

Chapter - 3 - Gender, Religion & Caste.

Democracy → Diversity → Differences.

↓
It may lead to social division & inequalities

Gender Religion Caste

⇒ Gender & Politics.

- Gender division tends to be understood as natural and unchangeable (Brg problem)

Sexual division of Labour.

Ex. farmer
Nurse
teachers.

- In our society, women's work is not valued much.
- " women's work is housework & bringing up children.

(cooking, washing clothes, tailoring etc.)

- When these jobs are done by men, they are paid for that.
- Literacy (as compared to men) is 54%.

Sexual division of Labour → reduction of women's role in public life, especially politics.

Demanding equality

Earlier only men were allowed to participate in public affairs, vote, public posts (offices).

FEMINIST MOVEMENT.

Equal rights for both.

- extension of voting rights to women.
- enhance political & legal status.
- educational opportunities

Literacy rate - lower than men
Jobs - paid low than men.
Female Foeticide - majority of parents prefer son.
(Killing of girl child).
Salary - paid less than men.

Advantages - Help to improve women's role in public life

- We now find women working as scientists, doctors, engineers, teachers etc.

Now - In Scandinavian countries such as Sweden, Norway, Finland - the participation of women in public life is very high.

DISCRIMINATION AG

PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY.

Society where it is perceived that the head of the family should be male.

Discrimination Against Women.

1. Literacy Rate. — Women 54%. Men 76%.
(Parents spend their resources for boys).
2. Jobs (skillful) — Women's proportion in high paying job is low.
— Women are paid less than men.
3. Female Feticide — Majority of society prefer to have son.
(Refer the Map). — This led to killing of girl before birth. (illegal now).
4. Salary — Equal Remuneration Act was passed in 1976.
Still women are paid less.
5. There are various kinds of harassment, exploitation & violence against women.

Women's Political representation.

- the proportion of women in the legislature is low.
- 12% in Lok Sabha & 5% in state assemblies.
- world's average women representation is around 24.5%.

Solution → 1/3 of seats are reserved for women in Panchayat Raj (India)

- cabinets are largely all male even when a woman becomes the CM or PM.
- women organisations → demanding reservation at least 1/3 seats for women in Lok Sabha & State Assemblies.
(bill is not passed from more than a decade).

RELIGION, COMMUNALISM & POLITICS.

Social division based on religion. (widespread $\rightarrow$ not universal)

COMMUNALISM: An ideology stating that the division of people on the basis of ethnicity, religion, beliefs, values, etc.
 $\rightarrow$ (domination of one religion.)

Connection between religion & Politics.

1. Gandhiji said $\rightarrow$ "religion can never be separated from politics" (taking moral & values $\rightarrow$ politics).
2. - most of the victims of communal riots $\rightarrow$ people are far from religious minorities.
3. Women's movement has argued that Family Laws of all religions discriminate against women.

(Religion in Politics or Politics over religion)

Various forms of Communalism in Politics.

- Most common - Superiority of one religion over another.
- Political domination through religion - majoritarianism.
- Use of sacred symbols & emotional appeals by leader on religion
 $\rightarrow$ (Political mobilisation)
- Sometimes communalism takes its most ugly form of communal violence, riots.
 - $\rightarrow$ India & Pakistan (Partition)
 - $\rightarrow$ The post Independence has also seen large scale communalism violence.

SECULAR STATE.

Communalism $\rightarrow$ Major Challenges $\rightarrow$ Solution $\rightarrow$ Secularism.

- Secularism - refers to the separation of religion from the state.
- It means that the state should not discriminate among the citizen on the basis of religion.
 - It should neither encourage or discourage the followers of any religion.

Constitutional provisions → makes India a secular state.

1. There is no official religion. no special status to any religion.
2. Freedom to profess, practice and propagate any religion or not to follow any.
3. Constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion.
4. Const. allows state to intervene in the matter of religion in order to ensure equality (Ex. Untouchability)

SECULARISM. — It is not just an ideology of some parties or person, This is the foundation of our country.

→ Thus Communalism needs to be combated as it is not a threat to some people or religion, it threatens the idea of India.

CASTE & POLITICS.

CASTE Inequalities.

— The major reason for the caste inequalities in India is caste system.

↳ In most societies → Occupations are passed on from one generation to another

[Hereditary Occupational Division]

— Married within caste group.

— Did not eat with members of other caste.

Expression of social division in Politics. (in India)

- ↳ Gender — Positive
- ↳ Religion — Negative
- ↳ Caste — Both.

Socio Reformers.

① That is why political leaders like Jyotirba Phule, Gandhi, BR Ambedkar & Periyar Ramaswami Naicker. → worked to establish a society in which caste inequalities are absent.

- Changes → in Caste system. → Reasons.
- ① Socio-reformers
 - ② Socio-economic change
 - ③ Constitutional change
- Economic Development.
 - Large scale Urbanisation
 - Growth of Literacy & Education.
 - Occupational Mobility
 - The weakening of position of landlords in villages.
 - The old notions of Caste Hierarchy is breaking down.
- ③ Constitution of India prohibited any caste based discrimination

⇒ CASTE in POLITICS.

- while choosing candidate in election → they keep in mind the caste composition of electorate.
- appeals to caste sentiments to gain muster support.
- Political leaders need to give political support to castes which were treated as inferior and low.

⇒ POLITICS IN CASTE → how politics influences the caste system.

It is not politics that get caste ridden, it is the caste that gets politicised.

- Each caste group tries to become bigger by incorporating within it neighbouring castes or subcastes.
- Caste groups are required to enter into coalition.

POSITIVE IMPACT

- The neglected caste get some political attention → which helps them to uplift.
- Ex. Dalits & other backward com. get access in decision making.

NEGATIVE IMPACT

- It diverts our attention from other important issues such as poverty, unemployment etc.
- It also led to the division among different societies, which leads to violence, tension etc.