

8th Standard- Social Science

Civics-Confronting Marginalisation

Confronting refers to the way in which groups and individuals challenge the existing inequalities.

In many cases, the marginalised groups are derived from the Fundamental Rights. In this case, they forced the government to enforce these laws.

The marginalised groups also influenced the government to frame new laws. The abolition of untouchability is one of such examples.

The Constitution always tries to ensure Social and Cultural Justice to the marginalised groups. The government has framed many schemes and policies for the marginalised groups and made efforts to promote them.

Reservation is one of them, which plays an important role in providing social justice to Dalits and Adivasis.

For the safeguards of Dalits, the government has framed SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

The 1989 Act also helps the Adivasis to defend their right to occupy the land that traditionally belonged to them.

Adivasis, Dalits, Muslims, and women come under marginal groups. These groups experience inequality and discrimination at every level in society.

As this hurt them, they want to come out of this. They often challenge existing inequalities.

They argue that simply by being citizens of a democratic country, they possess equal rights that must be respected. Many of them look up to the Constitution to address their concerns.

The Constitution provides Fundamental Rights which are available to all Indians equally, including the marginalised groups.

But as the marginalised groups fail to enjoy equal rights, they insist the government to enforce laws.

The government, as a result, frame new laws in keeping with the spirit the Fundamental Rights.

Untouchability has been abolished. This means that no one can henceforth prevent Dalits from educating themselves, entering temples, using public facilities, etc.

Our Constitution States that no citizen of India shall be discriminated against on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. This has been used by Dalits to seek equality where it has been denied to them.

There are specific laws and policies for the marginalised groups in our country.

The government sets up a committee or undertakes a survey and then makes an effort to promote such policies in order to give opportunities to specific groups.

The government tries to promote social justice by providing for free or subsidized hostels for students of Dalit and Adivasi communities.

The Government's reservation policy is a very significant effort to end inequity in the system.

The laws which reserve seats in education and government employment for Dalits and Adivasis are based on an important argument that in a society like ours, where for centuries sections of the population have been denied opportunities to learn and to work in order to develop new skills or vocations, a democratic government must assist these sections.

Governments across the country have their own list of SCs or Dalits, STs, and backward and most backward castes. The central government too has its list.

Students applying to educational institutions and those applying for posts in government are expected to furnish proof of their caste or tribe status in the form of caste and tribe certificates.

If a particular Dalit caste or a certain tribe is on the government list, then a candidate from that caste or tribe can avail of the benefit of reservation.

Besides policies, there are also specific laws to protect the rights of marginalised communities.

The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act came into being in 1989 to protect Dalits and Adivasis from the domination of the powerful communities.

Dalit: The term Dalit means 'broken' or oppressed socially and economically.

Confront: To come face to face or to challenge someone or something. In the chapter, the word refers to groups that challenge their marginalisation.

Policy: A well-planned course of action that provides direction for the future, sets goals to be achieved or lays out guidelines to be followed and acted upon.

Ostracise: To socially boycott an individual and his family.

Dispasses: To give up ownership or authority.

Morally reprehensible: An act that violates all norms of decency and dignity that society believes in.

Assertive: An individual or a group that expresses themselves and their views strongly.

Manual Scavenging: It refers to the manual practice of removing human and animal waste or excreta with the help of brooms, tin plates and baskets from dry latrines and carrying it on the head to disposal grounds.