

Gender Religion and Caste

Previous Years' CBSE Board Questions

◆ Gender and Politics

MCQ

- Two statements are given below as Assertion (A) and Reason (R). Read the statements and choose the appropriate option.
Assertion (A) : Women in different parts of the world organised themselves and agitated for equal rights.
Reason (R) : Women's movement aimed at equality in personal and family life as well.
(a) Both (A) and (R) are true and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).
(b) Both (A) and (R) are true, but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).
(c) (A) is true but (R) is false.
(d) (A) is false, but (R) is true. (2023)
- Which one of the following laws was enacted by the Government of India in October 2005?
(a) The Right to Property Act
(b) The Right to Education Act
(c) The Consumer Protection Act
(d) The Right to Information Act (AI 2014) **R**

VSA (1/2 mark)

- "Women face discrimination in various ways in our society." Explain any two ways. (2023) **An**
- Suggest any one way to protect women from domestic oppression. (2020) **An**
- Suggest any one way to pay equal wages to women in all areas of work as men. (2020)
- What percentage of reservation is given to women in local administration in India? (2020) **Ev**
- Suggest any one way to increase the participation of women in the legislative domain of India. (2020 C)
- What do you mean by a patriarchal society? (2015)
- By what term is now the person known who believes in equal right and opportunities for women? (2015)
- At which level of government in India, $\frac{1}{3}^{\text{rd}}$ of seats are reserved for women? (2015)
- In which constitutional institution have seats been reserved for women? (2014)

SA I (3 marks)

- Describe the problems of low representation of women in Indian legislature. (2020)
- Describe the ways of discrimination faced by women in India. (2020)

OR

"Women still lag much behind men in India despite some improvements since independence." Analyse the statement. (Delhi 2019) **An**

- "Gender division is not based on biology but on social expectations and stereotypes." Support the statement. (2019 C, 2015) **An**
- Suggest any three measures to enhance the participation of woman in politics. (2015) **An**

LA (5 marks)

- Explain any five methods to raise the political representation of women in India. (AI 2019) **R**
- How is gender division understood in the society? To what extent does political mobilisations on gender help to improve women's role in public life? (2016)
- Examine the standard of women's representation in India's legislative bodies. (2014)

◆ Religion, Communalism and Politics

MCQ

- Which one of the following matters do not deal with the 'Family Laws'?
(a) Marriage (b) Adoption
(c) Inheritance (d) Finance (2023) **U**

VSA (1 mark)

- Suggest any one way to create communal harmony among various communities of India. (2020)
- Suggest any one way to change 'family laws' of all religions. (2020)
- Fill in the blank :
The Indian Constitution provides to all individuals and communities freedom to profess, practise and propagate any religion because of _____. (2020)

SA I (3 marks)

- Describe any three problems of communalism in Indian politics. (2020)
- Mention any three features of 'secularism' described in the Indian Constitution. (2020)

OR

Secularism is not an ideology of some political parties, but it is one of the foundations of a country. Examine the statement. (2018)

- What is communalism? How does it affect the political life of the people? (2016) **U**

26. Suppose a politician seeks your vote on the religious ground. Why is his act considered against the norms of democracy? Explain. (2015)
27. Suggest any two measures to check communalism in India. (2014)
28. "The Government of India gives holidays for the festivals of most of the religions." Why is it so? Give your view point. (2014)

LA (5 marks)

29. 'Communalism can take various forms in politics'. Explain. (2020)
- OR**
- What form does communalism take in politics? (2015)
30. Explain the constitutional provisions that make India a secular state. (2017, 2014) **Ev**
31. Why did the framers of the constitution choose the ideals of secularism for India? How is this choice reflected in the constitutional provisions? Explain. (2017) **U**
32. Define communalism. Explain any three forms of communalism in the Indian Politics. (2016)

◆ Caste and Politics

VSA (1/2 mark)

33. How has caste system in modern India undergone great change? Explain. (2023)
34. "Caste system is still prevalent in the Indian society." Suggest any one measure to abolish it. (2020)
35. "Sometimes elections are all about caste in India." How can this situation be avoided? (2020)

36. Fill in the blank :
Castes and Caste system in modern India have undergone a great change because _____. (2020)

SA I (3 marks)

37. Describe the influence of Politics in the Caste system. (2020 C)
38. Mention the problem of 'Casteism' in Indian politics. (2020) **U**
39. "Politics and social divisions should not be allowed to mix." Justify the statement. (AI 2019) **Ev**
40. Describe the three factors which determine the outcome of the politics of social divisions. (2016)
41. Describe three advantages of the political expression of caste differences. (2015) **U**
42. Literacy and urbanisation combined with economic growth have changed the value system of Indian society. Explain with reference to India's social problems. (2015) **An**

LA (5 marks)

43. Examine the different forms of 'Casteism' in Indian politics. (2019 C)
44. Explain the factors that have led to the weakening of the caste system in India. (2019 C, 2014)
45. Caste has not still disappeared from contemporary India. Justify the statement. (2016, 2014)
46. The focus on caste in politics can sometimes give an impression that elections are all about caste and nothing else. Do you agree? Explain. (2015) **An**

CBSE Sample Questions

◆ Gender and Politics

MCQ

1. Which of the following statement is true regarding Feminist Movements?
- (a) A group which favours giving more power to working women at rural and urban level.
- (b) A movement that believes in giving exclusive rights to female in urban areas.

- (c) Radical women's movements aimed at equality in personal and family life as well.
- (d) It is the practice of placing a feminine and masculine point of view in decision making. (2022-23) **R**

VSA (2 marks)

2. Mention the provisions that constitute India into a secular country. (2022-23)

ANSWERS

Previous Years' CBSE Board Questions

1. (a) : Both (A) and (R) are true and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).

2. (d) : The Right to Information Act
3. (i) A smaller proportion of girls students go for higher studies.
- (ii) The proportion of women among the highly paid and valued jobs is still very small.

4. Women can take help from NGO or Mahila Aayog.
5. Better implementation of 'Equal Remuneration Act, 1976' which provides equal wages to be paid to equal work.
6. 33% or one-third
7. One way to solve this problem is to make it legally binding to have a fair proportion of women in the elected as well as nominated bodies.
8. A male dominated society
9. A feminist
10. Third tier government
11. Local self-government bodies.
12. Problems of low representation of women in legislature
 - (i) Political parties are not giving tickets to women candidates to fight election in proportion to their population.
 - (ii) No or low representation led many feminists and women's movement to the conclusion that unless women control power. This problem will not get adequate attention.
 - (iii) India is behind the averages for several developing countries that make India, among the bottom group of nations in the world.
13. In our country, women still lag much behind men despite some improvements since Independence. Women face disadvantage, discrimination and oppression in various ways :
 - (i) The literacy rate among women is only 64.60 per cent as compared with 80.90 per cent among men (2011 data).
 - (ii) Similarly, a smaller proportion of girl students go for higher studies. Girls are performing as well as boys in school. But they drop out because parents prefer to spend their resources for their boy's education rather than spending equally on their sons and daughters.
 - (iii) The proportion of women among the highly paid and valued jobs is still very small. On an average an Indian woman works one hour more than an average man every day.
 - (iv) In some 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 has led to a decline in child sex ratio.
 - (v) Women often face harassment, exploitation and violence on the domestic front.
14. (i) Gender division is a form of hierarchical social division based on social expectation and stereotypes.
 - (ii) Boys and girls are brought up to believe that the main responsibilities of women is house work and bringing up children.
 - (iii) There is a sexual division of labour in most families where women do all the household chores and men work outside the home.
 - (iv) Majority of women may do some paid work in addition of domestic labour both in rural and Urban areas but their work is not valued and does not get recognition.

15. (i) Women should be given proper education, so that they are aware of their rights and duties and participate actively in politics.

(ii) Every woman should be self reliant, so that she enjoys a respectable position in the society and is confident about her meaningful contribution in politics as well.

(iii) It should be legally binding to have a fair proportion of woman in the elected bodies. That is why 1/3rd of seats in local government bodies in panchayats and in municipalities are now reserved for women.

16. The political representation of women in India can be improved by adopting a holistic approach. This would include :

(i) By improving the literacy rate. Presently the literacy amongst women is only 65.46% as compared to over 82% in men. This would improve the political awareness amongst women.

(ii) The percentage of women in highly paid jobs is still very small. At many workplaces, women are paid less than men for the same job. When equal pay comes the voice of women will get strengthened.

(iii) The Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 removes discriminatory gender practices. The daughters now have equal right of inheritance to their father's estate as sons. This definitely has increased the political power of females.

(iv) The political representation of women had been very poor in the Indian legislatures. Even in the cabinet, the number of women ministers is very low. The political parties must give more representation to female candidates in union and state elections. The Supreme court of India must intervene in this matter.

(v) One-third of seats in local government bodies have been reserved for women candidates. This has helped in increasing women's representation in panchayats and municipalities. There is a need to enhance this to 50%.

A bill for providing one-third reservation in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies has been pending in the Parliament for more than a decade. Political parties are yet to arrive at consensus on this issue.

Commonly Made Mistake

- Students must know one-third reservation is given only in local bodies (Panchayat level) not for Legislative assembly or Parliament-houses.

17. (i) In Indian society, gender division tends to be understood as natural and unchangeable. It is based on social expectations and stereotypes.

(ii) This attitude leads to sexual division of labour i.e., boys and girls are brought up to believe that, the main responsibility of women is house work and bringing up children whereas all the outside works are to be done by men.

(iii) The result of this division of labour is that though the women constitute almost half the population, their role in public life is minimal.

(iv) Political mobilisation on this issue has helped to improve women's role in public life. We now find women working as scientists, doctors, engineers, teachers, etc.

(v) Now 33% seats are reserved for women in local government bodies and a similar demand has been made for assemblies and the Parliament.

18. The status of women's representation in India's legislative bodies is as follows :

(i) Central Legislature : Less than 10% of its total strength are women.

(ii) State Legislature : Less than 5% of its total strength are women.

(iii) Panchayati Raj : One-third of the seats are reserved for women.

(iv) India is among the bottom group of nations in the world, in this aspect.

(v) Women's organisations and activists have been demanding a reservation of at least one third of seats in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. But the bill to this effect has not been passed.

19. (d) : Finance

20. Spread awareness about unity and integrity.

21. Enforcement of dowry prohibition act can bring a remarkable change in the family law of all religions.

22. Secularism

23. Problems of communalism in Indian politics.

(i) Communalism routinely involves religious prejudices, stereotypes of religions communities and belief in the superiority of one's religion over other religions.

(ii) For those belonging to the minority community, it can take the form of a desire to form a separate political unit.

(iii) Communalism takes its most ugly form of communal violence, riots and massacre. India and Pakistan suffered some of the worst communal riots at the time of partition. The post-independence period has also seen large scale communal violence.

24. The makers of our Constitution were aware of religion related challenge. That is why they chose the model of a secular state. The important provisions that makes India a secular state are :

(i) There is no official religion for the Indian states. Unlike the status of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, that of Islam in Pakistan and that of Christianity in England, our Constitution does not give a special status to any religion.

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

(iii) The Constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion.

(iv) At the same time the Constitution allows the state to intervene in the matters of religion in order to ensure equality within religious communities. For example, it bans untouchability.

25. Communalism : When beliefs of one religion are presented as superior to those of other religions, when the demands of one religious group are formed in opposition to another and when state power is used to establish domination of one religious group over the rest, Then, it is called as communalism.

Communalism is a hindrance in the functioning of our democracy because :

(i) 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 nation.

(ii) Any attempt to bring all followers of one religion together is bound to suppress the voices of others.

26. His act is against the spirit of democracy as the said politician is not working as per the Constitution.

(i) It also exploits the social difference.

(ii) It may create social discord and may lead to social division.

(iii) It is also biased attitude and neglects the principle of equality.

27. (i) Communal prejudices and propaganda need to be countered in everyday life.

(ii) Religion based mobilisation to meet political needs must be countered.

28. It is so because :

(i) India is a secular state, there is no official religion in our country.

(ii) The Constitution provides us freedom to profess, practice and propagate any religion or not to follow any.

(iii) The Constitution prohibits discrimination on the ground of religion.

29. Communalism can take various forms in politics :

(i) The most common expression of communalism is in everyday beliefs. These involve spread of religious prejudices, stereotype of religious belief, in the superiority of one's religion over other religions. This is so common that we often fail to notice it, even when we do not believe in it.

(ii) It often leads to a quest for political dominance of one's own religious community, this takes the form of majoritarian dominance. For those belonging to the minority community, it leads to formation of a separate political unit.

(iii) Political mobilisation on religious lines is another frequent form of communalism. This involves the use of sacred symbols by religious leaders. Emotional appeals are made to bring the followers of one religion together in the political arena.

(iv) Sometimes communalism can lead to communal violence, riots and massacre.

30. Secularism means no special status is given to any religion.

(i) There is no official religion for India unlike the status of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, or that of Islam in Pakistan.

(ii) The constitution provides freedom to practice and propagate any religion, or not to follow any.

(iii) The Constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion.

(iv) The Constitution allows the state to intervene in the matters of religion to ensure equality within religious communities. For example, it bans untouchability.

31. Secularism in India means equal treatment for all religions by the state. The term 'Secular' was added along with the term 'Socialist' through the 42nd Amendment in the Preamble of the Constitution of India in 1976. The Preamble of Constitution of India asserts that India is a secular country.

The Indian Constitution does not profess any state religion. The state recognises and accepts all religions. It enforces parliamentary laws and not religious laws, and respects pluralism.

The framers of constitution chose the model of secular state because of the following reasons :

(i) India emerged as an independent country amidst heavy turmoil and faced many problems like partition based on religion. The constitution makers did not want to give importance to any religion as it could again divide the country.

(ii) After getting independence, the important leaders of India made it clear that India has to be a secular state as they could not afford any disturbance in the country based on religion.

(iii) The framers of constitution knew that if any particular religion was promoted then there would be a chance of conflict among people of various religions and that would harm the progress of the country. This would also bring a feeling of insecurity among the people who follow other religions.

There is no discrimination among people based on the religious grounds in India. No religion is given superiority over any other religion.

32. (i) Communalism is a situation when beliefs of one religion are presented as superior to those of other religions. When the demands of one religious group are formed in opposition to another and when state power is used to establish domination of one religious group over the rest.

(ii) Various forms of communalism in politics :

(a) The most common expression of communalism is in everyday beliefs and practices.

(b) Practice of political dominance of one's own religious community over others.

(c) Political mobilisation on religious lines is another frequent form of communalism. This involves the use of sacred symbols by religious leaders, emotional appeals to spread fear.

Answer Tips

- ➔ The student must avoid focussing on a specific community while answering the question. The answer must be stated in a general manner without use of any specific name, place and symbol.

33. Caste system has undergone a major change in modern India. Following points explain this statement:

(i) Large scale urbanisation has diminished the awareness of caste system, as people work together. It does not matter much who is walking along next to us.

(ii) Growth of literacy and education has helped to decrease the belief in caste.

34. One measure to abolish caste system is increasing the literacy rates in our country.

35. Proper laws should be passed to separate elections from casteism.

36. Occupational mobility/implementation of laws.

37. We can say that, while caste matters in electoral politics, so do many other factors. People within the same caste have different interests depending on their economic condition; that is why rich and poor or men and women from the same caste often vote very differently.

A caste group often tries to become bigger by incorporating within it neighboring castes or sub-castes thus changing the definition of the group.

Sometimes various caste groups enter into a coalition and thus enter into a dialogue and negotiation. This leads to new kinds of caste groups such as 'backward' and 'forward'.

38. Problems of casteism in India :

(i) There is discrimination between upper and lower castes. Still there is wide gap and difference between different castes.

(ii) Upper castes still enjoy respectable position in the society.

(iii) Political leaders contest election on the name of castes, for the vote bank.

39. It is absolutely correct to say that politics and social divisions should not be allowed to mix. This is because :

(i) It can make social divisions into political division and lead to conflict, violence or even disintegration of a country.

(ii) In Northern Ireland, there has been a violent and bitter ethno-political conflict for many years.

(iii) It caused disintegration of Yugoslavia into six independent countries. In Sri Lanka, when the ethno-social difference between Sinhals and Tamils were politicised, the result was the Civil War in the country.

40. Factors that decide the outcome of the politics of social divisions are

(i) When the people's perception of their identities is strict, the accommodation of other identities becomes difficult in the group.

(ii) Representation of a community by political leaders : While representing a community, if politicians raise demands that are constitutional, then, it is easier to accommodate those demands.

(iii) The government's reaction : If the reasonable demands of a community are suppressed by the government, then it leads to social divisions, which in turn threatens the integrity of the country.

41. Advantages of the political expression of caste differences are :

(i) It gives disadvantaged groups the opportunity to demand a share in power and decision-making.

(ii) Many political parties have taken up the issue of ending caste discrimination.

(iii) Measures for uplifting the status of the backward castes has also been undertaken.

42. (i) The caste system is very old in India and also very rigid at one point of time but due to rise in literacy and economic development the caste barriers are breaking down. People in urban areas who are literate mostly do not believe in inequality based on caste. It is accepted that all are equal. Rising economic status of backward castes has helped in eroding the caste barriers.

(ii) The problem of communalism has decreased and there is less violence in the name of religion. People who are literate mostly do not get swayed by appeal to religious emotions. Economic progress and urbanisation has greatly helped in spread of in spread of secularism.

(iii) The position of women too has improved with the spread of literacy among women. Now they can earn and be economically independent. This helps to increase self-esteem and decreases dependence on male members of society.

(iv) The system of dowry at the time of marriage is getting diluted due to literacy and economic development of women.

(v) The practice of child marriage is decreasing due to spread of literacy.

(vi) There is occupational mobility due to spread of urbanisation and literacy and people are free to follow the profession of their choice rather than follow hereditary professions.

43. Different forms of casteism in Indian politics :

(i) 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 the necessary support to win elections.

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

(iii) While campaigning : Political parties and candidates in elections make appeals to people to give them their votes on the basis of caste. Some political parties are known to favour some castes, and are seen as their representatives.

(iv) Universal adult franchise and the principle of one-person-one-vote, has compelled the political leaders to raise the caste-based issues during elections. They do so to mobilise and secure political support. It also brought new consciousness among the people of castes that were hitherto treated as inferior and low.

44. Factors that led to the weakening of caste systems in India :

(i) Efforts of social reformers like Jyotiba Phule, Gandhiji, Ambedkar against caste system have helped to promote a casteless society.

(ii) Economic development has reduced the emphasis on caste.

(iii) Large scale urbanisation has diminished the awareness of caste, as people work together.

(iv) Growth of literacy and education has helped to decrease the belief in caste.

(v) Occupational mobility is possible now and children are not compelled to continue the profession of the family or father.

45. It is true the caste factor has still not disappeared from our society :

(i) Most people marry within their own caste or tribe.

(ii) Untouchability has not ended despite provisions in the constitution.

(iii) Effects of centuries of advantages to upper cast and disadvantages to lower castes continue to be felt today.

(iv) Large number of low caste people still do not have access to education.

(v) Caste is still linked to economic and social status.

46. No, I do not agree. The focus on caste in politics can sometimes give an impression that elections are all about caste and nothing else is not correct because—

(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 voters of a caste or community. When people say that a cast is a 'vote bank' of one party, it usually means that a large proportion of the voters from the caste vote for the party, not all.

(iii) Many political parties may put up candidates from the same caste (if that caste is believed to dominate the electorate in a particular constituency). Some voters may have more than one candidate from their caste while many voters may have no candidate from their caste.

(iv) The ruling party or the sitting M.P. or M.L.A. frequently lose elections in our country. That could not have happened if all castes or communities were frozen in their political preferences.

CBSE Sample Question

1. (c) : Radial women's movements aimed at equality in personal and family life as well. (1)

2. Secularism means no special status is given to any religion.

(i) There is no official religion for India unlike the status of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, or that of Islam in Pakistan.

(ii) The constitution provides freedom to practice and propagate any religion, or not to follow any.

(iii) The Constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion.

(iv) The Constitution allows the state to intervene in the matters of religion to ensure equality within religious communities. For example, it banned untouchability.

(Any two points to be explained)

(2)