

Chapter - 4

Gender, Religion And Caste

1. "In India women's political representation is very low" Justify.

The percentage of elected women members in Lok Sabha has never reached even 10 percent of its total strength.

The share of women in the State Assemblies is less than 5 percent. In this respect India is among the bottom group of nation in the world. India is behind the averages for several developing countries of Africa and Latin America.

In the government, Cabinets are largely all male even when a woman becomes the chief minister or the Prime minister.

There is urgent need to increase women representation in the legislature to empower women.

2. What were Gandhi ji's views regarding religion and politics? Explain.

Gandhi ji used to say that religion can never be separated from politics. What he meant by religion was not any particular religion like Hinduism or Islam but moral values that form the basis of all religions. He believed that politics must be guided by ethics drawn from religions.

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

(i) Nothing on the basis of community. Political leaders pursue the voters to cast their vote on the basis of communal lines.

(ii) Political Mobilization on Religious line. Political mobilization on religious line is another frequent item of communalism. This involves the use of sacred symbols, religious leaders, emotional appeal and plain fear in order to bring the followers of one

religion together in the political arena. In electoral politics this often involves offering special appeal to the interests or emotions of voters of one religion in preference to others.

(iii) Performance of the government:

Along with caste and community people also check the performance of the political party or the agenda of the party.

4. Suggest any three steps to improve the women's participation in politics.

- To make it legally binding to have a fair proportion of women in the elected bodies.

- By reserving some seats in the Lok Sabha and the state Assemblies for women.

- Political parties should also give due representation to women members.

- By raising the literacy rate.

5. Describe the positive and negative aspects of relationship between caste and politics.

In some situations, expression of caste differences in politics gives marginalised communities the space to demand their share of power.

In this sense, caste politics has helped people from the Dalits and the OBC castes to gain better access to decision making.

Several political and non-political organisations have been demanding and agitating for the end of discrimination against particular castes for more dignity and more access to land, resources and opportunities.

Negative

- It disrupts social harmony.
- It can divert attention from other pressing issues like poverty, corruption, etc.

6. What are Feminist Movements? What were their major demands.

These are the movements which are organised by various women organisations to create equality for women in personal and family life.

These feminist movements demand equal rights for women in all spheres of life.

There were agitations in different countries for the extension of voting rights to women.

The agitations demanded enhancing the political and legal status of women.

The movements also demanded in improving the educational and career opportunities for the women.

7. State any four provisions of the Indian Constitution which make it a secular state.

(i) No official religion:-

There is no official religion of the Indian state. Unlike the status of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Islam in Pakistan and Hinduism in Nepal, our Constitution does not give a special status to any religion.

iv) Fundamental Rights:- Under the Right to freedom of Religion, our constitution provide to all citizens freedom to profess practice and propagate any religion, or not to follow any. Under the Cultural and Educational Right our Constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion

v) Equality:- The Constitution allows the state to intervene in the matters of religion in order to ensure equality within religious communities. To ensure equality untouchability has been banned.

8. Explain the different aspects of life in which women are discriminated or disadvantaged in India.

Literacy rate:- The literacy rate among women is only 54% (2011 census) percent among men. Similarly, a smaller proportion of girl students go for higher studies because parents prefer to spend their resources for their boys education than spending equally on their daughters.

Unpaid work:- The proportion of women among the highly paid and valued jobs is still very small. Though on an average, the Indian woman works one hour more than an average man every day but most of them are not paid equally and therefore their work is often not valued.

Sex ratio:- In many parts of India parents prefer to have sons, and find ways to have the girl child aborted before she is born. This has led to a decline in the child sex ratio (the number of girl children per thousand boys) in the country is merely 940.

Domestic violence. There are reports of various kinds of harassment, exploitation and violence against women. Both urban as well as rural areas have been unsafe for women. They are not safe even within their own homes from beating and other forms of domestic violence.

9. Explain the various forms that communalism can take in politics.

Communalism can take several forms in politics - in everyday beliefs, formation of parties based on communal campaigning or asking for votes, formation of government, etc.

Communalism in daily beliefs: The most common expression of communalism is in everyday life. These stereotypes involve religious prejudices and stereotypes of religious communities and the beliefs in the superiority of one religion over the other. Religious the is so common that we often fail to notice it, even when we

believe in it.

Formation of political parties on the basis of communities. All the communities of the world have a quest for political dominance of one's own religious community. For these belonging to the 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.

Political mobilisation on communal lines.

It is another frequent form of communalism. Parties based on a particular community make use of sacred symbols, religious leaders, emotive appeal and create fear in order to bring the followers of one religion together in the political arena. In electoral politics this often involves a special appeal to the interest or emotions of voters of one religion in preference to others.

Communal riots: Sometimes communal takes the ugly form of communal violence, riots and massacre. India has suffered some of the worst communal riots at the time of partition. The post-independence period has also seen large-scale communal violence.

10. Explain any four forms of caste in Indian politics.

While choosing candidates: When parties choose candidates in elections, they keep in mind the caste composition of the electorate and nominate candidates from different castes so as to get necessary support to win election.

While forming a government: When the government is formed, political parties usually take care that representatives of different castes and tribes find a place in it.

While campaigning: Political parties all candidates in election make appeals

to people to give them their vote on the basis of caste.

Universal adult franchise and the principle of one-person-one-vote has compelled that the political leaders to make the caste-based vote during elections. They do so to achieve and secure political support.

11. How do social divisions affect politics? Explain with examples.

Caste, religion and caste are the most important factors responsible for social divisions.

Caste and politics: The share of women in the parliament is less than 12%. Women's parliament organisations and activities have been demanding reservation of some seats for women in the legislature.

Single or political parties, religious organisations, the people

or the followers of one religion come under the same umbrella. Different parties also keep it in mind while choosing a candidate for a constituency.

Caste & Politics: When parties choose candidates in elections, they keep in mind the caste composition of the electorate and nominate candidates from different castes so as to win necessary support to win elections.

12 Caste has not still disappeared from contemporary India. Give any three example to justify the statement.

Even now most people marry within their own caste or tribe.

Untouchability has not ended completely despite constitutional prohibition.

Caste continues to be closely linked to economic status.

Gender & Politics Public/ private division

Women do all work inside the home such as cooking, cleaning, washing etc. and the men all the work outside the home.

The agitation demanded enhancing the political and legal status of women and improving their educational and career opportunities.

More radical women's movement aimed equality in personal and family life as well.

These movements are called Feminist movements.

Even is still a male-dominated Patriarchal society.

Women political representation.

In India, the proportion of women in legislature has been very low.

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India is among the bottom group of nations in the world.

India is behind the average for several developing countries of Africa and Latin America.

One way to solve this problem is to make it legally binding to have a fair proportion of women in the elected bodies.

Religion, Communalism and politics.

Many countries including India have in their population, followers of different religions.

Gandhi ji used to say that religion can never be separated from politics.

Ministers have demanded that the govt take special steps to protect these religions.

Volom movement has argued that family dues of all religions discriminate against

Communalism

Communal politics is based on the idea the religion is the principal basis of social community.

- The followers of a particular religion must belong to one community.

- Their fundamental interest are the same.

- The most common expression of communalism is in everyday belief

- Political mobilisation on religious lines is another frequent form of communalism.

Secular State.

Communalism was and continues to be one of the major challenges to democracy in our country.

The makers of our constitution were aware of this challenge.

That is why the chose the model of a secular state.

There is no official religion for the India state.

The constitution provides to all individual and communities freedom to profess, practice and propagate any religion or not to follow any.

The Constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion.

Caste and politics.

Cast inequalities:

- Unlike gender and religion caste division is special to India

- Member of the same caste group were supposed to form a social community that practised the same or similar occupation, married within the caste group and did not eat with members of other groups.