

## CHAPTER 4

### ROOTS OF MULTICULTURALISM IN INDIA

Multiplicity in patterns of ethnic identities and relations are today a hallmark of the great majority of societies in all regions of the world. It has been estimated that there are approximately about 3000 ethnic or tribal groups in the world that are cognizant and confident of their particular identities. South Asia, as a distinctive multi ethnic region, in terms of population accounts for about a fourth of the human race. It comprises three densely populated large States of the world, namely India (113 crores approx.), Pakistan (17 crores approx.) and Bangladesh (14 crores approx). It has two island communities— Sri Lanka (2 crores approx) and Maldives (3 lakhs approx.) and two land locked Himalayan States----Nepal (2.58 crores approx) and Bhutan (8lakhs). In a way, South Asia represents a distinct sub-global entity in terms of its variant geographical conditions, diversity in ethnic and inter-ethnic composition and orientations towards beliefs, values and culture.

As a South Asian State, India exhibits a mosaic of socio-cultural heterogeneity, diversities and pluralities, integrated in a multicultural federal polity. This heterogeneous culture has evolved over centuries, through a continuous process of adaptation and amalgamation of the diverse cultural influxes coming with the hordes of invaders---The Aryans, the Sakas, the Huns, the Pathans, The Mughals and the Europeans. And this evolved composite culture of India is often ascribed with lexical expressions as 'unity in diversity', 'bouquet of flowers' or 'vegetables in a salad bowl' etc. Multiculturalism is embedded in Indian history, civilization and is a way of life for the Indians. Jawaharlal Nehru in his *The Discovery of India*

remarked that “We are an old race, or rather an odd mixture of many races, and our racial memories go back to the dawn of history”.<sup>1</sup>

The present chapter seeks to focus as to how India, being the world’s largest and most complex multicultural federal polity have successfully reflected the individuality of the identities for centuries. How the different units created for the protection of distinct identities are by it multicultural?

It is highly contextual to reflect upon the basic thrust as to how have multiculturalism, if at all, contributed to India’s unity and in what way is diversity deeply embedded in the lives of Indians? It is so because past has a bearing upon the present form of the Indian society and this is duly supported by Watson, when he opined that among the different dimensions of multiculturalism one of them “is a sense of history arising out of a link to the past traced through kinship and family tradition”.<sup>2</sup>

An historical insight into India’s culture and civilization would reveal that the roots of India are deeply multicultural. The different linguistic, religious, ethnic groups have their own history, tradition which is totally embedded in the Indian sub-continent due to their long relationship with the Indian state and which the Indian government can hardly afford to ignore. The workings of the last sixty years of Indian democracy, amidst all odds, have proved that multiculturalism as a policy and as a principle have gained wide recognition in India. The question is how?

In India, unlike other multicultural states, the ethno-communities have multi-layered and multi-dimensional identities that impress upon each other in a non-stratified and vivacious manner. In the subsequent discussion this multivalent diversity would be explained with the help of demographic composition, linguistic, religious, ethnic and tribal composition of the Indian population and as to how the

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<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, J Nehru Memorial Fund and Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2002, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> C. W. Watson, *Multiculturalism*, Viva Books Private Limited, New Delhi, 2005, p. 110.

different identities have been residing together for ages without at the same time relinquishing their individualities.

The following study attempts to furnish a detailed description of the socio-cultural and demographic profile of India's population and how these diverse multicultural elements are intertwined within the federal polity. The discussion is based on three basic premises—

- (a) Existence for centuries of a plural society in terms of culture, language, religion, economy and urban- rural dichotomy;
- (b) Union type federal structure of government and administration;
- (c) Democratic decentralization.

An insight into India's historical development reveals that while the external attributes of nationality were influenced by the geographical environment and religious beliefs that determined the dress and food patterns, a common historical destiny created a psychological unity. Nationality was a phenomenon, sometimes preceding and sometimes coterminous with the state formation. Newer ethnic elements were regularly added to a particular nationality, both due to immigration and conquest. Language remained the core since diverse practices under a common religion were allowed.<sup>3</sup> Vincent A. Smith has articulated the deep-seated unity in India in one of his eminent works: "Her type of civilization ...has many features which differentiate it from that of all regions of the world, while they are common to the whole country, or rather sub-continent, in a degree sufficient to justify its treatment as a unit in the history of the social, religious, and intellectual development of mankind".<sup>4</sup>

By the tenth century, the basic nationalities in India had been formed; the Punjabis, the Sindhis, the Gujaratis, the Marathas, the Bengalees, Assamese, Oriyas,

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<sup>3</sup>A.S. Narang, *Ethnic Identities and Federalism*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, 1995 p. 132.

<sup>4</sup> Vincent. A. Smith, *The Early History of India*, Clarendon Press , Oxford, 1962, p. 5.

Andhras, Tamils, Malayalese, Kanadigs etc., had come into existence.<sup>5</sup> And by the eighteenth century, several politically powerful nationalities had emerged in India. They included the Maratha kingdom in western India, Mysore in peninsular India, Punjab in the northwest and Bengal in the east. However, the territories were not always well defined.<sup>6</sup>

However, in the absence of full-fledged development of different regions and their economies, cultures and languages nationalities (along regional, cultural and linguistic lines) also started emerging, particularly during and after the second half of the nineteenth century, a sense of distinct identity and an urge for a separate compact territorial unit had begun to take root and grow among several linguistic groups.<sup>7</sup>

Rashiduddin Khan, too, points out that its plural character is apparent in practically every major aspect of its cultural life, be it social system, economic formations, cultural patterns of language-dialect groupings, religious communities, castes, sub-castes and sects, or local variations of commonly prevalent mythologies and commonly revered deities; or ethnic identities, regional alignments and sub-regional attachments; or diversities of history marked by moments of triumphs and tragedies and differences in heroes and villains, and in the rich tapestry of folklore, folk-dance, music, cuisine, crafts and artifacts of life. This notion is amply reflected in his summary of the ancient roots of India's multicultural mosaic.

“While India's democratic system is new, its pattern of socio-cultural federalism is age-old with distinctive heritage of rich diversity. In its latent form this socio-cultural federalism has not only survived, but has matured by the passage of time despite the vicissitudes of India's political destiny. Developing from its embryonic form since the Vedic age, it continued to acquire new forms and substance in the ancient period ( during the rise and fall of the Mauryas, the Satvahanas, the Sakas, the Kushans, the Guptas, the Rashtrakutas, the Chalukyas, the Cholas, and the Pandyas etc.) and came to acquire distinct characteristics by the medieval times, in the span covered by the hegemony of the Delhi Sultanate, the Bahamanis of the

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<sup>5</sup> A.S. Narang, *Ethnic Identities and Federalism*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, 1995, p.133.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

Deccan and the Mughal Empire. The Mughal *Suba* and *Sarkars* considerably coincided with the socio-cultural identities.” “It is interesting to note that even in the hoary past, India’s federal socio-cultural pattern, was recorded with amazing clarity in *Vayu- Purana*. However, today little is known of the *Janapadas* of Bharat Varsha-----the territorial communities identified by an admixture of ethnicity, dialect, social customs, geographical location and political characteristic.”<sup>8</sup>

Morris-Jones, one of the foremost observers of Indian politics since independence, has rightly said, “The political systems of modern States are usually developments from earlier, sometimes, much earlier, times.”<sup>9</sup> Moreover, historically oriented scholars of state formation have found no conception of an absolutist state in India for “there developed within India a concept and practice of sovereignty, which emphasized the multiple rights of different groups and sectors of society and not the existence----real ideal---of a unitary, almost ontological existence of the state.”

<sup>10</sup> Ravindra Kumar in his distinguished work, ‘State Formation in India: Retrospect and Prospect’ argued that the multiplicity of identities was accommodated within the matrix of Indian civilization prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>11</sup>

For many centuries, India remained a land of many lands, regions, sub-regions, cultures and traditions. The country of more than a billion people inhabiting some 3,287,263 sq. km. is deeply multicultural. India’s broad regions, socio-culturally speaking, are distinct from one another. For instance, southern India (the home of Dravidian culture), which is itself a region of many regions, is evidently different from the north, the west, the central and the northeast. Even the east of India is

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<sup>8</sup>Rasheeduddin Khan, *Bewildered India-Identity, Pluralism and Discord*, Har-Anand Publications, New Delhi, 1994, pp. 26-27.

<sup>9</sup> Cited in Harihar Bhattacharyya, “Federalism, Decentralization and State-Building in India: Aspects of Centre-State Fiscal Relations”, in Richard Bird and Thomas Stauffer, (eds.), *Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations in Fragmented Societies*, Institute of Federalism, Fribourg , 2000, p. 280.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

different from the northeast of India comprising today 7 constituent units of Indian federation with the largest concentration of tribal peoples.<sup>12</sup>

In spite of such heterogeneities, India still today is a united state into which the different elements of diversity are tied together and thereby maintain the balance between the different ethnic identities with no danger of “spilling over”. Despite its immense cultural diversity, certain strands of a common cultural heritage had developed over the centuries, knitting its people together and giving them a sense of oneness, even while inculcating tolerance of diversity and dissent.<sup>13</sup> History has proved that multiculturalism is deeply embedded into the lives of Indians and India has flourished as a heterogeneous society for centuries. It is a different question whether these heterogeneities thrive because of historical reasons or due to the multicultural policy of the state.

The multivalent diversity of India cannot be understood without taking the demographic, social, linguistic and religious composition of the country into consideration. Therefore, to trace the roots a four-dimensional approach, viz, linguistic situation, social, religious have to be taken into consideration.

#### 4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC MULTICULTURALISM

From the point of view of demography, India is the second largest country (population over a billion) after China. Its population is composed of diverse social, cultural and ethnic elements spread throughout the length and breadth of the country. Since the investiture of the Indian state in 1950 the internal boundaries of the state has been continuously redrawn; linguistic states were created in Andhra Pradesh, Madras and Kerala in 1956, Maharashtra and Gujarat in 1960, Punjab and

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<sup>12</sup> Harihar Bhattacharyya, “Federalism and Regionalism in India, Institutional Strategies and Political Accommodation of Identity”, Heidelberg Papers in South Asian and Comparative Politics, Working Paper No. 27, May 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Bipan Chandra., M. Mukherjee, A. Mukherjee, *India After Independence 1947-2000*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 1999, p. 83.

Haryana in 1967. The North east was reorganized with the creation of Sikkim in 1975, the North –east states in 1977, Goa became a full fledged state from a Union Territory in 1987 and ultimately in 2000 three new states were created – Jharkhand, Chattisgarh and Uttaranchal. Therefore in 2007 India comprises of 28 states, 6 Union Territories and the National Capital Territory of Delhi. The size of the population, geographical, linguistic, religious, and racial and other diversities give it the character of a sub-continent. Also more or less unbroken social history spanning about 3000 years of recorded annals gives the society a sphere of its own. From geographical viewpoint, India has vast territory with the Himalayas on the north and seas on three sides. Its territory stretches from north to south over a distance exceeding 3500km. and from east to west over a distance of more than 3300km. This geographical expansion has made India a land of varieties. Like physical varieties, there is the human variety manifest in her teeming millions, often referred to by commentators as “mosaic society” made up of countless human beings; each neatly defined and separated from others.<sup>14</sup>

**Table 4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION OF INDIAN STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES, 2001**

STATES	POPULATION
ASSAM	26655528
ANDHRA PRADESH	76210007
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	1097968
BIHAR	82998509
CHATTISGARH	20833803
DELHI	13850507
GUJARAT	50671017
HARYANA	21144564
HIMACHAL PRADESH	6077900
JHARKHAND	26945829

<sup>14</sup>A.S. Narang,, *Ethnic Identities and Federalism*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, 1995, p. 131.

KARNATAKA	52850562
KERALA	31841374
MADHYA PRADESH	60348023
MIZORAM	888573
MANIPUR (Excl. of 3 sub-divisions)	2166788
MEGHALAYA	2318822
MAHARASHTRA	96878627
NAGALAND	1990036
ORISSA	36804660
PUNJAB	24358999
RAJASTHAN	56507188
SIKKIM	540851
TRIPURA	3199203
TAMIL NADU	62405679
UTTARANCHAL	8489349
UTTAR PRADESH	166197921
WEST BENGAL	80176197
JAMMU AND KASHMIR	10143700
DAMAN AND DIU	158204
CHANDIGARH	900635
DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI	220490
GOA	1347668
LAKSHADWEEP	60650
PONDICHERRY	974345
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS	356152

Source: Census Reports of India, 2001.

As per the 2001 census, India has a population of 1,028,610,328 and is the most populous country in the world. As per the table, the most populous state is Uttar Pradesh and the least populous state is Lakshadweep. Most of the federating states are bigger, in size, population and variety to two-thirds of the sovereign nations of the world. For instance, the state of Uttar Pradesh is bigger than Pakistan or

Bangladesh. Even there are certain districts such as Bastar which are bigger in size than many of the member-states of United Nations. Furthermore, there are huge social and economic disparities within and across states. The North Indian state of Bihar and the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu, speak respectively Hindi and Tamil, languages tracing to wholly different language families; have experienced radically different histories; contain respectively a backward economy growing at 1.5 percent per annum and a progressive one growing at 6 percent per annum; a low education land with female literacy rates at an embarrassing 28 percent and a high education region that produces computer specialists for the US and boasts female literacy rates of 80 percent ; they are different from each other, or more so, than Portugal and Sweden.<sup>15</sup>

**Table 4.2: DIVERSITY AMONG THE STATES, 2001**

STATES	LANGUAGES SPOKEN	RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES	TRIBES/NON- TRIBES
ASSAM	Assamese, Bengali, Boro	Hindus, Muslims, Christians,	Bodo Kacharis, Mishings, Koch- Rajbanshi, Mishimi, Rabha
ANDHRA PRADESH	Telugu, Urdu, Hindi	Hindus, Muslims Christians, Buddhists	Chenchus, Konda, Dokas, Kurichivas
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	Nissi, Nepali, Bengali	Hindus, Muslims Christians	Adis, Mishmis, Wancho, Nocte, Tangsa
BIHAR	Hindi, Urdu, Santali	Hindus, Muslims	Asur, Banjara, Pedia
CHATTISGARH	Hindi, Urdu, Marathi	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Gonds, Muria, Kawars, Halbas,

<sup>15</sup> Susanne Rudolph, Lloyd. I. Rudolph , Redefining Democracy in India, Presented by Susanne Rudolph at Briefing for Ambassador designate Robert Blackwill, Meridian International Center, Washington DC, May 14, 2001.

DELHI	Hindi,	Hindus, Muslims Christians, Sikhs, Jains	nil
GUJARAT	Gujarati, Hindi, Sindhi	Hindus, Muslims Christians, Jains	Barda, Bhavacha, Bhil, Dungri
HARYANA	Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi	Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs	
HIMACHAL PRADESH	Hindi, Punjabi, Kinnauri	Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists	Gujjar, Lamba, Bhot, Bodh
JHARKHAND	Hindi, Santali	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Munda, Santhal, Ho, Kharia
KARNATAKA	Kannada, Urdu, Telugu	Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jains	Adiyan, Barda
KERALA	Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Aranadans, Adiyan, Kadar
MADHYA PRADESH	Hindi, Bhili, Gondi	Hindus, Muslims, Jains	Raj Gonds, Bhil, Bhilala, Meo-Mina
MIZORAM	Lushai, Bengali, Lakher	Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists	Lusei, Pawis, Paites, Raltes, Pangs, Hmars
MANIPUR (Excl. of 3 sub-divisions)	Manipuri, Thadou, Tangkhul	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Meitis, Naga, Kuki-Chin- Mizo
MEGHALAYA	Khasi, Garo, Bengali	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Khasi, Garo, Jaintias
MAHARASHTRA	Marathi, Hindi, Urdu	Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jains	Andh, Baiga, Bhunijia
NAGALAND	Ao, Sema, Konyak	Hindus, Muslims, Christians,	Nagas

ORISSA	Oriya, Hindi, Telugu	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Khond, Gond, santal, Kolha, Munda, Saora, Shabar, Bhottada
PUNJAB	Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu	Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs	nil
RAJASTHAN	Hindi, Bhili, Urdu	Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains	Mina, Bhil, Garasia, Damor, Dhanka, Saharia
SIKKIM	Nepali, Bhotia, Lepcha	Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists	Bhutia, Lepcha
TRIPURA	Bengali, Tripuri, Hindi	Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists	Reang, Chakma, Deobarma, Halam, Usai
TAMIL NADU	Tamil, Telugu, Kannada	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Mudugas, Adi, Naga, Juang
UTTARANCHAL	Hindi	Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs	Tharu, Jannsari, Buksa, Bhotia
UTTAR PRADESH	Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi	Hindus, Muslims	Tharu, Jannsari, Buksa, Bhotia
WEST BENGAL	Bengali, Hindi, Urdu	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Santhal, Oraon, Munda, Bhumij,
JAMMU AND KASHMIR	Urdu, Hindi	Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists	Balti, Beda, Boto
CHANDIGARH	Punjabi, Hindi,	Sikhs, Hindus	nil
DAMAN & DIU	Gujarati, Marathi	Hindus, Muslims, Christians,	Dhodia, Dubla
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	Gujarati, Hindi, Bhili	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Dhodia, Kokna

GOA	Konkani, Kannada, Marathi	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Dhodia, Dubla, Siddi
LAKSHADWEEP	Malayalam, Mahl	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Laccadive, Aminidivi
PONDICHERRY	Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam,	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	nil
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS	Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati	Hindus, Muslims, Christians	Andamanese, Kora, Bo, Shompens

Source: Census Reports of India , 2001.

The above table clearly indicates that not only the country is multicultural but each and every state, union territory is also equally diverse, both linguistically, as well as in terms of religious composition and even we find that the federal units have some proportion of tribal population, truly speaking an 'incredible India'.

## 4.2 RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION

Diversity of religious belief constitutes the most important characteristic of the Indian population. There is probably more diversity of religions in India than anywhere on the earth. Although, mainly dominated by the 'Hindus' (over 80%) who are regionally rooted and plural in customs and beliefs and divided into castes. India also contains significant number of Muslims (about 13%) spread over the country with more than a million in as many as 13 states(out of 28), Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Christians and so on.

**Table 4.3: RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF INDIA'S POPULATION (2001)**

Religious Communities	Population (in '000)	% of total population
Hindus	827,579	80.5
Muslims	138,188	13.4
Christians	24,080	2.3
Sikhs	19,216	1.9
Buddhists	7,955	0.8
Jains	4,225	0.4
Others	6,640	0.6
All	1,028,610	100

(Figures for 2001 exclude Mao Maram, Paomata and Purul sub-divisions of Senapati district of Manipur)

Source: Census Reports of India, 2001.

**Table 4.4 RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF INDIA'S POPULATION BY STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES (2001)**

STATES	HINDUS	MUSLIMS	CHRISTIANS	SIKHS	BUDDHISTS	JAINS
INDIA	80%	13%	2%	2%	1%	0%
ASSAM	65%	31%	4%	0%	0%	0%
ARUNACHAL	35%	2%	19%	0%	13%	0%
ANDHRA PRADESH	89%	9%	2%	0%	0%	0%
BIHAR	83%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%
CHATTISGARH	95%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%
DELHI	82%	12%	1%	4%	0%	1%
GUJARAT	89%	9%	1%	0%	0%	1%
HARYANA	88%	6%	0%	6%	0%	0%
HIMACHAL PRADESH	95%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%

JHARKHAND	69%	14%	4%	0%	0%	0%
KARNATAKA	84%	12%	2%	0%	1%	1%
KERALA	56%	25%	19%	0%	0%	0%
MADHYA PRADESH	91%	6%	0%	0%	0%	1%
MIZORAM	4%	1%	87%	0%	8%	0%
MANIPUR (Excl. of 3 sub-divisions)	46%	9%	34%	0%	0%	0%
MEGHALAYA	13%	4%	70%	0%	0%	0%
MAHARASHTRA	80%	11%	1%	0%	6%	1%
NAGALAND	8%	2%	90%	0%	0%	0%
ORISSA	94%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%
PUNJAB	369%	2%	1%	60%	0%	0%
RAJASTHAN	89%	8%	0%	1%	0%	1%
SIKKIM	61%	1%	7%	0%	28%	0%
TRIPURA	86%	8%	3%	0%	3%	0%
TAMIL NADU	88%	6%	6%	0%	0%	0%
UTTARANCHAL	85%	12%	0%	2%	0%	0%
UTTAR PRADESH	81%	18%	0%	0%	0%	0%
WEST BENGAL	72%	25%	1%	0%	0%	0%
JAMMU AND KASHMIR	30%	67%	0%	2%	1%	0%
DAMAN & DIU	90%	8%	2%	0%	0%	0%
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	94%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%
GOA	66%	7%	27%	0%	0%	0%
LAKSHADWEEP	4%	95%	1%	0%	0%	0%
PONDICHERRY	87%	6%	7%	0%	0%	0%
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS	69%	8%	22%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Census Reports of India, 2001.

The above analysis shows that in India the Hindus are a majority while the other religions are minorities. Nonetheless, a study of the religious composition in the last forty years, that is from 1961 to 2001 reveals that the percentage of Hindus in the population has decreased by 3 percentage points since 1961, dropping from 83.5 % to 80.5% in 2001; Muslims have increased by nearly 3% points in the same period, going from 10.7% in 1961 to 13.4 % in 2001. During the same forty-year period other religious groups have shown little change. For example, according to the census Christians make up 2.3 % of the population in both 1991 and 2001.

**Table 4.5: MINORITIES IN MAJORITY IN STATES (2001)**

Jammu & Kashmir	67% Muslims
Meghalaya	70% Christians, 80 % Tribal
Nagaland	90% Christians, 89% Tribal
Punjab	60 % Sikhs
Lakshadweep	95 % Muslims
Mizoram	87% Christians, 94.2 % Tribal*

Source: Census Reports of India, 2001.

(Note\*: Percentage of Tribal to Mizoram's population has been taken from an article by Harihar Bhattacharyya-- Indian Federalism, Minorities and Statehood: Accommodation of Diversity and Political Order, [http://www.sociology.ed.ac.uk/sas/papers/panel14\\_bhattacharyya.rtf](http://www.sociology.ed.ac.uk/sas/papers/panel14_bhattacharyya.rtf) ).

In the Indian context the concept of religious minorities is misleading and can be illustrated with the help of the abovementioned table (Table 4).

Though India is a majority Hindu, there is considerable variation by state. Muslims make up the majority of the population in Lakshadweep (95.5%) and in Jammu and Kashmir (67.0 %), moreover Muslims are found in almost all the states of the country. In Assam, Bengal, and Kerala they account for one-fifth or more of the population; in four others they are a tenth or more of the total; in nine others, they