

Lesson No. 4

Gender, Religion and Caste

Q1. Mention different aspects in which women are discriminated or disadvantaged in India.

Ans:- Some of the different aspects in which women are discriminated in India are as under:-

- i. Education:- In India girls are given less education as compared to boys. The boy's education is still preferred over girl's education. Spending money for boy's education is considered more important than spending money on girl's education. This is the reason that the literacy rate among girls is much lesser than the literacy among boys in India.
- ii. Proportion of women in paid jobs:- In India the percentage of women in highly paid jobs is very less as compared to those of men. They are paid lesser wages in comparison to men even though they work for more number of hours than men. This result in low paid jobs and low valued jobs for women.
- iii. Preference for male child:- Indian parents prefer to have male child over female child in the family. A female child is preferred as a burden as the parents will have to earn for her dowry to ,marry her. This preference has resulted in social crimes such as female-foeticide where a girl child is killed even before she is born.
- iv. Crime against women:- In India women are exploited and harassed at the work place and at the home. There are various instances of domestic violence against women which make them unsafe even in their families. Dowry deaths, Rape, Abusing, Beating and torturing , conjugal violence etc. are examples of crimes against women.

Q2. State different forms of communal politics with an example of each.

Ans:- The different forms of communal politics are discussed as under:-

- i. The most common form of communal politics is in every day religious ideas of people. People often believe that the ideas of their religion are superior to the ideas of other religions. The demands of one religious group are against the demands of the other religious groups. For Example the politics between Hindus and Muslims on the slaughtering of Cows by the Muslim community.
- ii. People of a particular religion often want the maximum representation of their religion in the politics. They want elected representatives in the political system from their own religious community. For Example the partition of India immediately after independence took place due to this factor. The Muslim League asked for more and more representation in the Muslim majority areas.
- iii. Communalism in politics sometimes takes the shape of political mobilization on communal lines. For example, some political parties make use of sacred religious symbols and emotional religious speeches to gain majority of votes by deceiving ignorant people at the cost of religion.
- iv. In its most ugly form, communalism leads to riots and violence. The people from various religions rise in opposition to each other leading to riots and violence in the country.

Q3. State how caste inequalities are still continuing in India.

Ans:- In the country like India, where caste system predominantly was the main force in running the society, Caste inequalities still persists. Some forms of caste inequalities continuing in India are as under:-

1. **Endogamy**:- The meaning of Endogamy is to marry within one's own caste or group and not to marry out of its caste or group. Even in this modern age the literate people give importance to such minor issues. They never like to prefer the inter caste marriages.
2. **Untouchability**:- It is the age old concept in which the people of lower castes don't touch or use the things of the people of higher castes. If they do so, they are punished. Even though various reformers tried to remove this inhuman concept, it still persisted in the Indian society. For example, the dalits are not allowed to enter the temples or use the wells/tube wells of the upper caste Brahmins and the law does not play any significant role to remove such discriminations.

3. Education: - During the period of dominance of caste system, Lower caste groups had no access to education and even today they do not have access to higher level of education due to one or the other reasons.
4. Occupation:- People of lower castes still are given their hereditary occupation of cleaning or shoe making/polishing and are not allowed to adopt any other occupation.

Q4. State two reasons to say that caste alone cannot determine election results in India.

Ans:- Politics is not all about the castes . Even though attention is given to the caste groups, the political system is not affected by it. The election results are also not determined by the caste alone and the two reasons in support of this are as under:-

1. It is not necessary that people of the same caste vote for the same political party. They have different demands and vote according to their choice.
2. It does not happen that there are candidates contesting election from every caste or all the candidates are from the same caste. Then, how is possible to determine the result of the election before hand on the Caste basis.

Q5. What is the status of women's representation in India's Legislative bodies?

Ans:- This is well known fact that the participation of women in India's Legislative bodies is very low. The women strength in the Lok sabha is not even 10%. Their share in the state assemblies is as low as 5%. The share of women in India is behind those of several other developing countries of Latin America and Africa.

One probable solution to increase the women's participation in the political system is to make legal laws for the minimum number of seats to be filled by the women candidates. In the panchayats and the municipalities, it is legally binding to fill one-third of the seats by women candidates.

Q6. Mention any two constitutional provisions that make India a secular state.

Ans:- The constitutional provisions that make India a secular state are as follows:-

1. There is no official religion of India. Every religion is given the same importance and respect. Even though Hindus constitute about 80% of the population, all religions are treated equally by the constitution.
2. The constitution gives freedom to people to follow, preach and propagate any religion of their choice.
3. The constitution does not allow any discrimination on the basis of the religion.

Q7. When we speak of gender divisions, we usually refer to:

Ans:- Option (b) . Unequal roles assigned by the society to men and women.

Q8. In India seats are reserved for women in:

Ans:- Option(d). “Panchayati Raj bodies”.

Q9. Consider the following statements on the meaning of communal politics. Communal politics is based on the belief that:-

Ans:- Option (C) is correct. (i.e. statement A&C).

Q10. Which among the following statements about India’s constitution is wrong? It

Ans:- Option (B) is correct. (i.e. gives official status to one religion).

Q11. Social divisions based on Caste are peculiar in India.

Q12. Match List I with List II and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists:

Ans:- 1-----B : 2-----A : 3-----D : 4-----C

Therefore, Option (b) is correct. (i.e. B,A,D,C).