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Q5(c)

Elaborate urbanism as a way of life in India

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2019 · Sociology GS 2 · 10 marks · Perspectives on the study of Indian society

Perspectives on the study of Indian society: Indology (G.S. Ghurye); Structural functionalism (M.N. Srinivas); Marxist sociology (A.R. Desai).

Core demand of the question

- Elaborate urbanism as a way of life in India
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Wirth's urbanism is density, diversity and secondary ties.

Indian cities add caste housing, informal labour and public ritual.

Class splits gated colonies from slums.

Migrants keep a village fallback.

Urbanism here is recombination, not a clean modern break.

Introduction

Urbanism as a way of life, after **Louis Wirth**, is density, diversity, and secondary relations. In India that style mixes with caste streets, jhuggis, and festival publics.

Body**Wirth in an Indian city**

- Size and density produce anonymity in offices and metros. Kin and jati still organise housing and marriage, so the secondary world is incomplete.
- Ghurye already wrote on cities; the Indian urban is not a clean break from civilisation as village.

Indian pattern

- Informal work, slums, and gated colonies are one urbanism of class split, which Beteille would call disharmonic: civic equality, ranked space.
- **Migrants live circular urbanism:** the village remains a fallback, as COVID reverse flows showed.
- Public religion and caste associations thrive, so secularization is institutional, not a emptying of faith.

Way of life

- Speed, consumption, and digital networks are real.
- Honour, endogamy, and domestic patriarchy travel with the suitcase.

Flow diagram

Wirth density diversity -> Indian urbanism

Jati kin informal -> Indian urbanism

Migrant circularity -> Indian urbanism

Conclusion

Indian urbanism is a way of life of density and markets that still carries village kinship. It is Wirth plus jati, not Wirth instead of India.

Facts & figures

Louis Wirth

Classic essay treating urbanism as a distinct way of life.

Gated / slum dualism

Indian urban form of class and service caste proximity.

Circular migration

Urban wages with rural social security.

Urban caste

Associations and marriage markets that survive anonymity.

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