

Sociology Daily Answer Writing

Week 7 - Day 3

Model Structures

1. Write a short note on the idea of Indian Village.

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Model Answer

Introduction

- Reference to Indian villages is found in many Indian texts since Vedic times, but during British rule, a systematic attempt was made to create the unique image of an Indian village.

Main Body

- Charles Metcalf treated the Indian Village community as an autonomous sociological isolate. He treated the village community as a little republic, a self-sufficient community.
- The idea of colonial administrators about Indian villages was of an inner world with communal ownership of land, social harmony, patriarchal in governance and surrounded by hostile other villages.
- Indian villages were described as closed, isolated systems and unchanging entities.
- The orientalist (Book view) described the Indian village as an Idyllic social reality with Varna system of caste hierarchy and complete functional integration between different occupations groups (castes).
- The stereotypical image of the Indian village as a self-sufficient community was contested by Anthropological studies in the 1950s and 1960s. The findings of these village studies based on extensive fieldwork concluded that the Indian village was never self-sufficient; rather it always maintained links with the larger society and centres of Indian civilization. Migration and movement for work and trade, village exogamy, administrative linkages, inter-regional markets, inter-village economic ties, caste networks, fairs, festivals and other activities always served as the bridge with neighbouring villages and the larger society.
- Scholars like M N Srinivas (Indian Villages), Mckim Marriott (Village India), D N Majumdar (Rural profiles), S C Dube (shamirpet) etc carried out field study. M N

Srinivas advocated that Indian Villages were always a part of a wider entity and maintained social, political, economic ties at the regional level.

- S C Dube argued that social differentiation was observed in village structure and hence they are not having monolithic structure .

Conclusion

- Though some feminist like Uma Chakravarty criticized village study for not including gender angle, field view of village study reflected empirical reality in contrast to ideological category propounded by colonial administrators and orientalist.
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2. Give a critical analysis of Andre Beteille's study of Tanjore village. 10

Model Structure

Introduction

- Why village studies
 - Initially the social researchers preferred book view to conduct their sociological studies.
 - However, it was realized that book view was not sufficient to understand the ground reality. As a result, sociologists started going for field view.

Main Body:

- Basic Approach of Andre Beteille-
 - Weberian Trinitarianism (Elaborate Caste-Class-Power Nexus)
 - Field view of Sripuram, Tanjore. (Book – Sripuram: A village in Tanjore District)
 - Changing role of Village institutions like Caste
 - Interactional approach, diffusive
- Thesis: In the similar line, Andre Beteille went on to study Sripuram village in Tanjore. His approach was reflexive, dynamic and analytical. He talked about segmentation of caste i.e. presence of sub-castes within caste. E.g. Brahmins in Sripuram village were divided into two groups such as Srivaishnav and Samarthas.

- Criticism: However, his study has been criticised by some scholars on the ground that there are some value judgments given by him. This criticism has been done due to following reasons:
 - Andre Beteille has resided in Agrahara. He was supposed to follow a Brahminical lifestyle.
 - He was not allowed to go to Cherri (Place of Adi-Dravidians). Instead of visiting them, some people from Cherri were invited to a place.
 - When he asked them questions, most of them kept mum considering him as an outsider. So, research was finally completed by applying some common sense.
 - As a result, value judgements entered in his piece of work. Thus, his study has been criticized for not being value free

Conclusion:

- Despite above Criticism Beteille's Field study brought Indian Sociology out from the clutches of Redundant Book View.

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