

# UNIQUE STUDY POINT

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## Chapter 3 : Gender, Religion and Caste

### SECTION A : Multiple Choice Questions

(1 Mark Each)

Q1. Which of the following divisions is unique to India? [CBSE 2023] [1]

- (a) Religious division (b) Caste division (c) Gender division (d) Economic division

**Ans: (b) Caste division. While religious and gender divisions exist everywhere, the caste system is unique to India, based on hereditary social hierarchy.**

Q2. When we speak of gender division, we usually refer to: [CBSE 2022] [1]

- (a) Biological difference (b) Social roles assigned to men and women  
(c) Legal difference (d) Economic difference

**Ans: (b) Social roles assigned to men and women. Gender division is not biological but based on social expectations and unequal treatment of men and women in society.**

Q3. What is communalism? [CBSE 2024] [1]

- (a) Living in a community (b) Belief that religion is the basis of social community and politics  
(c) Secularism (d) Nationalism

**Ans: (b) Belief that religion forms the principal basis of social community and political identity. Communal politics treats people of one religion as opposed to others.**

Q4. The percentage of women in Indian state assemblies is barely: [CBSE 2021] [1]

- (a) 5% (b) 10% (c) 33% (d) 50%

**Ans: (a) 5%. Despite being half the population, women have extremely low representation in state assemblies and Parliament. The situation has improved only marginally.**

Q5. Which of the following is a secular state feature in India? [CBSE 2020] [1]

- (a) State has its own religion (b) State has no official religion  
(c) Only one religion is followed (d) Religious leaders run the government

**Ans: (b) State has no official religion. Indian Constitution provides freedom of religion, prohibits discrimination on religious grounds, and allows state intervention to ensure equality.**

Q6. The caste system in India is based on: [CBSE 2023] [1]

- (a) Wealth and income (b) Hereditary occupational division  
(c) Education level (d) Place of birth

**Ans: (b) Hereditary occupational division. Traditionally, castes were linked to occupations. One was born into a caste and could not change it.**

Q7. Which of the following promotes social division in politics? [CBSE 2022] [1]

- (a) Expression of social divisions (b) Accommodation of diversity  
(c) When one community dominates others and suppresses them (d) Equal representation

**Ans: (c) When one community demands dominance over others and suppresses them. Healthy expression of social divisions is actually beneficial for democracy.**

Q8. What is a secular state? [CBSE 2024] [1]

- (a) State that promotes one religion (b) State that has no official religion and treats all religions equally  
(c) State without any religion (d) State that bans religion

**Ans: (b) A state that has no official religion and treats all religions equally. India, France, and Turkey are examples of secular states.**

Q9. Family laws in India cover which of the following? [CBSE 2021] [1]

- (a) Only marriage (b) Marriage, divorce, adoption, and inheritance  
(c) Only property rights (d) Criminal matters

**Ans: (b) Marriage, divorce, adoption, and inheritance. In India, different religions have different family laws (personal laws), which sometimes create gender inequality.**

Q10. Assertion (A): Caste alone cannot determine election results in India. Reason (R): No single caste forms a majority in any constituency. [CBSE 2024] [1]

- (a) Both true and (R) correctly explains (A)  
(b) Both true but (R) does not explain (A)  
(c) (A) is true but (R) is false  
(d) (A) is false

**Ans: (a) Both true and (R) correctly explains (A). Since no single caste is a majority, parties must win support from multiple castes, making caste alone insufficient for electoral victory.**

### SECTION B : Short Answer Questions

(3 Marks Each)

Q11. How is the gender division a form of hierarchical social division? Explain. [CBSE 2023] [3]

- **Domestic Labour:** Women do most unpaid housework and childcare. This is not valued economically, making women financially dependent on men.
- **Low Representation:** Women constitute half the population but have less than 10% representation in Parliament. Only 5% in state assemblies.
- **Wage Gap:** Women are paid less than men for equal work. They face discrimination in education, property rights, and career opportunities in many parts of India.

Q12. What is communalism? How does it pose a threat to Indian democracy? [CBSE 2024] [3]

- **Definition:** Communalism is the belief that people of the same religion form one community with common interests that are opposed to other religious communities.
- **Extreme Form:** It can lead to riots, violence, and even genocide. India has witnessed communal riots in 1984, 1992, and 2002 causing immense suffering.
- **Threat to Unity:** Communalism divides society on religious lines, weakens national unity, and undermines the secular fabric of the Constitution.

Q13. Explain how caste has entered Indian politics in various ways. [CBSE 2022] [3]

- **Vote Banks:** Political parties choose candidates based on caste composition of constituencies. They appeal to caste sentiments during elections.
- **Caste Coalitions:** No single caste forms a majority, so parties try to build coalitions of different castes. This leads to multi-caste alliances.
- **Reservation Politics:** Demands for reservation in education and jobs based on caste have become major political issues, leading to movements and counter-movements.

Q14. What is the relationship between religion and politics in India? [CBSE 2021] [3]

- **Secular Constitution:** India is constitutionally secular - no state religion, freedom of religion guaranteed, and no discrimination based on religion.
- **Political Mobilisation:** Despite secularism, political parties sometimes use religious symbols and sentiments to mobilise voters during elections.
- **Positive Aspects:** Expression of religious needs in politics is not always negative. It can lead to protection of minority rights and resolution of genuine grievances.

Q15. Explain any three constitutional provisions that make India a secular state. [CBSE 2020] [3]

- **No Official Religion:** Unlike Pakistan or England, India does not have any official state religion. The government does not favour any particular religion.
- **Freedom of Religion:** Article 25-28 guarantee every citizen the right to profess, practice, and propagate any religion of their choice.
- **Anti-Discrimination:** The Constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion. The state cannot deny anyone equality before law based on religious identity.

### SECTION C : Long Answer Questions

(5 Marks Each)

**Q16.** "Social divisions of one kind or another exist in most countries." How do democracies handle these divisions? [CBSE 2024] [5]

**Ans: Democracies handle social divisions through multiple mechanisms:**

- **Constitutional Safeguards:** Fundamental rights protect individuals from discrimination. Reservation policies ensure representation of marginalised groups.
- **Accommodation:** When social differences overlap with each other (e.g., race and poverty), they deepen divisions. Democracies try to break such overlapping through inclusive policies.
- **Representation:** Democratic elections allow all groups to participate. Reserved seats for SCs, STs, and women ensure their voice in governance.
- **Rule of Law:** Equal treatment under law regardless of caste, religion, or gender. Independent judiciary protects rights of minorities.
- **Dialogue:** Democratic politics provides space for peaceful expression of grievances through protests, media, and elections rather than violence.

**Q17.** "Caste can take various forms in politics and politics can influence caste system." Analyse. [CBSE 2023] [5]

**Ans: Caste and politics have a complex two-way relationship:**

- **Caste in Politics:** Parties select candidates based on caste. Voters sometimes vote along caste lines. Caste-based vote banks influence election outcomes.
- **Politics in Caste:** Political mobilisation has brought disadvantaged castes into mainstream. Reservation policies have changed the social hierarchy.
- **Positive Changes:** Caste politics has given voice to previously oppressed communities. OBC, SC, and ST leaders now hold powerful positions.
- **Negative Effects:** Sometimes caste politics promotes division, casteism, and prevents development from becoming the main election issue.
- **Evolving Nature:** No single caste wins elections alone. Parties need cross-caste support. Urbanisation and education are slowly reducing caste rigidity.

**Q18.** How does communalism threaten the fabric of Indian democracy? Suggest measures to counter it. [CBSE 2022] [5]

**Ans: Communalism is a serious threat to India:**

- **Violence:** Communal riots have killed thousands. The 1984 anti-Sikh riots, 1992 Babri Masjid demolition, and 2002 Gujarat riots are tragic examples.
- **Division:** It divides society along religious lines, creating mistrust between communities and undermining national unity.
- **Counter Measures:** Strict enforcement of law during communal tensions. Police and administration must act impartially regardless of community.
- **Education:** Promoting secular values through education, interfaith dialogue, and celebrating shared cultural heritage can reduce communal prejudice.
- **Constitutional Spirit:** Upholding the secular principles of the Constitution, ensuring equal treatment of all religions, and preventing political misuse of religion.

**Q19.** Describe the role and status of women in Indian political life. [CBSE 2021] [5]

**Ans: Women face significant challenges in Indian politics:**

- **Low Representation:** Women constitute about 14% of Lok Sabha MPs (as of 2024). In state assemblies, it is often less than 10%.
- **Local Level Success:** At Panchayat level, 33% reservation (now 50% in some states) has brought millions of women into governance.
- **Barriers:** Patriarchal attitudes, lack of education, economic dependence, and violence against women in politics discourage participation.
- **Women's Reservation Bill:** The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhinyam (2023) reserves 33% seats in Lok Sabha and state assemblies for women, pending implementation.
- **Progress Needed:** While laws exist, real change requires addressing social attitudes, providing education and economic independence, and supporting women candidates.

**Q20.** Explain why it is important for democracies to accommodate social diversities. [CBSE 2020] [5]

**Ans: Accommodating diversity is essential for democratic success:**

- **Prevents Conflict:** When groups feel excluded, they may resort to violence. Sri Lanka's civil war is an example of what happens when diversity is not accommodated.

- **Strengthens Democracy:** Including diverse voices in decision-making leads to better policies that address needs of all sections of society.
- **Legitimacy:** A government that represents all sections of society enjoys greater legitimacy and public trust than one dominated by a single group.
- **National Unity:** India's diversity is its strength. Accommodating linguistic, religious, and caste identities through power sharing has kept India united.
- **Constitutional Mandate:** The Indian Constitution guarantees equality, freedom of religion, and protection of minority rights - all requiring active accommodation of diversity.

--- End of Chapter 3 PYQ ---

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