

Sociology Daily Answer Writing

Week 3 - Day 5

Model Structures

1. What are the features that distinguish tribes from the rest of the population? 20

Model Structure:

Introduction

- Definition - a social division in a traditional society consisting of families or communities linked by social, economic, religious, or blood ties, with a common culture and dialect, typically having a recognized leader.
- Also mention that following features also abuse definitional problems for tribes.

Main Body

1. Definite Common Topography:

Tribal people live within a definite topography and it is a common place for all the members of a particular tribe occupying that region.

In the absence of a common but definite living place, the tribals will lose other characteristics of a tribal life, like common language, way of living and community sentiment etc.

2. Sense of Unity:

Unless and until, a group living in a particular area and using that area as a common residence, does not possess the sense of unity, it cannot be called a tribe. Sense of unity is an invariable necessity for a true tribal life. The very existence of a tribe depends upon the tribal's sense of unity during the times of peace and war.

3. Endogamous Group:

Tribal people generally do not marry outside their tribe and marriage within the tribe is highly appreciated and much applauded. But the pressing effects of changes following the forces of mobility have also changed the attitude of tribals and now, inter-tribal marriages are becoming more and more common.

4. Common Dialect:

Members of a tribe exchange their views in a common dialect. This element further strengthens their sense of unity.

5. Ties of Blood-relationship:

Blood-relation is the greatest bond and most powerful force inculcating a sense of unity among the tribals.

6. Protection Awareness:

Tribal people always need protection from intrusion and infiltration and for this a single political authority is established and all the powers are vested in this authority. The safety of the tribal is left to the skill and mental power of the person enjoying political authority. The tribal chief is aided by a tribal committee, in the events of contingencies. Tribe is divided into a number of small groups and each group is headed by its own leader. The chief of a group works according to the directives received by him from the tribal chief.

7. Distinct Political Organization:

Every tribe has its own distinct political organisation which looks after the interests of tribal people. The whole political authority lies in the hands of a tribal chief. In some tribes, tribal committees exist to help the tribal chief in discharging his functions in the interests of the tribe.

8. Common Culture:

Common culture of a tribe springs out from the sense of unity, common language, common religion, common political organisation. Common culture produces a life of homogeneity among the tribals.

9. Importance of Kinship:

Kinship forms the basis of tribal social organization. Most tribes are divided into exogamous clans and lineages. The marriage among tribals is based on the rule of tribal endogamy. Marriage is viewed as a contract and there are no prohibition on divorce and remarriage.

10. Egalitarian Values:

The tribal social organization is based on the egalitarian principle. Thus there are no institutionalized inequalities like the caste system or sex based inequalities. Thus men and women enjoyed equal status and freedom. However some degrees of social

inequality may be found in the case of tribal chiefs or tribal kings who enjoy a higher social status, exercise political power and possess wealth.

11. Rudimentary type of Religion:

Tribes believe in certain myths and a rudimentary type of religion.

Further, they believe in totems signifying objects having mystic relationship with members of the tribe.

Robert Goodland has given the following characteristics of the tribal people:

- (a) Geographical isolation or semi-isolation;
- (b) Unacculturated or partially acculturated into national society;
- (c) Largely or entirely independent of the national economic system;
- (d) Ethnic distinctiveness from the national society;
- (e) Economic base tightly dependent on their, specific environment;
- (f) Possessing leadership but no more national representation, and few, if any political rights

Conclusion:

- Therefore, on the basis of above features tribes can be defined as a social group composed chiefly of numerous families, clans, or generations having a shared ancestry and language.
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2. Write a short note with a sociological perspective on the significance of the Forest Rights Act. 10

Model Structure

Introduction

- The Forest Rights Act, 2006 is unique in setting up a paradigm shift from colonial forest governance to community governance in India. The community forest governance denotes a social concept-"community" as well as a legal concept- "forest governance". The Forest Act recognizes and vests the forest rights and occupation of Forest land in Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDST) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFD) who have been residing in such forests for generations.

Main Body

- The act has high sociological significance:-
 - Title rights: It gives FDST and OTFD the right to ownership of land cultivated by tribal or forest dwellers. It has helped conserve the traditional rights of tribals residing in forests and provide them with ownership.
 - Use rights: The rights of the dwellers extend to extracting Minor Forest Produce (MFP), grazing areas, etc. Such MFP extraction serves as a source of income for tribals. Marketing of forest products through agencies like TRIFED improves tribes' economic position and also protects them from exploitation by the middlemen.
 - Relief and development rights: The act provides for rehabilitation in case of illegal eviction or forced displacement and guarantees access to basic amenities, subject to restrictions for forest protection. This provides a legal framework for tribes to fight exploitation by civilians and authorities.
 - Forest management rights: This includes the right to protect, regenerate, conserve or manage any community forest resources which they have been traditionally protecting and conserving for sustainable use.
 - The Forest Rights Act recognizes and secures community rights over forest resources of the communities in addition to their individual rights.

- Recognition of community rights is a landmark step that is expected to empower the communities to assert their rights over community forest resources which are critical for their livelihood. It also enhances the self-respect of the tribes at the individual and the collective level.
- The enactment of the Forest Rights Act, 2006 represents a moment of inclusion of the marginalized in the democratic process and is a good example of law for social change.
- The law's potential to enhance local livelihood and ensure conservation makes it an effective vehicle to address the Sustainable Development Goals, especially the goals of eliminating poverty and achieving ecological sustainability. By recognizing individual and collective rights of forest dwellers, the FRA supports their access to subsistence resources including forest-based livelihood, food grains, etc and thus improve their life-chances.

Conclusion

- For the very first time, not merely forest-dependent communities are identified by governmental law; the government has also started facilitating these communities' participation in forest governance and management which was an exclusive bastion of forest departmental bureaucracy. This is in tune with Nehru's Panchsheel policy.