



Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the impact of the following on Indian society:

- a. Sanskritisation
- b. Westernisation
- c. Modernisation

02 Dec, 2019 GS Paper 1 Indian Society

Approach

- Explain the terms.
- Describe how they have impacted the Indian society.

Sanskritisation

- Sanskritisation is a process through which lower castes try to achieve upward social mobility by emulating the customs and rituals of the upper castes. It is a cultural process, but changes in social status and occupations as a consequence of the upward mobility brought about by Sanskritisation, also makes it a structural process.
- It accepts the ways of the 'upper caste' as superior and that of the 'lower caste' as inferior. Therefore, the desire to imitate the 'upper caste' is seen as natural and desirable.
- **Impact:**
 - It seems to justify a model that rests on inequality and exclusion. It appears to suggest that to believe in the concept of pollution and purity of groups of people is justifiable.
 - It results in the adoption of upper caste rites and rituals which leads to the practice of secluding girls and women, adopting dowry practices instead of bride-price and practising caste discrimination against other groups, etc.
 - The effect of such a trend is that the key characteristics of Dalit culture and society are eroded. For example, the very worth of labour which 'lower castes' do is degraded and rendered 'shameful'.

Westernisation

- The contact with the West, particularly with England set in motion another process of transformation in India, known as Westernisation. It is characterised by Western patterns of administration, legal system and education through the medium of the English language.
- **Impact:**
 - Under the impact of the Western way of life, a sizeable section of educated and urbanised Indians adopted the Western style of dress, food, drink, speech and manner.
 - The emulation of the West inculcated the values of Western democracy, Industrialisation and Capitalism.
 - There are cultural as well as structural aspects of Westernisation. It brought about structural changes by the growth of modern occupations related to modern education, economy and industry.

Modernisation:

- Modernisation is a process by which modern scientific knowledge is introduced in the society with the ultimate purpose of achieving a better and more satisfactory life in the broadest sense of the term accepted by the society concerned.
- **Impact:**
 - It has introduced structural changes in social institutions like marriage, family, caste etc. The concept of joint families is rapidly decreasing, everyone wants to remain aloof from others.
 - There are some eliminative changes like the disappearance of cultural traits, behavioural patterns, values etc.
 - Emergence of new forms because of the synthesis of old and new elements. For example, nuclear family in structure but functioning as joint.
 - Modernity assumes that local ties and parochial perspectives give way to universal commitments and cosmopolitan attitudes.
 - The truths of utility, calculation, and science take precedence over those of the emotions, the sacred, and the non-rational.

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/mains-practice-question/question-427/pnt>