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Q5(a)

Write a note on the uneven impact of 'Green Revolution' on rural society.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · Sociology GS 2 · 20 marks · Rural and Agrarian transformation in India

Rural and Agrarian transformation in India: Programmes of rural development, Community Development Programme, cooperatives, poverty alleviation schemes; Green revolution and social change; Changing modes of production in Indian agriculture; Problems of rural labour, bondage, migration.

Core demand of the question

- Write a note on the uneven impact of 'Green Revolution' on rural society
- Cover region, class, caste, and ecology

Revision summary

The Green Revolution concentrated in irrigated wheat-rice regions.

Rich peasants captured seed, water, and machines.

Labour gains were partial and later mechanised away.

Caste-land overlap structured who won.

Ecology and dryland India show the uneven remainder.

Introduction

The Green Revolution thickened grain in irrigated wheat-rice belts and left rainfed India behind. Its rural impact was uneven by region, class, caste, and ecology, not a national farm miracle.

Body**Regional unevenness**

- Punjab, Haryana, and western Uttar Pradesh gained surplus, machines, and farmer unions.
- Eastern and dryland tracts stayed with low yield and distress, which later NREGA partly met as a wage floor.

Class and caste

- Proprietary cultivators who could buy water, seed, and credit became a rich-peasant class. **A. R. Desai's** incomplete reform met new capital.
- Landless labour gained some days of work, then machines and migrants cut that gain. Thorner's mazdoor did not become a citizen of the revolution.
- Dominant castes that Srinivas mapped often captured the package. Dalit labour remained at the bottom.

Social and ecological

- Households commercialised; tenancy and reverse tenancy shifted.

- Groundwater, soil, and later farmer suicide clusters showed the ecological bill.
- Women gained transplanting work and lost control as cash and machines masculinised decision.

Flow diagram

HYV irrigation credit -> Rich peasant belts
HYV irrigation credit -> Labour then machines
HYV irrigation credit -> Water soil cost
Rainfed India -> Left behind

Conclusion

- **Green Revolution impact was a regional class project:** plenty for irrigated proprietors, casual work and ecological cost for others. Unevenness is the sociological fact, not a side effect.

Facts & figures

HYV package

Seed, fertilizer, water, and credit that only some regions could use.

Punjab-Haryana

The classic surplus belt of proprietary farmer power.

A. R. Desai

Class reading of agrarian modernisation as rich-peasant strengthening.

Groundwater stress

An ecological unevenness now visible in the same success belts.