

CLASS 10
SOCIAL SCIENCE
NOTES

**Gender, Religion and
Caste**

Gender, Religion and Caste

Gender Inequality

Social roles and expectations based on gender have historically led to the exclusion of women from education, employment, and political participation.

Religion

Religious diversity has been both a source of conflict and strength. Religious groups have influenced politics significantly, sometimes creating communal tensions, but also contributing to secularism and social harmony.

Caste

Social hierarchy based on birth has led to the exclusion of people from lower castes from education, employment, and political participation. However, there has been a growing movement against caste discrimination.

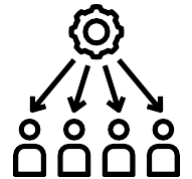
Gender and Politics

Gender division is often perceived as natural and unchangeable, but it is rooted not in biology, but in social expectations and stereotypes.

Sexual division of labour

In our society, women's work has often been undervalued.

- Gender issues have historically been central to political movements, with demands for equality in all aspects of life.



- The political expression of gender issues has significantly contributed to the
- upliftment of women and society.

This has led to improved participation of women in various fields of work.

- Women's participation is notably high in countries like Sweden, Norway, and Finland (Scandinavian countries), where gender equality is strongly emphasized.

Discrimination against Women

Exam me aayega

Patriarchal Society :

In our society, women often face disadvantages, oppression, and discrimination

- based on gender.

The major reason for this is entrenched old beliefs and ideas that perpetuate

- gender biases.

Literacy Rate:

The literacy rate among women is significantly lower compared

- to men, at just 54%.

In villages, the literacy rate for women is even lower due to

- high dropout rates.

Jobs:



- The proportion of women in high-paying jobs is very low.
- Women are often paid less than men and have longer average working hours.

Female Foeticide:

- In our society, many parents prefer having a son, leading to the practice of female foeticide, where unborn girls are aborted.
- Female foeticide is now illegal, reflecting efforts to combat this harmful practice.

Salary:

Although the **Equal Remuneration Act** was passed in 1976, women are still paid less than men.

Women's political representation

E.M.A

- The proportion of women in the legislature is low, with 14.36%, representation in the Lok Sabha (2019) and less than 5% in State assemblies.
- The global average for women's representation in legislatures is around 23.5%.
- Legal provisions have been enacted to ensure a fair representation of women in the legislature.
- 1/3 of seats are reserved for women in local government bodies (Panchayats and Municipalities) under the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution.

Religion, Communalism and Politics

E.M.A

- Religion plays an important role in politics. In some countries, politicians promote the cause of the majority religious group at the cost of the minorities.
- According to Mahatma Gandhi- "Religion can never be separated from politics. Politics must be guided by ethics, drawn from all religion."
- Religious differences are often leveraged in politics, with leaders using these divisions to their advantage.
- Special measures should be taken to protect minority groups.
- The followers of the same religion have the same fundamental interests, while followers of different religions may have fundamental differences, which might lead to tensions.



Communalism:

An ideology stating the division of people on the basis of ethnicity, religion, beliefs, values, etc.

Different forms of communalism

- **Religious Prejudice:** Believing that one's religion is superior to others can lead to stereotypes and discrimination against people of different faiths.
- **Political Dominance:** When members of one religious group seek to gain power over others, it can result in violence and conflict.
- **Communal Violence:** Conflicts between different religious groups can escalate into riots, massacres, and even civil wars.
- **Political Mobilization:** Politicians may use religion to garner support by employing religious symbols, leaders, and appeals to fear.

Secularism: It means no official language or religion in a country or No special status to one religion. This means everyone is free to profess, propagate and practice any religion or not to follow any.

Secular States

India is a secular state, meaning the government does not favour any religion over another.

- Everyone is free to practice their religion or to choose not to practice any religion at all. This is known as religious freedom.
- No one can be discriminated against based on their religion. This is called religious equality.

Secularism is important as it promotes religious harmony and tolerance. It ensures that no religion has official status or special privileges, and there is freedom to practice and propagate any religion without discrimination.

Secularism holds the country together, and its foundation was well established by the founding fathers of the nation. The state may need to intervene in matters involving religious communities to maintain harmony and equality.



Caste and Politics

E.M.A

Caste and politics are two powerful forces in India that can either divide or unite people. It is crucial to understand both the positive and negative aspects of caste and politics and to work towards creating a society where everyone is treated equally.

Caste and Politics:

To address discrimination based on caste, various constitutional protection acts have been enacted. The primary cause of caste inequalities in India is the caste system, which is rooted in Hinduism. This system stratifies society into different groups or castes based on birth, often resulting in differential treatment.

- People from lower castes frequently face discrimination.
- Although the caste system has weakened over time, it remains a significant issue in India.
- The Constitution of India prohibits caste-based discrimination and has implemented measures to rectify the injustices of the caste system.



Various Forms of Caste in Politics:

Caste in Politics refers to how caste identities and considerations influence political decisions and behaviours. Political parties often focus on caste groups when planning their campaigns because they understand that caste can significantly impact voting patterns. This means parties may choose candidates or create promises that appeal to specific castes to gain their support. Additionally, politicians may form alliances with caste-based groups to strengthen their position in elections. Overall, caste plays a crucial role in shaping political strategies and decisions, as leaders aim to gain support from large or marginalized caste groups to increase their chances of winning elections.

- **Appealing to Specific Castes:** Parties often focus on certain caste groups in an area to win their support. They may promise things that benefit that caste to get their votes.
- **Targeting Based on Caste Makeup:** Parties look at the caste distribution in a region and make special efforts to appeal to the most significant groups there.
- **No Caste Has One Voice:** Even if a party tries to appeal to a specific caste, not everyone in that caste will vote the same way. People have different opinions and preferences.
- **Helping Lower Castes:** To get votes, some political leaders offer more support and attention to castes that have been treated unfairly in the past. They do this to gain trust and build a strong voter base.

Politics in Caste E.M.A

Politics in Caste refers to the use of political strategies, tactics, and maneuvers within caste-based communities.

Political Influence of Caste:

- It's not that politics becomes focused on caste; instead, caste itself becomes a tool in politics. Politicians use caste identities to influence political outcomes.
- Each caste group tries to grow its influence by incorporating nearby sub-castes, aiming to become a larger political force.

- Caste can have both good and bad effects on politics. On the positive side, it can help represent marginalized groups and ensure their needs are heard. On the negative side, it can lead to division and favouritism, affecting fair governance.



Positive relation between Caste and Politics:

- **Political Attention to Neglected Castes:** Castes that have been ignored or marginalized receive political attention, which helps improve their social status.
- **Example of Upliftment:** In our country, Dalits and other backward communities now have access to decision-making processes, giving them more power and representation in society.

Negative relation between Caste and Politics:

- Focusing on caste can divert attention from critical issues like poverty and unemployment.
- Caste-based politics can create and deepen divisions between different social groups.

Top 7 Questions



1. Describe any five features of the caste system in India.

Answer: These are the five features of the caste system in India

- (i) It was a hierarchical occupational division of the society.
- (ii) The caste system is both hierarchical and segmented
- (iii) The most important aspect of the caste system is 'untouchability'.
- (iv) In the caste system, the members of the same caste group formed a social community that followed similar occupations, married within the caste, and did not mingle with other castes.
- (v) In the caste system, the people belonging to higher castes started treating others as belonging to lower castes and then started the practice of untouchability.

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

Answer: It is true that secularism is not an ideology of some political parties or persons, but it is one of the foundations of our country. This statement can be examined by the following points:

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

- (ii) The Constitution provides to all individuals and communities the freedom to profess, practice, and propagate any religion or not to follow any.
- (iii) The Constitution allows the state to intervene in matters of religion to ensure equality within religious communities. For example, it bans untouchability.

3. Besides caste, which other factors do matter in electoral politics? Explain.

Answer: Besides caste, other factors do matter in electoral politics. These are:

- (i) The voters have a strong attachment to political parties which is often stronger than their attachment to their caste or community.
- (ii) People within the same community have different interests depending on their economic status. Rich and poor, men and women from the same caste often vote very differently.
- (iii) People's assessment of the performance of the government vis-a-vis the performance of the candidate in the development of his constituency are often decisive factors in elections.

4. How can caste take several forms in politics? Explain with examples.

Answer: Caste can take various forms in Indian politics. For example:

- (i) When parties choose candidates in elections, they keep in mind the caste composition of the electorate and nominate candidates from the same castes to get the necessary support to win elections. A candidate from a particular minority community becomes a candidate from the constituency which is mostly inhabited by that particular minority.
- (ii) During the campaigning, political parties and candidates make appeals to people to give their votes based on caste. Some political parties are known to favour some castes and are seen as their representatives.
- (iii) When governments are formed, the political party takes care that representatives of different castes and tribes should get a place in the ministry.

5. Suggest any two measures to integrate the people belonging to different ethnic groups in a society.

Answer: The measures to integrate people belonging to different ethnic groups in a society are:

- (i) Everyone, including political leaders, social reformers and general people should discourage casteism and work for socio-economic and political harmony.
- (ii) The political and regional political parties based on caste should be removed.
- (iii) The name and aim of educational institutions referring to castes should be given up.

6. What is communal politics? Explain the idea behind communal politics.

Answer: The use of religion in politics, where one religion is shown as superior to other religions is called communal politics. Here, one religious group is against the other religious group and the demands of one religious group are against the demands of the other religious group. The idea behind the communal politics are:

(i) Communal politics is based on the idea that religion is the only basis for forming a community. It believes that followers of one religion belong to the same community. Their interests, ideas and opinions are the same.

(ii) Communal politics follows that people belonging to different religions can not be a part of the same community. Their ideas and demands are bound to be different.

(iii) In an extreme case of communalism, communal politics follows that people from different religions are not equal citizens and cannot live together within one nation, which leads to the partition of that country.

(iv) Communal politics is a belief that a particular community has the same voice is fundamentally wrong. People of one religion do not have the same interests and aspirations in every context. All voices inside a community have a right to be heard.

7. 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.

Answer: It is correct to say that it is not politics that gets caste-ridden, but it is the caste that gets politicised. Caste can take various forms in politics:

(i) Each caste group tries to become bigger by incorporating within it neighbouring castes or sub-castes that were earlier excluded from it.

(ii) Various caste groups are required to enter a coalition with other castes or communities and thus enter a dialogue and negotiation.

(iii) New kinds of caste groups have come up in the political arena like 'backward' and 'forward' caste groups.

(iv) Caste plays different kinds of roles in politics. In some cases, politics allows many disadvantaged communities to demand their share of power.

(v) Politics has helped people from OBC and Dalit castes to gain better access to decision-making.

(vi) But sometimes exclusive attention to caste can produce negative results like tensions, conflicts and violence in our society.