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Social Movements and Politics in India

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By: Gaurav Sahni



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AND POLITICS IN INDIA**

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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2024

(Solved)

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND POLITICS IN INDIA

M.P.S.E.-7

Time: 2 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 50

Note: Attempt five questions in all, selecting at least two questions from each Section. All questions carry equal marks.

SECTION-I

Q. 1. Critically assess Indian social movements.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 1, 'Definition of Social Movements', and Chapter-4, Page No. 27, 'Social Reforms and Inequalities During Colonial Period'.

Q. 2. How has democracy impacted Indian society?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-17, Page No. 155, 'Democracy and Social Transformation India' and Chapter-4, Page No. 29, 'People's Movements as Reflection of Democracy and Social Change'.

Q. 3. Explain resource mobilization theory.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 13, 'Resource Mobilization Theory', Page No. 16, Q. No. 7.

Q. 4. How important are social reforms in Indian context?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 27, 'Social Reforms and Inequalities During Colonial Period'.

Q. 5. Write notes on the following:

(a) Gender issues in Indian society

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 34, Q. No. 2.

(b) Liberalization and changes in Indian society

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 30, 'Liberalization, Poverty and Social Change'.

SECTION-II

Q. 6. How has Globalization impacted developing countries?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-5, Page No. 37, 'Impact of Globalization' and Page No. 43, Q. No. 3.

Q. 7. Discuss the changing status of Indian State since Independence.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 46, 'Changing Status of the Indian State'.

Q. 8. Discuss the growth and ideology of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP).

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-7, Page No. 61, Q. No. 2.

Q. 9. What are ethnic movements?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 76, 'What are Ethnic Movements'.

Q. 10. Write notes on the following:

(a) State's response to regional movements

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 100, 'State's Response to Regional Movements'.

(b) Communalism in India

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-12, Page No. 112, Q. No. 1.

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QUESTION PAPER

December – 2023

(Solved)

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND POLITICS IN INDIA

M.P.S.E.-7

Time: 2 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 50

Note: Attempt five questions in all, selecting at least two questions from each Section. All questions carry equal marks.

SECTION-I

Q. 1. Explain Gandhian approach to the study of social movements.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 12, 'Gandhian Approach'.

Q. 2. Describe new social movements and their relevance.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 20, 'New Social Movement'.

Q. 3. Explain interlinkages of social and political movements.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 2, 'Social Movement and Political Movement' and Page No. 6, Q. No. 5.

Q. 4. Differentiate reform movements and revolutionary movements.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 19, 'Reform, Rebellion and Revolution', Page No. 22, Q. No. 2.

Q. 5. Describe social transformation.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 27, 'The Idea of Social Transformation in the Wake of Independence'.

SECTION-II

Q. 6. Explain Human Development Index and reality.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 31, 'Human Development Index and Reality', and Page No. 33, Q. No. 1.

Q. 7. How important is 'Networking and Cooperation' in social movements?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-5, Page No. 40, 'Networking and Cooperation'.

Q. 8. Describe changing status of market and its relevance to social movements.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 48, 'Changing Status of Market', 'State and Market in New Context', 'Contextualizing State, Market and Social Movement'.

Q. 9. Comment on achievements and limitations of BSP.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-7, Page No. 61, Q. No. 2 and Page No. 62, Q. No. 3.

Q. 10. What is Subaltern Study? How and why is it important to study Indian society?

Ans. Subaltern Studies is a scholarly initiative that emerged in the early 1980s, led by a group of South Asian historians and social scientists aiming to revise the traditional accounts of Indian history. The term 'subaltern' is derived from the work of Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci and refers to individuals of inferior rank in society due to factors such as class, race, or gender. The scholars involved in Subaltern Studies sought to shift the focus of historical inquiry from the perspectives of the elite to those of the oppressed and marginalized groups-such as peasants, workers, tribal communities, and women-who had been largely overlooked in mainstream historiography.

In the context of Indian society, Subaltern Studies critiques the dominant nationalist historiography, which tends to highlight the roles of elite figures and neglects the experiences and contributions of those outside of power centers. These scholars argue that the nationalist perspective is limited and incomplete because it fails

Sample Preview of The Chapter

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SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND POLITICS IN INDIA

Social Movements : Meanings, Significance and Components



INTRODUCTION

Social Movements are there in all the societies of the world in the past and present. Social movements also played an essential role in the distribution of powers amongst the different sections of the society. In the modern scenario the social movements has played the important role in challenging the Church and Feudal government. Some of the renowned social movements happened throughout the globe were – French and Russian Revolutions, the Fascist Movement of Germany, Islamic Movement of Middle East, Hindutva Movement of India, Tamilian Movement in Sri Lanka, etc. These all movements influenced the political system and the society.

More recent strains of theory understand social movements through their cultures – collectively shared beliefs, ideologies, values and other meanings about the world. These include explorations into the “collective identities” and “collective action frames” of movements. For instance if we want to know about the directive principles and fundamental rights of the Indian Constitution we have to analyze the Indian freedom movements of the 1930s and 1940s. In other words our understanding of political institutions and processes remain incomplete without the understanding of social movements. In this chapter we will learn about the definition of social movements, their comparison with political movements. We will also learn about the important components of social movements.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The term social movement is often conveying different meanings. Sometimes it is related with the historical trend like modernization and industrialization. It is often related with the activities taken by the various organizations to bring change in the society. Many scholars who have written about social movements in the advanced countries argue that they underwent a sea change from the late 1960s onwards linked to certain underlying changes evident in the industrialized countries from around that time.

The term social movement gained fame in the European languages in the early 19th century. This was the era of social change. The powers of church and different superior authority were challenged in this era. The political leaders who used the term social movement were concerned with the emancipation of the exploited classes and creation of a new society by changing proper relationships. Different scholars have their own views on the political system and expected social change. Their views are different on strategy and path to bring social change. For instance an action of a mob in streets in spite of collective behaviour cannot called as social movement. All social movements have a complex dynamics. While people have genuine aspiration to bring to fore their real issues, many of the movements remain trapped at the symptomatic level and this tantamount to by passing the core issues.

A social movement is an organized social group that acts with continuity and coordination to promote or resist change in society or other social units. Social

movements are the most organized form of collective behaviour, and they tend to be the most sustained. They often have a connection to the past, and they tend to become organized in coherent social organizations. Social movements can be the basis of revolutionary change. Some movements originating in one nation also spill over to affect movements in another. Transnational social movements have organizational structures that cross national borders. Forms of collective behaviour wherein many people, over a broad social spectrum, engage in similar behaviour and have a shared definition of their behaviour as needed to bring social change or to identify their place in the society. Riots are likely to occur in cities with economic deprivation of racial-ethnic minority groups. Riots are most likely to occur in cities where grievances of the rioting group have not been addressed. A rapid influx of new population is a common characteristic of cities where riots take place. Whether a group has resources to initiate and sustain rebellions activity influences the development of riots. Some scholars have referred that collective actions associated with social movements play such an important role in bringing about social change in political, religious, educational, health, corporate, government, and other institutional arenas. However, social movements which have always been a social form for challenging or defending prevailing systems of authority are becoming even more ubiquitous worldwide. There is no one meaning of social change this will be quite clear from the following definitions of social movements:

Paul Wilkinson interprets social movement as “A deliberate collective endeavour to promote change in any direction and by any means, not excluding violence, illegality, revolution or withdrawal into ‘utopian’ community. Social movements are in this sense, obviously distinct from historical movements, upheavals or waves. It is obligatory to remember, in this connection, however that such propensities and inclinations and the effect of the material or insensible factors in human behaviour, may be of vital significance in enlightening the problems of interpreting and explaining social movement.”

According to Herbert Blumer, “Social movements can be viewed as collective enterprises to establish a new order of life. They have their inception in the condition of unrest, and derive their motive power on the one hand from dissatisfaction with the current form of life, and on the other hand, from wishes and hopes for a new scheme or system of living.” Dong Macadam defines social movements as “Those organized efforts,

on the part of excluded groups, to promote or resist changes in the structure of society that involve recourse to non-institutional forms of political participation.”

In the words of Sidney Tarrow, “Collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities.” Three crucial factors concurrent in the above definitions are noteworthy. They include (1) collective initiative, (2) social transformation, and (3) common purposes. hence, in the strict sense agitation or protests are quite different from social movements. Since, they recurrently do not seek to bring about social change. They do not interpret that they are recoil to a certain state of conditions.

The three essential elements of the above definitions are collective action, social change and common purpose. Now it is very rightly to say that protests and agitations are not social movements because they do not performed to bring social change. On the other hand we know the fact that social movements develop in course of time and they usually begins with protest and agitation. When students of the engineering college in Gujarat protested against the mess bill, it was in reality a spontaneous act. But that protest takes the shape of Navnirman Andolan of 1974 in Gujarat. Hence, we can say that riots are not social movements but they are more often than not related with social movements.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

Usually social and political movements are treated more or less same except those collective efforts which are mainly related with personal issues and salvations. But the same movement after entering into social relationship arena gets the tag of political movement. Backward caste movement is its prime example. The famous scholar Rudolf Heberle (1951) believes that all movements have political implications even their members do not strive for political power. Some of the scholars like Andre Frank and Marta Fuentes make a distinction amongst social and political movements. We will argue that, despite the discourse of self-determination and self-organization at the heart of autonomous movements, autonomy cannot be seen to be detached from accumulation processes of capital, not from liberal democracy or development. Rather, it is intimately intertwined with these modes of social life, which autonomous social movements seek autonomy from. Mainstream political parties often ignored social movement activists who engaged in public education and took to the streets to demand justice and political

equality. The relationship between political progressivism – as expressed in the platforms and actions of political parties and leaders – and social movements has not always been harmonious or cooperative. Social movements, by definition, arise from a committed minority of citizens working together to shape larger public consciousness about particular injustices in addition to working for concrete political change. Social movements have invariably advanced moral and political causes surrounding gender, racial and class equality with much greater force and consistency than those in mainstream politics.

EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL OR NON-INSTITUTIONAL PATH

Social movements follow institutional as well as non-institutional path. They may be known as constitutional and the latter is termed as extra-constitutional path. This path is also termed as direct action against the government authorities. According to famous scholar Johnson, the renowned action which is legally correct and accepted as binding in the society at a given point of time is an institutionalized action. For instance voting in elections and fighting legal battles in court. According to famous scholar Rajni Kothari, direct action can be defined as an extra constitutional political technique that takes the form of group action, aimed at some political change directed against government in power.

Movements comprise several types social movements, political movements, religious movements, reformative movements, linguistic movements, etc. All movements have political implication even if there members do not strive for political power. For many of us violent means illegal therefore not permitted. But on the other hand the term extra-constitutional can be related with interpretation. The non-institutionalized collective action takes various forms like protest, riot, *satyagraha*, *gherao*, etc.

IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Various political philosophers and scholars conceive the ideal political system and social order. Many of them plead for a necessity of social movements to oppose the present political system and to create a system which they consider perfect to resolve the problems of the society. A social movement is a continuous phenomenon that thrives on the ability of the progressive community to capitalize on political opportunities and translate such opportunities into social change, according to sociologist Doug McAdam's political process model. Social movements not only

redundant but also detrimental in the ideal social order. The social movements are often looked upon either as counter revolutionary, native and irresponsible.

Social movements need organizations first and foremost. Organizations can acquire and then deploy resources to achieve their well-defined goals. Some versions of this theory see movements operate similar to capitalist enterprises that make efficient use of available resources. Modern social movements became possible through the wider dissemination of literature and increased mobility of labour due to the industrialization of societies. Organized social structures like modern day armies, political societies, and popular movements required freedom of expression, education and relative economic independence. Certain political contexts should be conducive for potential social movement activity. These climates may disfavour specific social movements or general social movement activity; the climate may be signaled to potential activists and/or structurally allowing for the possibility of social movement activity and the political opportunities may be realized through political concessions, social movement participation, or social movement organizational founding.

COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social movements possess five ingredients: objectives, ideology, programmes, leadership, and organization. They are interdependent and inter-related. repulsive public protest in an unorganized manner does not resemble social movement. Social movement is associated with social and political change. Therefore it has a direct and persistent objective. The urgent objective may be to handle a particular issue or contrary to the decision of the authority. It undertakes a number of concerns and continues towards a consistent objective of altering authority, power relationship, dominance and political system.

The movement originates policy for the long-term objective. It assigns precedence to specific course of actions over the rest and also concentrates on a selected direction, energizes several groups. The course of initiative is closely connected to get dimension with the perception of the desired social transformation. The parameters and ideals constitute ideology. The ideology is not necessarily systematic or preconceive. In some cases, ideology champions the movement and in other cases ideology gets to be moulded and authorizes the movement. Leadership plays dominant part in formulation of ideology and constructing strategies for action.

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Social movement entails activation of people who duly get involved with the objective of the movement. They interchange values and start to interchange impression of common realization of social reality. This too needs some or other form of organization. The organization may be loose or compact with centralized or decentralized decision-making mechanism for introducing programmes. None of these components are deductive and stationary. Their nature and function differ between movements. They are found to be elementary in some movements whereas in some others they may be considerably matured. These factors – leadership, organization as well as ideology get rotated in due time of the movement. In certain cases the objective may even alter and circulate in different direction in contrast to the previous ones.

EXERCISES

Q. 1. What is the importance of a study of social movements in understanding politics?

Ans. A social movement is a continuous phenomenon that thrives on the ability of the progressive community to capitalize on political opportunities and translate such opportunities into social change, according to sociologist Doug McAdam's Political Process Model. For example, the settlement house movement in the late 19th century and early 20th century served as an aspect of a larger anti-poverty movement. The settlement houses focused on various social services, such as unemployment, childcare, and city sanitary regulations. The Federal government has adopted some portions of the settlement house movement's agenda as public works, while many of the poverty related issues that Jane Addams and her peers fought still exist and are being battled by current non-profit agencies.

Studies of social movements have taken various forms offering many explanations for the genesis and eventual decline of American movements. The definition of social movement that was utilized for this project was based in part on three social movement models. First, there is the classical model of social movements, which argues that social change is the result of a systematic "strain" on the social infrastructure of the political system. Hence, the commotion associated with the "strain" is transformed into feelings of anxiety, frustration, and hostility that lead to the emergence of a social movement. Secondly, the resource mobilization model argues that social movements are the result of the quantity of "social resources" that are accessible to

"unorganized but aggrieved groups, thus making it possible to launch an organized demand for change".

Q. 2. Explain difference between riot and social movement.

Ans. A riot is a form of civil disorder characterized by what is thought of as disorganized groups lashing out in a sudden and intense rash of violence against authority, property or people. While individuals may attempt to lead or control a riot, riots are thought to be typically chaotic and exhibit hard behaviour, and usually generated by civil unrest. However, there is a growing body of evidence to suggest that riots are not irrational.

Riots typically involve vandalism and the destruction of private and public property. The specific property to be targeted varies depending on the riot and the inclinations of those involved. Targets can include shops, cars, restaurants, state-owned institutions, and religious buildings.

On the other hand, social movements are generally seen as phenomena of the modern era and industrialized society, whether located in the "first" world or not. Industrialization and urbanization, technological advancements, and ongoing democratization allowed people to push for change collectively from the margins of the polity.

Sociologists have tended to define and re-define "social movement" in response to the kind of protests they saw taking place around them. American sociologists in the early - to mid-twentieth century characterized movements as being on a continuum of innovative collective behaviour, as the organized end of a spectrum whose opposite pole was crowds and riots. Social movements were highly organized but non-routine entities where people interacted to establish new meanings about politics and where they challenged power based on the making of these new meanings. Some variations on collective behaviour theory emphasized the disorderly side of movement activism, seeing actors in movements as problematic for democracy. Kornhauser's (1959) "mass society" theory, for example, painted protesters as alienated and atomistic, the product of structurally abnormal nation-states; hence the mass movements of fascism and communism were both pathological manifestations of ill-channeled popular discontent.

Q. 3. What are the common elements of different definitions of social movement?

Ans. Charles Tilly defines social movements as a series of contentious performances, displays and campaigns by which ordinary people make collective