

Instructions to the candidate:

- There are 5 Questions.
- All Questions are Compulsory.
- You should download the question-and-answer booklet, take its print-out, attempt the questions and then scan the same using various mobile apps like Cam Scanner etc. on your mobile, Convert the file using these apps to PDF and upload.
- You will be able to upload the file from where you had downloaded the question-and-answer booklet.
- In case you face any difficulties, you can write to us at sleepy.classes@gmail.com.
- Those candidates who are not writing on the printed booklet are to leave margins on their answer sheet for comments.
- The above-said candidates are to then make their own evaluation sheet in the format stated below to be uploaded with the answer.
- Compulsory to name your PDF file in the following format (Student Complete Name_Test Number) e.g.: (Kriti Rathor_Mains Test-5)

Comments for the purpose of evaluation of Answer Writing:

| | |
|--|--|
| Relevance to the question | The answers largely stay focused on the demands of each question. For example, in discussing middle-class women and marriage, you clearly address modern changes and sociological implications. Except in Q3, different parts were addressed |
| Structure of Answer | Most answers follow a clear and logical structure, with well-placed introductions, arguments, and conclusions. Introduction can be more comprehensive and crisp. |
| Content | The content is good and shows clear understanding of the topics. Most points are relevant and well explained. To make it even better, try to include a few more important thinkers and real-life examples. This will help make your answers stronger and more complete. |
| Presentation (Neatness, charts, diagrams as required) | Handwriting is clear and legible. Answers are neatly structured. No presentation issues |

Question 1. Contemporary India have witnessed a significant evolution in roles of middle-class women. Discuss. (10 Marks)

'Middle Class' is the ^{post industrial phenomenon} **India's middle class, defined by economic stability and rising aspirations, is a key driver of social change. Within it, women are reshaping gender norms by pursuing education and employment while navigating the tensions between tradition and modernity.**

define middle class in indian context

However women's position

within the middle class has evolved: — **highlight heading**

① Early functional role as 'house-wife' who cooks and takes care of the house & working-husband. [Marx] Reserve Army

decent point

② With LPG reforms and more job opportunities — women joined labour force as 'skilled-class'. **good argument**

flexible work arrangements have allowed more women to balance domestic responsibilities with professional goals.

③ Feminist movements of late 90s on pay-parity, abortion rights, inheritance etc. led by middle-class women.

pay-parity

e.g. → STEM admission, rights of female mining engineers, crèche facility.

better example can be written - Middle-class women have been at the forefront of movements like #MeToo, anti-CAA protests, and gender justice campaigns.

Women are now active decision-makers in family finances, children's education, and even caregiving roles for elders.

delay in marriage, increased inter-caste/inter-religious marriages, and acceptance of divorce reflect shifting norms.

④ Indian women of middle class also at forefront of pressure-groups, civic cause and policy push.
 decent point
 e.g → Ila Bhatt's SEWA
 → Vandana Shiva's Naudanya Movement
 → Medha Patkar & Sunita Narain Feminist - environmental movements

⑤ Political participation and struggle for representation.
 e.g → Jayalalitha, Mayawati
 → Nari Shakti Adhikaran (e.g. panchayats, parliament).
 Increased visibility of women in politics, activism, and governance

heading - how past structures still impacting

Women may be included in committees or panels, but without meaningful power or voice in decision-making.

→ Pink Collarization of middle class females [Karuna Ahmed]
 → 'Double Shift' as per Arlie Hochschild due to working Indian woman & responsibility of home.
 → less than 41% Female LFPR and high care-work involvement

According to the NSSO Time Use Survey (2019), Indian women spend nearly 6 hours daily on unpaid domestic work, while men spend less than 1 hour.

→ Glass ceiling (< 2% Female CEOs) and < 75 women parliamentarians.
 → hence the role of the Indian middle class woman continues taking new forms.
 relevant arguments
 Mary E. John highlights how women's education is often viewed not for independence but to enhance "marriageability" in middle-class families.

in conclusion - Empowering middle-class women in India requires not just better laws on equal pay and safety, but also a fundamental shift in societal attitudes toward gender roles and female autonomy.



Question 2. Indian religions are said to spread patriarchy? Critically analyse. (10 Marks)

Sylvia Chantler defines patriarchy as system of female subordination via male privilege and authority. **decent intro**

Patriarchal dimensions of Indian religion :-

① Brahminic and textual interpretation of hinduism treats women as male property (Manusmriti) and subjugated
e.g. → 'Kanyadaan' in marriage, fast keeping by women in Puja, discrimination of Menstruating female
→ Veena Das calls hindu 'Devi-worship' as 'Devi-Dichotomy'

valid and relevant arguments

Women are often excluded from certain religious roles (e.g., temple priests, entry into certain temples).

→ U Chakravarty shows in her study how Brahminism promotes 'obedient' woman.

② Islamic tenets are egalitarian in text as marriage is a contract and 'Meher' as protection

decent

Yet subjugation via 'Nikah' property rights curb, mosque entry

Interpretations of Sharia law often assign women unequal inheritance and testimony rights. Veiling and segregation reinforce control over female bodies.

Though founded on egalitarian ideals, Buddhist orders often placed nuns below monks in hierarchy.

- ③ Buddhism - a non-Brahminical sect faced dilemma when Atisha stated 'Religion would last 300 years if women don't join, but would end sooner' - putting blame of male delinquency on female

can write argument in better manner

- ④ Tribal religions in India Leela Dube's study of Gonds highlights that tribal religious practices often reflect male dominance, ritual exclusion of women, and gendered kinship norms.
- decent depicts 'seed-Earth' gender norms, a woman as other's possession.

Criticisms:-

- ① Matrilineal societies exist in Indian fold. e.g. → Khasi tribes - Matrilineage → Nairs - Thiruvallur tradition
- ② Vedantic tradition is based on tenets of equality. e.g. → Sati Ban remains
- ③ Queen Nanak's - 'Nirgun' path

Saints like Mirabai and Akkamahadevi challenged gender norms through spiritual rebellion.

New forms of sect-cult (ISKON) and Bhakti have redefined gender norms - the process of equity is slow but positive.

Recent cases like the Sabarimala verdict and Triple Talaq ban show how Indian religions can evolve. Empowering women requires reinterpretation, legal reform, and challenging patriarchal religious authority.

Question 3. In manifest practice of untouchability is checked, but in latent terms, it still exists. Discuss. (10 Marks)

Manifest forms of untouchability such as segregation, use of public spaces, wells etc are legally curbed by constitutional provisions of Article 15 and 17.

decent intro

Despite legal guarantee Prasad in his study of 50 Andhra villages suggests occurrence of more than 150 forms of untouchability.

Latent forms of existence

① Marital restrictions in the name of religion (endogamy) and culture
e.g. → Recent T.N used blocking during dalit marital union

Inter-caste marriages face violent resistance (e.g., honour killings in states like Haryana, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu).

② Occupational stratification as

A Chakraborty states how sewerage workers, tannery workers, carcass removal have over 95% sc/ST population
Caste-based occupational roles continue. Dalits are overrepresented in sanitation, sewer work, and manual scavenging.

③ Latent ritual segregation
e.g. → Puri temple has sign board for 'non-dalit hindus' only.

decent point

Gopal guru argues that modern spaces such as universities, bureaucracy, and civil society remain "graded inequalities" masked as meritocracy.



High dropout rates among Dalit students due to subtle biases.

④ Economic exploitation as Sukhdev Thorat in his study shows 75% dalit households landless & push to bondage. **good point**

⑤ Political exclusionism
e.g → Gujarat Panchayat member's house was burnt for being dalit who was 'outspoken' in 2024! **decent point**

⑥ Crime incidents have saturation of dalit oppression **good argument**
e.g → Amit Thorat, Omkar Joshi study of NCRB - 60 thousand cases in Delhi.

few lines on how to address the issue or how problem is tackled

- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar emphasized the importance of constitutional safeguards and state power to dismantle caste oppression.

⑦ Affirmative actions being marred by what Sachidanand calls 'state capture'

Kancha Ilaiah advocates for cultural democratization to dismantle caste hierarchies embedded in daily practices.

- Platforms like Dalit Camera, Equality Labs, and social media activism document everyday caste bias and violence.

Ghanshyam Shah in his study 'Rural India' - 2006 - depicted how >80% villages in India practised latent forms of untouchability - depicting cultural lag - despite legal, social modernity.

decent conclusion

Question 4. Marriage in India is increasingly seen as a personal choice rather than a social obligation. Critically examine this transformation. (10 Marks)

Marriage traditionally in India is a sacramental bond between partners and families. **it is an institution that provides an individual with rights such as sexual monopoly, social importance, legality, and rights unique to each distinct culture.**

define marriage properly

decent point

Functionalists such as **Murdock** & **Parsons** called it necessity for stability of family.

few lines on how Marriage was in traditional setup

The concept in India is increasingly shifting from 'obligation' to choice.

- The major goal of marriage in old Hindu culture was dharma, or the fulfilment of one's obligations

① industrialization and urbanization aided by economic opportunities.

- Women's roles were defined through marriage—as daughters, wives, and mothers—reinforcing patriarchal control over sexuality, labor, and mobility.

e.g. Post LPG, marriage not compulsion for female economic stability

decent point

② career of women and self-reliance led to delayed marriage, focus on career.

e.g. → **Deepankar Gupta** reveals how it is no more 'necessary milestone' **essence is similar to earlier argument**

③ Modern forms of family and Romantic relations.

e.g. → live-in, single parent family, LGBTQ-cohabitation, hybrid couples.

good point

Even in arranged marriages, individuals take a more active role in the search for a spouse through matrimonial portals and so on, as a consequence of which the sense of 'ownership of the marriage' is often stronger than it was previously

the concept of remarriage is gaining acceptability in our culture, demonstrating how an individual's life and happiness is more significant than societal expectations



Marriage breakup has gotten simpler with the passage of divorce legislation. According to K.M. Kapadia, "marriage remains a sacrament; only it has been elevated to an ethical plane."

① Procreation no more necessary parameter within marital domain - rather economic prospect
e.g → DINKS, pet - parents, room-mates;
low TFR (< 2.1)

relevant argument

Yet ritual domination persists :-

Over 90% of marriages in India are still within the same caste (per IHDS, 2011-12).

① Kareena Ahmed states education has fuelled 'show-off' culture in marriage
e.g → IIT-IIM shadi.com; big fat wedding

decent point

② Technology has fuelled 'male-selection' and dowry tradition in upper class as 'status symbol'. e.g → 'Love Jihad'

Unmarried or divorced individuals, especially women, face social stigma and exclusion from family or community roles.

③ women go through 'Patriarchal Bargain'
e.g → Study further or travel abroad but be 'engaged' first

can write better arguments

④ India has <2% divorce rate despite high domestic violence. **good point**

Hence the transformation is visible but not rapid - females in India (rural & urban) still lack real choice of partners & own bodies.

The future of marriage will increasingly reflect personal fulfillment, emotional intimacy, and individual choice, moving further from traditional norms toward flexible, egalitarian partnerships shaped by evolving social and cultural values.

A joint family is a multigenerational relatives live together, sharing resources, responsibilities, and a common kitchen, often under the authority of the eldest male family member.



Question 5. In the age of individualism and digital connectivity, does the idea of a joint family still hold sociological relevance in India? (20 Marks)

With idea of freedom and advent of modernity
- traditional forms of commensal, cohabitative
multi-generational joint families have declined.

define joint family in better manner

Individualism & Digitization breaking joint family system:-

① Occupational diversity and migration to big cities have broken jointness.
e.g → working in IT, parents in village

Urbanization and migration have led to more nuclear households.

decent point

② Households no more unit of production or only source of social development.
e.g → Institutions like crèche, old-age homes.

relevant

③ New forms of family in nuclear setup emerge. e.g → live-in, living-apart together, weekend family.

decent points

[S. Jodhka] calls their connection as 'skype families' who are connected via video calls / messaging'

Influenced by Western ideals and urban living, priorities shift from family obligations to self-development.



Rise in property-related family court cases shows the growing tension in joint setups.

① Youngsters move-out of parents even in same city in search of space and personal growth.
e.g. → women in hostels, escape patriarchy and docility of joint-burden.

Educated women increasingly reject the patriarchal structure of traditional joint families.

② Filicentricism and cost of living has made nuclearization necessary.
e.g. → tier 2 towns no more have affordable housing for multi-generations (NSSO - 52% nuclear housing)

Urban housing is expensive and limited, making joint living impractical.

Yet Jointness is a Sociological Reality

① Joint households have reduced but family jointness persist
e.g. → AM Shah studies cycle of 'jointness' via marriage, migration, child birth.

decent point

② Technology has created what Eugene Litwak calls 'modified-extended family'.
e.g. → call home, come back to parents during festivals.

Tools like WhatsApp, video calls, and family groups keep extended families emotionally connected.

decent point

③ Industrial & business needs help support joint family.
e.g. → Pauline Kolinda's study on Mauwari & Agarwals with joint business.

Even when not living together, families maintain close emotional and economic joint family.

in the absence of robust state welfare, joint families act as a safety net. During COVID-19, many migrants returned to joint families for support.

(1) Joint family concept is modified via reverse migrations

e.g. → IT couple working in metros — call parents to their place for child-rearing

→ sending back monthly earnings to family home — [TN Madan] calls it 'money order economy'

As [IP Desai] in his study of Gujarati families concludes — families today might be structurally nuclear but are functionally joint.

The future of joint families in India lies in flexible, tech-enabled forms that retain emotional bonds and support, adapting to urban pressures while preserving cultural values through redefined, cooperative living arrangements.