Society & Social Justice · GS - I

Critically analyse the proposition that there is a high correlation between India’s cultural diversities and socio-economic marginalities

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2024	GS - I	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

cultural diversity, socio-economic marginality, caste, tribes, religion, language, geography, social exclusion, poverty, intersectionality, regional inequality, inclusive development

Model Answer

Introduction

India's cultural diversity encompasses caste, tribe, religion, language, region and customary practices. Certain culturally distinct communities experience persistent socio-economic disadvantages, but cultural diversity itself should not be equated with marginality.

Basis of the Correlation

1. Tribal marginality: Many Scheduled Tribes inhabit remote forest and hilly regions where historical deficits in connectivity, education, healthcare and employment have contributed to deprivation.

2. Caste-based exclusion: Historically disadvantaged castes have faced discrimination and restricted access to land, education and economic opportunities.

3. Religious disadvantages: Some religious communities experience relatively weaker socio-economic outcomes in particular indicators, although substantial internal diversity exists.

4. Geographical isolation: Cultural groups concentrated in remote regions may face limited access to markets, public services and infrastructure.

5. Intersectionality: Marginality can become more pronounced where caste, gender, poverty, tribal identity and geographical isolation overlap.

Why Correlation Is Not Absolute

Cultural identity itself is not a sufficient explanation for poverty. Several culturally distinct communities have achieved significant educational and economic progress. Similarly, deprivation exists among socially dominant and culturally mainstream groups.

Socio-economic marginality is also shaped by **historical land relations, education, employment, public investment, geography, discrimination and political representation**.

Way Forward

Policy should combine protection of cultural identities with measures addressing actual deprivation. Quality education, healthcare, infrastructure, livelihood opportunities, social protection, effective anti-discrimination mechanisms and protection of legitimate community rights are essential.

Conclusion

There is a meaningful relationship between cultural identity and socio-economic marginality in several historically disadvantaged sections, but **correlation does not establish causation**. India's objective should be to preserve cultural diversity while dismantling the structural conditions that convert social differences into persistent socio-economic disadvantage.