

Gender, Religion & Caste

2016

Short Answer Type Questions [3 Marks]

Question 1.

Suggest any two measures to check casteism in India.

Answer:

The following are the two measures to check casteism in India.

- **Spread of education:** Education upgrades one's level of thinking and helps in eradicating the misconceptions of one's mind. All possible steps should be taken to educate the masses.
- **Economic equality:** Inequality in the economic life creates the feeling of superiority and inferiority among the members of different caste groups. Steps need to be taken to maintain economic equality of all castes.
- **Abolition of Reservation Policy:** Reservation in government job, education and other sectors creates conflicting attitude among the members of two different castes. When the people of higher castes having adequate educational qualification are deprived of all facilities, they revolt against the lower caste people.
- **Political reforms:** Political leaders and parties based on caste should be banned from the political horizon.
- The name and aim of educational institutions referring to castes need to be given up.

Question 2.

How can religion be used in politics in a positive manner? Express your view point.

Answer:

Politics and religion can be a deadly combination if not used wisely. It should be for the good of the people rather than used as a weapon to settle scores. **Religion can be used in politics in a positive manner in the following ways.**

- Politics should be guided by the ethics and values of religion.
- We should raise our demands as a religious community but not at the cost of other religions.
- Political leaders should also ensure that religion is not used as a medium of oppression and discrimination. They should have equal response to different religious conflicts or demands.



Long Answer Type Questions [5 Marks]

Question 3.

Why are caste barriers breaking down in India? Explain any five reasons.

Answer:

In the recent decades, cast barriers have been breaking down in India because of the following reasons.

- It has been the efforts of social reformers that people have realised the caste based differences had no logic.
- The economic development, large scale urbanisation and occupational mobility has further erased the caste barriers.
- Spread of literacy and education has also played a great role in upgrading the beliefs and ideologies of the people.
- Complete eradication of landlordism has resulted in the decline of caste system.
- The constitutional provision of prohibiting caste based discriminations in every form and providing equal opportunities to all has reversed the caste injustices.

Question 4.

How is gender division understood in Indian society? To what extent does political mobilisation on gender basis help to improve women's role in public life?

Answer:

In the Indian society gender division is taken as a socially constructed basis to differentiate between the roles played by men and women. Sexual division of work has become the mindset of the society. Because of this women face discrimination and have become the victim of the patriarchal system.

Even after adopting the concepts of equality and liberty, we lack practical approach. It is therefore necessary that political mobilisation helps to improve women's role in public life. Political parties should come together to frame policies for equal representation of women in the national and local politics. This will widen the horizon for women. Taking part in the decision making will encourage them in their day-today affairs. They will develop a sense of maturity and responsibility.

2015

Short Answer Type Question [3 Marks]

Question 5.

Is the caste system coming to an end in India? Give arguments in support of your answer.

Answer:

No, I do not think that the caste system is coming to an end in India. From time immemorial, the caste system has been an inseparable part of Indian society and has been deeply rooted in our culture. It is entrenched in the society and brings about discrimination. Even though a number of government policies have been implemented, the caste system has not been completely eradicated.

The following are the instances to support this argument.



- Even though the constitution provides for various provisions for marrying outside the caste, most people in India still marry in their caste.
- CitiQuestion ens of the country, while casting their votes, usually vote for a candidate of their own caste, rather than any other caste irrespective of the credibility of the candidate.
- Political parties keep in mind the caste composition of the electorate before choosing a candidate to represent their party so as to get necessary support for benefiting their election spree.
- Untouchability still has not completely eradicated from the Indian society even though the constitution prohibits any kind of untouchability.

Long Answer Type Questions [5 Marks]

Question 6.

Describe three advantages and two disadvantages of the political expression of caste differences.

Answer:

The following are the advantages of the political expression of caste differences.

- In the present times, several political and non-political organizations have fought discrimination against particular castes, for more dignity and more access to land, resources and opportunities for the people from lower caste, who were not given equal status and opportunity like the uppercaste people.
- In some situations, expression of caste differences in politics gives many disadvantaged communities the space to demand their share of power. Usually it is seen that the disadvantaged communities are not able to exercise their rights but because of political representation of such caste differences, the oppressed people get to put forward their rights to get what they deserve.
- **The following are the disadvantages of the political expression of caste differences.**
- In case of religion, politics based on caste identity alone is not very healthy in democracy. It can divert attention from other pressing issues such as poverty, development and corruption. Because caste is not the only issue that is causing a hindrance in the society there are various issues that need to be given equal importance.
- In some cases, caste differences lead to caste division, which further leads to violence and tension among the people of different caste and that might lead to outburst of riots in the society.

Question 7.

Explain any five aspects of our day-to-day life in which women are discriminated against in India.

Answer:

The following points sum up how women are still discriminated against and oppressed in India.

- **Literacy rate:** The first and foremost discrimination is in the field of education where the literacy rate among women is only 66 per cent when compared to a high 82 per cent in males. Even otherwise, parents prefer educating spending their resources of education of a male child rather than a female child.
- **Sex ratio:** The sex ratio in India is as low as 940 females per 1000 males. The proportion of women as compared to men is very low. A major reason behind this is



that parents prefer having a male child over a female child keeping in view the future perspective.

- **Unpaid work:** The proportion of highly-paid women is very less when compared to highly-paid men. Though on an average, Indian women work one hour more than men every day but they are not equally paid and thus their work is also not often valued as much as that of men.
- **Domestic violence:** Women every day in Indian society are harassed, exploited, and subjected to all sorts of violence behind the closed doors. Both in urban and rural areas, domestic violence is one of the most prominent form of discrimination faced by women. Many cases of domestic violence and dowry deaths are reported in the media every day.
- **Female foeticide:** In India, a male child is considered a blessing and a female child is considered a bane. This has come to an extent where the female child is killed in the womb of the mother. This killing of foetus is known as foeticide. Female foeticide is prevalent in both urban and rural areas.

2014

Short Answer Type Question [3 Marks]

Question 8.

"Women in the Indian society still suffer from discrimination and oppression." Support the statement with suitable examples.

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2012

Short Answer Type Question [3 Marks]



Question 9.

Describe any five ways in which women in India are still discriminated against and oppressed.

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Long Answer Type Questions [5 Marks]

Question 10.

What are the problems faced by Indian women which affect their social status? Explain any five.

Answer:

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Question 11.

Explain any five reasons for the declining caste system in India.

Answer:

The following are the five reasons for the declining caste system in India.

- Growth of literacy and education: After industrialization the literacy rate has increased.
- Occupational mobility: Due to occupational mobility, the new generation takes up occupations other than those practised by their ancestors.
- Large-scale urbanisation: Shift of people from rural areas to urban areas in search of jobs and better living conditions.
- Efforts made by leaders and reformers: The political leaders and social reformers worked to establish a society in which caste inequalities are absent.
- Economic development: Adoption of newer technologies from agriculture-based to industry-based economy and general improvement in living standards.

2011

Short Answer Type Question [3 Marks]

Question 12.

Mention any three constitutional provisions that make India a secular state.

Answer:

The constitutional provisions which make India a 'secular state' are as follows.

- The Constitution of India does not give special recognition to any religion and there is no state religion in India, unlike, Christianity in America, and Buddhism in Sri Lanka.
- All individuals and communities have been given freedom to practise, profess and propagate any religion.
- The Constitution of India has put a ban on any discrimination on the grounds of religion.
- According to the constitution, the state cannot intervene in the matters of religion to promote religious equality.

Long Answer Type Questions [5 Marks]

Question 13.

What forms does communalism take in politics?

Answer:

Communalism is a strong sense of belonging to particular community especially a religious community, which often leads to extreme behavior or violence towards others. It cannot tolerate and respect people belonging to different religious communities.

There are different forms of communalism in politics as follows.

- **Communalism in everyday beliefs:** It is the most common form of communalism and



can be in the form of religious prejudices, stereotypes of religious communities and belief that one religion is superior to other religions.

- **Communalism as Majoritarian Dominance and Political Dominance:** A communal mind often leads to quest for political dominance of one's own religious community. For people belonging to the majority community this comes out as 'Majoritarian dominance' for those belonging to the minority community, it can take form of a desire to form a separate political unit.
- **Communalism as political mobilisation:** Political mobilisation on religious lines is another frequent form of communalism. This involves the use of sacred symbols, emotional appeals and plain fear in order to bring the followers of one religion together in political arena.
- **Communalism in the form of communal violence:** Sometimes, communalism takes its most ugly form of communal violence, riots and massacre. For instance, India and Pakistan suffered some of the worst communal riots at the time of the partition. To sum up, it can be said that communalism leads to the belief that people belonging to different religions cannot live as equal citizens within one nation. Either one of them has to dominate the rest or they have to form different nations.

Question 14.

Define communalism as an ideology. Explain the forms of communalism in politics.

Answer:

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2010

Short Answer Type Questions [3 Marks]

Question 15.

Explain three features of the model of a secular state of India.

Answer:



The concept of a secular state in India purports equal treatment all religions and to be officially neutral in the matters of religion.

The following are the features which make India a secular state.

- Unlike Christianity in America or Buddhism in Sri Lanka, India does not purport to or give special recognition to any religion. The Constitution of India has nowhere prescribed a particular religion.
- All Citizens of India and all communities and sects in India have been given freedom to practise, profess and propagate any religion under the Fundamental rights of the Constitution.
- The Constitution of India has clearly put a ban on any discrimination on the ground of religion. It provides for equal opportunity for all individuals irrespective of their religion.

Question 16.

Explain how the proper representation of women in legislature can solve the problem of gender-based discrimination in India.

Answer:

The proper representation of women in legislature can solve the problem of gender-based discrimination in the following ways.

- Proper representation of women in legislature will result in more women- friendly laws.
- Better policing will help in greater security for women and better law enforcement.
- Seeing women in positions of decision-making is reassuring women empowerment, which helps to improve their image.

2009

Very Short Answer Type Question [1 Mark]

Question 17.

What is the basis of gender division in the society?

Answer:

Gender division in society is based on the concept of patriarchal society.

Long Answer Type Question [5 Marks]

Question 18.

Describe any four aspects of life in which women are discriminated against in Indian society.

Answer:

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