

Epilogue

Conceptualizing and editing this volume have been a learning experience. Both diversity and social development are interconnected, multidimensional, and dynamic phenomena ever changing with context and time. Most of the contemporary societies are concerned with diversity and social development and are facing challenges and grappling with solutions. Of course, the dynamic nature, history, and complexity of these social phenomena may not be similar across nations and societies, including solutions of the related problems. We also know that psychological theories, though developed in different social contexts, could be generalized to some extent making our task easier in understanding and finding solutions. Thus, the book chapters by the authors from different disciplinary backgrounds and nationalities represent research findings and analyses emanating from varied contexts and collectively enrich the volume.

Even a cursory glance of the chapters leads the readers to conclude that nature of both diversity and social development are constantly changing. What we see today as diversity and issues related to social development were not the same a few decades ago and will change after a few years from now. For example, Pandey in his chapter has discussed the process of *Sanskritization* formulated by sociologist, Srinivas (1966). According to the process of *Sanskritization*, low Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, change their customs, ritual, ideology, and way of life in the direction of higher caste. This phenomenon was commonly observed more in the 1960s and 1970s among those of aspiring lower caste who would like to be seen at higher level in the caste hierarchy. One of the most common examples was replacing traditional surname associated with one's caste by either adopting a new surname of a higher caste or an innovative neutral surname. Pandey has concluded that with implementation of many measures like reservation in employment and representation in statutory bodies by the 1980s, the lower caste people in India achieved positive meaning in their caste identity with their success in getting higher jobs and political power. Thus by the 1980s, the progressive changes in caste status resulted in reversal of the process of *Sanskritization*. Thus instead of reversal, the parents who had changed their surnames in the 1960s, preferred asking their sons and daugh-

ters to continue with traditional caste-based surnames. Similarly findings and discussion across other chapters, for example, related to norm violation, linguistic minorities, communal relationship, life in Kibbutz of Israel, acculturation of migrants, and agenda of social development, are contextualized in time and space.

While going through the process of editing, we also learnt that diversity and social development are valuable for the contemporary societies, but it is also challenging. The issues concerning both are widely debated and discussed by common people, politicians, administrators, and social scientists of different hues and persuasions. Debates, discussion and interpretations based on research findings, and real incidences happening in society including allegations and rumours result in emergence of new issues. These debates, the politics and policy in practice within a national boundary, greatly impact how people see diversity and social development and how they deal with it. The diversity also provides a fertile soil for competitive politics. In such a situation, the political entities may manipulate people perception and behaviour and may create difficulties for diverse population to co-exist and work together to build a peaceful society.

In recent years, in many countries, for example, the majority are being fed with the ideas that minority population is rising rapidly and in the coming years they (majority) will be outnumbered by the minority. Such perceptions, real or manipulated may make the majority feel insecure and make them behave negatively towards the minority. This phenomena is being observed not only in India but also in the USA, UK, Canada, and Italy. Jennifer Richeson (2018) has extensively studied the impact of shifting demographics on attitude and behaviour. She quotes the US Census which has been projecting those racial minorities which will become the numerical majority by 2042. These reports have been extensively covered in the media leading to strong comments and reactions, influencing recent political campaigns. According to Richeson (2018) in the context of the USA, when projections of the majority-minority demographic shift are made salient, White American participants consistently respond with more negative attitudes towards other racial groups. Research has shown similar reactions among White populations living in Canada, the UK, and Italy. One can easily find in literature that real or imagined increasing population sizes of minority groups can increase the tension between groups. She has argued that people's reaction to a shift in demographics illuminates the broad psychological, social, and political implications for our democracy.

As reported in Media, recent incidences of violence against minorities in India need to be examined as to whether these are the outcome of insecurity being planted in the majority regarding rising population of minorities. We also know that equality in social development across diverse social groups would be the best answer for building inclusive society.

So obviously, we are dealing with socially sensitive issues that require continuous dialogues and discussion with various stakeholders, scholars of different backgrounds, politicians, social reformers, Government of the day, the policymakers, and implementing agencies to find the right path and by making a turnaround for

building an inclusive society. Inculcating new sociocultural values for appreciation of diversity will change people to accept diversity as a value. We hope this volume would facilitate a successful and meaningful dialogue.

References

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