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Q6(a)

Explain Indian village as a social system with suitable examples

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · Anthropology GS 2 · 20 marks · Indian Village

5.1 Indian Village-Significance of village study in India; Indian village as a social system; Traditional and changing patterns of settlement and inter-caste relations; Agrarian relations in Indian villages; Impact of globalization on Indian villages.

Core demand of the question

- Explain Indian village as a social system with suitable examples
- Keep the answer to a 20-mark length of about 250 words

Revision summary

The village is a system of jati, land, shrine, and state ties.

Srinivas's **Rampura**, Dube's **Shamirpet**, and Marriott's **Kishan Garhi** are type cases.

It is open to market and tirtha, not an isolate.

Panchayati raj sits on the same structure.

Tribal hamlets are a clan-forest variant of the system.

Introduction

The Indian village as a social system is a set of lasting relations among jati, land, shrine, and state. It is not a self-sufficient republic, but it is a working whole.

Body**Parts of the system**

- **M. N. Srinivas's Rampura**: **dominant caste**, service jatis, faction, and the vote as one system.
- **S. C. Dube's Shamirpet**: caste, kinship, and administration in a Telangana village.
- **Marriott's Kishan Garhi**: little and great tradition as ritual traffic with the outside.

How the system hangs

- Land and jajmani-like services bind households. Rank is purity plus power.
- The shrine and **Vidyarthi's** sacred centres pull the village into civilisation.
- Panchayat, police, and school are now internal offices of the same system.

Open, not isolate

- **N. K. Bose** already denied the island myth. Markets, marriage circles, and **Karve's** regional kinship open the village.
- Examples today include reserved **panchayati raj** chairs captured by the old **dominant caste**, and migrant remittances that still fund the local feast.
- **Tribal hamlets in Fifth Schedule belts are a variant system**: clan and forest in place of jajmani, yet still a whole.

Flow diagram

Village system -> Jati land faction
Village system -> Shrine state market
Rampura Shamirpet -> Village system

Conclusion

The Indian village is a social system of caste or clan, land, ritual, and external ties. **Rampura**, **Shamirpet**, and **Kishan Garhi** remain the teaching examples of that whole.

Facts & figures

Rampura

Srinivas's example of dominant caste and village politics as a system.

Shamirpet

Dube's example of caste, faction, and planned change.

Kishan Garhi

Marriott's example of little and great tradition in one village.

Dominant caste

The structural core of many agrarian village systems.