

Chapter 2 - Freedom

Question 1:

What is meant by freedom? Is there a relationship between freedom for the individual and freedom for the nation?

Answer:

- Freedom is a situation that limits the constraints on individuals and allows them to expand their ability and reach their potential.
- Freedom allows the full development of an individual's creativity, sensibility, capabilities and the autonomy to make choices.
- It permits the individuals to exercise their power of reason and judgement.

Yes, there is a relationship between freedom for the individual and freedom for the nation.

- A free nation allows the full development of individual's talent and ability by making fewer constraints on individuals.
- An individual is said to be free only if s/he resides in a free nation.
- A nation is said to be free if it has freedom as one of its principles and only if it has provided this to its people. In this way, individual freedom and national freedom are closely linked together.

Question 2:

What is the difference between the negative and positive conception of liberty?

Answer:

| | Negative liberty | | Positive liberty |
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| 1. | It defines and defends the area of an individual's life where no external authority can interfere. | i. | It defines the area of society where an individual can be free with some constraints made by the society and the government. |
| 2. | It is not concerned with the conditions of the society. | ii. | It is concerned with the enabling conditions of the society. |
| 3. | It is concerned with explaining the idea of 'freedom from'. | iii. | It is concerned with explaining the idea of 'freedom to'. |
| 4. | This area comes into personal domain of the individual. | iv. | This area comes into social domain of the individual. |
| 5. | More negative liberty leads to more freedom. | v. | More positive liberty checks excess of freedom to an individual, which could be an |

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| | | | obstruction for social stability. |
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Question 3:

What is meant by social constraints? Are constraints of any kind necessary for enjoying freedom?

Answer:

- Social constraints are the external controls on individual freedom maintained by the society.
- The government, as a part of the society, controls individual freedom through laws that embodies the power of the government and are legitimatised.
- Constraints on freedom are also a result of social inequality.

Yes, constraints are essential to enjoy freedom.

- Constraints are necessary to develop respect for views and beliefs of others.
- It is necessary for the creation of a society.
- Absence of constraint would lead to imposition of beliefs and ideas of stronger groups eventually leading to conflict.
- Constraints are required to control violence and settle disputes.

Question 4:

What is the role of the state in upholding freedom of its citizens?

Answer:

- The state upholds the freedom of its citizens by providing certain rights to them.
- The state maintains 'justifiable constraints' or reasonable restrictions on people so that they cannot harm others and their freedom.
- It provides positive liberty to its citizens to enable them to expand their ability and talent.
- It defines and checks 'other regarding' actions of its people in order to maintain social stability.

Question 5:

What is meant by freedom of expression? What in your view would be a reasonable restriction on this freedom? Give examples.

Answer:

- Freedom of expression means the freedom to express one's views through speech, writing etc.

- It is considered to belong to the minimum area of 'non-interference', that is, negative liberty.
- According to the provisions of the Indian Constitution, this is a fundamental right.
- Society bears some inconvenience caused by freedom of speech to protect it from people who want to restrict it.
- Society cannot restrict people from expressing themselves freely whether it agrees with their views or not.
- A reasonable restriction of freedom of expression is one that allows society to function smoothly and curbs interference in privacy.
- These restrictions are reasonable as they are necessary to run the society smoothly.

Following are some reasonable restrictions on freedom of speech.

- Freedom of speech cannot interfere in someone's privacy. Employees of Royal household of England are constrained by contract from disclosing any inner affairs of the royal household.
- Another example of putting restriction on freedom of speech is of film censor board. Censor board of films ban some portion of film to prevent adverse effect on society or disturbance of peace.