

man's power into progressive working population which is the foundation to the creation of knowledge society. He considers that education is a prerequisite for the rise of knowledge society and India unlike China is a leader in this Frontier. He expects Indian economy to grow to be sustainable because it stands on a solid knowledge base.

The Institute of Applied Economic and Research in its report indicated that during India's independence the total percentage of middle class was 12% that increased to 20% during 1951 which reached the figure of 58% in 2001 and it is expected to reach a target of around 70% by the end of 2020. These presumptions drive the point back that India is going to evolve into a society where the middle class is expanded, lower class is squeezed and upper class is not hegemonistic. This will make India a more inclusive, highly dynamic and growth oriented society.

But sociologists are skeptical whether India can evolve into such an inclusive society without any caste-class disparity or any other form of inequality. The gender inequality persist in India both in public and private sphere, hegemonistic domination in rural India, hijacking of modern benefits by dominant class, distinction between literacy and functional literacy, women exploitation, environmental degradation etc. are stumbling blocks in the way of building an affluent India dominated by Indian middle class carrying modern and secular values. This paradox in India is a contest between the pervasive natures of tradition engaged in dialectics with the emergent nature of modernity. As a result social change in India is becoming more restrictive than being absolute.

A crucial distinction is made in the sociological literature between the "**old**" middle classes and the "**new**" middle classes. The term "old" middle class is used in the sense in which Marx had used the term "**petty-bourgeoisie**" i.e. those who work with their own means of production such as traders, independent

professionals and farmers. The term "new" middle class is broadly used to describe the skilled or white-collared workers/ salaried employees and the self-employed professionals. Even though they do not own the means of production they work with, they are distinguished from the unskilled blue-collar workers. Their incomes being much higher than that of the blue-collar workers, they can lead a lifestyle that is very different from that of the working class.

Scholars also differentiated between rural and urban middle class. Some thinkers like **Yogendra Singh** assert that both are similar at one ideological level, but antagonistic at another as they have different interests. For example – rural middle class has its interests in agriculture which has seen decline post Green Revolution and many farmers have witnessed downward mobility, while urban middle class is growing. Similarly, **Ananda Kumar** in his 'Indian Middle Class' argues that 'while urban middle class is 'market' bound, rural middle class is 'power' bound'.

Andre Beteille contends that the idea of middle class is often highly romanticized as an outcome of liberal democracy, a vibrant capitalist economy and individual freedom, but middle in itself has subclasses which fight for scarce resources in a country like India and this struggle can be unhealthy at times.

INDUSTRIAL CLASS STRUCTURE

Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim associated a number of social features with industry, such as urbanization, the loss of face-to-face relationships that were found in rural areas where people worked on their own farms or for a landlord they knew and their substitution by anonymous professional relationships in modern factories and workplaces. Industrialisation involves a detailed division of labour. People often do not see the end result of their work because they are producing only one small part of a product. The work is often repetitive and