

Very Short Answer Questions

Q. 1. What is sexual division of labour?

Ans. A system in which all the work inside the home is either done by the women of the family, or organised by them through the domestic helpers.

Q. 2. How are boys and girls brought up in India for the division of labour?

Ans. Boys and girls are brought up to believe that the main responsibility of women is house work and bringing up children.

Q. 3. How is sexual division of labour done in India?

Ans. In most families, women do all the work inside the home such as cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, tailoring, looking after children, etc. and men do all the work outside the home.

Q. 4. Does women's work get recognition?

Ans. The majority of women do some sort of paid work in addition to domestic labour, but their work is not valued and does not get recognition.

Q. 5. Why are men tailored not to do the household work?

Ans. It is not that man cannot do housework; they simply think that it is for the women to attend to these things. When these jobs are paid for, men are ready to take up these works. Like most tailors or cooks in hotels are men.

Q. 6. What is the role of women in public division of labour?

Ans. Although women constitute half of the humanity, their role in public life, especially politics is minimal in most societies.

Q. 7. What are feminist movements?

Ans. Women in different parts of the world organised and agitated for equal rights. These agitations demanded enhancing the political and legal status of women and improving their educational and career opportunities. These movements are called 'feminist movements'.

Q. 8. What is the perception of a modern women now?

Ans. We now find women working as scientists, doctors, engineers, lawyers, managers and college and University teachers, which were not considered suitable for women earlier.

Q. 9. How do women in India lack in literacy rate?

Ans. The literacy rate among women is only 54 percent compared to 76 per cent among men.

Q. 10. Why is girl student's dropout more in higher studies?

Ans. It is so because parents prefer to spend their resources for their boys' education rather than spending equally on their sons and daughters.

Q. 11. How far is it true that proportion of women among the highly paid and valued jobs is still very small?

Ans. On an average an Indian woman works one hour more than an average man every day. Yet much of her work often not valued and therefore not paid.

Q. 12. Has Equal Wages Act provided any comfort in women's jobs?

Ans. In almost all areas of work, from sports and cinema, to factories and fields, women are paid less than men, even when both do exactly the same work. So, Equal Wages Act doesn't work.

Q. 13. Why is there a decline in sex ratio in India?

Ans. In many parts of India, parents prefer to have sons and find ways to have the girl child aborted before she is born. Such sex selective abortion led to a decline in child sex ratio.

Q. 14. What is country's sex ratio at present?

Ans. At present, country's sex ratio is 914 women per thousand males.

Q. 15. Why is it said that urban areas have become particularly unsafe for women?

Ans. Urban areas are unsafe for women. Women are not safe even within their own home from beating, harassment and other forms of domestic violence. Even in work place, there is a sexual harassment.

Q. 16. What is the proportion of women in legislature of India?

Ans. In India, the proportion of women in legislature has been very low. The percentage of elected women members in Lok Sabha has never reached even 10 per cent of its total strength. India is among the bottom groups of nations in the world.

Q. 17. What is the proportion of women in India's local bodies?

Ans. One third of the seats in local government bodies—in panchayats and municipalities are now reserved for women. Now there are more than 10 lakh elected women representatives in rural and urban local bodies.

Q. 18. "Religion can never be separated from politics" by Mahatma Gandhi. Elaborate the Statement.

Ans. According to him, religions was not only particular religion like Hinduism or Islam but moral values that inform all religions. He believed that politics must be guided by ethics drawn from religion.

Q. 19. Why did human rights groups of India demand protection for religious minorities?

Ans. Human rights groups in our country have argued that most of the victims of communal riots in our country are people from religious minorities. They have demanded that the government should protect religious minorities.

Q. 20. What is the family laws' role for women in different religions?

Ans. Women's movement has argued that family laws of all religions discriminate against women. So, they have demanded that government should change these laws to make them more equitable.

Q. 21. What is Communal politics?

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

Q. 22. What does communalism lead to in its extreme form?

Ans. In its extreme form, 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.

Q. 23. What is the most common expression of communalism?

Ans. The most common expression of communalism is in everyday beliefs. These routinely involve religious prejudices, stereotypes of religious communities and belief in the superiority of one's religion over other religions.

Q. 24. How political mobilisation on religious lines are a form of communalism?

Ans. Political mobilisation 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.

Q. 25. What is the most ugly form of communalism?

Ans. The most ugly form of communalism is communal violence, riots and massacre. India and Pakistan suffered some of the worst communal riots at the time of partition.

Q. 26. What do you understand by secularism?

Ans. There is no official religion for the Indian state. Our constitution does not give a special status to any religion. All religions are treated equally by the law.

Q. 27. What are the provisions for a secular state according to the Indian constitution.

Ans. The constitution provides to all individuals and communities the freedom to profess, practise and propagate any religion, or not to follow any.

Q. 28. What is the extreme form of caste system in India?

Ans. Members 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 from other caste groups.

Q. 29. Mention some reforms of history against caste system.

Ans. Social reformers like Jyotiba Phule, Gandhiji, B.R. Ambedkar and Periyar Ramaswami Naiker advocated and worked to establish a society in which caste inequalities are absent.

Q. 30. Which factors are responsible to bring changes in caste system in India?

Ans. With the economic development, large scale urbanisation, growth of literacy and education, occupational mobility and the weakening of the position of landlords in the villages, the old notions of caste hierarchy are breaking down.

Q. 31. What is occupational mobility?

Ans. Shift from one occupation to another, usually when a new generation takes up occupations other than practised by their ancestors.

Q. 32. What does 'Caste hierarchy' mean?

Ans. It is a ladder like formation in which all the caste groups are placed from the 'highest' to the 'lowest' castes.

Q. 33. What is the role of Indian Constitution to remove caste system?

Ans. The Constitution of India prohibited any caste based discrimination and laid the foundations of policies to reverse the injustices of the caste system.

Q. 34. How is caste system still prevailing in contemporary India?

Ans. Some of the older aspects of caste have persisted. Even now, most people marry within their own caste or tribe. Untouchability has not ended completely despite constitutional prohibition.

Q. 35. Is it true that caste is the sole basis of social community?

Ans. According to this way of thinking, people belonging to the same caste belong to a natural social community and have the same interests which they do not share with anyone from another caste.

Q. 36. How do political parties keep castes in their minds during elections?

Ans. When parties choose candidates in elections, they keep in mind the cast composition of the electorate and nominate candidates from different castes so as to muster necessary support to win elections. They make appeals to caste sentiments to gather support.

Q. 37. Does anyone single caste get a clear majority of one single caste?

Ans. No, parliamentary constituency in the country has a clear majority of one single caste. So, every candidate and party needs to win the confidence of more than one caste and community to win elections.

Q. 38. What do you understand by vote bank of a caste?

Ans. When people say that caste is a vote bank of one party, it usually means that a large proportion of the voters from that caste vote for that party.

Q. 39. How does caste get politicised?

Ans. Each caste group tries to become bigger by incorporating within it the neighbouring castes or sub-castes, which were earlier excluded from it.

Short Answer Questions

Q. 1. What would happen if politics and religion go hand in hand?

Ans. Gandhiji used to say that religion can never be separated from politics. What he meant by religion was not Hinduism or Islam but moral values that inform all religions. He believed that politics must be guided by the morals and ethics drawn from religion.

Human rights group in one country has argued that most of the victims of communal riots in India are people from religious minorities. They have demanded that the government should protect religious minorities.

Women's movements have argued that 'family laws' of all religions discriminate against women. So they have demanded that the government should change these laws to make them more equitable.

Q. 2. How can you say that women's role in public life is minimal?

Ans. Earlier, only men were allowed to participate in public affairs, vote and contest for elections and public offices.

Gradually, the gender issue was raised in politics.

Women in different parts of the world organised and agitated for equal rights.

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

These agitations demanded enhancing the political and legal status of women and improving their educational and career opportunities.

More feminist movements have taken place for equality of women.

We now find women working as scientists, doctors, engineers, lawyers, managers and college and university teachers, which were earlier not considered suitable for women.

Q. 3. How are religious differences expressed in politics?

Ans. A communal mind often leads to a quest for political dominance of one's own religious community.

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

Sometimes, communalism takes its most ugly form, in communal violence riots and massacres.

Q. 4. How can a relationship between religion and politics be established?

Ans. The relationship between religion and politics can be established by setting up the following constitutional provisions:

(i) There is no official religion. The Indian Constitution does not give special status to any religion.

(ii) The Constitution provides to all individuals and communities freedom to profess, practise and propagate any religion, or not to follow any.

(iii) At the same time, the Constitution allows the state to intervene in matters of religion in order to ensure equality within religious communities.

Q. 5. Do you agree that caste has not disappeared from contemporary India?

Ans. Some of the older aspects of caste are continuing.

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

Untouchability has not ended completely, despite constitutional prohibition.

The caste groups that had access to education under the old system have done very well in acquiring modern education as well.

Those groups that did not have access to education or were prohibited from acquiring it have naturally lagged behind.

Caste continues to be closely linked to economic status.

Q. 6. What factors matter in politics other than caste?

Ans. The voters have strong attachment to political parties which is often stronger than their attachment to their caste or community.

People within the same caste or community have different interests depending on their economic conditions.

Rich and poor or men and women from the same caste often vote very differently.

People's assessment of the performance of the government and the popularity rating of the leaders matter and are often decisive in elections.

Q. 7. What does 'gender-division' mean?

Ans. Gender division is a form of hierarchical social division seen everywhere, but rarely recognised in the study of politics. It tends to be understood as natural and unchangeable. However, it is not based on biology but on social expectations and stereotypes.

Q. 8. What do you understand by 'sexual division of labour'? Give some examples.

Ans. It is a system in which all work inside the home is either done by the women of the family, or organised by them through the domestic helpers.

It is reflected in most of the families. Women do all the work inside the home such as cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, tailoring, looking after children, etc. and men do all the work outside the home.

It is not that men cannot do housework; they simply think that it is for women to attend to these things.

In villages, women fetch water, collect fuel and work in the field.

Q. 9. What does 'feminist' mean? What are feminist movements?

Ans. Feminist can be a woman or a man who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men.

Feminist movements aim at equal rights and opportunities for women and men. More radical women's movements aimed at equality, both in personal and family life.

Long Answer Questions

Q. 1. What is communal politics? How is it preferred?

Ans. Communal Politics: It is based on the idea that religion is the principal basis of social community.

Communalism involves thinking that the followers of a particular religion must belong to one community. Their fundamental interests are the same. Any difference that they may have is irrelevant or trivial for community life. It also follows that people who follow different religions cannot belong to the same social community. If the followers of different religions have some commonalities, these are superficial and immaterial. Their interests are bound to be different and involve a conflict.

Q. 2. How is caste preferred in politics?

Ans. (i) No parliamentary constituency in the country has a clear majority of one single caste. So every candidate and party needs to win the confidence of more than one caste and community to win elections.

(ii) No party wins the votes of all the voters of a caste or community. When people say that a caste is a 'vote bank' of one party, it usually means that a large proportion of the voters from that caste vote for that party.

(iii) Many political parties may put up candidates from the same caste. Some voters have more than one candidate from their caste while many voters have no candidate from their caste.

(iv) The ruling party and the sitting MPs or MLAs frequently lose elections in a country. That would not have happened if all castes and communities were frozen in their political preferences.

Q. 3. "The problem begins when religion is seen as the basis of nation." Explain the statement with an example.

Ans. When religion becomes the basis of nation, it becomes communalism.

When people of one religion consider themselves as superior to other religions, the problem of communalism erupts. This problem of communalism takes another sharp turn when it gets mixed with politics. The state power is used to establish domination of one religious group over the other religion. The manner in which religion is used in politics is called 'communal politics'. Sometimes people also use politics to express their needs, interests as members of a particular religious community.

Q. 4. What changes can be seen in the caste system in modern India?

Ans. Partly due to social reformers and political leaders' efforts and partly due to other socio-economic changes, castes and caste system in modern India have undergone great changes.

With economic development, large-scale urbanisation, growth of literacy and education, occupational mobility and the weakening of the position of landlords in the villages, the old notions of caste hierarchy are breaking down. Now most of the times, in urban areas, it does not matter much who is walking along next to us on a street or eating at the next table in a restaurant. The Constitution of India prohibited any caste-based discrimination. If a person who lived a century ago were to return to India, he/she would be greatly surprised at the change that has come about in the country.

Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

Q. 1. How does communalism threaten the Indian democracy? Explain.

Ans. The most common expression of communalism lies in our everyday beliefs. These routines involve belief in the superiority of one's religion above other religions.

A communal mind often leads to a quest for political dominance of one's own religious community; it can take the form of a desire to form a separate political unit.

Political mobilisation based on religion is another form of communalism. This involves the use of sacred symbols, religious leaders, emotional appeal to bring the followers of one religion together in the political arena.

Sometimes, communalism takes its most ugly form in violence riots and massacres. India and Pakistan suffered some of the worst communal riots at the time of partition.

Q. 2. "In politics, the focus on caste can sometimes give an impression that elections are all about caste and nothing else." Justify the statement.

Ans. 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 elections.

Political parties and candidates in elections make appeal to caste sentiment to muster support. Some political parties are known to favour some castes and are seen as their representatives.

Universal adult franchise and the principle of 'one person one vote' compelled political leaders to gear up to the task of mobilising and securing political support.

Q. 3. Highlight the positive and negative impact of casteism with regard to political expression. Give any three examples to justify the statement.

Ans. Positive Impact of Casteism

(i) With the economic development, large scale urbanisation growth of literacy and education, occupational mobility and the weakening of the position of landlords in the village, the old notions of caste hierarchy are breaking down.

(ii) The constitution has prohibited any caste based discrimination and laid the foundation of policies to reverse the injustices of the caste system.

Negative impacts of Casteism

(i) When parties choose candidates in election, they keep in mind the caste imposition of the electorate and nominate candidates from different castes so as to get necessary support to win elections.

(ii) Political parties and candidates in elections make appeal to caste sentiments to muster support.

Q. 4. Write few measures to combat communalism in India.

Ans. Measures to Combat Communalism in India

Communalism can be combated through the following methods:

(i) Law should ban parties using religion in politics.

(ii) Socio-economic backwardness of the country should be removed so that people are not used as vote banks.

(iii) Political parties should rise above narrow gains and stop fanning communal passions.

(iv) Educational institutions should inculcate secular values among students.

(v) The Election Commission should prepare a code of conduct for parties so that religion is not used in politics.

(vi) Mass media, TV, radio, NGOs and people themselves should launch an enlightenment movement so that public opinion is created against communal riots.

Q. 5. How is gender division understood in Indian society? How does political mobilisation of women on this question help to improve women's role in public life?

Ans. (i) Boys and Girls are brought to believe that the main responsibility of women is household work and bringing up children.

(ii) Women do all work inside the house such as cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, tailoring, looking after the children, etc. and men do all the work outside the house. It is not that men cannot do such work they simply think that it is for women, to attend to.

(iii) Political mobilisation has helped to improve women's role in public life.

(a) Now women are scientists, space astronauts, doctors, engineers, lawyer and college and university teachers which were earlier not considered suitable for them.

(b) Despite certain improvement, Indian Society remains a male dominated and patriarchal society. Women still face torture, discrimination in various ways.

(iv) In urban areas, poor women work as domestic helps in middle-class homes while middleclass women work in offices.

(v) In fact, the majority of women do some sort of paid work in addition to domestic labour. But their work is not valued and does not get recognition.

Q. 6. How does caste get politicised?

Ans. Each caste group tries to become bigger by incorporating within it the neighbouring castes or sub castes, which were earlier excluded from it.

Various caste groups are required to enter into a coalition with other castes or communities and thus enter into a dialogue and negotiations.

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

These castes play different kinds of roles in politics. As in the case of religion, politics based on caste identity alone is not very healthy in a democracy.