

Sociology Daily Answer Writing

Week 4 - Day 4

Model Structures

1. Examine the role of pressure groups in parliamentary democracy.

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Model Structure:

Introduction

- Pressure groups are the interest groups which work to secure certain interests by influencing public policy.

Main Body

- A Pressure group has three elements:
 1. An organized group of people,
 2. The common interests and
 3. Exercise influence on the decisions of the Government.
- Pluralists like M Lipset, Rober A Dahl sees pressure group as a necessary element in parliamentary democracy for a number of reason:
- Participation: Pressure group allows many individuals who are not members of political parties to participate in politics.
- Supplementing electoral democracy: Pluralists argue that the pressure groups may supplement electoral democracy because they keep the government in touch with public opinion between elections. pressure groups give political voice to minority and vulnerable sections of the society. Moreover, pressure groups raise concerns about various social issues such as fundamental rights and liberties, poverty, environment, domestic violence etc.
- Dissent voice: Pressure groups are important to raise the dissenting voice of people who have voted for the government, may not agree with all its policies.
- Education - Pressure groups play a role in promoting healthy discussion and debate, and because they come from an angle of challenging long-accepted views, they broaden the variety of beliefs and views, leading to a better-informed public. An educated electorate means that public policy will better reflect the needs of society.

- However, pressure can turn negative for parliamentary democracy because of following reasons:
 - Use of unconstitutional method-Pressure groups in India tries to influence the government mainly through various unconstitutional methods such as strikes, agitation, demonstration, lockouts etc.
 - Sometimes led to a mass violence-Pressure group involved with protest and certain radicalization of political life results in mass violence. For example, the Naxalite movement started after the fourth general election of 1967 in West Bengal.
 - The threat to democratic set up-The tendency of pressure groups to resort to coercion to secure the solution of a socio-political problem in streets could be regarded as a serious threat to democratic setup.
 - Ineffective for interest articulation-pressure groups like trade unions in India lacked trained and competent functionaries. They have been not effective agents of interest articulation in India
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2. Explain the emergence of peasant movements in India.

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Model Structure

Introduction

- According to T.K. Oommen, an agitation or protest can be called a social movement if it has:
 - Cause
 - Ideology
 - Leadership
 - Collective action
 - Goal attainment

Main Body

- **Peasant movements are proletarian movements:** Peasant movements in India are comparable to proletariat movements in the West because the peasant movements in India happened because of poverty, indebtedness. They did not have a regional identity e.g., Champaran Satyagraha
- **Peasant movements are unique in India:** Partha Chatterjee opines that the peasant movements in India are not comparable to western proletariat movements because the peasant movements were localized and had unique regional or religious character. There was no class consciousness. E.g., Moplah Rebellion
- **Peasant movements were part of the national movement:** A.R. Desai says that peasant movements were a part of the national movement. Since the majority of population were peasants, the peasant movements ultimately lead to pan-India movements like Non-Cooperation movement, Civil Disobedience movement
- Peasant movements, according to Partho Chatterjee, were not class movements as they were more guided by regional, ethnic and caste considerations.
- According to Vibha Arora, the rise of peasant movements in post-independent India can be attributed to the green revolution and new farm tech leading to increased productivity but farm income remaining stagnant due to the high input prices for farming
- Reasons for emergence of peasant movements in post independent India
 - Failure of land reforms
 - Green revolution and rising disparities
 - Non-access to institutional credit and usurious money lending from private players
 - Demand for MSP, loan waiver, electricity, etc.
 - Draught, dependency on monsoon and non-access to irrigation facilities
 - Lack of social security
 - Local issues compounding with above issues
- In contemporary times, peasant movements are due to factors like irrigation, vagaries of monsoon etc.,

Conclusion:

- The peasant movements of post-modern India are not as virulent as that of pre-Independence times. Modern factors like MSP, National Agriculture Market have spurred discussions. Recent movements like the Farm Bill Protests are evidence of the changing nature of peasant movements in India.
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