

## Unit 16

# Gender, Caste and Class

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### Contents

- 16.1 Introduction
- 16.2 What is Gender?
- 16.3 Gender and Caste
- 16.4 Gender and Class
- 16.5 Regional Variations in Gender, Caste and Class
- 16.6 Conclusion
- 16.7 Further Reading

### Learning Objectives

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- ≈ define the concept of gender;
- ≈ explain the relationship between gender and caste;
- ≈ discuss the links between gender and class; and finally
- ≈ describe briefly the regional variations in gender, caste and class.

## 16.1 Introduction

So far you learnt about agrarian classes and categories, the working class and the middle class in India. In this unit we will explain the third kind of social stratification based on gender. Indian society is marked by multiplicity of languages, customs and cultural practices. Within the broad social hierarchy of caste and class, gender cuts across caste and class. In contemporary India gender, caste and class are dynamic phenomena, which vary between different regions and communities.

Since the previous units have already described to you the various aspects of caste and class system of stratification, here we will focus on the dynamics of gender a system of stratification and its various dimensions in Indian society. Gender roles are determined through the interaction of several factors such as material factors, the division of labour, constraints which are imposed through the processes of socialisation within family, caste, marriage and kinship organisation, inequality in inheritance and in access to resources for maintaining health, life and livelihood. Social hierarchies that exist within the family are also expressed and are visible outside in the realms of wage work on the basis of gender, caste and class.

Some of these factors are ideological factors based on domestic ideologies, religious beliefs, rituals and customs that reinforce inequality, and lead to the internalisation of hierarchies by women themselves. Most of the material and ideological factors are very deeprooted in our society and culture, in our social institutions, which play a significant role in sustaining and reproducing women's subordination in society.

## 16.2 What is Gender?

Gender is perhaps the oldest and the most enduring source of social differentiation. It is one that has claimed critical address only within the last

century. Within the academia, the conceptualisation and re-conceptualisation of gender, as an idea and as a set of practices, has occurred during the last three decades, which surely reveals the deeply political character of the issue that it raises. Further, gender encompasses the social division and cultural distinctions between women and men as well as the characteristics commonly associated within femininity and masculinity. It should be remembered, however, that gender could not be abstracted from the wider social relations with which it is enmeshed, that gender intersects other social divisions and inequalities such as class, race and sexuality, and that the meanings of masculinity and femininity vary within, as well as between societies. Gender does not replace the term sex, which refers exclusively to biological difference between men and women. Gender identities are plural, divided and potentially unstable, gender always includes the dynamics of ethnicity and class. Let us see how various sociologists have discussed the concept of gender.

### 1) Gender and Sex

Gender refers to the socially constructed and culturally determined roles that women and men play in their daily lives. It is a conceptual tool for analysis and has been used to highlight various structural relationships of inequality between men and women as manifested in labour markets and in political structures, as well as, in the household. 'Sex' on the other hand, refers to the biological differences between male and female, which are much the same across space and time. Gender, the socially constructed differences and relations between males and females, varies greatly from place to place and from time to time. Gender can therefore be defined as a notion that offers a set of frameworks within which the social and ideological construction and representation of differences between the sexes are explained. (Masefield. A. 1991).

According to a UNESCO document titled: "The Needs of Women", the definition of gender given by the international labour organisation refers to the social differences and relations between men and woman, which are learned, which vary widely among societies and cultures and change over time. The term gender does not replace the term sex, which refers exclusively to biological difference between men and woman. The term gender is used to analyse the role, responsibilities, constraints, needs of men and women in all areas and in any given social context. Gender involves power structure and economic relationships. Gender identities are plural, divided and potentially unstable. Gender always includes the dynamics of ethnicity and class.

### 2) Social Construction of Gender

Social scientists like E.D. Grey (1982: 39) believe that social construction is a continuous process in which both individual, as well as, wider social processes take a part. It is the process by which 'everyday sense of things' forms the foundation of the social construction of reality. Each and every construction is influenced by the individual understanding of the social actors and therefore it has obviously a subjective bias. Social construction of reality is also shaped, by the interests of particular groups and classes in a society. In this sense too it is biased. Generally, cultural values, norms, customs, languages, ideologies and institutional frameworks of society are used to justify particular social constructions with a view to projecting the subjective bias of groups and classes as rational and to make it broad based and legitimate. Hence, social construction through which we understand our

everyday experience, make moral judgements and classify other people according to religion, sex, caste etc. are culturally determined and can be changed. They shape social norms, values, customs, beliefs etc. and are also inculcated through them. The social processes like socialisation and education also help to make a particular kind of social construction enduring and widely accepted. Gender is a product of such social construction. It is also shaped within the given cultural apparatus of a society. (Kannaviran, K. 2000 FWE-01, IGNOU)

Gender or the cultural construction of the masculine and feminine, plays a crucial role in shaping institutions and practices in every society. It is important in order to understand the system of stratification and domination in terms of caste, class, race and especially the relations of power between men and women within a culture.

#### Reflection and Action 16.01

Reflect upon the customs and traditions of your family. Write a description of at least one ritual or ceremony, which discriminates men from women.

What are the implications of the ritual for your family and your own status? Discuss your account with other students of your Study Centre.

### 16.3 Gender and Caste

In Block-2 **Perspectives on Caste** of this course, **Sociology in India** you have already learnt about the various perspectives on caste in India – how the upper castes like the Brahmins viewed it, how the colonial rulers (the Britishers and other Europeans) viewed caste in India, and how other castes lower in the caste hierarchy perceived caste. Caste as a system of social stratification is said to have subsumed class in India. In the traditional Indian society, the upper castes were generally upper class having all the resources and power, social, political and economic in their favour. The lower castes were generally landless labourers or service castes that were low in status, economically poor and politically powerless.

It was only later that this harmony was disturbed during the colonial rule in India when land became a marketable commodity. The traditional power structure was disturbed and social mobility rate increased multifold due to the colonial impact and opening up of different occupational avenues, economic betterment of middle castes and some lower castes as well, such as the Jatavs of Agra (OM Lynch 1968 in Milton Singer (ed.) 1968).

There are various theories of the origin of caste in India, such as the theory of racial origin, origin in terms of occupational specialisation etc. But none of the writings on caste has looked at it in politically conscious or gendered terms and they do not address the issues of power, dominance and hegemony as key issues in caste society throughout its history. Kalpana Kannaviran in IGNOU FWE-01, Block 1: pp. 16) writes that any analysis of caste by Indians is by definition political. It either consciously chooses or unconsciously identifies with one of the two positions:

- a) supporting the status quo by proposing a case for the concentration of power in the hands of those who already have it, or
- b) engaging critically with the status quo by developing a critique of Indian tradition.

Needless to say, the most radical critique of caste and by extension, the Indian tradition, have come from intellectuals and political activists, from Dalit groups and anti-Brahmin movements, that is, critiques that have emerged from the life experience and world views of these groups. These critiques re-centre caste firmly within the socio-political and cultural realities of those whose labour and sexuality has been traditionally mis-appropriated by the hegemonic groups in caste society, namely the dominant castes.

She believes that the single most important arena for the gendering of caste occurs in the arena of sexuality. The desire to regulate female sexuality has led to a considerable ritual preoccupation with female purity in the caste societies of Sri Lanka and India. Predictably, male sexuality is not ritualised in the same way.

**Box 16.02: Low Female Male Ratio (FMR) in Uttar Pradesh**

Leiten and Srivastava (1999 : 71) say that Uttar Pradesh has among the lowest Female-Male ratio (FMR) in the world, and the lowest in India, with the exception of Haryana. A closer look at the regional dissimilarities shows that the 'epicentre' of the problem of low FMR is not in Haryana but in western Uttar Pradesh. This region has more than one third of the population of the entire state and nearly three times the population of Haryana. Also, this region has the lowest FMR of only 0.84.

**I) Construction of Gender and Rituals**

As is well known, rituals reveal a lot about the gender construction in a particular society. Amongst the Kandyan Singhalese, Yalman (1963) highlights two important ceremonies.

- i) The most important ritual for Kandyan Children, which is gender differentiated is the ear piercing ceremony for girls before they attain puberty.
- ii) The second and by far the most significant ritual is the one that marks the onset of male puberty.

Here, as well as in many caste communities of the South of India, there are specific rituals which are performed when a girl begins to menstruate. The rites of passage marking her entry into adulthood is publicly celebrated and rituals are performed. During the period of menstruation she is confined into a hut or a closed room so that she does not pollute others nor does harm come to her. The segregation is partly to protect her from hostile powers and demons that are attracted to her at this time. Elaborate rituals surround the girl's purification after her first period. (Yalman, N. 1963 : 25)

What is the need for only girls to go through these rituals? As believed by the villagers themselves amongst the Singhalese, Yalman reports, these rituals relate as much to female fertility as to more honour. The villagers say that:

- i) It protects the fecundity of the womb of the woman and
- ii) "This is necessary since the honour and respectability of men is protected and preserved through their women".

**II) Caste and Regulation of Sexuality and Reproduction**

Thus, it is very clear that caste and gender are closely related since the question of sexuality of women is directly linked with the purity of the race,

honour of the men. Therefore, the higher the caste, the more controlled would be the sexuality of their women. In caste societies, such as, Sri Lanka and India, more so in the upper castes than the lower castes, elaborate institutions of hypergamy – where women can cohabit only with men of their own caste or of a superior caste is practised. They cannot marry a man who is lower in caste status than their own. Kannaviran (2000 : 17) says that women as seen through the lens of the dominant castes are mere receptacles for the male seed. The purity of the receptacle (here, women's womb) then ensures the purity of the offspring and sets to rest doubts about paternity. As said earlier, the control and concern over female sexuality are greatest in the castes which have the highest stakes in the material assets of society i.e. the upper castes and classes.

The concern with marriage networks, endogamy and exogamy being crucial to the maintenance of the caste system where men regulate the system through the exchange of or control over women is central to any discussion on caste. The customary right of male family members to exchange female members in marriage, according to Lerner, antedated the development of the patriarchy and created the conditions for the development of the family. In India, the customary right acquired a further economic significance with the development of private property and caste stratification. The primary consideration in the forming of marriage alliances was and still is, the maximising of family fortunes. Women play a crucial economic role not only by providing free domestic labour, but also through their reproductive services. Lerner argues that it was the sexual and reproductive services of women that were cared under patriarchy, not women themselves. (Lerner, G. 1986 quoted in IGNOU 2000 FWE-01, Block 1)

The commodification of women in the marriage market in patriarchal, patrilineal caste society goes hand in hand with prescriptions for women's behaviour and restrictions on their mobility, the dispossession of women in property and inheritance matters, and their absence in local level political and decision making bodies. The entire complex constituting the construction of gender in caste society is a construction that radically devalues the status of women in these societies (Kannaviran, K. 2000 : 17)

### III) Changing Caste System and its Impact on Women

In contemporary India, many constraints on women due to their caste identity have been greatly reduced. In capitalist India, several new social classes have emerged. However, this does not mean that the age-old subordination of women has disappeared. The emergence of new classes has meant control of women in new and different forms from those under the caste system. Let us examine some of the issues related with gender and class in the next section.

## 16.4 Gender and Class

In order to understand women's status in traditional as well as contemporary Indian society it is imperative to understand the class concept in determining the status of women in society. Many scholars consider caste and class as polar opposites. According to them caste and class are different forms of social stratification. The units ranked in the class system are individuals, and those ranked in the caste system are groups. Therefore, change takes place from caste to class, hierarchy to stratification, closed to open and from organic to segmentary system. In reality both caste and class are real and

empirical and both interactional and hierarchical, in fact, both incorporate each other. (Kaur, Kuldip 2000 : 34, WED-01, Block-3, IGNOU)

The caste and class nexus is highlighted by Kathleen Gough in her analysis of the mode of production as a social formation in which she finds connections between caste, kinship, family and marriage on the one hand and forces of production and productive relations on the other. Class relationships are taken as the main assumptions in the treatment of caste and kinship in India. Some scholars have even explained the Varna and Jajmani system (about which you learnt in Block-4 **Perspectives on Caste**) in terms of class relations and the mode of production. Therefore, we can say that caste incorporates class, class incorporates caste. (Gough, 1980 quoted in IGNOU: WED-01, Block-3)

The caste-class nexus is related with the status of working women in urban and rural India. Andre Beteille in his book “Six Essays in Comparative Sociology” has highlighted this aspect. He asks the relevant question – How are we to view families in which men work in the fields but women are by custom debarred from such work? This is quite prevalent among the families of the upper castes. Even among some families of the intermediate and lower castes who have become economically well off have adopted this norm with a view to elevate their social status in the village community. But it does not mean that this position leads to equal treatment being meted out to women. Withdrawal from work only results in elevation of family status. But as explained by Beteille (1974) this also arises from caste to caste, and also depends upon the economic and social standing of particular families.

**Box 16.03: “Sanskritisation” of Lower Castes in Uttar Pradesh**

The negative aspect of ‘Sanskritisation’ (i.e. adopting the norms and values and style of life of the upper castes by the lower castes to gain higher social status) seems to be the fall-out of general upward economic mobility. However, “this economic mobility leads to the ‘domestication’ of women and a fall in their status and value”. (Dreze & Sen A. 1995 : 158)

Andre Beileille also comments upon the process of change in the status of women in the context of manual labour. He points out how women are first withdrawn from the family farm. Finally, with economic mobility, the men, too, either withdraw from work, or change their role from cultivator to supervisor. Therefore withdrawing womenfolk from manual labour on farms is a symbol of high social status in the countryside. Due to variation in life styles, the caste duties differ from one caste to another or one class to another. But inspite of the differences of caste backgrounds, the status of women across castes does not differ in comparison with men. So far as the ideology of the ‘Pativrata’ is concerned, which directs women to maintain male authority in all castes. applies to women of all castes and class. (Kaur, Kuldip 2000 : 35 quoted in IGNOU 2000 : WED, Block-3)

**New Social Classes and Status of Women**

A study of classes in India shows that it is a very complex phenomena. Infact, the rise of new classes among different communities is an uneven phenomena. During, the British period, Indian society was exposed to certain new forces as mentioned earlier e.g. the Western system of education, the new land settlements and the provision of new transport facilities such as the railways. This phenomena led to a lot of changes in the caste/class

relationships. In rural India there emerged a new class especially in Bengal Presidency called the Zamindars. Under the new settlement the right of ownership was conferred on the Zamindars. According to the new settlement, failure on the part of some Zamindars to pay the fixed revenue led to the auction of portions of large estates. This in turn, led to the entry of new classes of landlords who were primarily the merchants and money lenders. Besides the zamindars, the peasants formed an important social class in rural India. The peasantry in India is not a homogeneous category. It consists of (i) the rich class, (ii) the middle class and (iii) the poor peasants. Along with the peasantry the artisan class also formed an important part of the village community. The artisans mainly consisted of carpenters (Badhai), the ironsmith (Lohar), the potter (Kumhar), and the goldsmith (Sonar).

Within the above mentioned classes the status of women has varied. Among the above classes women generally occupied a secondary place – interestingly, this phenomenon continues to exist in contemporary times. Given below are some tables that portray the status of women among different economic classes.

**Table 1**  
**Percentage Distribution of Female Main Workers by**  
**Industrial Category in India, 1981 and 1991**

Industrial Category	1981			1991		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Cultivators	33.09	36.04	4.63	34.22	38.53	5.13
Agricultural Labourers	46.34	50.36	16.65	44.93	49.32	15.61
Livestock, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Plantations and Allied Activities	1.83	1.84	1.77	1.60	1.61	1.52
Mining & Quarrying	0.35	0.31	0.69	0.34	0.29	0.68
Manufacturing, Processing, Servicing & Repairs						
a) Household Industry	4.57	3.77	10.44	3.53	2.93	7.53
b) Other than Household Industry	3.60	2.11	14.59	3.88	2.34	14.14
Construction	0.87	0.56	3.10	0.66	0.27	3.30
Trade and Commerce	2.04	1.12	8.92	2.26	1.10	10.01
Transport, Storage & Communications	0.37	0.11	2.24	0.32	0.08	1.94
Other Services	6.94	2.88	36.97	8.26	3.48	40.14

**Source:** Census of India, 1991, Final Population Totals, series-I, India, Paper 2 of 1992, Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, New Delhi] 1993.

The above table clearly depicts that the percentage of female workers in the industrial category has increased over the years. The percentage of women cultivators and agricultural labourers has not only increased but is the largest sector that employs women.

**Table 2**  
**Women in the Organised Sector**  
**(In lakhs)**

Year	Public Sector		Private Sector		Total	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1971	98.7 (92.0)	8.6 (8.6)	56.8 (84.0)	10.8 (16.0)	155.6 (89.0)	19.3 (11.0)
1981	139.8 (90.3)	14.9 (9.7)	61.0 (82.5)	12.9 (17.5)	200.5 (87.8)	27.93 (12.2)
1991	167.1 (87.7)	23.4 (12.3)	62.4 (81.3)	14.3 (18.7)	229.5 (85.9)	37.81 (14.1)
1993	168.4	24.7	63.0	15.5	231.4	40.27

Source: DGE and T, Ministry of Labour, Government of India, New Delhi.

The above table portrays that women are largely employed in private sector enterprise.

The state wise break up is given in table (3)

**Table 3**  
**Table Employment Statistics, 1991**

India/State	Employment of Women (in thousands) as on 31.3.99		
	Public Sector	Private Sector	Total
India	2810.7	2018.4	4829.2
1. Andhra Pradesh	216.3	183.0	399.3
2. Arunachal Pradesh	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
3. Assam	73.2	238.9	312.1
4. Bihar	90.1	17.4	107.5
5. Chhattisgarh	-	%	%
6. Delhi	90.7	29.3	120.1
7. Goa	14.9	7.4	22.3
8. Gujarat	144.7	78.1	222.8
9. Haryana	63.4	24.5	87.9
10. Himachal Pradesh	38.8	5.7	44.5
11. Jammu & Kashmir	20.7	1.9	22.6
12. Jharkhand	%	%	%
13. Karnataka	234.6	310.5	545.1
14. Kerala	191.5	275.2	466.7
15. Madhya Pradesh	162.5	26.7	189.3
16. Maharashtra	350.6	207.8	558.4
17. Manipur	17.4	0.8	18.2
18. Meghalaya	14.6	4.3	18.9



19. Mizoram	10.4	0.6	11.0
20. Nagaland	1.6	1.1	12.7
21. Orissa	83.9	10.9	94.8
22. Punjab	100.7	31.1	131.8
23. Rajasthan	129.6	42.0	171.5
24. Sikkim	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
25. Tamil Nadu	414.0	325.7	739.8
26. Tripura	17.5	4.7	22.1
27. Uttar Pradesh	184.9	54.4	239.3
28. Uttaranchal	%	%	%
29. West Bengal	111.7	128.8	240.4
30. Andaman & Nicobar Island	3.1	0.1	3.3
31. Chandigarh	12.4	4.7	17.1
32. Dadra & Nagar Haveli	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
33. Daman & Diu	0.2	1.4	1.6
34. Lakshadweep	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
35. Pondicherry	6.6	1.5	8.1

**Source:** India, Ministry of Labour, DGET Employment Review January-March 1999, p. 23.

It is significant to note that the above table depicts that the status of women has fluctuated in different economic sectors. However in the North-East region especially among the Khasis and the Gharos the status of women is high both economically and socially. Among the Khasis in Meghalaya the ancestral property is inherited by females. One of the distinguishing feature of the Khasi family structure is that women hold property. Infact, they are the hub of the economy, and the youngest daughter performs all the religious rites, yet the outside world is dominated by men. They have a saying “war and politics for men, property and children for women” (Tiplut Nongbri 1994).

#### Reflection and Action 16.02

Recount a short incidence about your experience regarding the status of women in a patriarchal family system or a matriarchal set-up. Write a short note of about a page. Compare it, if possible, with other students at your Study Centre.

## 16.5 Regional Variations in Gender, Caste and Class

As stated earlier, gender class and caste relationships are highly complex and dynamic phenomena. In a patriarchal family system which exists in the northern belt of India and among Brahmins, Thakurs, Kayasthas and Banias the womenfolk occupy a secondary place in the family. In such families power is wielded by the eldest male members or other males in the family. Prevalent customs like child marriage, enforced widowhood, sati purdah etc. purdah have had an adverse impact on the status of women. The above mentioned customs, along with socialisation practice have led to the girls/

women occupying a subordinate position in the family. Further, women's education in such families is not valued. Field studies have shown that violence in patriarchal families have been reported to be higher. According to Vina Mazumdar, "we remember that this region (India) had thrown up some of the most powerful women rulers in the world, but they did not work for restructuring of the social order, eliminating patriarchal institutions. We have taken pride in their successful defence of national sovereignty and leadership role in defending third world interest in global fora. But as prisoners of power in hierarchical global and national social order, they could not be creators or defenders of democracy from below. Nor could they even begin the task of eliminating the subordination of women in the masses."

Leela Dube also states in her work – "Women and Kinship: Comparative Perspectives on Gender in South and South East Asia" that it is a peculiarity of South Asia that the female sex is denied the right to be born, to survive after birth, and to live a healthy life avoiding the risks of pregnancy and childbirth. The under valuing of women across different castes, classes and even regions has had an impact on the educational status of women as well as their ratio in the total population of India. Given below are tables depicting the literacy rate, as well as sex ratio of women in India. These are self-explanatory where status of women in India is concerned.

**Table 4**  
**Literate and Literacy Rates by Sex : 2001**

S.No.	India/State/Union Territory*	Literacy rate #		
		Person	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5
	<b>India</b>	6538	7585	5416
01	Jammu & Kashmir	5446	6575	4182
02	Himachal Pradesh	7713	8602	6808
03	Punjab	6995	7563	6355
04	Chandigarh*	8176	8565	7665
05	Uttaranchal	7228	8401	6026
06	Haryana	6859	7925	5631
07	Delhi*	8182	8737	7500
08	Rajasthan	6103	7646	4434
09	Uttar Pradesh	5736	7023	4298
10	Bihar	4753	6032	3357
11	Sikkim	6968	7673	6146
12	Arunachal Pradesh	5474	6407	4424
13	Nagaland	6711	7177	6192
14	Manipur	6887	7787	5970
15	Mizoram	8849	9069	8613
16	Tripura	7366	8147	6541
17	Meghalaya	6331	6614	6041
18	Assam	6428	7193	5603
19	West Bengal	6922	7758	6022

20	Jharkhand	5413	6794	3938
21	Orissa	6361	7595	5097
22	Chhattisgarh	6518	7786	5240
23	Madhya Pradesh	6411	7680	5028
24	Gujarat*	6997	8050	5860
25	Daman & Diu*	8109	8840	7037
26	Dadra & Nagar Haveli*	6003	7332	4299
27	Maharashtra	7727	8627	6751
28	Andhra Pradesh	6111	7085	5117
29	Karnataka	6704	7629	5745
30	Goa	8232	8888	7557
31	Lakshadweep*	8752	8315	8156
32	Kerala	9092	9420	8786
33	Tamil Nadu	7374	8233	6455
34	Pondicherry*	8149	8889	7413
35	Andaman & Nicobar Islands*	8118	8607	7529

**Table 5**  
**Population and Sex-Ratio**

S.No.	India/State/Union Territory*	Literacy rate #			
		Person	Males	Females	Sex ratio (females per 1,000 males)
1	2	3	4	5	6
	<b>India</b>	1027015247	531277078	495738169	933
01	Jammu & Kashmir	10069917	5300574	4769343	900
02	Himachal Pradesh	6077248	3085256	2991992	970
03	Punjab	24289296	12963362	11325934	874
04	Chandigarh*	900914	508224	392690	773
05	Uttaranchal	8479562	4316401	4163161	964
06	Haryana	21082989	11327658	9755331	861
07	Delhi*	13782976	7570890	6212086	821
08	Rajasthan	56473122	29381657	27091465	922
09	Uttar Pradesh	166052859	87466301	78586558	898
10	Bihar	82878796	43153964	39724832	921
11	Sikkim	540493	288217	252276	875
12	Arunachal Pradesh	1091117	573951	517166	901
13	Nagaland	1988636	1041686	946950	909
14	Manipur	2388634	1207338	1181296	978
15	Mizoram	891058	459783	431275	938

16	Tripura	3191168	1636138	1555030	950
17	Meghalaya	2306069	1167840	1138229	975
18	Assam	26638407	13787799	12850608	932
19	West Bengal	80221171	41487694	38733477	934
20	Jharkhand	26909428	13861277	13048151	941
21	Orissa	36706920	18612340	18094580	972
22	Chhattisgarh	20795956	10452426	10343530	990
23	Madhya Pradesh	60385118	31456873	28928245	920
24	Gujarat*	50596992	26344053	24252939	921
25	Daman & Diu*	158059	92478	65581	709
26	Dadra & Nagar Haveli*	220451	121731	98720	811
27	Maharashtra	96752247	50334270	46417977	922
28	Andhra Pradesh	75727541	38286811	37440730	978
29	Karnataka	52733958	26856343	25877615	964
30	Goa	1343998	685617	658381	960
31	Lakshadweep*	60595	31118	29477	947
32	Kerala	31838619	15468664	26369955	1058
33	Tamil Nadu	62110829	31268654	30842185	986
34	Pondicherry*	973829	486705	487124	1001
35	Andaman & Nicobar Islands*	356265	192985	163280	846

## 16.6 Conclusion

In this unit an attempt has been made to examine the close relationship between gender, caste and class in the Indian context. An in-depth definition of gender, caste and class is also stated. An analysis of the position of women within the different castes in India has been described. The relationship between caste and class in the context of gender has been explained. Further, an attempt has been made to discuss the participation of women in different sectors of the economy such as the public and private sectors through tables. Finally the regional variation of status of women in patriarchal and matriarchal families is discussed. The table mentioning the literacy rate and sex ratio of women state-wise highlighting the regional variations is also given.

## 16.7 Further Reading

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## Glossary

<b>Sociography</b>	: It refers to descriptive studies of both a qualitative and a quantitative kind. It was used first by Ferdinand Tonnies who placed great emphasis on the use of statistics. For him sociography means descriptive sociological studies using statistics.
<b>Suzerainty</b>	: The right of a country to rule over another country.
<b>Empirical</b>	: Any field of study, which may or may not have an explicit theory, is seen as a different order of inquiry from that which either (a) sets out a conceptual language for analysing social relations or (b) outlines a theory or explanation of some aspect of social life without testing its truth or falsity. (Mitchel, Dumcan G. 1968 : 65)
<b>Conservatives</b>	: Those scholars and thinkers who resisted change from the traditional order.
<b>Utilitarian rationalism</b>	: Its a philosophical outlook associated with the name of Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) in whose thought, ethics and psychology rest on the fundamental fact that pleasure is better than pain. Utility is the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The maximisation of utility is the proper end of humankind. (I vid 1968)
<b>Pragmatic</b>	: Solving problems in a practical and sensible way rather than by having fixed ideas or theories.
<b>Demographic</b>	: The changes in the number of births, deaths, diseases etc. in a population over a period of time.
<b>Structural</b>	: Anything related with the network of social relationships in a society, which are institutionalised.
<b>Ideological</b>	: A set of beliefs and ideas, especially one held by a particular group of people that influences their behaviour.
<b>Field-View</b>	: View of social scientists based on first-hand observation or field work of the area of study. It refers to the way a system, for eg. caste system, functions in reality in different communities in India.
<b>Decolonisation</b>	: It is the process of the colony such as India becoming independent.
<b>Differentiated</b>	: When each part takes up a different function or specialisation in a society.
<b>Mechanisation</b>	: Technological advance when dependence on manual labour shifts to the use of machines.

<b>Modernisation</b>	: The process of becoming more modern or contemporary. It applies to the use of technology, changes in values, beliefs and ideas etc.
<b>Patronage</b>	: The institution of giving protection to the lower castes, in terms of cash and kind and receiving services from them in lieu of it by the upper castes or the relationship between lords and peasants.
<b>Loyalty</b>	: Refers to the obligation that the peasants or the lower castes felt for the Lord or the upper caste landowner who gave them protection.
<b>Affinity</b>	: Relationship by marriage is described as 'affinity'.
<b>Agnate</b>	: Related through male descent or on the father's side.
<b>Alliance</b>	: In the context of kinship studies, the bond between two families following a marriage is described as relationship of 'alliance'.
<b>Clan</b>	: A group united through a belief that they have a common ancestor, is called a clan. In the context of Indian society, subcaste sharing a common <i>gotra</i> is called a clan.
<b>Consanguinity</b>	: It refers to the state of being related by blood. All blood relatives of a person are his/her consanguine.
<b>Descent</b>	: Derivation from an ancestor is called descent. There are various ways of derivation and hence different systems of descent are found in human societies.
<b>Endogamy</b>	: When marriage is specifically required within a group, this specification is called the rule of endogamy.
<b>Exogamy</b>	: When marriage is specifically required outside a group, this specification is called the rule of exogamy.
<b>Hypergamy</b>	: When marriage is specifically required in an equal or higher social group or subcaste, this specification is called the rule of hypergamy.
<b>Neolocal</b>	: This term refers to residence after marriage. In this type of residence, the husband and the wife set up an independent household.
<b>Patrilocal</b>	: In this type of residence, after marriage, the married couple lives with the husband's father's family.

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