacy and personal freedoms.
4. Economic disparities continue to disadvantage women in divorce and maintenance proceedings.
5. Child marriages still occur, especially in rural areas, despite legal prohibitions.

Recent Government Initiatives

1. Himachal Pradesh's amendment to raise women's marriage age aligns with national gender equality goals.
2. Uttarakhand's UCC introduces uniform laws for marriage, divorce, and live-in relationships.
3. Supreme Court's alimony guidelines provide clarity on maintenance calculations across cases.
4. Delhi High Court rulings reinforce the precedence of maintenance obligations over personal financial commitments.
5. Legal provisions now recognize maintenance rights for partners in long-term live-in relationships.

Various **successful candidates of UPSC CSE-24** were part of Ethics/Essay Modules & Other Initiatives. **Some of them, with their clickable feedback, are AIR-2, 28, [32](#), [35](#), 53, [54](#), [55](#), 57, [61](#), 72, [91](#), [119](#), [217](#), 219, 247, 256, [261](#), 287, [299](#), 328, 351, 450, 525, 579, 590, 728, 813, 871, 905 etc.**

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Current Affairs (Last 1 Year)

1. Supreme Court increased alimony in a landmark case, emphasizing fair maintenance for divorced women.
2. Delhi High Court ruled that personal loans don't override maintenance obligations to spouse and child.
3. Uttarakhand High Court addressed challenges to the UCC, focusing on live-in relationship regulations.
4. Supreme Court quashed rape charges in a case involving consensual relationship and false promise of marriage.
5. Government opposed criminalizing marital rape, citing potential misuse and societal implications.

Challenges That Remain

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1. Uniform implementation of marriage laws across diverse communities remains a complex issue.
2. Balancing individual rights with societal norms poses challenges in live-in relationship regulations.
3. Ensuring economic justice for women post-divorce requires consistent legal enforcement.
4. Awareness campaigns are needed to educate citizens about their rights and legal provisions.
5. Addressing societal stigma around non-traditional relationships is essential for inclusive policy-making.

Way Forward

1. Promote legal literacy programs to educate individuals about marriage-related rights and responsibilities.
2. Encourage uniform civil laws that respect diversity while ensuring equality and justice.
3. Strengthen enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with maintenance and alimony rulings.
4. Facilitate open dialogues to reduce stigma around live-in relationships and alternative family structures.
5. Implement community-based monitoring to prevent child marriages and support women's empowerment.

Transgender Issues in Indian Society, covering the Olympic debate and Government initiatives

What (Definition & Context)

1. Transgender persons have gender identity differing from sex assigned at birth (Nalsa judgment, 2014).
2. Olympic issue: complex global debate on trans athlete inclusion, fairness, and eligibility criteria.
3. Indian social context: trans rights enshrined in Article 14/15/16/19/21 of the Constitution post 2014.
4. Personal laws don't address gender diversity; trans inclusion remains legally fragmented (e.g. marriage, adoption).
5. Issues include healthcare, identity, safety, employment, social acceptance, and participation in sport and public life.

Why (Structural & Sociological Roots)

1. **Patriarchy** and binary gender systems exclude gender-diverse identities in social and legal frameworks.
2. **Intersectionality**: trans individuals face layered marginalization due to caste, class, and disability.
3. Social stigma and religion-based prejudice perpetuate discrimination in public spaces and institutions.
4. Lack of gender-sensitive education fosters prejudice, bullying, and exclusion from early schooling.
5. Sports controversies reflect tension between **fairness doctrine** and rights-based inclusion (e.g. Paris Olympics).

How (Mechanisms & Policy Response)

1. 2019 Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act aims at non-discrimination in public spheres.
2. SMILE Scheme provides counselling, skill development, livelihood, and sanitation support for trans persons.
3. NALSA (2014) ruling recognized self-perceived gender and mandated transgender welfare boards.
4. IOC allows individual sports federations to set eligibility, e.g., hormone therapy for trans athletes.
5. Indian courts (Kerala, TN, Telangana HC) expand gender-neutral documentation and affirmative action policies.

Positive Outcomes

1. Kerala HC allows gender-neutral "parent" instead of "father/mother" for first biological transgender couple.
2. Tamil Nadu inducted 50 trans persons into Home Guard services—symbolic of inclusion.
3. Crisis intervention centre in Kerala for trans individuals offers mental-health, legal aid.
4. Public infrastructure upgrades: toilets in Chandigarh and Nagpur are now transgender-friendly.
5. Reservation policies emerging; Karnataka and West Bengal introduce trans quotas, lifted Tamil Nadu's ban.





Negative Aspects

1. 2019 Act criticized for bureaucratising change of gender via district magistrate's certificate requirements.
2. Ground reality: high incidence of violence and low NCRB reporting; punitive laws insufficient.
3. Olympic fairness debate: many sports ban trans women citing biological advantage concerns.
4. Implementation gaps persist: lack of trans welfare boards and grievance redress in most states.
5. Social stigma continues: bullying, low employment, and underrepresentation in political and public spheres.

Government's Recent Initiatives

1. SMILE scheme supports rehabilitation, mental healthcare, skill training, economic linkage for trans persons.
2. Transgender Pension and Ayushman Bharat TG Plus extend financial, healthcare security.
3. States establishing crisis centres (Kerala) and Home Guard inclusion (TN) strengthen social integration.
4. Transgender-friendly sanitation in public toilet guidelines across municipalities (e.g., Nagpur, Chandigarh).
5. Affirmative action: Telangana HC orders vertical reservations and welfare board formation.

Current Affairs (Last 1 Year)

1. Kerala HC's landmark gender-neutral parenting order empowers transgender couples legally.
2. Singapore National Olympic Council outlines specific frameworks for trans athlete eligibility.
3. IOC's Paris 2024 policies spark renewed debate—cases like Imane Khelif's participation controversy.
4. Odisha and TN launch transgender quotas; WB follows with 1% govt employment reservation.
5. NALSA, 2014, cited in policy dialogues on gender-inclusive citizenship and human dignity.

Challenges That Remain

1. Deep-rooted **social stigma** and lack of gender-sensitive pedagogy in schools and workplaces.
2. Data poverty: crime and exclusion under-reported, limiting evidence-based policymaking.
3. Policy fragmentation: divergent state implementation of welfare boards and services.
4. Sports inclusion issue unresolved due to competing mandates of equality and fairness.
5. Lack of robust **legal sociology** research on trans realities hampers sociocultural policy relevance.

Way Forward

1. Amend Trans Act to allow self-certification of gender, removing district magistrate requirement.
2. Implement State transgender welfare boards with participatory budgets and grievance redress.
3. Introduce national IOC-aligned guidelines for trans athletes balancing inclusion and fairness science-based.
4. Expand affirmative action via central legislation ensuring educational, employment reservation and political representation.
5. Launch nationwide sensitization in curricula and public campaigns fostering gender sensitivity and social inclusion.

Key Sociological Concepts & Thinkers

- Patriarchy, Intersectionality, Social exclusion, Structural violence, Symbolic recognition (Taylor 1994), Legal pluralism, Human rights discourse, Identity politics, Gender performativity (Butler).

Population: Natalism (pro-natalist policies), North vs South disparities, Silver Dividend, Women's Reproductive Rights

What (Concepts Defined)

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1. **Natalism**: policies promoting higher birth rates, often through incentives, aimed at population growth.
2. **North vs South**: demographic divide; northern states high fertility, southern states below replacement levels (<2.1 TFR).
3. **Silver Dividend**: economic benefits from healthy aging population engaging productively beyond traditional retirement.
4. **Women's reproductive rights**: autonomy over contraception, abortion, fertility decisions, fundamental to gender equality.
5. **Societal implication**: demographic transition influenced by patriarchy, modernization, gender norms, affecting fertility and aging.

Why (Sociological & Structural Drivers)

1. **Patriarchy** and son preference fuel high fertility, particularly in North India.
2. **Education and female autonomy** in South correlate with lower fertility and better reproductive rights.
3. Aging population due to falling fertility rates necessitates silver dividend via social capital utilization.
4. Reproductive rights empower women, challenging norms and enabling demographic transitions.
5. Natalist incentives sometimes reflect **state-led demographic engineering**, risking individual autonomy.

How (Policies & Mechanisms)

1. Family planning through National Population Policy 2000: focused on spacing, voluntary methods.
2. Some states enforce two-child norms with incentives or penalties, raising reproductive justice concerns.
3. Budget 2024-25 emphasised demographic, gender, and silver dividends—integrated health, adolescent, and elderly support.
4. Ayushman Bharat expanded elderly health coverage, integrating geriatric care under NHM.
5. Reproductive rights promoted through increasing contraception access and legal safeguards for abortion services.

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Positive Outcomes

1. **Demographic dividend** in South boosts skilled workforce, aiding economic growth and human capital.
2. Silver dividend initiatives mobilize elderly into mentorship and community roles.
3. Delay in marriage and childbearing among women (South) enhances education and career opportunities.
4. Expanded reproductive rights support individual agency and gender equality, per CEDAW commitments.
5. Integrated health budgets reflect holistic lifecycle approach—adolescents, mothers, elderly tied together.

Negative Aspects

1. Two-child norms threaten reproductive justice; may lead to coercion and selective practices.
2. North–South divide creates unequal development, healthcare, education, and gender outcomes.

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3. Silver economy is nascent; policy-practice gaps hinder active elderly participation.
4. Persistent gender norms restrict women's control over reproductive decisions.
5. Emergency-era sterilization abuses cast long shadow; trust deficit remains in family planning.

Government's Recent Initiatives

1. **Budget 2024–25/2025–26** prioritised silver, gender, demographic dividends, expanded adolescent health and elderly coverage.
2. Ayushman Bharat includes geriatric services for aging population.
3. Reproductive education strengthened via adolescent and youth health programmes under NHM.
4. Push towards universal health and elder-friendly infrastructure under silver economy framework.
5. Advocacy by civil society (PFI) for rights-based policy, balancing demographic goals and autonomy.

Current Affairs (2024–2025)

1. UNFPA data warns elderly population to reach over 20% by 2050, prompting silver economy discourse.
2. Population Foundation urges investments in demographic, gender, silver dividends in Union Budgets.
3. Heated debates on two-child incentives continue; some states reassess coercive elements.
4. Digital health initiatives launched for elderly—telemedicine, mobile clinics, geriatric tracking.
5. Ongoing global dialogue on reproductive freedom amidst policies tightening in some states.

Challenges That Remain

1. Health and SRH services disparity between states undermines nationwide reproductive rights implementation.
2. Silver economy focus lacks robust data and elderly engagement mechanisms.
3. Patriarchal family structures curtail women's autonomy over fertility decisions.
4. Ethical concerns over potential coercion persist in demographic control policies.
5. Disaggregated data on SRH, fertility, and aging hinder targeted sociological and policy interventions.

Way Forward

1. Promote **rights-based family planning** with voluntary, informed consent and gender equality framing.
2. Strengthen **Silver economy policies**: incentives for elderly employment, education, and community participation.
3. Bridge North–South inequities through regionally tailored health, education, and women's empowerment programmes.
4. Integrate reproductive and elderly health into **NEP, gender budgeting, and public health priorities**.
5. Enhance public awareness via **legal literacy**, behavioural change campaigns informed by sociologists like Sen and Bourdieu.

Key Sociological Concepts & Thinkers

- Demographic transition theory (Notestein), Demographic dividend, Silver economy,
- Feminist reproductive justice (Roberts), Patriarchy, Intersectionality, Gender budgeting, Rights-based approach,
- Social determinants of health, Population engineering, Structural violence

Caste: Relevance of Caste Identity & Demand for Caste Census

What (Concept & Context)

1. Caste system is hereditary, endogamous social stratification rooted in ritual hierarchy (Varna–Jati framework).

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2. Caste remains politics' vehicle for mobilization and resource bargaining (Ghurye's theory of caste-politics).
3. Caste identity influences education, employment, marriage, and social capital – integral to social arrangement.
4. Demand for caste census seeks updated data, addressing social justice deficits and reservation equity.
5. Current census (2026–27) will include OBC enumeration after nearly a century (first since 1931).

Why (Importance & Sociological Rationale)

1. Caste identity provides group solidarity but sustains social inequality and hierarchical order.
2. Caste census enables evidence-based affirmative action (Mandal Commission, Justice Rohini Commission).
3. Symbolic recognition validates subaltern groups' dignity (Axel Honneth's recognition theory).
4. Lack of granular data hinders precise welfare targeting and reinforces dominant caste bias.
5. Critiques argue enumeration could solidify caste boundaries, undermining quest for casteless equality.

How (Mechanism & Demand Process)

1. Cabinet approved caste census inclusion in upcoming population census (Census Act amendment).
2. States like Bihar, Telangana, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh have conducted state-level caste surveys.
3. Survey data used for OBC sub-categorization and reallocation of reservation quotas.
4. Political parties demand caste census for power-sharing and electoral appeal.
5. Process initiated digitally, beginning April–June 2026, to be completed by March 2027.

Positive Outcomes

1. Enables accurate reservation allocation to underrepresented sub-castes, promoting social justice.
2. Improves targeted policy design in education, health, employment and poverty alleviation.
3. Empirical data may reduce biases in corporate DEI frameworks and public service quotas.
4. Transparency in affirmative action enhances legitimacy and public trust in state institutions.
5. Community mapping aids grassroots representation, strengthening democracy and social inclusion.

Negative Aspects

1. Caste enumeration risks reifying identities, undermining goal of caste dissolution.
2. Political misuse may polarize communities and fracture social cohesion.
3. Risk of quota pressure exceeding Supreme Court's 50% cap, triggering litigation.
4. Data integrity issues emerged in SECC-2011 and state surveys (underreporting concerns).
5. Resource diversion to census may delay social policy implementation elsewhere.

Government's Recent Initiatives

1. Cabinet formalised caste census in 2026–27, first since 1931 (excluding SC/ST).
2. Bihar, Telangana, Odisha, and Andhra Pradesh conducted caste surveys for policy mapping.
3. Karnataka and Bihar's surveys inform demand for sub-quotas within OBC category.
4. Parliamentarians like Rahul Gandhi pledge amendment to lift reservation cap, backed by caste census.
5. Political leaders like Himanta Sarma (Assam) champion caste data for minority sub-groups.

Challenges That Remain

1. Ensuring methodological clarity to avoid data manipulation or faulty enumeration.
2. Balancing caste visibility with fostering national solidarity and casteless aspirations.
3. Judicial clarity needed on reservation cap revision tied to caste data.
4. State-level surveys vary in quality and transparency; standardization required.





5. Political consensus challenging; upper castes often resist expanded reservation demands.

Way Forward

1. Implement transparent, self-reported caste enumeration in national census with expert supervision.
2. Use data for micro-targeted welfare—education, health, livelihood upliftment for subaltern castes.
3. Update reservation policy via Justice Rohini's findings and constitutional amendments.
4. Strengthen anti-discrimination laws in private sector using caste census insights.
5. Integrate caste-data education in curriculums while promoting inter-caste integration dialogues.

Key Sociological Concepts & Thinkers

- **G.S. Ghurye:** caste-politics fusion
- **Louis Dumont:** caste hierarchies
- **Intersectionality:** layered marginalisation by caste, class, gender
- **Social justice, recognition theory** (Axel Honneth), **symbolic/structural violence**
- **Reservation equity, affirmative action, quota sub-categorisation**

Urbanization: Urban Flooding & Drainage issues (with Delhi examples) – Effects on Vulnerable Sections

What (Context & Definitions)

1. Urban flooding arises from intense rainfall and insufficient drainage, causing waterlogging in built environments.
2. Drainage refers to sewer/stormwater systems; inadequacy leads to pluvial flooding and public health threats.
3. Delhi experiences frequent flood hotspots—ITO, Minto Bridge, Saket—due to infrastructure neglect and climate stress.
4. Vulnerable sections include slum dwellers, elderly, women, disabled, socially excluded in low-lying neighborhoods.
5. Urban flooding is intersection of **urban political ecology** and **social vulnerability**, highlighting governance failure.

Why (Structural & Sociological Drivers)

1. Rapid urbanisation and encroachment on water bodies disrupt natural drainage patterns.
2. Fragmented urban governance and inter-departmental silos lead to drainage dysfunction.
3. Climate change intensifies monsoon patterns and Western Disturbances, worsening flood frequency.
4. Marginalized groups disproportionately live in flood-prone zones due to **spatial inequality**.
5. Incorporation of flood-risk ignorance rooted in **modernist neglect of ecosystem services** (Bhagidari failure).

How (Processes & Responses)

1. Delhi mandates drain desilting by June 15; GPS-tracked cleanup in 200+ critical spots.
2. SDRF and SDRF-NDRF integration via Emergency Operations Centre for disaster preparedness.
3. GMDA constructing temporary drains near Delhi–Gurgaon Expressway, removing blocked culverts.
4. Bhubaneswar/ULBs instructed to repair drains ahead of monsoon to ensure functioning networks.
5. National investments (\$300 million) announced for flood management, water conservation in major cities.

Positive Outcomes

1. Coordinated PWD, Irrigation, Delhi Jal Board efforts show improved preparedness culture.
2. Wireless base camps enable real-time coordination during Yamuna floods—enhanced resilience model.





3. Community volunteers (“Apad Mitras”) in Guwahati reflect emergent **public–community governance synergy**.
4. Ecological embankments (Najafgarh) restored, integrating forest cover with drainage infrastructure.
5. National program includes recharge zones and nature-based stormwater solutions—progressive IWRM approach.

Negative Aspects

1. Recurring waterlogging at Minto Bridge shows inertia in resolving structural failures.
2. Drain desilting often superficial—silt returns, indicating lack of systematic maintenance.
3. Vulnerable communities remain infrastructure-poor, with negligible access to shelters or early warnings.
4. Urban expansion on recharge zones (Ahmedabad 33%) exacerbates flood risk immensely.
5. Governance remains siloed; lack of integrated spatial planning amplifies flood crises.

Current Affairs (2024–2025)

1. Delhi Govt preparing emergency response systems ahead of monsoon, integrating departments.
2. PWD officials facing suspension for negligence at flood hotspots like Minto Bridge.
3. GPS-monitored desilting progress and proactive announcements signal governance accountability.
4. Guidelines issued for urban water body recharge zones and natural drainage restoration.
5. FM’s urban flood-budget signals shift towards resilience, climate-compatible urban planning.

Challenges That Remain

1. Fragmented bureaucracy still delays inter-departmental coordination needed for drainage management.
2. Lack of shelter/inclusion for vulnerable groups violated disaster equity norms.
3. Spatial injustice persists—low-income communities remain in high-risk zones.
4. Insufficient climate adaptation frameworks; ecosystem services undervalued in urban policy.
5. Community-led frameworks remain aspirational; limited integration in local governance.

Way Forward

1. Adopt Integrated Flood Management: unity of urban planning, ecosystems, engineering, and governance.
2. Embed **spatial justice**—uplift slum dwellers through infrastructure, shelter, early warning.
3. Institutionalize “Apad Mitra” volunteer model under ULBs for community resilience.
4. Enforce drainage zoning, stop encroachments in water bodies, recharge zones.
5. Upgrade public awareness via **Bhagidari**-style participatory schemes focusing on flood-prepared citizenship.

Key Sociological Concepts & Thinkers

- Urban Political Ecology, Spatial Justice, Social Vulnerability, Risk Society (Beck), Environmental Injustice, Bhagidari, Community Resilience, Ecosystem Services, Climate Adaptation

Globalization: Effects on Vulnerable Sections & Culture

What (Key Concepts)

1. Globalisation: interconnection via trade, tech, culture—reshapes societies beyond territorial limits.
2. Vulnerable sections: informal workers, tribal communities, women—exposed to market instability and social exclusion.
3. Culture: processes of homogenisation vs **glocalisation** create hybrid identities balancing tradition and modernity.





4. Language loss: minority dialects decline as English/Hindi dominate global-local interfaces.
5. Vulnerable groups suffer **structural marginalisation**, reflecting **social exclusion** and lack of welfare buffers.

Why (Structural & Sociological Drivers)

1. **Neoliberal reforms (post-1991)** favoured skilled labor, disadvantaging unskilled and informal workers.
2. Global capital flows intensify income inequality, reinforcing caste/class divides.
3. Media and consumer culture reshape aspirations, often eroding traditional norms in vulnerable groups.
4. Migration to urban centers breaks community bonds—heightens socio-cultural vulnerability and alienation.
5. Displacement due to environmental change (global warming) erodes livelihoods and cultural identity.

How (Mechanisms & Manifestations)

1. Export-driven sectors absorb skilled workers; informal labor remains unprotected from global shocks.
2. Cultural consumption adopts Western patterns; Bollywood, food, fashion become global hybrids (“glocalisation”).
3. Language shift: regional/minority tongues decline as English/Hindi dominance increases in education.
4. NGOs advocate for tribal, rural communities via global human rights frameworks.
5. Digital platforms widen knowledge access but deepen **digital divide** across caste, class, gender.

Positive Outcomes

1. Economic liberalisation boosted GDP, poverty reduction, and global integration.
2. IT and services sector created jobs—especially benefiting urban youth, women professionals.
3. Cultural dialogue enhanced plural identities—fusion food, arts, and global awareness.
4. NGOs use global norms to champion tribal, Dalit, and women rights.
5. Financial inclusion and tech access uplift vulnerable rural/urban households.

Negative Impacts

1. Rising inequality: top 10% accrue disproportionate wealth; marginalization deepens for bottom 50%.
2. Precarity for informal labour: lack of social security makes them vulnerable to global shocks.
3. Cultural homogenisation dilutes local traditions; minority languages become endangered.
4. Tribal identities destabilised due to migration and value shifts.
5. Informal sector workers bear brunt of gig economy’s uncertainties.

Government’s Recent Initiatives

1. **Language hub launch** promotes regional languages to decolonise administration—cultural inclusivity emphasis.
2. **Pension, health schemes** for informal workers and elderly under Ayushman Bharat, PMVVY schemes.
3. **Digital India** and skill missions aim to bridge digital and job opportunity divides.
4. Culture Ministry funds minority language documentation, reviving glocal heritage.
5. Social justice schemes leverage global frameworks (rights-based protection) for SC/ST/tribes.

Current Affairs (Past Year)

1. **Language hub (2025)** boosts admin decolonisation and regional language inclusion.
2. UNDP report warns Bihar floods drive language extinction—Angika, Bajjika disappear linked to climate impacts.
3. WTO tariff wars threaten manufacturing jobs—heightened vulnerability in informal sectors.
4. Language preservation missions respond to UNESCO warnings on 220+ endangered Indian languages.
5. NGOs align Indian tribal rights with global movements (e.g. climate justice protests).





Challenges That Remain

1. Structural inequality in digital access persists—urban/rural, gender, caste-based digital divide.
2. Cultural homogenisation undermines local identity—threat to cultural capital.
3. Social exclusion of informal workers despite some policy progress.
4. Climate-induced displacement erodes vulnerable communities' cultural fabric.
5. Governance lacks integrated policy addressing socio-economic, cultural, climate vulnerabilities.

Way Forward

1. Integrate **globalisation governance** via Drèze-Sen welfare paradigm balancing growth with equity.
2. Expand digital inclusion frameworks ensuring marginalized group access to technology.
3. Promote **glocalisation** rallies to preserve regional cultures alongside global engagement.
4. Strengthen climate-culture resilience through community-led heritage protection and livelihood support.
5. Embed social justice in globalisation: regulate labour, protect diversity, ensure inclusive policy integration.

Sociological Keywords & Thinkers

- **Glocalisation**, **Social Exclusion** (Castells), **Intersectionality** (Crenshaw), **Digital Divide**, **Cultural Capital** (Bourdieu), **Risk Society** (Beck), **Neoliberalism**, **Structural Inequality**, **Welfare Economics**, **Rights-based Approach**

Various **successful candidates of UPSC CSE-24** were part of Ethics/Essay Modules & Other Initiatives. **Some of them, with their clickable feedback, are AIR-2, 28, [32](#), [35](#), 53, [54](#), [55](#), 57, [61](#), 72, [91](#), [119](#), [217](#), 219, 247, 256, [261](#), 287, [299](#), 328, 351, 450, 525, 579, 590, 728, 813, 871, 905 etc.**

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Regionalism linked with linguistic diversity/identity in India

What (Definitions & Context)

1. Regionalism: strong affinity to region based on language, culture, resources (sub-national identity movement).
2. Linguistic diversity: India's multilingual mosaic with 22 official + 1,369 mother tongues.
3. Language politics: important axis of regional assertions, state formation, and cultural politics.
4. NEP-2020 promotes mother-tongue instruction to strengthen regional identity within national cohesion.
5. State demands like Khasi inclusion in Sixth Schedule display regionalism's formal assertion.

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by Mudit Jain Sir

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Why (Drivers of Regionalism)

1. Linguistic state reorganisation (1956) institutionalised language-based identity as political resource.
2. Cultural distinctiveness fosters solidarity and counters perceived neglect in centralised development.
3. Feelings of relative deprivation prompt regional assertions (e.g., anti-North Indian sentiments).
4. Political mobilisation taps linguistic pride to challenge national homogenisation (Dravidian, Kannada resurgence).
5. Globalisation threatens regional languages, prompting policy responses (NEP, translation missions).

How (Expressions & Institutionalisation)

1. State-formation on linguistic basis: Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Telangana movements.
2. Policies: multilingual higher-education, language hubs, summer camps, mother-tongue instruction.
3. Translation initiatives: National Translation Mission, bilingual curriculum to preserve and promote diversity.
4. Inclusion efforts: Khasi demands Sixth Schedule status, Santali's Ol Chiki script promotion.
5. Local regulation: Karnataka nativism, language quotas, and regional job protections.

Positive Impacts

1. Enhances **cultural capital**, enriching plural identities and national integration.
2. Empowers marginalised communities, e.g., Santali revival with script-centre, library initiatives.
3. Mother-tongue instruction improves learning outcomes, bridging educational equity.
4. Translation infrastructure makes knowledge equitable, bridging linguistic divides.
5. Fosters regional pride and community cohesion without threatening national unity.

Negative Impacts

1. Excessive regional attachment leads to **parochialism**, anti-migrant sentiments (anti-North Indian waves).
2. Language quotas risk **discrimination** against interstate migrants and economic migrants.
3. Conflicts over linguistic dominance (Hindi imposition vs local languages).
4. Resource demands (6th Schedule inclusion) strain governance and fiscal capacity.
5. Regionalism can fragment national political space, hindering integrated policy making.

Current Affairs (Last Year)

1. Khasi Authors' Society demands Sixth Schedule inclusion—amplifies regional identity claim.
2. Bharatiya Bhasha Summer Camps launched by CBSE to foster multilingualism.
3. Language hub in Home Ministry seeks to reduce English dependency in administration.
4. DU's Hindi journalism master's reflects higher education regionalisation.
5. Odisha's Santali script initiatives strengthen tribal identity and folklore preservation.

Challenges Remain

1. Balancing regional language promotion with mobility-driven migration needs equitable policies.
2. Preventing linguistic favoritism in state jobs avoiding xenophobia (e.g., Karnataka law).
3. Ensuring translation capacity and equitable resource distribution across 22 official languages.
4. Avoiding cultural silos by promoting inter-linguistic cultural exchange and empathy.
5. Institutional capacity-building needed at states to implement NEP and language policies.

Way Forward

1. Foster **plurilingual pedagogy**—NEP, multilingual materials, teacher training, AI translation.





2. Invest in translation tech (IndicTrans2, AI) to democratise knowledge access.
3. Strengthen constitutional protections (Art 29, 30, 345) for linguistic minorities.
4. Promote inter-state language exchange programs to build empathy and national cohesion.
5. Encourage decentralised language planning with community-led initiatives within governance.

Sociological Keywords & Thinkers

- Regionalism, Linguistic pluralism, Glocalisation, Cultural capital (Bourdieu), Symbolic recognition, Identity politics, Structural inequality, Decolonisation, Plurilingual pedagogy, Right-based culture, Spatial justice

Technology's Effects on Components/Features of Society

What (Scope & Dimensions)

1. Technology refers to digital infrastructure (internet, AI, social media) reshaping societal interactions and institutions.
2. It influences **socialization** (online learning), **family structures** (remote work), and **community** dynamics.
3. Impacts key institutions: **education, healthcare, politics, economy, and cultural norms**.
4. Indicates **technological determinism** (McLuhan) where media environments shape societal evolution.
5. Becoming central to **social stratification** through digital access, data sovereignty, and participation inequality.

Why (Structural & Sociological Drivers)

1. Neoliberal globalisation demands technological adoption for economic competitiveness and service delivery.
2. Digital revolution accelerated by COVID-19 pushed telehealth, online education, and remote governance adoption.
3. Economic inequality creates **digital divide**, differentiating access among caste, class, gender groups.
4. Technology shapes **life-chances**, altering cultural capital and symbolic power distribution (Bourdieu).
5. Surveillance norms (Aadhaar, CCTVs, data mining) enhance social control and biopolitics (Foucault).

How (Mechanisms & Deployment)

1. Digital ID systems (Aadhaar) enable targeted welfare distribution and biometric-based identity control.
2. e-Learning platforms scale education but often exclude low-income/digital-poor communities.
3. Telemedicine via Health ID improves healthcare but needs expanded rural connectivity.
4. Social media transforms political mobilization—example: farmer protests organized via WhatsApp, Twitter.
5. Gig economy platforms (Swiggy, Urban Company) digitize work but increase precarity and unprotected labour.

Positive Outcomes

1. Increased public accountability—e.g., RTI apps, e-governance transparency, prompt grievance redressal.
2. Rural economic uplift via digital marketplaces (e-NAM) and connectivity.
3. Telemedicine bridges healthcare gaps in remote areas.
4. Edtech democratizes knowledge—enabling UPSC aspirants from marginalised regions.
5. Digital activism enhances linked identities, drives social movements for gender, caste, environment.

Negative Impacts

1. Digital divide leads to further **social exclusion** of vulnerable caste/class groups.
2. Cyberbullying, misinformation about caste/gender reinforce social tensions.
3. Algorithmic bias perpetuates discrimination in policing, lending, recruitment.





4. Screen culture fosters individualism—reduces communal bonding and social capital.
5. Platform gig work creates vulnerable precariat lacking job security and social protections.

Government's Recent Initiatives

1. **Digital India Program** strengthens digital infrastructure, connectivity, and e-services nationwide.
2. **e-Sanjeevani** telemedicine portal scaled during COVID, now serving rural healthcare.
3. **PM eVIDYA**, DIKSHA, SWAYAM enhance remote education during pandemic/afterwards.
4. National Cyber Crime Portal launched to combat online harassment and hate speech.
5. Draft **Digital Personal Data Protection Bill** proposes regulatory framework for data rights/security.

Current Affairs (Past Year)

1. "Transparent Aadhaar" held glitch; ADB examines balance between convenience and privacy in India.
2. E-Panchayat platform launched in five states for digital local governance.
3. Parliamentary debates on AI Regulation Call Centre misuse, caste-based profiling by algorithms.
4. Education Minister warns against deepfakes, proposes digital media usage training for students.
5. Supreme Court hearing demands algorithmic accountability in predictive policing across metros.

Challenges That Remain

1. Deep **digital divide** persists across rural/urban, gendered, caste lines.
2. Data privacy weak—needs stronger regulatory safeguards vs Aadhaar-based profiling.
3. Insufficient digital literacy undermines equitable participation and empowerment.
4. Lack of algorithmic fairness leads to biased outcomes affecting marginalized groups.
5. Unorganised gig workers lack social security, rights in online platforms.

Way Forward

1. Expand digital infrastructure with sub-centre connectivity, rural broadband, gender-friendly access.
2. Implement data privacy/cyber-ethics literacy in school curriculum (NEP-2020 aligned).
3. Regulate platform work via OSH standards, gig worker unions, social security coverage.
4. Mandate algorithmic audits to ensure fairness and nondiscrimination in public tech deployment.
5. Promote blended rural-urban education and telemedicine to unify digital social equity.

Sociological Concepts & Thinkers

- **Technological determinism** (McLuhan), **Network society** (Castells), **Digital divide**, **Algorithmic bias**,
- **Platform capitalism** (Srnicek), **Surveillance society**, **Symbolic capital** (Bourdieu), **Biopolitics** (Foucault), **Precarity**

Secularism & Communalism – Cultural/Religious Intolerance

What (Definitions & Context)

1. **Secularism**: State neutrality in respecting all religions equally, per Indian model.
2. **Communalism**: Politicization of religious identities to assert dominance and marginalise minorities.
3. **Cultural/religious intolerance**: Prejudice, hate speech, violence targeting minorities due to religious identity.
4. Indian secularism is **positive**, as per **Rajeev Bhargava**—promotes equality, not mere separation.
5. Communal violence rose 84% in 2024, with 59 riots across India.





Why (Structural & Sociological Causes)

1. **Instrumentalization of religion** by political parties foments vote-bank mobilization.
2. **Social identity theory**: in-group bias intensifies sectarian differentiation.
3. Structural marginalisation of minorities sustains grievance and polarisation.
4. Online hate and misinformation act as accelerants—fueling real-world tensions.
5. Hindutva ideology's expansionist ethos undermines pluralism.

How (Mechanisms & Processes)

1. **Festivals and processions** become flashpoints for communal confrontation.
2. Media and politicians employ hate speech to deliberately escalate tensions.
3. Illegal animal-vigilantism often functions as authoritarian moral policing.
4. Social media platforms amplify misinformation and mobilize mobs.
5. Bulldozer justice instantiates collective punishment, eroding secular due-process norms.

Positive Developments

1. Supreme Court upheld madrasa education rights in UP—reinforcing judicial secular corrective power.
2. Peace committee engagements in Jharkhand mitigated communal tensions.
3. Fact-finding panels and SITs initiated in Karnataka to counter violence.
4. Civil-society efforts like Karwan-e-Mohabbat support lynching victims and promote reconciliation.
5. Government's social media monitoring during festivals helped curb potential conflicts.

Negative Trends

1. Spike in communal riots in BJP-ruled states; impunity seen in law enforcement response.
2. Criminal mobs attack minorities with state tolerance via vigilantism and hateful rhetoric.
3. Bulldozer demolitions occur without judicial oversight, violating constitutional secularism.
4. Social media-driven hate remains under-regulated, fueling real-world violence.
5. Polarization during festivals (Ram Mandir, Eid) deepens communal distrust.

Current Affairs (Last 1 Year)

1. BJP delegation visited Dakshina Kannada to assess communal incidents; calls for removing hate texts.
2. Murshidabad's April Waqf Amendment protests triggered communal violence; SIT filed heavy charges.
3. Nagpur curfew after demands to raze Aurangzeb's tomb—reflects rising intolerance.
4. Bakrid celebrations in Ranchi proceeded peacefully with security via CCTV and police.
5. Western-coastal communal incidents signal activist analysis that unchecked tensions mirror Manipur.

Challenges That Remain

1. Institutional inertia in prosecuting hate speech fosters impunity.
2. Deep structural inequality sustains communal vulnerability across caste, class, religion.
3. Social media regulation remains weak; real-time hate moderation is limited.
4. Polarisation around contested heritage sites defies secular resolution.
5. Lack of constitutional literacy undermines popular support for secularism.

Way Forward

1. Strengthen hate speech laws and empower fact-finding by civil society.
2. Promote interfaith dialogues and educational curricula emphasising constitutional secularism.





3. Monitor and regulate digital platforms using LLMs to detect communal content.
4. Enforce impartial policing, stop bulldozer justice, ensure due-process in communal cases.
5. Expand programs like Karwan-e-Mohabbat with govt support to rebuild communal trust.

Sociological Keywords & Thinkers

- Secularism, communalism, social identity theory, symbolic violence (Bourdieu), hate speech, media ecology, Liberal pluralism (Bhargava), Hindutva, democratic norms, public sphere.

Cultural Continuity Despite Cultural Diversity in Indian Society

What (Concept & Scope)

1. Cultural continuity: preservation of core traditions despite dynamic cultural diversity and historical changes.
2. India's diversity: multilingual, multi-religious, multi-ethnic—22 official languages, 1369 mother tongues.
3. Continuity emerges via institutionalised rituals, kinship, caste, regional festivals, and oral traditions.
4. Anthropologists term Indian society a "salad bowl"—distinct components within shared unity.
5. Continuity enables adaptation while maintaining identity—creating social resilience and collective purpose.

Why (Sociological Rationale)

1. **Enculturation** transmits tradition through family, education, religious institutions.
2. Shared historical memory (civilisational narratives) binds diverse groups—Mughal, Vedic, British periods.
3. Religious rituals and festivals reinforce continuity alongside regional variation.
4. Institutions like panchayats and caste councils mediate local customs within modernity.
5. Continuity fosters social cohesion—a mature multiculturalism feeding sustainable plural identity.

How (Mechanisms of Continuity)

1. Oral traditions, folk art, and tribal crafts transmit cultural memory (e.g., Jharkhand tribal fashion).
2. Language instruction in mother tongue fosters valuation of heritage.
3. Heritage policies (PRASHAD, Swadesh Darshan) integrate pilgrimage circuits, reinforcing cultural centers.
4. Archaeological excavations (Lakkundi temple) revive heritage continuity in Karnataka.
5. Museums and XR-audio guides digitise continuity (Pune's Raja Dinkar Kelkar).

Positive Outcomes

1. Cultural resilience supports identity stability amid rapid modernisation and globalisation.
2. Heritage tourism boosts livelihoods and safeguards intangible traditions.
3. Regional fashion (tribal) gains national/international recognition, preserving craftsmanship.
4. Heritage hubs (Vidhan Sabha) foster civic cultural awareness.
5. Multilingual education under NEP strengthens linguistic and cognitive bonds.

Negative Aspects

1. Overemphasis on dominant culture can sideline minority practices.
2. Heritage tourism may commodify culture, detaching it from community meaning.
3. Language policies risk neglecting endangered dialects outside official support.
4. Major projects (Scholars say digital audio guides) may exclude digitally marginalised.
5. Tensions arise when heritage claims override present-day cultural sensitivities (e.g. religious conflicts).





Current Affairs (Last Year)

1. Tribal fashion from Jharkhand makes global presence at Dubai Fashion Week.
2. PM advocates using local languages in higher education under NEP.
3. Lakkundi excavation site launched; open-air museum planned.
4. Chhattisgarh's IIT partners to research heritage tourism connections.
5. Digital audio apps launched at Pune museum, boosting multilingual cultural access.

Challenges That Remain

1. Digital and urban divides hamper equitable access to cultural initiatives.
2. Heritage policy often ignores intangible traditions outside mainstream narrative.
3. Many dialects remain uncatalogued, risking irreversible loss.
4. Cultural tourism may displace locals or commodify practices lacking consent.
5. Funds and institutional capacity scarce for minority heritage preservation at grassroots.

Way Forward

1. Strengthen community-driven mapping and intangible tradition registries under Mission on Cultural Mapping.
2. Launch mobile heritage tours and AR tools for rural areas.
3. Incorporate local languages, crafts, and festivals into NEP curriculum.
4. Empower artisans via sustainable tourism models ensuring fair returns.
5. Support multilingual digitization of oral traditions through public-private partnerships.

Sociological Keywords & Thinkers

- Enculturation, Cultural resilience, Salad-bowl pluralism, Hybridisation (Homi Bhabha), Cultural capital (Bourdieu), Intangible cultural heritage, Modernisation vs tradition, Heritage commodification, Social cohesion, Ritual continuity

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