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Q5(d)

Comment on the changing democratic profile of India

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2019 · Sociology GS 2 · 10 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

- Comment on the changing democratic profile of India
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Early elite democracy gave way to wider caste-class entry.

Mandal and panchayat reservation recast who holds office.

Media made a national simultaneous public.

Disharmony of equality versus honour continues.

Majoritarian pressure tests the constitutional profile.

Introduction

India's democratic profile has changed from an elite Congress system toward deeper caste-class entry, stronger states, and a louder media-public. The Constitution's equality creed still meets ranked society.

Body**Who enters**

- Adult franchise and **Mandal** made OBC and Dalit blocs central, which **Kothari** called the democratisation of caste.
- Women in panchayats changed the face of local office, still often proxied by kin.

How it works

- Coalition and then national-party dominance altered federal bargaining.
- Television and phones made a simultaneous public, an opportunity structure for movements.
- **Beteille's disharmony remains:** votes of equals, honour of unequals.

Worry

- Majoritarian mobilisation and shrinking dissent change the quality of the profile, not only the census of voters.

Flow diagram

Elite early democracy -> Caste class deepening
Caste class deepening -> Media simultaneous public
Disharmonic honour -> Caste class deepening

Conclusion

The democratic profile is more socially representative than in the 1950s and more mediated. Whether it stays constitutional depends on minority security and open contest, not only on turnout.

Facts & figures

Mandal

A turning point in the social composition of democratic claim-making.

73rd Amendment

Local democracy that included women and weaker sections on paper.

Kothari

Politics as a force that reshapes caste into associations.

Disharmonic democracy

Beteille's equality creed inside an unequal social structure.