

Gender, Religion and Caste

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FACTS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

- ➔ **Feminist:** A woman or a man, who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men, is called a feminist

Feminist Movements are radical women's movements aiming at attaining equality for women in personal and family life and public affairs. These movements have organized and agitated to raise channels for enhancing the political and legal status of women and improving their educational and career opportunities.

- ➔ **Patriarchal society:** A patriarchal society is essentially male dominated. The line of descent is traced through the father. Men are valued more in terms of work they do and the place they hold in society. This gives them more power than women.

- ➔ **Communal politics:** When the demands of one religious group are formed in opposition to another and when State power is used to establish domination of one religious group over the rest, this manner of using religion in politics is called communal politics.

- ➔ **Discrimination against women:**

- (i) In studies girls mostly perform better than boys, but they drop out simply because parents prefer to spend their resources on their boys' education. A smaller proportion of girls go for higher studies.

- (ii) On an average, a woman works more than an average man everyday. Since much of her work is not paid for, therefore often not valued.

- (iii) **The Equal Wages Act** provides for equal wages for equal work. But in almost all areas of work from sports to cinema, from factories to fields, women are comparatively paid less.

- (iv) The child sex ratio (number of girl children per thousand boys) is very low. In India the national average is 927. In some places it is as low as 850 or even 800, because parents prefer to have sons so they get the girl child aborted before her birth.

- (v) In urban areas, women are unsafe. Even in their homes they suffer from beating, harassment and other forms of domestic violence.

- ➔ **Caste inequalities in India:** Caste has not disappeared from contemporary India and caste division is special to India. Even now most people marry within their own caste. The caste groups that had access to education under old system have done well, whereas those groups that did not have access to education have lagged behind. There is a large presence of 'upper caste' among the urban middle classes in our country. Caste continues to be linked to economic status as is evident from National Sample Survey. The average

economic status of caste groups still follows the old hierarchy—the 'upper' castes are best off, the Dalits and Adivasis are worst off and the backward classes are in between. The upper castes are heavily overrepresented among the rich while the lower castes are under-represented. The SC, ST and OBC together account for about two-thirds of India's population.

➤ **Status of women's representation in India's legislative bodies:**

The one way to ensure that women related problems get adequate attention is to have more women as elected representatives. To achieve this, it is legally binding to have a fair proportion of women in the elected bodies.

- **Panchayati Raj** in India has reserved **one-third seats** in Local Government bodies for women.
- In India, the proportion of women in legislature has been very low. The percentage of elected women members in Lok Sabha is not even 10 per cent and in State Assemblies less than 5 per cent. In March 2010, the women's reservation bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha ensuring 33% reservation for women in Parliament and State Legislative bodies.

➤ **Religion and politics in India:** Gandhiji said, **"Religion can never be separated from politics"**. By religion he did not mean any particular religion like Hinduism or Islam, but moral values and ethics

drawn from religion to guide politics. Religion in politics is not as dangerous as it may seem to us. Ethical values of each religion can play a major role in politics. According to human rights groups, most of the victims of communal riots in our country are from religious minorities. Government can take special steps to protect them. These instances show a relationship between religion and politics. People should be able to express in politics their needs, interests and demands as members of a religious community. Thus, it is the responsibility of those whose political power is able to regulate the practice of religion, to prevent discrimination and oppression.

➤ **Reasons which have contributed to changes in caste system:**

- (i) Efforts of political leaders and social reformers like Gandhiji, B.R. Ambedkar who advocated and worked to establish a society in which caste inequalities are absent.
- (ii) Socio-economic changes such as: urbanisation; growth of literacy and education; occupational mobility; weakening of landlord's position in the villages; breaking down of caste hierarchy—have greatly contributed.
- (iii) The Constitution of India prohibited any caste-based discrimination.
- (iv) Provision of fundamental rights has played a major role because these rights are provided to all citizens without any discrimination.



NCERT Exercise

1. Mention different aspects of life in which women are discriminated against or disadvantaged in India.

Ans. *Women face disadvantages and are discriminated against in various ways in India:*

- (i) Literacy rate among women is only 54% in comparison to 76% among men. In studies girls mostly perform better than boys, but they drop out simply because parents prefer to spend their resources on their boys' education. A smaller proportion of girls go for higher studies.
- (ii) On an average, a woman works more than an average man everyday. Since much of her work is not paid for, therefore often not valued.
- (iii) The Equal Wages Act provides for equal wages for equal work. But in almost all areas of work from sports to cinema, from factories to fields, women are comparatively paid less even if men and women both do exactly the same work.
- (iv) The child sex ratio (number of girl children per thousand boys) is very low. In India the national average is 927. In some places it is as low as 850 or even 800, because parents prefer to have sons so they get the girl child aborted before her birth.
- (v) In urban areas, women are unsafe. Even in their homes they suffer from beating, harassment and other forms of domestic violence.

2. State different forms of communal politics with one example each.

Ans. *Communalism can take various forms in politics:*

- (i) The most common expression of communalism is in everyday beliefs. This is so common that we fail to notice it, even when we believe in it. *For example*, belief in the superiority of one's religion and inferiority of other religions. As long as people in Northern Ireland saw themselves only as Catholics or Protestants, their differences were difficult to reconcile.
- (ii) A communal mind often leads to a quest for political dominance of one's own religious community. In a majority community this takes the form of majoritarian dominance.

For those belonging to the minority community, it can take the form of a desire to form a separate political unit. The Catholics, who comprise 44 per cent and were represented by the Nationalist parties, demanded that Northern Ireland be unified with the Republic of Ireland, a Catholic country.

The Protestants, who comprise 53 per cent, were represented by the Unionists who wanted to remain with the UK which is predominantly Protestant. There was fight between the Unionists and Nationalists. It was in 1998 that the UK Government and the Nationalists reached a peace treaty.

- (iii) Political mobilisation on religious lines is another form of communalism. This involves the use of sacred symbols, religious leaders, to bring the followers of one religion together. Christianity in England and Buddhism in Sri Lanka reflect the interests or emotions of voters in one religion in preference to others.
- (iv) Sometimes, communalism takes its most ugly form of communal violence, riots and massacre. The post-independence period has seen large scale communal violence in our country. Recently, the same communal violence has been seen, *for example*, in Gujarat and Mumbai.

3. State how caste inequalities are still continuing in India.

Ans. Caste has not disappeared from contemporary India and caste division is special to India. Some of the older aspects of caste persist even today.

- (i) Even now most people marry within their own caste.
- (ii) Untouchability has not ended completely despite constitutional prohibition.
- (iii) Effects of centuries of advantages and disadvantages can be felt today. The caste groups that had access to education under old system have done well, whereas those groups that did not have access to education have lagged behind.
- (iv) There is a large presence of 'upper caste' among the urban middle classes in our country.

(v) **Caste continues to be linked to economic status as is evident from National Sample Survey:**

- The average economic status of caste groups still follows the old hierarchy—the 'upper' castes are best off, the Dalits and Adivasis are worst off and the backward classes are in between.
- Although every caste has some poor members, the proportion of those living in extreme poverty is higher for lowest castes and much lower for the upper castes.
- Similarly, every caste has some members who are rich. The upper castes are heavily over-represented among the rich while the lower castes are under-represented.
- The SC, ST and OBC together account for about two-thirds of India's population.

4. **State two reasons to say that caste alone cannot determine election results in India.**

Ans. **Two reasons to state that caste alone does not matter in electoral politics:**

- (i) People within the same caste or community have different interests depending on their economic condition. Rich and poor or men and women from the same caste vote very differently.
- (ii) Peoples' assessment of the performance of the Government and the popularity rating of the leaders matter and are often decisive in elections.

The Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) justifies both the reasons. It enjoys strong support in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura, especially among the poor, factory workers, farmers, agricultural labourers and intelligentsia. It has been in power in West Bengal without a break for 30 years. In 2004 elections, it won 6 per cent of votes and 43 seats in Lok Sabha.

5. **What is the status of women's representation in India's legislative bodies? (2014)**

Ans. In India, the proportion of women in legislature has been very low. For example, the percentage of elected women members in Lok Sabha has never reached even 10% of its total strength. Their share in the State Assemblies is less than 5%. The average percentage of women in National Parliament is 8.3%. This figure is even behind the averages for several developing countries of Africa and Latin America. However, Panchayati Raj has brought a change in the status of women. One-third of seats in Local Government bodies—in

Panchayats and Municipalities are now reserved for women. Now, there are more than 10 lakh elected women representatives in rural and urban local bodies. Only recently, in March 2010, the Women's Reservation Bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha ensuring 33% reservation to women in Parliament and state legislative bodies.

6. **Mention any two constitutional provisions that make India a Secular State.**

Ans. **Two constitutional provisions that make India a Secular State are:**

- (i) There is no official religion for the Indian State. Unlike the status of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Islam in Pakistan and Christianity in England, our Constitution does not give a special status to any religion.
- (ii) At the same time, the Constitution allows the State to intervene in the matters of religion in order to ensure equality within religious communities; for example, it bans untouchability.

7. **When we speak of gender divisions, we usually refer to:**

- (a) Biological difference between men and women
- (b) Unequal roles assigned by the society to men and women
- (c) Unequal child sex ratio
- (d) Absence of voting rights for women in democracies.

Ans. (b)

8. **In India seats are reserved for women in:**

- (a) Lok Sabha
- (b) State legislative assemblies
- (c) Cabinets
- (d) Panchayati Raj bodies

Ans. (a), (b) and (d)

9. **Consider the following statements on the meaning of communal politics. Communal politics is based on the belief that:**

- A. One religion is superior to that of others.
- B. People belonging to different religions can live together happily as equal citizens.
- C. Followers of a particular religion constitute one community.
- D. State power cannot be used to establish the domination of one religious group over others.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

- (a) A, B, C and D
- (b) A, B and D
- (c) A and C
- (d) B and D

Ans. (c)

10. Which among the following statements about India's Constitution is wrong? It

- (a) prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion.
- (b) gives official status to one religion.
- (c) provides to all individuals freedom to profess any religion.
- (d) ensures equality of citizens within religious communities.

Ans. (b)

11. Fill in the blanks:

Social divisions based on are peculiar to India.

Ans. social divisions based on caste are peculiar to India

12. Match List I with List II and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists:

List I	List II
1. A person who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men.	A. Communalist
2. A person who says that religion is the principal basis of community.	B. Feminist
3. A person who thinks that caste is the principal basis of community.	C. Secularist
4. A person who does not discriminate others on the basis of religious beliefs.	D. Casteist

	1	2	3	4
(a)	B	C	A	D
(b)	B	A	D	C
(c)	D	C	A	B
(d)	C	A	B	D

Ans. (b)

Related Concept

The constitution gives a State the right to intervene in matters related to any community or religion so that every citizen of India can experience dignity on the basis of religion or caste.



Kudos!! One more step towards success.....



SUBJECTIVE TOPIC-1

Gender and Politics

Short Answer Type Questions (SA-I)

(Easy) (1 Mark)

1. Define the term 'feminist'.

Ans. A woman or a man, who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men, is called a feminist.

2. What is the 'term' used for a person who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men?

Ans. Feminist

3. Explain the term 'feminist movements'.

Ans. Feminist Movements are radical women's movements aiming at attaining equality for women in personal and family life and public affairs. These movements have organized and agitated to raise channels for enhancing the political and legal status of women and improving their educational and career opportunities.

4. What is a patriarchal society?

Ans. A patriarchal society is essentially male dominated. The line of descent is traced through the father. Men are valued more in terms of work they do and the place they hold in society. This gives them more power than women.

5. What is the percentage of seats reserved for women in local bodies?

Ans. 33%

6. Suggest any one way to protect women from domestic oppression.

Ans. Empowering women by providing education to them. Women must be educated about their legal rights as well as laws like Domestic Violence Act, Inheritance Laws etc. to protect them.

Short Answer Type Questions (SA-II)

(Average) (2-3 Marks)

7. Explain the status of women's representation in India's legislative bodies.

Ans. The one way to ensure that women related problems get adequate attention is to have more women as elected representatives. To achieve this, it is legally binding to have a fair proportion of women in the elected bodies.

(i) Panchayati Raj in India has reserved 1/3 seats in Local Government bodies for women.

(ii) In India, the proportion of women in legislature has been very low. The percentage of elected women members in Lok Sabha is not even 10 per cent and in State Assemblies less than 5 per cent. India is behind several developing countries of Africa and Latin America. Women organisations have been demanding reservations of at least one-third seats in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies for women.

(iii) In March 2010, the women's reservation bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha ensuring 33% reservation to women in Parliament and State Legislative bodies.

8. What have been the consequences of the political expression of gender division in free India? (2013)

Ans. Political expression of gender division and political mobilisation has helped improve women's role in public life all over the world including India. However, despite some improvements since Independence, ours is still a male-dominated society and women lag behind in all fields.

- Literacy rate among women is only 54% as compared with 76% among men.
- Proportion of women among highly paid and valuable jobs is still very small.
- Equal Wages Act provides that equal wages should be paid for equal work. However, in all areas from sports and cinema, factories to fields, women are paid less than men for the same amount of work.
- In many parts of India, parents prefer to have sons and find ways to abort the girl child before she is born.

Long Answer Type Questions (LA)
(Difficult) (5 Marks)

9. "Gender division is not based on Biology but on social expectations and stereotypes." Support the statement. (2012)

Or, Mention different aspects of life in which women are discriminated against or disadvantaged in India.

Ans. 'Gender division is not based on Biology but on social expectations and stereotypes':

(i) Boys and girls are brought up to believe that the main responsibility of women is house work and bringing up children. There is sexual division of labour in most families

where women stay at home and men work outside to play the role of breadwinners.

(ii) Literacy rate among women is only 54% in comparison to 76% among men. In studies, girls mostly perform better than boys, but they drop out simply because parents prefer to spend their resources on their sons' education. A smaller proportion of girls go for higher studies.

(iii) On an average, a woman works more than an average man everyday. Since much of her work is not paid for, therefore often not valued. The Equal Wages Act provides for equal wages for equal work, but in almost all areas of work from sports to cinema, from factories to fields, women are comparatively paid less because of the male chauvinistic bent of mind of society.

(iv) Child sex-ratio (number of girl children per thousand boys) is very low. In India, the national average is 927. In some places it is even lower because parents prefer to have sons so they get girl child aborted.

(v) In urban areas too, women are not respected and are unsafe even in their homes being subjected to beating, harassment and other forms of domestic violence.

(vi) The role of women in politics in most societies is minimal.

10. What was the Feminist Movement? Explain the political demands of the Feminist Movement in India. (2013, 2017)

Ans. Feminist Movements are radical women's movements aiming at attaining equality for women in personal and family life and public affairs. These movements have organised and agitated to raise channels for enhancing the political and legal status of women and improving their educational and career opportunities.

Political demands of the feminist movement in India:

The one way to ensure that women related problems get adequate attention in India is to have more women as elected representatives. To achieve this, it is legally binding to have a fair proportion of women in the elected bodies. Panchayati Raj in India has reserved one-third seats in Local Government bodies for women.

In India, the proportion of women in legislature has been very low. The percentage of elected women members in Lok Sabha is not even 10 per cent and in State Assemblies less than 5 per cent. India is behind several developing countries of Africa and Latin America. Women organizations

have been demanding reservations of at least one-third seats in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies for women. And only recently, in March 2010, the women's reservation bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha ensuring 33% reservation for women in Parliament and State Legislative bodies.

11. "Women still lag much behind men in India despite some improvements since independence." Analyse the statement. (2019 Series: JMS/1)

Or: Describe the different ways through which women face discrimination and oppression in India. (2019 Series: JMS/4)

Or: "In India, women still lag behind men despite some improvement since Independence." Support the statement with examples.

(2020 Series: JBB/3)

Or: "Women face discrimination in various ways in our society." Explain any two ways. (2023)

Ans. Women face disadvantages and are discriminated against in various ways in India:

- (i) Literacy rate among women is only 54% in comparison to 76% among men. In studies girls mostly perform better than boys, but they drop out simply because their parents prefer to spend their resources on their boys' education. A smaller proportion of girls go for higher studies.
- (ii) On an average, a woman works more than an average man everyday. Since much of her work is not paid for, therefore often not valued.
- (iii) The Equal Wages Act provides for equal wages for equal work. But in almost all areas of work from sports to cinema, from factories to fields, women are comparatively paid less even if men and women both do exactly the same work.
- (iv) The child sex ratio (number of girl children per thousand boys) is very low. In India the national average is 927. In some places it is as low as 850 or even 800, because parents prefer to have sons so they get the girl child aborted before her birth.
- (v) In urban areas, women are unsafe. Even in their homes they suffer from beating, harassment and other forms of domestic violence.

Related Concept

Women don't have the same economic rights as men. unpaid care work, lack of fair pay and job security, poor working conditions, and limited opportunity to own land and inherit property are all undermining women's rights. Women can't earn a living and take control of their lives.



SUBJECTIVE TOPIC-2

Religion, Communalism and Politics

Short Answer Type Questions (SA-I) (Easy) (1 Mark)

12. What proportion of the country's population do the SC, ST and OBC together account for? (2013)

Ans. The SC, ST and OBC together account for about two-thirds of the country's population.

13. Why do Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have the prefix 'Scheduled' in their names?

Ans. Both these broad groups include hundreds of castes or tribes whose names are listed in an official Schedule. Hence, the prefix 'scheduled' in their name.

14. What is communal politics?

Ans. When the demands of one religious group are formed in opposition to another and when State power is used to establish domination of one religious group over the rest, this manner of using religion in politics is called communal politics.

15. Suggest any one way to create communal harmony among various communities of India.

(2020 Series: JBB/1)

Ans. By enhancing the feelings of national integration among people. By preventing activities that exploit the rights of other communities. Communal prejudices and propaganda need to be eradicated in everyday life.

16. Read the following information and write a single term for it. (2020 Series: JBB/3)

The Constitution of India provides freedom to profess and practice any religion to all its citizens. The Constitution of India prohibits discrimination on religious grounds.

Ans. Secularism

Short Answer Type Questions (SA-II) (Average) (2-3 Marks)

17. Mention any two constitutional provisions that make India a Secular State.

Ans. Two constitutional provisions that make India a Secular State are:

- (i) There is no official religion for the Indian State. Unlike the status of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Islam in Pakistan and Christianity in England, our Constitution does not give a special status to any religion.

Long Answer Type Questions (LA)
(Difficult)

(5 Marks)

- (ii) At the same time, the Constitution allows the State to intervene in the matters of religion in order to ensure equality within religious communities; for example, it bans untouchability.

Related Concept

A secular state is one that does not consider anyone's religion as an official religion. A secular state also treats all its citizens equally, regardless of religion.

18. Suppose a politician seeks your vote on the religious ground. Why is his act considered against the norms of democracy? Explain. (2015)

Ans. If a politician seeks votes on religious grounds, he is acting against the norms of democracy because—

- (i) This act of his is against the Constitution. He is exploiting social differences which may create social discord and lead to social division.
- (ii) Religion becomes a problem when it is expressed in politics and when one religion and its followers are pitted against another.
- (iii) When beliefs of one religion are presented as superior to those of other religions and the demands of one religious group are formed in opposition to another and the state power is used to establish the domination of one religious group over the rest, it leads to communal politics.

19. How does religion influence the political set up in our country? Explain. (2015)

Ans. Gandhiji said, "Religion can never be separated from politics". By religion he did not mean any particular religion like Hinduism or Islam, but moral values and ethics drawn from religion to guide politics. Religion in politics is not as dangerous as it may seem to us. Ethical values of each religion can play a major role in politics. According to human rights groups, most of the victims of communal riots in our country are from religious minorities. Government can take special steps to protect them. Family laws of all religions discriminate against women. The government can change laws to make them more equitable. These instances show a relationship between religion and politics. People should be able to express in politics their needs, interests and demands as members of a religious community. Thus, it is the responsibility of those whose political power is able to regulate the practice of religion, to prevent discrimination and oppression. These political acts are not wrong as long as they treat every religion equally.

20. "The Government of India gives holidays for the festivals of most of the religions." Why is it so? Give your viewpoint. (2015)

Or, What constitutional provisions were provided to make India a secular state?

Or, Describe any five features of secularism in Indian Constitution.

(2019 Series: JMS/4, 2020 Series: JBB/1)

Or, "Secularism is not an ideology of some political parties or persons, but it is one of the foundations of our country." Examine the statement. (2018)

Ans. To overcome the challenges posed by communalism and to accommodate diversity, the makers of the Constitution of India chose the model of a secular state. The Government of India gives all religious holidays because India is a secular state.

Certain provisions were adopted in the Constitution to make India a secular state:

- (i) There is no official religion for the Indian State. Unlike the status of Buddhism in Sri Lanka and Islam in Pakistan, our Constitution does not give a special status to any religion.
- (ii) The Constitution provides to all individuals and communities freedom to profess, practice and propagate any religion or not to follow any.
- (iii) The Constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion.
- (iv) Constitution allows the State to intervene in the matters of religion in order to ensure equality within religious communities, for example, it bans untouchability.

21. 'Communalism can take various forms in politics.' Explain. (2020 Series: JBB/3)

Ans. Communalism can take various forms in politics:

- (i) The most common expression of communalism is in everyday beliefs. This is so common that we fail to notice it, even when we believe in it. For example, belief in the superiority of one's religion and inferiority of other religions. As long as people in Northern Ireland saw themselves only as Catholics or Protestants, their differences were difficult to reconcile.
- (ii) A communal mind often leads to a quest for political dominance of one's own religious community. In a majority community this takes the form of majoritarian dominance. For those belonging to the minority



SUBJECTIVE TOPIC-3

Caste and Politics

Short Answer Type Questions (SA-II) (Average) (2-3 Marks)

22. What factors have brought about a change in the Indian Caste system in modern times? Explain. (2012)

Ans. The castes and caste system in modern India have undergone great changes due to the efforts of social reformers and the socio-economic changes in India. With economic development, large scale urbanisation, growth of literacy and education, occupational mobility and weakening of the position of landlords in the villages, the old notions of caste hierarchy are breaking down. Politics too influences the caste system and caste identities by bringing them into the political arena. The Constitution of India prohibits any caste-based discrimination and has laid foundations of policies to reverse injustices of the caste system.

23. How far is it correct to say that it is not politics that gets caste ridden but it is the caste that gets politicised? Explain. (2015)

Ans. Politics too influences the caste system and caste identities by bringing them into the political arena. This takes several forms:

- (i) Each caste group tries to become bigger by incorporating within itself neighbouring castes or sub-castes.
- (ii) Various caste groups enter into a coalition with other castes for negotiations.
- (iii) New caste groups like 'backward' and 'forward' have come up in the political arena.
- (iv) Expressions of caste differences in politics give many disadvantaged communities the chance to demand their share of power and thus gain access to decision-making.
- (v) Many political and non-political organisations have been demanding and agitating for an end to discrimination against particular castes for more dignity and more access to land, resources and opportunities.

24. Mention the problem of 'Casteism' in Indian politics. (2020 Series: JBB/1)

- Ans.**
- (i) Caste system is the extreme form of social inequality. In this system, hereditary occupational division is sanctioned by rituals. In some cases, caste division like communalism leads to tensions, conflict and even violence.
 - (ii) When a political party chooses candidates in elections, they keep in mind the caste composition of the electorate and nominate candidates from different castes so as to muster their support.
 - (iii) Political parties make appeals according to caste sentiments to gain support. Some political parties are known to favour some castes.

Long Answer Type Questions (LA) (Difficult) (5 Marks)

25. State how caste inequalities are still continuing in India.

Or, "Caste Inequalities are still prevalent in India." Examine the statement. (2019 Series: JMS/4)

Ans. Caste has not disappeared from contemporary India and caste division is special to India. Some of the older aspects of caste system persist even today.

- (i) Even now most people marry within their own caste.

- (ii) Untouchability has not ended completely despite constitutional prohibition.
- (iii) Effects of centuries of advantages and disadvantages can be felt today. The caste groups that had access to education under old system have done well, whereas those groups that did not have access to education have lagged behind.
- (iv) There is a large presence of 'upper castes' among the urban middle classes in our country.
- (v) **Caste continues to be linked to economic status as is evident from National Sample Survey:**

- The average economic status of caste groups still follows the old hierarchy—the 'upper' castes are best off, the Dalits and Adivasis are worst off and the backward classes are in between.
- Although every caste has some poor members, the proportion of those living in extreme poverty is higher for lowest castes and much lower for the upper castes.
- Similarly, every caste has some members who are rich. The upper castes are heavily over-represented among the rich while the lower castes are under-represented.
- The SC, ST and OBC together account for about two-thirds of India's population.

26. Explain the various forms that caste can take in politics.

Or, Describe any five features of 'caste in politics' in India. (2019 Series: JMS/4)

Or, 'Caste can take various forms in politics.' Explain with example. (2020 Series: JBB/3)

Ans. Various forms of caste in politics:

- (i) When governments are formed, political parties usually take care that representatives of different castes and tribes are properly represented.
- (ii) When parties choose candidates, they keep in mind the composition of the electorate

and accordingly choose candidates from different castes so as to muster necessary support to win elections.

- (iii) Political parties make appeals to caste sentiments to gain support. Some political parties are known to favour some particular castes.
- (iv) Universal adult franchise and the principle of one-person-one-vote compelled political leaders to mobilise political support. It also brought new consciousness among people belonging to those castes which were treated as inferiors.

27. Explain the factors that have led to the weakening of the caste system in India. (2014)

Or, Describe any three factors that are responsible for breaking down of caste system in India. (2018 Comptt.)

Or, "The rigid caste system is disappearing in India." Explain the major factors responsible for this.

Ans. Reasons which have contributed to changes in caste system:

- (i) Efforts of political leaders and social reformers like Gandhiji, B.R. Ambedkar who advocated and worked to establish a society in which caste inequalities are absent.
- (ii) **Socio-economic changes such as:**
 - urbanisation;
 - growth of literacy and education;
 - occupational mobility;
 - weakening of landlord's position in the village; and
 - breaking down of caste hierarchy have greatly contributed.
- (iii) The Constitution of India prohibited any caste-based discrimination and laid the foundations of policies to reverse the injustices of the caste system.
- (iv) Provision of fundamental rights has played a major role because these rights are provided to all citizens without any discrimination.





2024 CBSE BOARD EXAMINATION

Questions

— 2024 (Series: AB3CD/1) Set-I —

Q.8. Which of the following term refers to the belief in and advocacy for the social, political and economic equality of women? 1

- (a) Patriarchy (b) Matriarchy
(c) Socialist (d) Feminists

Q.9. Read the given statements: 1

- India has no official religion.
- All the communities have freedom to profess and practice any religion in India.

Which one of the following constitutional term is used for the above statements?

- (a) Republic (b) Secular
(c) Sovereign (d) Socialist

— 2024 (Series: AAB1/3) Set-I —

Q.11. Which one of the following statements, best describes women empowerment? 1

- (a) Encouraging men to take leadership roles.
(b) Promoting superiority of women over men.
(c) Ensuring equal opportunities and rights for women.
(d) Limiting the rights of men in all spheres.

Q.24. "Role of women is gradually enhancing in the politics of the country." Examine the statement. 2



SCAN ME!
FOR ANSWERS

Competency Based Questions

Stand Alone Multiple Choice Questions

1
mark

- Among the following, which countries have high participation of women in public life?
(a) Sweden and India (b) Norway and Sri Lanka
(c) Nepal and Finland (d) Sweden and Norway
- The distinguishing feature of communalism is:
(a) followers of a particular religion must belong to one community.
(b) communalism leads to the belief that people belonging to different religions can live as equal citizens within one nation.
(c) a communal mind does not lead to quest for political dominance of one's own religious community.
(d) a secular constitution is sufficient to combat communalism.
- Identify the statements which suggest that it is not politics that gets caste-ridden, it is the caste that gets politicised.
A. When governments are formed, political parties take care that representatives of different castes find a place in it.
B. Each caste group incorporates neighbouring castes which were earlier excluded.
C. Various caste groups enter into a coalition with other castes.
D. Political parties and candidates in elections make appeals to caste sentiments.

Choose the correct option:

- (a) A, B and D (b) B, C and D
(c) B and C (d) A and D

- Identify two reasons that state that caste alone cannot determine elections in India.

- A. No party wins the votes of all the voters of a caste or community.
B. Some political parties are known to favour some castes and are seen as their representatives.
C. No parliamentary constituency in the country has a clear majority of one single caste.
D. Mobilising and securing political support has brought new consciousness among the lower castes.

Choose the correct option:

- (a) A and C (b) A and D
(c) B and C (d) B and D

- When we speak of gender divisions, we usually refer to:

- (a) Biological difference between men and women
(b) Unequal roles assigned by the society to men and women
(c) Unequal child sex ratio
(d) Absence of voting rights for women in democracies.

- In India seats are reserved for women in:

- A. Lok Sabha
B. State legislative assemblies
C. Cabinets
D. Panchayati Raj bodies

Choose the correct option:

- (a) A, B and D (b) B, C and D
(c) B and C (d) A and D

- Which among the following statements about India's Constitution is wrong? It—

- (a) prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion.
(b) gives official status to one religion.
(c) provides to all individuals freedom to profess any religion.
(d) ensures equality of citizens within religious communities.

- Which one of the following countries has the highest representation of women in their National Parliament? (2023)

- (a) Russia (b) Australia
(c) Sweden (d) India

Assertion-Reason Questions

1
mark

DIRECTION: There are two statements marked as Assertion (A) and Reason (R). Read the statements and choose the correct option:

- (a) Both Assertion and Reason are true and Reason is the correct explanation of Assertion.
(b) Both Assertion and Reason are true but Reason is not the correct explanation of Assertion.
(c) Assertion is true but Reason is false.
(d) Both Assertion and Reason are false.

- Assertion. Sex-selective abortion led to decline of sex ratio in India.

Reason. Desire for a male child makes Indian families abort girls.

2. **Assertion.** Stereotypical gender roles for males and females help in avoiding conflicts.
Reason. India is a matriarchal society.
3. **Assertion.** Communalism is based on the idea that religion is the principal basis of social community.
Reason. Caste should be kept away from politics.
4. **Assertion.** A casteist is a person who thinks that caste is the principal basis of community.
Reason. All castes are equal and man-made.
5. **Assertion.** Sometimes a caste group becomes vote bank for a party.
Reason. Selecting the candidate from same caste helps in winning the votes of all voters of that caste or community.
6. **Assertion.** Universal Adult Franchise gives right to vote to everyone.

- Reason.** It is based on the principal of equality.
7. **Assertion.** Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, provides that equal wages should be paid for equal work, irrespective of gender and caste.
Reason. Women are believed to be physically weak so they are righteously paid less than men.
 8. **Assertion.** Women face discrimination and disadvantage in India in many ways.
Reason. India is a patriarchal society.
 9. **Assertion.** India is a secular state.
Reason. Constitution gives freedom to everyone to profess, practice and propagate any religion without prejudices or any discrimination.
 10. **Assertion.** Men and women should be given equal rights.
Reason. India is a secular country.

Match the Columns

1 mark

1.	Column-A		Column-B
	(a) A person who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men.		(i) Communalist
	(b) A person who says that religion is the principle basis of community.		(ii) Feminist
	(c) A person who thinks that caste is the principle basis of community.		(iii) Secularist
	(d) A person who does not discriminate others on the basis of religious beliefs.		(iv) Casteist
2.	Column-A	Column-B	
	(a) Sexual division of labour	(i) Rule by father, a system that gives power to men over women.	
	(b) Family laws	(ii) Shift of population from rural areas to urban areas.	
	(c) Urbanisation	(iii) When a new generation takes up occupations other than those practised by their ancestors.	
	(d) Occupational mobility	(iv) A ladder formation where all caste groups are placed from the 'highest' to the 'lowest' castes.	
	(e) Caste hierarchy	(v) Laws that deal with family related matters such as marriage, divorce, adoption, inheritance, etc.	
	(f) Patriarchy	(vi) A system where all the work inside the house is done by the women of the family.	

Picture Based Questions

1 mark

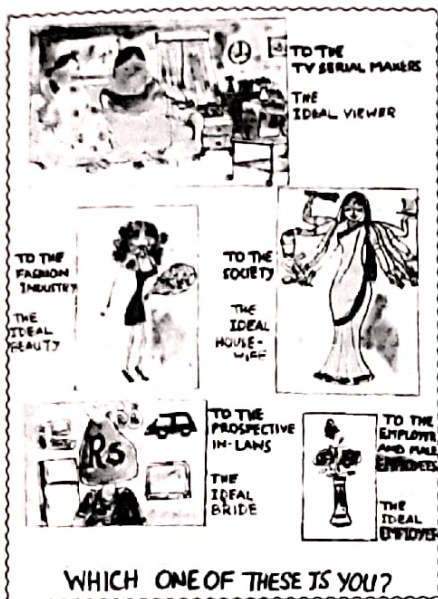
1. What message is this poster providing?



- (a) A dancing woman
 - (b) Woman facing a problem
 - (c) Woman's strength
 - (d) None of the above
2. Which of the following aspects of voters which politicians consider is depicted in the given cartoon?
 - (a) Caste loyalties
 - (b) Vote banks
 - (c) Community loyalties
 - (d) Both (a) and (c)



3. Which one of the following option best signifies this cartoon?



- Different roles of the women
- Different perceptions of ideal woman
- Problems which women had to face
- Women perform multiple tasks

Case/Source Based Questions

4-5 marks

1. The result of this division of labour is that although women constitute half of the humanity, their role in public life, especially politics, is minimal in most societies. Earlier, only men were allowed to participate in public affairs, vote and contest for public offices. Gradually the gender issue was raised in politics. Women in different parts of the world organised and agitated for equal rights. There were agitations in different countries for the extension of voting rights to women. These agitations demanded enhancing the political and legal status of women and improving their educational and career opportunities. More radical women's movements aimed at equality in personal and family life as well. These movements are called FEMINIST movements.

Answer the following MCQs by choosing the most appropriate options:

- Which 'division of labour' is referred to in the above para?
 - Occupational division of labour
 - Sexual division of labour
 - Organisational division of labour
 - None of the above
- What is the literacy rate of men and women?
 - 79%, 55%
 - 76%, 54%
 - 75%, 59%
 - 70%, 50%
- Feminist movements aim to:
 - Improve the status of men in the society.
 - make the country secular.
 - help men in earning more.
 - provide equal rights and opportunities for men and women.
- A system that values men more and gives them power over women is called:
 - Feminist
 - Socialist
 - Patriarchy
 - Communist
- The problem becomes more acute when religion is expressed in politics in exclusive and partisan terms, when one religion and its followers are pitted against another. This happens when beliefs of one religion are presented as superior to those of other religions, when the demands of one religious group are formed in opposition to another and when state power is used to establish domination of one religious group over the rest. This manner of using religion in politics is communal politics.

Answer the following MCQs by choosing the most appropriate options:

- Which of these countries has an official state religion?
 - Sri Lanka
 - Pakistan
 - England
 - All of these
- The distinguishing feature of communalism is:
 - Followers of a particular religion must belong to one community.
 - Communalism leads to the belief that people belonging to different religions can live as equal citizens within one nation.
 - A communal mind does not lead to quest for political dominance of one's own religious community.
 - A secular constitution is sufficient to combat communalism.
- Which among the following statements about India's Constitution is wrong?
 - It prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion.

- (b) It gives official status to one religion.
- (c) It provides to all individuals freedom to profess any religion.
- (d) It ensures equality of citizens within religious communities.

8. On which of the following ideas is communal politics based?

- (a) One religion is considered superior than the others.
- (b) Creating a vote bank on the basis of religion.
- (c) Parties promote religious stereotypes.
- (d) All of the above

III. All societies have some kind of social inequality and some form of division of labour. In most societies, occupations are passed on from one generation to another. Caste system is an extreme form of this. What makes it different from other societies is that in this system, hereditary occupational division was sanctioned by rituals. Members of the same caste group were supposed to form a social community that practiced the same or similar occupation, married within the caste group and did not eat with members from other caste groups.

Answer the following MCQs by choosing the most appropriate options:

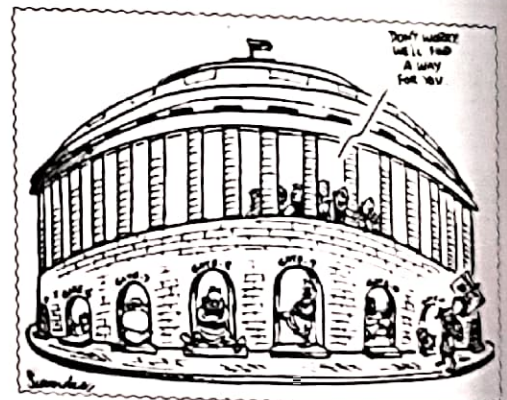
9. In India, caste system was based on exclusion of and discrimination against the group.
 - (a) outcaste
 - (b) in caste
 - (c) Both (a) and (b)
 - (d) None of the above
10. The Constitution of India prohibits the following:
 - (a) Caste based discrimination
 - (b) Social status to any particular religion
 - (c) Untouchability
 - (d) All of the above
11. What does caste hierarchy mean?
 - (a) Shift from rural areas to urban areas
 - (b) Shift from one occupation to another
 - (c) A ladder-like formation in which all caste groups are placed from the highest to the lowest.
 - (d) None of these
12. Which of the following divisions is unique to India?
 - (a) Gender division
 - (b) Caste division
 - (c) Economic division
 - (d) Religious division

IV. As in the case of communalism, casteism is rooted in the belief that caste is the sole basis of social community. According to this way of thinking, people belonging to the same caste belong to a natural social community and have the same interests which they do not share with anyone from another caste. As we saw in the

case of communalism, such a belief is not borne out by our experience. Caste is one aspect of our experience but it is not the only relevant or the most important aspect.

Answer the following MCQs by choosing the most appropriate options:

13. Various caste groups are required to enter into a coalition with other castes or communities and thus enter into a dialogue and negotiation. (True/False)
14. A person who thinks that caste is the principal basis of community is
 - (a) Secularist
 - (b) Feminist
 - (c) Communalist
 - (d) Casteist
15. Partly due to the efforts of reformers and partly due to other changes, castes and caste system in modern India have undergone great changes.
 - (a) Fundamental
 - (b) Socio-economic
 - (c) Cultural
 - (d) Professional
- V. Study the cartoon given and answer the questions that follow:



Answer the following MCQs by choosing the most appropriate options:

16. Identify the building shown in the cartoon.
 - (a) Rashtrapati Bhawan
 - (b) Parliament House
 - (c) India Gate
 - (d) National Archives
17. What is shown in the Cartoon?
 - (a) Movement for restoration of democracy
 - (b) Demanding a bill for reservation of backward classes.
 - (c) It shows why the Women's Reservation Bill has not been passed in the Parliament.
 - (d) Protest against Lokpal Bill.
18. What is the status of this bill?
 - (a) Rajya Sabha has passed the bill.
 - (b) Lok Sabha has passed the bill.
 - (c) Both houses have passed the Bill.
 - (d) Bill is pending.
19. What does the cartoon represent? Describe briefly.



Stand Alone

Multiple Choice Answers

- | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. (d) | 2. (a) | 3. (c) | 4. (a) |
| 5. (b) | 6. (a) | 7. (b) | 8. (c) |

Assertion-Reason Answers

1. (a) Both assertion and reason are true and reason is the correct explanation of assertion.
Sex-selective abortion led to decline of sex ratio in India. Indian parents want to have son and find ways to abort girl child. However, sex-selective abortion is immoral and legally banned in India.

2. (d) Both assertion and reason are false.
Stereotypical gender roles where females are expected to do household work and males are expected to earn living is unjustifiable. The female should also get equal rights as male. Also, India is a patriarchal society, Men are in authority over women in different aspects of society.

3. (b) Both assertion and reason are true but reason is not the correct explanation of assertion.
Communalism is based on the idea that religion is the principal basis of social community. It considers that people of different religions can't be equal citizens and one has to dominate the other. Caste creates social conflicts and should be kept away from politics as it leads to violence.

4. (b) Both assertion and reason are true but reason is not the correct explanation of assertion.
A casteist is a person who thinks that caste is the principal basis of community. However, such a belief is faulty as everyone is equal and no caste is superior to other.

5. (c) Assertion is true but reason is false.
Sometimes a caste group becomes vote bank for a party as people select the candidate belonging to their own caste. This helps in representing and communicating their personal interests on a wider front. But, it is wrong to select a candidate on the basis of caste instead of personal abilities. However, no party wins the votes of all the voters of a caste or community. Only the large proportion of voters from that caste vote for that party.

6. (a) Both assertion and reason are true and reason is the correct explanation of assertion.
Universal Adult Franchise gives right to vote to everyone irrespective of caste, religion, colour or gender. It is based on the principle of equality. Right to vote should be given to everyone because

that is the whole essence of a democracy, equal representation. Class cannot determine wisdom.

7. (c) Assertion is true but reason is false.

Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, provides that equal wages should be paid for equal work. However, women are considered to be inferior to men and that is why, they are paid less. However, this belief is not correct and should not be justified. Thus, unequal payment should not be advocated. This belief is unjustifiable as both are equal.

8. (a) Both assertion and reason are true and reason is the correct explanation of assertion.

India is a patriarchal society where men are considered superior to women. Hence, women face discrimination and disadvantage in India in many ways. Yet, it is not justifiable.

9. (a) Both assertion and reason are true and reason is the correct explanation of assertion.

India is a secular state. The Constitution gives freedom to everyone to profess, practice and propagate any religion. There is no official religion of India. The reason explains the assertion.

10. (b) Both assertion and reason are true but reason is not the correct explanation of assertion.

Men and women should be given equal rights as both are equal in every respect. However, this does not have to do anything with secularism. A secular nation is one that does not support any particular religion.

Match the Columns

1. (a) — (ii); (b) — (i); (c) — (iv); (d) — (iii)
2. (a) — (vi); (b) — (v); (c) — (ii); (d) — (iii); (e) — (iv); (f) — (i)

Picture Based Answers

1. (c) 2. (b) 3. (b)

Case/Source Based Answers

- | | | | |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| I. 1. (b) | 2. (b) | 3. (d) | 4. (c) |
| II. 5. (d) | 6. (a) | 7. (b) | 8. (d) |
| III. 9. (a) | 10. (d) | 11. (c) | 12. (b) |
| IV. 13. True | 14. (d) | 15. (b) | |
| V. 16. (b) | 17. (c) | 18. (d) | |

19. Cartoon represents that Parliament of India is male dominated who are not passing the Bill that will increase number of women representation.