

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q7(c)

Caste ideology appears to have strengthened democracy .Comment.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2015 · Sociology GS 1 · 15 marks · Politics and Society

Politics and Society: Sociological theories of power; Power elite, bureaucracy, pressure groups, and political parties; Nation, state, citizenship, democracy, civil society, ideology; Protest, agitation, social movements, collective action, revolution.

Core demand of the question

- Caste ideology appears to have strengthened democracy .Comment
- Keep the comment within a 15-mark length

Revision summary

Caste ideology became a language of democratic claims after franchise.

Associations, **Mandal**, and vote bargaining widened who holds office.

Kothari and **Weber** explain status groups in party form.

Equality of honour, endogamy, and labour still contradict civic democracy.

- **Comment:** strengthened competition, not a finished equal citizenry.

Introduction

Caste ideology ranks groups by birth and honour. Democracy counts persons as voters and citizens. The paradox is that caste as a political ideology has thickened participation even while it contradicts civic equality. The appearance of strengthening is real as mobilisation, and double-edged as equality.

Body

How caste ideology feeds democracy

- Universal franchise made numbers a resource. Caste associations turned rank into a vote bank and a demand group.
- **Mandal** and OBC politics expanded who enters legislatures and offices. That is a democratic widening of personnel.
- **Rajni Kothari's classic claim:** caste entered politics and politics entered caste. Ideology became a language of claims, not only of ritual.
- **Max Weber's** status groups organise parties. Caste is a status ideology that learned the party form.

What "strengthened" cannot mean

- **Karl Marx** would read caste ideology as a veil over class, yet also as a real extra-economic structure. Democracy can be captured as patronage.

- **Emile Durkheim**'s civic morals need a membership beyond the jati. Caste ideology can fragment the civic cult.
- Atrocities, endogamy, and honour killings show ideology as domination, not as civic education.
- George Herbert Mead's generalised other, if it remains only the caste, blocks a democratic self.

Comment

- **Strengthened turnout, bargaining, and representation of middle and lower castes:** yes, as a historical sequence after 1950 and especially after **Mandal**.
- **Strengthened liberal equality:** not automatically. The same ideology polices marriage and labour.
- Talcott Parsons's achievement values sit uneasily with ascriptive ideology that nonetheless uses elections.
- **Comment in one line:** caste ideology democratised competition among groups more than it dissolved hierarchy.

Flow diagram

Caste ideology -> Vote associations Mandal
Vote associations Mandal -> Thicker electoral democracy
Caste ideology -> Honour endogamy labour
Honour endogamy labour -> Thin civic equality

Conclusion

Caste ideology has strengthened Indian democracy as mobilisation, numbers, and entry into office. It has not completed democracy as equal honour. **Weber** and **Kothari** explain the party use of status; **Marx** and **Durkheim** name the remaining domination and the thin civic whole.

Facts & figures

Kothari

Caste-politics mutual penetration as a feature of Indian democracy.

Mandal

OBC reservation as a mass democratic incorporation through a caste idiom.

Weber status

Honour groups can organise as parties without becoming a class in **Marx**'s sense.

Atrocities law

A state admission that caste ideology still organises violence inside a democracy.