



The society of Banaras during the eighteenth century

Mithu Roy

Research Scholar, Department of History, University of North Bengal, Siliguri, West Bengal, India

Abstract

This research examines the social structure of Banaras during the eighteenth century, highlighting the complex interaction between caste, occupation, religion, gender, and urban institutions. As a major sacred and commercial city, Banaras displayed a highly stratified yet dynamic society where ritual hierarchy coexisted with emerging economic differentiation. Brahmanical elites occupied the apex of the social order through control over religious knowledge, temples, and educational institutions, while merchant communities gained increasing influence due to the expansion of trade, banking, and monetization. Artisans and service castes formed the productive backbone of the city, sustaining its religious economy through craft production and essential services, though they remained socially marginalized. Pilgrims and migrants contributed to demographic diversity and introduced limited social fluidity within the urban setting. Religious institutions functioned as key centers of social regulation, economic patronage, and cultural authority, reinforcing hierarchy while integrating diverse groups through rituals and festivals. Women's roles, shaped by patriarchal family structures, were simultaneously restrictive and indispensable, as they contributed significantly to household economy, artisanal labor, and ritual life. Overall, the study reveals that Banaras society in the eighteenth century was resilient and adaptive, maintaining traditional caste-based hierarchies while gradually absorbing economic and social change.

Keywords: Banaras, temples, organization, artisans, pilgrims, merchants, brahmanical elites etc

Introduction

In this chapter, the intricate relationships between caste, occupation, gender, family, and urban institutions are highlighted in this analysis of Banaras' social structure in the eighteenth century. A highly stratified society with a close relationship between religious authority, economic activity, and ritual hierarchy was evident in Banaras, a vibrant urban center and sacred city. Different yet interdependent social groups were made up of Brahmanical elites, merchant communities, craftsmen, service castes, and transient populations. Social interactions and labor organization were mediated by families and local communities. Religious organizations organized public life, promoted commercial interchange, and strengthened societal norms. In order to show how continuity and change coexisted within Banaras society, this chapter examines the social makeup, caste and occupational organization, urban neighbourhoods, religious organizations, and the status of women and family systems. By examining these aspects, the chapter offers a thorough grasp of how Banaras' social life maintained its cultural, economic, and ceremonial vibrancy while adjusting to economic change and political decentralization.

Social Composition and Stratification

Religion, caste, employment, economic distinction, and

urban life all influenced Banaras' social makeup in the eighteenth century, creating a multifaceted and intricate image. Banaras, one of the oldest and most continuously inhabited towns on the Indian subcontinent, served as a bustling urban economy, a center of learning, and a place of worship all at once. A highly varied social structure was created by this diversity of functions, where new kinds of economic stratification coexisted with ceremonial hierarchy. As a result, Banaras' social life was neither uniform nor static; rather, it was marked by the persistence of established institutions and a slow change in response to political and economic shifts.

Banaras' social structure was mostly generated from economic activity and religious authority rather than direct governmental control, in contrast to towns that were solely administrative or military. The political landscape changed as regional and colonial influences grew and Mughal central authority declined, but the city's social structure remained rooted in long-standing cultural values. At the same time, new opportunities for wealth accumulation were made possible by the growth of trade, banking, and monetization, which gave some groups—especially merchants—more social clout. The end effect was a stratified society where ritual status based on caste continued to be dominant but was more influenced by institutional connection and economic power.

Table 1: Social Composition of Banaras in the Eighteenth Century

Social Group	Primary Source of Status	Main Economic Role	Relative Social Position
Brahmanical elites	Ritual purity, learning	Temple management, education, landholding	Highest
Merchant communities	Wealth, trade networks	Trade, banking, patronage	High (economically rising)
Artisans	Skill, hereditary occupation	Craft production, ritual goods	Middle
Service castes	Caste-based service roles	Urban and ritual services	Low
Labouring poor	Manual labour	Transport, construction	Lowest
Pilgrims & migrants	Religious affiliation, mobility	Consumption, temporary labour	Fluid

▪ **Urban Character and Social Diversity**

Banaras was a heavily populated urban center with a notable degree of socioeconomic diversity in the eighteenth century. Brahmanical elites, priests, intellectuals, traders, bankers, artisans, service castes, labouring poor, pilgrims, students, and migrants were among its inhabitants. Demographic diversity and social fluidity were influenced by constant influxes of people into the city, driven by employment, trade, education, and pilgrimage. In contrast to rural society, where caste and occupation were more firmly established, Banaras was characterized by its continuous migration.

Particularly in markets, temples, ghats, and festivals, urban life produced areas where various social groups might interact. Although hierarchy persisted, there was little opportunity for status and identity negotiation because different groups were close to one another in common metropolitan areas. Therefore, social stratification in Banaras was not only inherited but also carried out and strengthened by customs, rituals, and business dealings.

▪ **Brahmanical Elites and Ritual Dominance**

Brahmanical elites were at the top of the social scale, and their supremacy stemmed from their knowledge of the scriptures, religious authority, and ritual purity. Priests, scholars, professors, and temple officials were elevated by Banaras's standing as the leading center of Hindu learning. Beyond their religious roles, they had an impact on moral adjudication, education, social regulation, and institutional wealth management.

The control of temples, monasteries, and endowed lands served to further solidify Brahmanical domination. Donations, land revenue, and ceremonial services were the main sources of income for these institutions. The economic foundation of Brahmanical families was further reinforced by patronage from monarchs, traders, and pilgrims. Because ritual authority translated into material benefit, Brahmanical elites were able to perpetuate their power over successive generations. However, there were internal divisions within Brahmanical society based on factors such as proximity to important religious institutions, specialization, and lineage.

▪ **Merchant Communities and Economic Differentiation**

Merchant groups in eighteenth-century Banaras held a position of rising influence beneath the Brahmanical authorities. Wealth was amassed by traders, bankers, moneylenders, and commercial intermediaries through financial services, pilgrimage-related commerce, and regional and long-distance trade. Merchants did not hold the highest ritual position, but they were able to subtly subvert established hierarchies thanks to their economic might.

In building temples, establishing charitable endowments, sponsoring festivals, and patronizing religious figures, merchant riches was transformed into social prestige. Within the confines of caste theory, such activities promoted social mobility and increased legitimacy. Ritual hierarchy was supplemented rather than replaced by economic stratification, as seen by the growth of merchant influence. A significant secondary indicator of status was wealth, particularly in metropolitan settings where financial success was readily apparent.

▪ **Artisans and Occupational Stratification**

In Banaras society, artisans made up a significant and essential portion. Both the city's religious and commercial activity were sustained by weavers, metalworkers,

stonecutters, carpenters, potters, painters, and ritual artisans. Their social standing changed according to their level of expertise, demand, and patronage. There was relative security for highly skilled artisans involved in temple construction or elite spending, but there was also economic insecurity for others.

Market dynamics and caste identification interacted to generate artisan stratification. Social identity was still defined by inherited occupation, but status and livelihood were impacted by economic circumstances. Even if market demand offered chances for limited promotion, craftsmen's reliance on patronage from temples, merchants, and elites strengthened hierarchical relationships.

▪ **Service Castes and the Urban Poor**

In Banaras society, the lower classes were filled by labouring groups and service castes. Despite performing necessary tasks in urban and ceremonial life, caste ideology and economic reliance kept washermen, sweepers, boatmen, porters, cremation workers, and domestic staff socially ostracized. The city's daily operations, especially its religious rituals, were supported by their labor, but they had very little access to wealth and influence.

Service groups played a crucial role in Banaras's sacred economy despite being marginalized. They were both excluded and dependent upon by concepts of ceremonial purity, which led to a paradoxical link between stigma and reliance. Their stance draws attention to the pervasive disparities in the social system.

▪ **Pilgrims, Migrants, and Floating Populations**

Large floating populations were a defining characteristic of Banaras civilization. Some of the pilgrims who came from all over the subcontinent settled there permanently in old age. While labourers and artisans relocated in pursuit of work, students and academics relocated for schooling. Although these organizations lacked permanent status, they contributed to economic life by occupying flexible and frequently ambiguous social positions.

The social order became less flexible due to the existence of floating populations. Caste lines were never entirely eliminated, but urban anonymity and economic opportunity enabled some people to renegotiate their identity and status. This migration added to Banaras' vibrant social character and set it apart from rural society.

▪ **Gender, Household, and Social Hierarchy**

In Banaras, social stratification was strongly gendered. Public involvement, inheritance, and household authority were all governed by patriarchal traditions. While women from artisan and service classes were more openly involved in economic activities including weaving, ritual preparation, and small-scale trade, elite women were more isolated. Women's access to property and decision-making remained limited notwithstanding their contributions.

As important social reproduction units, households passed on caste identity, occupation, and status from one generation to the next. Caste, class, and gender interacted to influence lived experience, facilitating household survival in the face of economic hardship while also perpetuating inequity.

▪ **Institutions as Agents of Stratification**

Markets, educational institutions, and places of worship all contributed significantly to the perpetuation of social

hierarchy. Markets determined economic opportunity, temples-controlled access to ritual space and patronage, and educational institutions bestowed symbolic capital. Elites were able to consolidate power and preserve domination by controlling institutions.

Simultaneously, these establishments promoted communication across socioeconomic divides. Distinctions were momentarily blurred by festivals, pilgrimages, and public rituals, which promoted a sense of shared identity within a hierarchical structure. The way Banaras society operated depended heavily on the institutions' dual function of being both integrating and divisive.

▪ **Continuity and Change in Social Order**

Table 2: Dimensions of Social Stratification in Banaras Society

Dimension	Basis of Differentiation	Groups Most Affected	Social Outcome
Caste	Ritual hierarchy	Service castes, artisans	Social exclusion
Occupation	Hereditary skills	Artisans, labourers	Economic dependence
Wealth	Trade, land, credit	Merchants, elites	Rising influence
Religious authority	Institutional proximity	Priests, scholars	Cultural dominance
Gender	Patriarchal norms	Women across groups	Limited autonomy

Banaras's eighteenth-century social structure and stratification show a complicated urban civilization influenced by institutional authority, vocational specialization, ritual hierarchy, and economic differentiation. Within a multi-layered social structure that balanced continuity with progressive change, Brahmanical elites, mercantile communities, artisans, service groups, and floating populations coexisted. Caste and ceremonial rank continued to play a major role in social order, but growing trade and monetization brought new levels of economic power and wealth-based stratification.

The knowledge of the following sections of this chapter, which delve deeper into caste and occupation, urban communities, religious institutions, and gender relations, is predicated on this complex social framework. As a result, Banaras society is shown to be strong, flexible, and extremely hierarchical, yet it can also adapt to change without losing its own identity.

Banaras's fundamental social order remains impressively robust in the face of political unrest and economic shifts. Social standing was still determined by caste and ceremonial status, but new conflicts were created within this framework by economic disparity. Economic transformation added new types of stratification to preexisting institutions rather than displacing previous hierarchies.

The durability of Banaras society can be explained by the coexistence of change and continuity. The city was able to retain its cultural identity while absorbing economic growth, political decentralization, and early colonial interference because the social order adjusted to change without experiencing a fundamental upheaval.

Caste System and Occupational Groups

In eighteenth-century Banaras, the caste system served as the primary organizing force of social life, influencing social interaction, occupation, identity, and resource availability. In early modern India, Banaras was one of the most ornate examples of caste system and a city of unmatched religious significance. Its metropolitan nature, growing economy, and ongoing migration brought some flexibility to an otherwise inflexible system at the same time. As a result, Banaras' caste system operated as a dynamic social organization that acted as a mediator between tradition and change rather than as a static or monolithic framework. This section looks at how caste and occupation are related, how caste groupings differ internally, and how economic change has impacted occupational organization without upending the caste-based social structure.

Table 3: Major Caste Groups and Associated Occupations in Banaras

Caste Category	Typical Occupations	Ritual Status	Economic Position
Brahmins	Priests, scholars, teachers	Highest	Stable, privileged
Kshatriyas	Landholders, administrators	High	Moderate
Vaishyas	Traders, bankers, moneylenders	Medium	Rising
Artisan castes	Weavers, metalworkers, builders	Low-medium	Variable
Service castes	Sweepers, washermen, cremation workers	Lowest	Marginal

▪ **Caste as a Framework of Social Organization**

In Banaras, caste (jati) operated as the primary marker of social identity, determining an individual's ritual status, occupational role, and position within the social hierarchy. Caste membership was hereditary and governed rules of endogamy, commensality, and social interaction. These norms regulated everyday life, from residential patterns and food practices to participation in religious rituals and access to public spaces.

The sacred character of Banaras intensified the significance of caste distinctions. Ritual purity and pollution were not abstract concepts but practical principles that structured daily interaction. Proximity to temples, ghats, and ritual spaces was often mediated by caste status, reinforcing social

boundaries in the urban landscape. Thus, caste hierarchy in Banaras was both socially embedded and spatially visible.

▪ **Brahmins and Ritual Occupations**

Brahmins had a particularly powerful position at the top of the caste structure since Banaras was a hub for Hindu study and ceremonial practice. Brahmins were internally divided according to institutional affiliation, specialization, and ancestry; they were not a homogeneous community. Members of Brahmanical society included priests affiliated with important temples, academics who taught and interpreted the scriptures, ceremonial experts, and astrologers, all of whom enjoyed differing levels of social standing and financial freedom.

Brahmins were linked to religious adjudication, temple management, education, and ritual performance as their occupations. Their monopoly on religious knowledge in the workplace strengthened their position of social power. At the same time, many Brahmins were involved in patronage-based livelihoods or possessed land through endowments, making it difficult to distinguish between ceremonial and commercial activities.

▪ **Kshatriya and Elite Lineages**

In Banaras, Kshatriya groups—traditionally linked to leadership and combat—held a very small but symbolically significant position. Ritual experts were given more power in Banaras culture than in political capitals where warrior elites predominated. However, through land ownership, administrative positions, and support of religious organizations, Kshatriya and related elite lineages maintained their social standing.

By the eighteenth century, their vocational identity had changed considerably. Kshatriya organizations were becoming more involved in local governance, tax management, and forming alliances with regional powers instead of engaging in direct military combat. This shift illustrates how caste identity maintained its symbolic standing while adjusting to shifting political circumstances.

▪ **Vaishyas and Merchant Castes**

Banaras's commercial economy was based on the Vaishya caste system. Traders, bankers, moneylenders, and wholesalers came from a variety of commercial castes with a focus on market exchange, business, and finance. During the seventeenth century, Vaishyas increased their economic power despite being at a lower position in the ritual order than Brahmins.

In addition to managing credit systems and organizing commercial networks, merchant castes also provided funding for philanthropic and religious causes. They were able to negotiate better status through generosity and patronage thanks to their economic success. This incident demonstrates how the caste system's economic distinction emerged, with wealth serving as a social standing signifier in addition to ritual position.

▪ **Artisan Castes and Occupational Specialization**

Banaras society was made up of a wide variety of artisan castes. Hereditary occupational categories included weavers, metalworkers, stonecutters, carpenters, potters, painters, goldsmiths, and ritual artisans. Through the creation of temples, icons, and ceremonial items, their abilities supported both the urban market and the religious economy. The social hierarchy placed artisan castes in the middle or lower levels, according to how pure their line of work was thought to be. While others faced unstable livelihoods, skilled craftspeople with tight relationships to temples or elite patrons enjoyed relatively greater status and economic stability. Caste borders were strengthened by occupational specialization, while variations within these groupings were brought about by market need.

▪ **Service Castes and Polluting Occupations**

Service castes, which were linked to professions deemed ritually impure, were at the bottom of the caste system. Among them were boatmen, washermen, sweepers, scavengers, cremation workers, and leather workers. These

groups, in spite of their low status, were essential to Banaras's ability to function as a sacred city.

Their social status was characterized by the conflict between ritual exclusion and functional necessity. Social interaction and temple access were restricted for service castes, who also lived in segregated neighbourhoods. Their job identity was inflexibly linked to caste, which restricted their freedom of movement and strengthened their social exclusion.

▪ **Caste and Occupational Rigidity versus Urban Flexibility**

The urban setting of Banaras allowed for little flexibility, notwithstanding the caste ideology's emphasis on inherited occupation. Migration, the need for pilgrimages, and economic growth all produced chances for additional or different sources of income. Some worked in secondary occupations, especially in service and artisan groups.

However seldom did such adaptability result in meaningful shifts in social standing. Instead of happening outside of the caste system, occupational diversification took place inside it. Even in the face of economic transformation, caste identity maintained its hold on social acceptance, marriage, and commensality.

▪ **Gender, Caste, and Work**

Occupation and caste were strongly gendered. Women's labor was frequently restricted to the home or unorganized sector, whilst men's labor defined caste identity in public life. Despite actively participating in productive activities including weaving, ritual preparation, and small-scale trade, women from artisan and service castes were socially invisible and their labor was underappreciated.

Elite women faced social isolation and little public participation, especially those from merchant and Brahmanical backgrounds. Thus, caste and gender norms combined to define job positions and perpetuate inequity.

▪ **Caste Institutions and Occupational Regulation**

Occupational groups and caste councils were essential in controlling social behavior and workplace procedures. These establishments upheld standards pertaining to marriage, ethics in the workplace, settling disputes, and relations with other castes. In Banaras, these organizations upheld social order in the absence of robust political supervision.

Caste-based occupational control preserved social stability and skill continuity, but it also stifled creativity and mobility. This regulatory role demonstrates how caste serves as a restricting and stabilizing factor.

▪ **Impact of Economic Change on Caste Structure**

Growing trade, monetization, and early colonial interference all contributed to the slow economic transition of the eighteenth century. Unfairly, caste-based occupations were impacted by these changes. Economic growth helped merchant and financial castes, but it also increased rivalry and exploitation for many artisan and service groups.

In spite of these changes, the caste system held up extremely well. Ritual hierarchy was not destroyed by economic power, but it did change the relative prominence of some groups. Rather, new and old kinds of inequality coexisted to create a multi-layered social structure.

Table 4: Relationship between Caste, Occupation, and Social Mobility

Factor	Effect on Occupation	Impact on Mobility
Hereditary caste	Fixes occupational identity	Restrictive
Urban economy	Creates supplementary work	Limited
Wealth accumulation	Enhances influence	Partial
Religious patronage	Improves visibility	Symbolic
Gender norms	Limits women’s work	Highly restrictive

In eighteenth-century Banaras, the caste system and occupational groupings created a complex social structure that was closely linked to economic function, hereditary occupation, and ritual hierarchy. Caste ensured continuity and stability in a holy urban setting by regulating both social interaction and labor structure. Simultaneously, urban complexity and economic growth brought much less flexibility, especially for merchant and craftsman groups. Economic change added new kinds of distinction to preexisting hierarchies rather than eradicating caste boundaries. Caste's continued dominance as a social structure explains Banaras society's tenacity and offers crucial background information for comprehending the urban communities, religious organizations, and gender relations covered in later sections of this chapter.

Artisans, Merchants, And Urban Communities

Artisans, merchants, and a variety of urban communities that integrated religious life, commerce, and daily urban functioning were the main drivers of Banaras' social and economic life in the eighteenth century. The city's material

economy was driven by these commercial and productive classes, even though Brahmanical authorities shaped ceremonial authority and symbolic hierarchy. Urban communities coordinated social life through neighbourhoods, occupational networks, and organizations, merchants facilitated internal and long-distance trade, and artisans produced commodities necessary for both religious practice and urban consumption. They served as the backbone of Banaras' urban life, balancing economic development with tradition.

Banaras demonstrated a dense urban organization that promoted occupational clustering, market contact, and limited social mobility, in contrast to rural cultures where output was spatially distributed and socially rigid. The eighteenth century, which was characterized by economic growth and political decentralization, increased the importance of merchants and artisans. Their increasing prominence changed urban neighbourhoods, brought about new social distinction, and made a substantial contribution to the socioeconomic transformation of the city.

Table 5: Major Artisan Groups and Their Economic Functions in Banaras

Artisan Group	Primary Products/Services	Main Source of Demand	Economic Position
Weavers	Textiles, ritual cloth	Pilgrimage, trade	Variable
Metalworkers	Vessels, lamps, tools	Temples, households	Moderate
Stonecutters & sculptors	Temples, idols	Religious institutions	Relatively stable
Carpenters & builders	Construction, repairs	Urban expansion	Moderate
Potters & painters	Ritual and domestic goods	Local markets	Vulnerable

▪ **Urban Economy and the Centrality of Production**

Banaras' economy was essentially urban in nature, driven by constant demand from trade, education, pilgrimage, and ritualistic activities. The foundation of this economy was mercantile trade and artisanal manufacture. Banaras relied on a self-reproducing urban structure where religious consumption, market demand, and occupational specialization reinforced one another, in contrast to cities that were dependent on court patronage or administrative tasks.

Long-term jobs in a variety of crafts and services were made possible by this urban economy. Merchants needed finance, storage, and transportation services; pilgrims created demand for food, lodging, transportation, and religious items; and temples needed ritual objects, textiles, metals, and construction. Because of this, merchants and artisans were important players in the social and economic life of the city rather than being peripheral groups.

▪ **Artisans: Occupational Diversity and Economic Role**

One of Banaras's major urban populations was made up of artisans. In addition to weaving and dying textiles, they also worked in metalworking, stone carving, woodwork, ceramics, painting, and creating ceremonial artifacts. The caste system and inheritance of many crafts ensured that

skills were passed down through the generations. Often residing and working in certain neighbourhoods, artisans established occupational clusters that promoted collaboration, apprenticeship, and quality assurance.

The artisanal demand in Banaras was greatly influenced by its holy nature. Stonecutters, sculptors, masons, and painters were needed for the building and refurbishment of the temple. Craftspeople created textiles, lamps, vases, statues, and garlands for daily rituals. Certain craft organizations, especially those closely associated with religious institutions, benefited from this steady demand.

▪ **Stratification among Artisans**

Artisan community was diverse. Skill level, market demand, caste rank, and patronage were the main determinants of stratification. Master weavers, goldsmiths, and temple sculptors were examples of highly talented workers who benefited from greater salaries and closer ties to wealthy clients. Seasonal or less experienced artisans had to rely on middlemen and suffered financial instability.

Early in the eighteenth century, market factors had a growing impact on artisan livelihoods. Expanding trade networks helped those who produced more commercially appealing commodities, while others were limited to meeting local demand. This distinction shows how caste-based employment and economic change interacted to create unequal results within artisan groups.

▪ **Merchants and the Commercial Structure of Banaras**

Banaras was connected to regional and long-distance commerce networks thanks in large part to merchant groups. Metals, luxury goods, textiles, ceremonial things, and agricultural output were all traded. The city's advantageous placement along riverine routes and its integration into larger north Indian economic circuits made merchant activity easier.

In addition to being traders, many merchants also served as bankers, moneylenders, and financiers. They extended credit to landowners, pilgrims, craftspeople, and even places of worship. They were able to become a prominent urban elite alongside Brahmanical authorities because of their financial position, which increased their economic power and social influence.

▪ **Economic Power and Social Mobility of Merchants**

Despite being lower in the ceremonial hierarchy than Brahmins, merchants were able to negotiate social status due to their economic influence. In order to transform wealth into symbolic capital, merchants built ghats, sponsored festivals, patronized temples, and established benevolent endowments. These actions improved reputation and made it easier to join affluent social circles.

Economic achievement progressively influenced social impact in this occurrence, which is indicative of a larger process of urban social transformation. Caste boundaries did not change, but money enabled merchants to hold powerful positions in urban communities, sometimes even challenging the authority of traditional rulers.

▪ **Urban Communities and Neighbourhood Organization**

In Banaras, urban communities were arranged according to religious institutions, occupational groups, and neighbourhoods (mohallas). These groups handled interactions with authorities, controlled behavior, and offered social support. Caste and occupation sometimes overlapped with neighbourhood identity, preserving hierarchy while fostering social cohesiveness.

Urban communities operated as semi-autonomous entities, handling local conflicts, planning celebrations, and providing assistance to members in times of need. These community formations were essential to preserving social stability and urban order in the absence of robust municipal governance.

Theory: Urban Craft Production and Social Embeddedness

Banaras artisanal economy is a theoretical example of embedded production, in which social and religious

structures are inextricably linked to economic activity. Caste standards, patronage connections, and ritual demand influenced artisans' work; they were not autonomous market actors. While continuity was guaranteed, innovation and mobility were constrained by this embeddedness. In a same vein, religion and social life were intertwined with merchant activities. In addition to market efficiency, reputation, trust, and institutional connection were all important for commercial success. Thus, urban communities served as structures that governed socially controlled economic transactions.

▪ **Artisans, Merchants, and Credit Relations**

Credit was frequently used as a mediator in the economic relationships between merchants and artists. Artists received loans or raw materials from merchants, which they paid back with completed goods. This system created dependency even as it guaranteed production continuity. Due to their ties to certain merchants, artisans with little money had less negotiating strength.

In the urban economy, credit linkages therefore strengthened social hierarchy. While artisans continued to be dependant despite their productive role, merchants amassed wealth and power. Early instances of class distinction in a caste-based society are reflected in this dynamic.

▪ **Urban Communities and Cultural Life**

Merchants and artisans played a significant role in Banaras' cultural life. Patronage and community cooperation were used to plan public rites, processions, and festivals. In order to strengthen social cohesiveness and collective identity, occupational groupings frequently sponsored particular religious or ritualistic events.

For merchant groups in particular, these cultural customs offered opportunities for attention and recognition. Economic elites were able to justify their position within the city's moral framework by taking part in public religious activities.

▪ **Theory: Urban Communities as Mediators of Change**

In Banaras, urban communities served as a bridge between change and tradition. They adjusted to economic change while maintaining occupational continuity and caste norms. Communities assimilated new economic responsibilities and dispersed rewards within preexisting social frameworks rather than overtly opposing change.

The urban society of Banaras is resilient, which can be explained by this adaptability. Instead of destroying established organizations, economic growth changed them from the inside out.

Table 6: Merchants and Urban Communities—Social and Economic Roles

Dimension	Merchant Communities	Artisan Communities	Social Outcome
Economic role	Trade, finance	Production, services	Interdependence
Social status	Rising	Middle to low	Stratification
Institutional ties	Temples, charities	Occupational clusters	Stability
Mobility	Moderate	Limited	Uneven

▪ **Gender and Urban Economic Life**

In artisanal and commercial endeavours, women played an important but frequently unseen role. Women participated in weaving

preparation, dying, and finishing in artisan houses. Women ran households in merchant households and occasionally engaged in unofficial commerce and religious patronage.

Women's contributions to the economy were rarely acknowledged by the general public. In urban societies, gender norms reinforced patriarchal dominance by restricting access to property, finance, and institutional authority.

▪ **Continuity and Transformation**

The urban economy of Banaras underwent slow but significant transformation during the eighteenth century. Early colonial interference, commercialization, and trade expansion changed business processes and strengthened social differentiation. However, the core structure of urban societies continued to be based on religious life, caste, and occupation.

Merchants increased their influence through economic power, artisans continued to rely on inherited skills and patronage, and urban groups remained cohesive despite changing circumstances. Banaras society at this time was characterized by this harmony between change and continuity.

Banaras civilization in the eighteenth century was centered on urban residents, artisans, and merchants. They maintained the city's economic dynamism and cultural life through production, trade, and social organization. These organizations created new kinds of stratification and influence in response to economic upheaval, yet being firmly rooted in religious tradition and caste system.

In examining these urban actors, we can see how Banaras was a resilient, adaptable, and socially complex living metropolis. Comprehending their function is crucial for understanding the city's larger social structure and prepares the reader for the following section, which delves deeper into the study of religious organizations and social life.

Religious Institutions and Social Life

Banaras has long been acknowledged as a spiritual and cultural hub whose social fabric is inextricably linked to its religious institutions, in addition to being a physical urban area. These institutions were crucial in forming daily life, controlling social relations, maintaining the economy, and upholding hierarchical hierarchies by the eighteenth century. In addition to being places of worship, temples, monasteries, ghats, and related educational and benevolent institutions served as important hubs for social, political, and economic activity. They defined both public and private behavior, facilitated access to resources, and organized urban space. An integrated examination of ritual authority, financial sponsorship, and sociocultural influence is necessary to comprehend the function of religious organizations in Banaras.

In Banaras, religious organizations were intricately linked to the social structure of the city. Priests, academics, and ritual experts oversaw daily religious operations, while Brahmanical aristocracy held positions of power within temples. Ritual legitimacy and economic power were mutually reinforcing in the symbiotic interaction between merchant elites and artisans who interacted with these institutions as both patrons and service providers. This social structure's broad basis was made up of pilgrims and devotees, who provided the labor, contributions, and involvement that kept the institutions and the larger urban economy afloat. This complex web demonstrates how religion and society are interdependent in determining urban life.

▪ **Temples as Social and Economic Hubs**

Banaras' urban and social life revolved around temples. They served as places of worship as well as educational institutions, land stewards, and commercial hubs. Temple structures frequently oversaw gifted lands, accepted pilgrim gifts, and conducted almsgiving. They served as a bridge between material economy and spiritual power through these roles.

Artisanal output was impacted by temples' economic power. To produce ceremonial textiles, architectural features, and ritual artifacts, temples hired carpenters, sculptors, weavers, and metalworkers. These committees tied temple power to the city's economic development, promoted artisanal livelihoods, and strengthened occupational hierarchies.

By controlling access to hallowed areas, dictating ritual participation, and upholding caste-based standards, temples also regulated social relationships. With its ghats, holy ponds, and temple precincts, Banaras' spatial layout strengthened its hierarchical social structure. Certain temples or inner sanctums were open to high-status people, while lower-status groups were confined to the outskirts. As a result, temples served as both places of worship and tools for social stratification.

▪ **Monastic and Educational Institutions**

In addition to temples, social life was significantly influenced by educational institutions and monastery establishments (maths). These establishments taught, trained priests and scholars, and maintained the knowledge of the Bible. Major temples were frequently connected to educational establishments, forming a network that strengthened Brahmanical authority.

Monastic organizations were also involved in the economy. They received gifts, managed endowment lands, and even engaged in business. By fostering communities of study and ritual practice, their presence strengthened social cohesion while upholding the moral and cultural authority of the city. By disseminating morals, standards, and ethical behavior, these organizations acted as social regulators. They ensured respect to social and religious norms, arbitrated disputes, and mediated conflicts. In this way, Banaras' urban governance was mostly governed by monastic and educational establishments that combined social, spiritual, and commercial purposes.

▪ **Pilgrimage and the Flow of Resources**

One characteristic that set Banaras's religious economy apart was pilgrimage. Devotees from all over the subcontinent came to the city, which helped to spread wealth, goods, and social power. Pilgrims used products and services offered by local organizations, craftspeople, and merchants in addition to paying fees and making donations. By allowing them to maintain temple structures, philanthropic endeavours, and ritual services, this resource flow strengthened the economic importance of religious organizations.

Social stratification was also strengthened via pilgrimage. Caste and ritual status determined access to specific temples or ritual activities, and affluent pilgrims and high-status contributors might have an impact on temple management and decision-making. However, taking part in festivals and pilgrimages created transient areas of social negotiation by offering few opportunities for connection across social categories.

Table 7: Major Religious Institutions in Banaras and Their Functions

Institution Type	Primary Function	Economic Role	Social Influence
Temples	Worship, rituals	Patronage of artisans, land endowments	Reinforce caste and hierarchy
Mathas/Monasteries	Religious learning, priestly training	Land administration, donations	Moral and educational authority
Pilgrimage sites	Ritual observance, festivals	Commerce, hospitality, donation	Social interaction, temporary mobility
Ghats and riverfronts	Ritual bathing, cremation	Collection of fees, ritual services	Public social regulation

The table shows how religious organizations used social, economic, and spiritual authority to serve a variety of purposes. They had an impact on caste and occupational structures, daily urban government, and ritualistic performance.

▪ **Festivals and Collective Social Life**

Banaras's social cohesiveness was largely dependent on festivals and religious rituals. Large crowds were mobilized, trade was promoted, and social standards were upheld by yearly celebrations

like Shivaratri, Kumbh Mela, and Ganga-related rites. While maintaining underlying caste and occupational inequalities, festivals permitted the temporary relaxation of rigid social hierarchies in public areas, fostering possibilities for cross-group interaction.

Additionally, festivals strengthened economic interdependence. While temples received donations and fees, merchants, craftspeople, and service providers profited from the increased demand for goods and services. These cyclical economic flows supported artisanal production and helped keep urban neighbourhoods stable.

Table 8: Functions of Religious Institutions in Banaras

Function	Description	Social & Economic Impact
Ritual & Worship	Daily ceremonies, pujas	Maintains hierarchy and cultural cohesion
Education	Sanskrit learning, philosophy	Reinforces elite knowledge, skill transmission
Charity	Food, lodging, medical aid	Supports dependent populations, builds legitimacy
Patronage & Economic Support	Commissioning artisans, collecting donations	Sustains artisans, strengthens merchant and institutional ties

▪ **Artisans, Merchants, and Institutional Interdependence**

Religious organizations were financially and materially supported by craftsmen and merchants. Artisans contributed textiles, temple furnishings, and ritual artifacts, while merchants promoted trade and extended loans. Economic and ritual hierarchies were mutually reinforced in this system of interdependence.

In particular, merchant patronage gave craftspeople access to metropolitan markets and long-term commissions. In a same vein, lands granted by temples supplied resources that supported both productive work and Brahmanical power. Economic activity is deeply ingrained in social and religious structures, as demonstrated by this mutually beneficial interaction.

▪ **Theory: Social Embeddedness and Religious Economy**

From a theoretical standpoint, social embeddedness can be used to interpret the social and economic roles of religious organizations in Banaras. Ritual authority, caste standards, and institutional patronage were inextricably linked to economic transactions, artisan output, and commercial trade. The Banaras economy was socially regulated, with religious organizations mediating trust, guaranteeing compliance, and allocating resources, in contrast to contemporary market systems that are only focused on profit maximization.

The robustness of Banaras society is explained by this theoretical framework. Because religious institutions were deeply ingrained, production, social control, and ritual practice continued even during times of political unrest and economic transformation.

Table 9: Interaction of Religious Institutions with Urban Economic Actors

Actor	Nature of Interaction	Benefits to Institution	Benefits to Actor
Artisans	Supply of ritual goods	Secured production, continuity of rituals	Long-term patronage, employment
Merchants	Financial support, credit	Enhanced wealth and influence	Market access, financial security
Pilgrims	Donations, participation	Sustained revenue, legitimacy	Religious merit, social recognition
Temple officials	Administration, land management	Authority and control	Oversight, legitimacy

This table illustrates how urban social and economic networks were organized by religious institutions. Institutions preserved hierarchy, guaranteed resource allocation, and promoted urban cohesion by integrating economic ties into ritual authority.

▪ **Education and Knowledge Transmission**

Additionally, religious organizations were vital to the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Temple and monastic systems incorporated centers of Sanskrit education, philosophy, and ritual instruction. Social inequality was strengthened by education, as children of merchants and artisans usually had only access to informal

education or practical skills, while Brahmanical elites-controlled access to higher education. This structure made sure that occupational groups were effectively integrated into the urban economy and that elite knowledge was maintained.

▪ **Charity and Social Welfare**

Religious organizations and temples held charitable events that served both social and economic purposes. Temple endowments provided money for ghat and road repair, food distribution, pilgrim housing, and medical assistance. Charity promoted social solidarity, validated elite power, and strengthened institutional authority. Because poorer

locals and travellers depended on institutional assistance for access to ritual sites and subsistence, it also organized dependency relationships.

▪ **Gender, Ritual, and Social Life**

In Banaras, gendered social life was shaped by religious institutions. Although their responsibilities were limited by caste and gender conventions, women participated in ritual performance, temple duties, and charity endeavours. While women from lower castes worked in ceremonial labor, artisanal production, or services, elite women took part in religious endowments and temple patronage. These gendered roles were mediated by institutional structures, which allowed participation in economic and ceremonial life while guaranteeing adherence to social hierarchy.

▪ **Festivals as Social Regulators**

Festivals had a variety of purposes, including fostering social negotiation, generating commercial activity, and reinforcing ceremonial hierarchies. During public

celebrations, caste barriers were temporarily loosened to permit restricted movement and contact, promoting urban togetherness without compromising structural inequity. The dual function of religious organizations as social life stabilizers and mediators is demonstrated by these ritualized activities.

In Banaras in the eighteenth century, religious organizations played a major role in social life. They served as centers of social control, economic activity, education, and ritual authority. Especially for merchant elites, temples, monasteries, and pilgrimage networks facilitated social mobility, consolidated caste hierarchy, and organized professional life. These institutions, which were integrated into economic networks, regulated interactions between elites, pilgrims, merchants, and artisans, resulting in a robust urban system that struck a balance between adaptability and continuity. In order to maintain the city's sacred identity and promote social and economic dynamism, festivals, education, and philanthropic endeavours further integrated social life.

Table 10: Interaction Between Religious Institutions and Urban Society

Actor	Type of Engagement	Benefit to Actor	Benefit to Institution
Artisans	Supply ritual goods	Income & patronage	Continuity of rituals
Merchants	Financial endowments	Social prestige, influence	Economic stability
Pilgrims	Donations & participation	Religious merit	Legitimacy, revenue
Women	Charitable & ritual participation	Recognition, social role	Workforce, ritual fulfilment

Position of Women and Family Structure

In Banaras in the eighteenth century, women's social, economic, and ceremonial lives were intricately entwined with caste systems, family structures, and urban organizations. Women's roles were both central and limited at the same time. Patriarchal rules limited their social mobility, property rights, and public engagement, even while they carried out necessary domestic, economic, and ritual tasks. Analyzing both family structures and women's interactions with the larger urban, religious, and economic context is necessary to comprehend women's status in Banaras. As the fundamental social structures, families shaped gendered experiences across caste and class by mediating women's access to resources, status, and authority.

Family systems in Banaras were predominantly patriarchal, with the male head holding all authority. Inheritance, labor distribution, ceremonial duties, and financial decision-making were all regulated by household organization. Women were characterized as mothers, wives, and daughters in relation to males. However, they made invaluable contributions to artisan work, ritual performance, household economy, and commercial support. Despite structural barriers, Banaras' urban and religious setting increased women's visibility in ceremonial and humanitarian endeavours, opening doors for social engagement.

▪ **Patriarchy and Household Authority**

In Banaras, patriarchy was established by customs that gave the head of the home or the oldest male the authority to make decisions. Property rights, marital arrangements, and movement were all impacted by the legal and economic agency of women, which was primarily mediated by male relatives. domestic power included managing domestic labor, controlling land, and receiving income from family-owned property.

The patriarchal family preserved caste identity and social hierarchy in terms of social reproduction. The maintenance of family rank and relationships was largely dependent on endogamy, arranged marriages, and dowry duties. Household rituals, such as ancestor worship and shrines, strengthened caste-based and gendered authority, enshrining women's roles within socially acceptable bounds.

▪ **Women's Domestic and Economic Roles**

In charge of food preparation, water collection, textile manufacture, child care, and ritual observances, women had a crucial role in home management. Women in artisan homes contributed to the family income by working on production activities like weaving, dying, or finishing crafts. Women oversaw service personnel, handled home finances, and occasionally participated in small-scale trade in merchant houses.

Despite their efforts, institutional records and legal systems frequently failed to acknowledge the economic roles played by women. Their reliance on male family leaders for material stability was reinforced by the fact that their labor was primarily seen as a domestic duty rather as an autonomous economic endeavour.

▪ **Ritual and Religious Participation**

In Banaras, women's lives had a substantial religious component. Women took part in festivals, pilgrimages, temple gifts, and family rituals, although caste and gender limitations frequently affected their access to holy places. While women from artisan and service castes carried out ceremonial labor and temple-related tasks, upper-caste women participated in controlled public life by sponsoring ceremonies and making charitable contributions.

Participation in religion served two purposes: it gave women symbolic authority while also reinforcing patriarchal standards. Women may build reputation, influence family

standing in the community, and get social recognition by participating in rituals and performing humanitarian deeds.

▪ **Marriage, Dowry, and Kinship Networks**

Women's social status was largely shaped by the institution of marriage. Arranged weddings shaped women's social positions and access to property; they were frequently arranged between families of like castes and social status. Dowries, in cash and in kind, were a way to consolidate

family wealth and social standing and represented the economic importance placed on women in marriage partnerships.

Kinship networks facilitated resource sharing, social control, and social support. Women relied on their maternal and biological relatives for financial support, aid, and mediation. These networks strengthened the bonds within the family but often restricted personal freedom, especially when it came to property and travel.

Table 11: Gendered Roles in Banaras Households

Dimension	Upper-Caste Women	Artisan/Service Women	Merchant Women	Social Outcome
Domestic Work	Supervised, symbolic	Labour-intensive	Managed domestic production	Household stability
Economic Contribution	Indirect, through patronage	Direct, production tasks	Moderate, trade-related	Economic sustenance
Ritual Participation	Temple donations, festivals	Temple labour, household rituals	Sponsorship of rituals	Social recognition
Autonomy	Restricted, seclusion	Limited, functional	Moderate influence	Stratified participation

▪ **Women’s Engagement with the Urban Economy**

Despite being mediated through families, women's involvement in the urban economy was essential to Banaras's commercial and artisanal networks. Women were directly involved in the creation of textiles, ceremonial items, and household crafts in artisan households. Women worked in small-scale trade, inventory control, and bookkeeping in merchant homes. Women from the service class also made contributions by performing labour-intensive tasks including cooking, cleaning, and ritual preparation.

Although mostly unofficial, women's economic integration emphasizes the connections between gender, work, and urban social life. Although the family was the main intermediary, women's labor went outside the home to connect households to the larger urban and religious economy.

▪ **Education and Knowledge Transmission**

In Banaras, women's education was restricted yet mediated by social and religious factors. While women from merchant or artisan households learned practical skills through occupational apprenticeship, upper-caste women were typically taught

religious texts, rituals, and household management. Education ensured the perpetuation of household and professional norms by reinforcing both ritual competency and domestic responsibility.

The gendered distribution of social capital and knowledge is demonstrated by this pattern. Women were able to contribute to the family and community because their education was relational and useful rather than independent, which strengthened patriarchal control.

▪ **Religious Institutions and Women’s Social Participation**

Women's social participation was significantly facilitated by religious institutions. Through family ties, women participated in festival planning, temple-based rites, and charity endeavours. Upper-caste and merchant women were able to increase their visibility, develop social power, and strengthen their family's reputation through patronage of religious organizations.

Therefore, practicing a religion offered opportunities for social identity negotiation while also reinforcing gender norms. In urban Banaras, women's involvement with institutions demonstrated how deeply ingrained social, economic, and ritual activity is.

Table 12: Interaction of Women with Religious Institutions

Group	Form of Participation	Benefits to Women	Benefits to Institution
Upper-caste women	Temple donations, festival sponsorship	Social recognition, family prestige	Sustained revenue, ritual continuity
Artisan women	Ritual labour, icon preparation	Skill recognition, contribution to household	Productive labour, ritual services
Merchant women	Charitable endowments	Economic and symbolic influence	Funding and legitimacy
Pilgrim women	Participation in rituals	Religious merit, social inclusion	Pilgrimage income, congregation support

▪ **Household Economy and Labour Division**

Women were in charge of organizing both reproductive and productive labor inside households. They handled spinning, weaving preparatory, and finishing duties to support male labor in artisan households. Women oversaw food production, organized domestic help, and occasionally oversaw small-scale business operations in merchant families. These functions were essential for maintaining the financial stability of households and generating urban livelihoods.

Division of labor was gendered yet adaptable, taking into account family financial requirements, pilgrimage intake, and seasonal demands. Despite obstacles, women's labor

supported the urban economy by connecting houses to networks of merchants, artisans, and religious organizations.

▪ **Marriage, Inheritance, and Property Rights**

Caste, family, and marital conventions severely restricted women's access to property and inheritance. Traditionally, male relatives mediated property rights, and women were given either a small dowry or gifts. Merchant and artisan women had practical access to domestic resources, but elite women occasionally controlled endowments. The management of dowries, gifts, and charitable contributions by women gave them indirect control over family income, despite the fact that legal and customary constraints limited autonomy.

▪ Theory: Gendered Social Reproduction

Theoretically, Banaras society is a prime example of gendered social reproduction. The maintenance of the urban economy and social hierarchy depended heavily on the labor, ritual participation, and household administration of

women. Their roles perpetuated societal norms across generations and strengthened family, occupational, and caste systems. Patriarchy ensured the survival of both family and urban institutions by limiting autonomy yet structuring participation in socially acceptable forms.

Table 13: Women’s Roles in Household and Urban Society

Dimension	Function	Social & Economic Impact	Theoretical Interpretation
Domestic labour	Food, childcare, household management	Household sustainability	Embedded labour, gendered responsibility
Economic contribution	Artisan tasks, trade support	Family income	Socially mediated economic agency
Ritual participation	Festivals, temple work	Prestige, social integration	Ritualized social capital
Property & inheritance	Dowry, endowments	Influence on family wealth	Patriarchal mediation of authority

▪ Family Structure and Social Order

Social order, economic productivity, and ceremonial observance were all centered around the family. Men and women's relationships were regulated by patriarchal power, which established roles, inheritance, and social standing.

Social norm transmission, caregiving for dependents, and labor pooling were all made easier by extended families. Families served as social negotiation units as well, mediating the connections between caste, occupation, and the urban economy.

Table 14: Family Structure and Social Reproduction

Aspect	Function	Effect on Women	Socio-Economic Implication
Patriarchal authority	Decision-making, inheritance	Limits autonomy	Preserves hierarchical norms
Extended family	Labour pooling, childcare	Shared responsibility	Sustains household economy
Marriage alliances	Social consolidation	Defines status & roles	Reinforces caste and wealth hierarchy
Ritual observance	Family-based religious practice	Involvement in ritual life	Integrates women into social and spiritual networks

In Banaras, family structures maintained social hierarchy while adjusting to shifting economic conditions. It incorporated domestic work into the larger urban economy, regulated women's duties, and strengthened intergenerational prestige.

In Banaras in the eighteenth century, women held a role that was both significant and constrained. Autonomy, property access, and public engagement

were restricted by caste hierarchy and patriarchal norms. At the same time, women made vital contributions to ceremonial life, artisanal production, urban social networks, and family economy. While religious and urban institutions allowed women to exercise indirect influence and social agency, family structures mediated these positions, offering both authority and restraint.

Table 15: Gender, Household, and Economic Participation

Category	Primary Function	Contribution to Economy	Contribution to Social Life
Upper-caste women	Domestic management, temple patronage	Indirect economic influence	Ritual legitimacy, prestige
Artisan women	Production, finishing crafts	Direct labour contribution	Support to family and temple economy
Merchant women	Household management, trade support	Moderate economic influence	Social negotiation, charitable visibility
Service-class women	Labour-intensive household & ritual work	Direct contribution	Maintains ritual and urban functions

Banaras culture struck a balance between tradition and flexible social norms, as demonstrated by the interactions between gender, family, caste, and occupation. To understand the larger dynamics of social life, urban economy, and institutional power in eighteenth-century Banaras, one must have a solid understanding of women's roles and family structure.

Conclusion

This study concludes that eighteenth-century Banaras represented a highly structured yet adaptable urban society where tradition and change coexisted in a complex balance. Caste and ritual hierarchy continued to shape social relations, occupational roles, and access to resources, ensuring continuity in a sacred city deeply rooted in religious authority. At the same time, expanding trade, monetization, and pilgrimage-based commerce enabled merchant groups to gain growing economic and social influence, subtly reshaping urban stratification. Artisans and service castes remained central to the functioning of the city’s religious and economic life, despite their marginalized

social position. Religious institutions acted as key agents of social regulation, economic patronage, and cultural integration, reinforcing hierarchy while fostering urban cohesion. Women, though constrained by patriarchal family structures, played an indispensable role in household economy, artisanal production, and ritual practices. Overall, Banaras society demonstrated remarkable resilience, absorbing economic and political changes without dismantling its traditional social order.

References

1. Vanina E. Of Russian spies and itinerants: Different perspectives on eighteenth century India. *India International Centre Quarterly*, 1997;24(1):32-47.
2. Vicziany M. Indian economic history and the ecological dimension. *Asian Studies Review*, 1990;14(2):53-77.
3. Ansari SH. *Evolution and Spatial Organization of Clan Settlements: A Case Study of Middle Ganga Valley*. Concept Publishing Company, 1986.
4. Arya PS. *Off-season vegetable growing in hills*. APH Publishing, 2000.

5. Audinarayana N. Socio-cultural dimensions of marriage in rural India: a study of Andhra Pradesh. Mittal Publications, 1990.
6. Bhattacharya N. The colonial subtext: Race and exterior space in eighteenth-and nineteenth-century British literature. University of Rochester, 1992.
7. Booth GD. Socio-musical mobility among South Asian clarinet players. *Ethnomusicology*, 1997;41(3):489-516.
8. Chandel MPS. Democratic Transformation of a Social Class. Mittal Publications, 1991.
9. Gupta CD. Socio-cultural history of an Indian caste. Mittal Publications, 1999.
10. Hagen JR. Indigenous society, the political economy, and colonial education in Patna District: a history of social change from 1811 to 1951 in Gangetic North India. University of Virginia, 1981.
11. Jones KW. Socio-religious reform movements in British India. Cambridge University Press, 1989, 1.
12. Mishra KP. Banaras in Transition, 1738-1795: A Socioeconomic Study. Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1975.
13. Sarkar R. The socio-economic organisation of Northern India (c. 200 AD-c. 600 AD). University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies (United Kingdom), 1947.
14. Saxena DP. Rural Towns and Socio-economic Development of Villages: In Special Reference to Eastern UP. Mittal Publications, 1994.