

INTRODUCING SOCIOLOGY

TEXTBOOK FOR CLASS XI



11104



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NCERT

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

ISBN 81-7450-533-4

First Edition

March 2006 Phalguna 1927

Reprinted

December 2007 Agrahayana 1929

December 2008 Pausa 1930

January 2010 Magha 1931

January 2011 Magha 1932

March 2012 Phalguna 1933

April 2013 Chaitra 1935

March 2014 Phalguna 1935

January 2015 Magha 1936

December 2015 Agrahayana 1937

December 2016 Kartika 1938

December 2017 Pausa 1939

January 2019 Pausa 1940

PD 60T BS

© **National Council of Educational
Research and Training, 2006**

₹ 7.00

Printed on 80 GSM paper with
NCERT watermark

Published at the Publication Division
by the Secretary, National Council of
Educational Research and Training,
Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016
and printed at Nikhil Offset, 223, 127,
DSIDC Complex, Okhla Industrial Area,
Phase-I, New Delhi-110 020

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FOREWORD

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005, recommends that children's life at school must be linked to their life outside the school. This principle marks a departure from the legacy of bookish learning which continues to shape our system and causes a gap between the school, home and community. The syllabi and textbooks developed on the basis of NCF signify an attempt to implement this basic idea. They also attempt to discourage rote learning and the maintenance of sharp boundaries between different subject areas. We hope these measures will take us significantly further in the direction of a child-centred system of education outlined in the National Policy on Education (1986).

The success of this effort depends on the steps that school principals and teachers will take to encourage children to reflect on their own learning and to pursue imaginative activities and questions. We must recognise that, given space, time and freedom, children generate new knowledge by engaging with the information passed on to them by adults. Treating the prescribed textbook as the sole basis of examination is one of the key reasons why other resources and sites of learning are ignored. Inculcating creativity and initiative is possible if we perceive and treat children as participants in learning, not as receivers of a fixed body of knowledge.

These aims imply considerable change in school routines and mode of functioning. Flexibility in the daily time-table is as necessary as rigour in implementing the annual calendar so that the required number of teaching days are actually devoted to teaching. The methods used for teaching and evaluation will also determine how effective this textbook proves for making children's life at school a happy experience, rather than a source of stress or boredom. Syllabus designers have tried to address the problem of curricular burden by restructuring and reorienting knowledge at different stages with greater consideration for child psychology and the time available for teaching. The textbook attempts to enhance this endeavour by giving higher priority and space to opportunities for contemplation and wondering, discussion in small groups, and activities requiring hands-on experience.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) appreciates the hard work done by the textbook development committee responsible for this book. We wish to thank the Chairperson of the advisory group in Social Sciences, Professor Hari Vasudevan and the Chief Advisor for this book, Professor Yogendra Singh for guiding the work of this committee. Several teachers contributed to the development of this textbook; we are grateful to their principals for making this possible. We are indebted to the institutions and organisations which have generously permitted us to draw upon their resources, material and personnel. We are especially grateful to the members of the National Monitoring Committee, appointed by the Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development under the Chairpersonship of Professor Mrinal Miri and Professor G.P. Deshpande, for their valuable time and contribution. As an organisation committed to systemic reform and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, NCERT welcomes comments and suggestions which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinement.

New Delhi
20 December 2005

Director
National Council of Educational
Research and Training

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The National Council of Educational Research and Training acknowledges Karuna Chanana, *Professor (Retd.)*, Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; Abha Awasthi, *Professor (Retd.)*, Department of Sociology, Lucknow University, Lucknow; Madhu Nagla, *Lecturer*, Department of Sociology, Mahrishi Dayanand University, Rohtak; Disha Nawani, *Lecturer*, Gargi College, New Delhi; Vishvaraksha, *Professor*, Department of Sociology, University of Jammu, Jammu; Sudershan Gupta, *Principal*, Govertment Higher Secondary School, Paloura, Jammu; Mandeep Chaudhary, *PGT (Retd.) Sociology*, Guru Harkishan Public School, New Delhi; Rita Khanna, *PGT Sociology*, Delhi Public School, New Delhi; Seema Banerjee, *PGT Sociology*, Laxman Public School, New Delhi; Madhu Sharan, *Project Director*, Hand-in-Hand, Chennai; Balaka Dey, *Programme Associate*, United Nations Development Programme, New Delhi; Niharika Gupta, *Freelance Editor*, New Delhi; Jesna Jayachandaran, *Research Scholar*, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi for providing their feedback and inputs.

Acknowledgements are due to Savita Sinha, former *Professor and Head*, Department of Education in Social Sciences for her support.

The Council expresses gratitude to Jan Breman and Parthiv Shah for using photographs from their book, *Working in the mill no more*, published by Oxford University Press, Delhi. Some photographs were taken from the Department of Tourism, Government of India, New Delhi; National Museum, New Delhi; *The Times of India*, *The Hindu*, *Outlook* and *Frontline*. The Council thanks the authors, copyright holders and publishers of these reference materials. The Council also acknowledges the Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi for allowing to use photographs available in their photo library. Some photographs were given by John Suresh Kumar, Synodical Board of Social Service; J. John of *Labour File*, New Delhi; V. Suresh Chennai and R.C. Das of Central Institute of Educational Technology, NCERT, New Delhi. The Council acknowledges their contribution.

Special thanks are due to Vandana R. Singh, *Consultant Editor*, NCERT for going through the manuscript and suggesting relevant changes.

The Council also gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Mamta, *DTP Operator*; Shreshtha, *Proof Reader* and Dinesh Kumar, *Incharge*, Computer Station in shaping this book. We are also grateful to Publication Department, NCERT for all their support.

A NOTE TO THE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

This book is an introductory invitation to sociology. It is not meant to be a comprehensive and exhaustive account of the discipline. Instead it seeks to give a sense of what sociology does and how it helps us understand both society and our own lives better. The book hopes to familiarise students with the sociological perspective, its concepts and tools of research. It seeks to show how sociology as a discipline engages with the fact that each of us, as members of society have commonsensical ideas and understandings about society. How is sociology as a body of knowledge distinguishable from the body of common sense knowledge that necessarily exists in society? Is it distinguishable by its method and approach? Is it different because it continuously asks critical questions, because it accepts nothing as taken for granted?

We could keep adding many more such questions. For sociology is a subject that trains us to question and understand why and how society functions the way it does. And hence there is a need to be clear about the terms and concepts that sociology uses, for they are necessary tools in our sociological understanding.

Apart from the critical perspective that sociology entails, it is also marked by diverse and contending approaches. This plurality is its strength. The different views within sociology about society can be fruitfully understood as debates. Debates often help us understand a phenomena better.

In keeping with the questioning and plural spirit of sociology, the book continuously engages with the reader to think and reflect, to relate what is happening to society and to us as individuals. The activities built into the text are therefore an intrinsic part of the book. The text and activities constitute an integrative whole. One cannot be done without the other. For the objective here is not just to provide ready made information about society but to understand society.

Society itself is plural, diverse and unequal. The book seeks to capture this complexity in each of the chapters. Both examples and activities seek to bring this in. The activities are therefore, essential part of the text. Yet like all books, this is just a beginning. And much of the most exciting learning process will take place in the classroom. Students and teachers will perhaps think of far better ways, activities and examples and suggest how textbooks can be bettered.

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THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a **'[SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC]** and to secure to all its citizens :

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity and to promote among them all;

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the ²[unity and integrity of the Nation];

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949 do **HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.**

1. Subs. by the Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976, Sec.2. for "Sovereign Democratic Republic" (w.e.f. 3.1.1977)
2. Subs. by the Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976, Sec.2. for "Unity of the Nation" (w.e.f. 3.1.1977)