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Q1(d)

**Panchayati Raj Institutions and Social Change**

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2015 · Anthropology GS 2 · 10 marks · Indigenous and exogenous processes of socio-cultural change in Indian society

5.3 Indigenous and exogenous processes of socio-cultural change in Indian society: Sanskritization, Westernization, Modernization; Inter-play of little and great traditions; Panchayati Raj and social change; Media and Social change.

**Core demand of the question**

- Write a note on Panchayati Raj Institutions and Social Change
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length of about 150 words

**Revision summary**

Panchayati raj is elected local government after the **73rd Amendment**.

Reserved seats opened office to women and SC/ST.

Srinivas and Dube showed caste and faction still organise the village.

**PESA** tried to strengthen tribal gram sabhas.

Change is real in access to schemes, weaker in land and honour.

**Introduction**

Panchayati raj institutions are elected village, block, and district councils after the **73rd Amendment**. They change who sits in local power, not always who owns land.

**Body****New offices, old structures**

- Reservations for women, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes opened chairs that **M. N. Srinivas's** Rampura notables once held by caste and faction.
- **S. C. Dube** already saw Shamirpet change meeting caste. The gram panchayat became a new prize for the same teams.
- **PESA** in **Fifth Schedule** areas was meant to give the gram sabha a tribal veto on land and liquor. Practice often stays with the sarpanch and the party broker.

**Directions of change**

- Schemes, MNREGA lists, and certificates now run through the panchayat, so the poor must use it even if they do not control it.
- Proxy sarpanches and elite capture show that social change is partial.
- Where literacy and movements are strong, reserved seats do shift honour and access.

**Flow diagram**

73rd Amendment -> Reserved seats  
73rd Amendment -> Faction capture  
PESA -> Fifth Schedule sabha

## Conclusion

Panchayati raj is a constitutional channel of rural change. It redistributes office faster than it redistributes caste and land.

## Facts & figures

### 73rd Amendment

Constitutionalised three-tier panchayats with reservations.

### Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA)

1996 law extending panchayats to Scheduled Areas with gram sabha powers.

### M. N. Srinivas

Village studies showing dominant caste and faction as the old local state.

### S. C. Dube

Shamirpet work on planned change meeting caste structure.

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