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Q8(b)

Briefly describe the anthropological perspective on development. How have anthropologists contributed in India's rural development?

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2022 · Anthropology GS 2 · 15 marks · Emergence, growth and development of Anthropology in India

4. Emergence, growth and development of Anthropology in India-Contributions of the 18th, 19th and early 20th Century scholar-administrators. Contributions of Indian anthropologists to tribal and caste studies.

Core demand of the question

- Briefly describe the anthropological perspective on development. How have anthropologists contributed in India's rural development?
- Keep the answer to a 15-mark length of about 200 words

Revision summary

Anthropology treats development as social process, not as a drawing.

Dube showed Community Development hitting faction at **Shamirpet**.

Elwin tied tribal development to land protection.

Village monographs trained the rural bureaucracy to see caste.

PESA and FRA carry ethnographic ideas of custom and nistar into law.

Introduction

The anthropological perspective on development treats a scheme as a social process among real groups, not as a budget drawing. Indian anthropologists put that view into village studies and into the state.

Body

Perspective

- Development is culture change with winners and brokers. **S. C. Dube** showed this when Community Development met **Shamirpet** factions.
- **Verrier Elwin** insisted that tribal development must not mean loss of land. Isolation versus integration is a development debate, not only a museum debate.
- **Later applied anthropology added participation:** villagers as analysts, which **PRA** borrowed. The perspective is sceptical of trickle-down and of a single modernisation ladder.

Contributions in rural India

- Monographs by Dube, **Srinivas**, and **Marriott** trained administrators to see caste and faction inside the block office.
- Elwin in NEFA and anthropologists in Tribal Research Institutes wrote handbooks that shaped **ITDP** manners, if not always ITDP outcomes.

- **Land and forest ethnography fed PESA and FRA arguments:** nistar, shifting plots, and Gram Sabha as living law.
- Evaluation of nutrition, boarding schools, and displacement is now a standard anthropological job in rural programmes.

Limit

- Contribution is diagnosis and some statute language. It has not stopped leakage. The field still meets the contractor.

Flow diagram

Anthropological view -> Scheme as social process
Scheme as social process -> Dube Shamirpet
Scheme as social process -> Elwin land
Scheme as social process -> PESA FRA participation

Conclusion

Anthropology sees development as structured social change. In India it contributed village realism, tribal caution, and the intellectual ground of PESA and FRA, not a magic rural plan.

Facts & figures

S. C. Dube

Linked village structure to Community Development in India's Changing Villages.

Verrier Elwin

Brought a protective tribal view into NEFA administration and national debate.

Shamirpet

Dube's case that planned rural change has brokers and caste.

FRA 2006

Statute that reflects anthropological insistence on customary forest use.

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