

CHAPTER-1

ON EQUALITY

EXCECISES:

1. In a democracy why is Universal Adult Franchise important?

Answer: In a democracy, the Universal Adult Franchise is important because of the following reasons:

1. Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, and for the people.
2. Every adult irrespective of caste, creed, religion, region, sex, the rich or poor background is allowed to vote. This is called a universal adult franchise.
3. The concept of the universal adult franchise is based on equality.
4. In a democracy every citizen is equal.

2. Re-read the box on Article 15 and state two ways in which this Article addresses inequality?

Answer: This Article addresses inequality in terms of access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment, or [b] the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of state funds or dedicated to the use of the general public.

3. In what ways was Omprakash Valmiki's experience similar to that of the Ansaris?

Answer: Omprakash Valmiki's experience was similar to that of Ansaris in the following ways:

1. Omprakash Valmiki was not allowed to sit with other students on the desks or mats.
2. Ansaris were not given apartments on rent in the locality of the people belonging to the Hindu religion.
3. Omprakash Valmiki was discriminated against on the basis of caste while Ansaris were discriminated against on the basis of religion.

4. What do you understand by the term "all persons are equal before the law"? Why do you think it is important in a democracy?

Answer:

1. By the term, “all persons are equal before the law”, we understand equality.
2. Equality is important in a democracy because democracy is the government of the people, by the people and for the people.
 - Equality is the essence of democracy.
 - If people are discriminated against on the basis of caste, creed, religion, sex, prosperity etc. the democracy will not survive.

5. The Government of India passed the Disabilities Act in 1995. This law states that persons with disabilities have equal rights, and that the government should make possible their full participation in society. The government has to provide free education and integrate children with disabilities into mainstream schools. This law also states that all public places including buildings, school etc., should be accessible and provided with ramps.

Look at the photograph and think about the boy who is being carried down the stairs. Do you think the above law is being implemented in his case? What needs to be done to make the building and accessible for him?

How would his being carried down the stairs affect his dignity as well as his safety?

Answer: The boy in the photograph is disabled. As per the law this building should have been accessible for him. But we see the law is not being implemented in his case. He is being carried down by security personnel's through stairs. This building does not provide ramps. The boy's dignity is overlooked here. He may morally feel inferior. The way he is carried down the stars may prove dangerous. Law should take this case to the court.

2 mark question:

1. What is Joothan about?

Answer: It is about the bitter experiences of growing up of a dalit boy.

2. What suggestion was given to Ansaris by the property dealer?

Answer: They were suggested to change their names and call themselves Mr. and Mr. Kumar.

3. On what basis were the Ansaris treated unequally?

Answer: The Ansaris were treated unequally on the basis of religion.

4. What do you mean by ‘dignity’? [V. Imp.]

Answer: Dignity means thinking of one self and others as worthy of self-respect.

5. What are the two ways in which the government has tried to implement the equality that guaranteed in the constitution?

Answer:

(i) Through laws

(ii) Through government programmes or schemes to help unprivileged groups.

6. Who have been employed to cook the meal under midday meal scheme?

Answer: Dalit women have been employed for this purpose.

7. How did B.R. Ambedkar view self-respect?

Answer: B.R. Ambedkar viewed self-respect as the most vital factor in life, without which man was cipher.

8. What was the condition of the African-Americans in the United States of America prior to 1950s? [V. Imp.]

Answer: Prior to 1950's, the African-Americans were treated extremely unequally in the USA and denied equality through law.

9. What is known as the Civil Rights Movements? [V. Imp.]

Answer: A movement took place in the USA in the late 1950's to push for equal rights for African-Americans. This movement later came to be known as Civil Rights Movement.

4 mark question:

1. What is it that makes Kanta unsure?

Answer: Kanta is a poor domestic worker. She lives in a slum which is very filthy. Her daughter is sick but she cannot skip work because she needs to borrow money from her employers to take her daughter to the doctor. Her job as a domestic help is not a permanent. She can be removed by her employers any time.

2. Mention two different kinds of inequalities that exist in our country. Give examples. [V. Imp.]

Answer: Two different kinds of inequalities that exist in our country are— inequalities based on the caste system and that based on the religion.

Omprakash Valmiki was treated extremely unequally because he was a dalit. In school, his headmaster made him sweep the school and the playground. The Ansaris were treated unequally on the basis differences of religion. They were looking to rent an apartment in the city. They were about to take an apartment at the first sight. But the moment the land lady knew their names she declined to rent the house.

3. Write a note on equality in Indian democracy. [V. Imp.]

Answer: The Indian constitution recognises all persons as equals. This means that every individual in the country irrespective of his/her caste, religion, educational and economic backgrounds is recognised as equal. Although, inequality still exists in the country, yet the principle of the equality of all persons is recognised. While earlier no law existed to protect people from discrimination and ill treatment now there are several that work to see that people are treated with dignity.

4. Write a brief note on the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Answer: The Civil Rights Act was passed in the year 1964. The Act prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, religion or national origin. It also stated that all schools would be open to African-American children and that they would no longer have to attend separate schools specially set up for them. However, a majority of African-Americans continue to be among the poorest in the country.

7 mark question:

1. What are the provision made in the constitution for the recognition of equality? [V. Imp.]

Answer: The provisions made in the constitution for the recognition of equality are as follow:

- (a) Every person is equal before the law. What this means is that every person, from the President of India to a domestic worker like Kanta, has to obey the same laws.
- (b) No person can be discriminated against on the basis of their religion, caste, race place of birth or whether they are male or female.
- (c) Every person has access to all public places including playgrounds, hotels, shops and markets. All persons can use publicly available wells, roads and bathing ghats.
- (d) Untouchability has been abolished.

2. How can you say that establishment of equality in society is a continuous struggle?

Answer: Inspite of several efforts made by the government inequalities still exist in our society. Even today low caste people are being discriminated against and treated unequally. The reason behind it is that people refuse to think of them as equal even though the law requires it.

This attitude of the people is so deeply rooted that it can not change all of a sudden. It will take a lot of time. Even though people are aware that discrimination is against the law, they continue to treat others unequally on the basis of caste and religion. People are also discriminated against on the basis of economic status, disability and gender.

Unless people believe that every person deserves to be treated equally and with dignity, the present attitude cannot be rooted out. Changing people's attitude is a very slow process and hence establishment of equality in society is a continuous struggle.

3: Define equality and explain its importance in society.

Answer: Equality refers to the state of being equal, where every individual is treated fairly and has the same opportunities without discrimination based on gender, race, religion, or socio-economic status. It is crucial in society as it promotes social harmony, prevents discrimination, and ensures justice. Equality fosters a sense of belonging and encourages participation in society's development regardless of differences, leading to a more inclusive and progressive community.

4: Discuss three ways in which equality can be promoted in a school environment.

Answer:

1. **Equal Access to Education:** Ensuring all students have the same access to quality education without any bias or discrimination based on their background.
2. **Zero-tolerance for Bullying or Discrimination:** Implementing strict policies against bullying, harassment, or discrimination based on race, gender, religion, etc., creating a safe space for all.

3. Inclusive Activities and Programs: Organizing events and programs that celebrate diversity, allowing students from various backgrounds to participate and learn from each other.

5: Describe the role of laws in promoting equality in a country.

Answer: Laws play a pivotal role in promoting equality in a country by establishing rules that ensure fair treatment for everyone. They prohibit discrimination, enforce equal rights, and provide a framework for justice. Laws protect individuals from any form of inequality or bias in various aspects such as education, employment, housing, and public services. Additionally, they help in holding accountable those who infringe upon the rights of others based on differences, thereby creating a more equitable society.

6: Explain how economic inequality can impact a society and suggest measures to reduce it.

Answer: Economic inequality can lead to social unrest, decreased opportunities, and disparities in access to resources and services. To reduce it, measures like progressive taxation, providing better access to education and healthcare for marginalized communities, creating employment opportunities, and implementing social welfare programs can be adopted. Empowering the disadvantaged through skill development and entrepreneurship programs can also help bridge the economic gap and promote a more equitable society.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is the primary principle recognized by the Indian Constitution regarding individuals?

- a) Social hierarchy
- b) Equal rights for everyone
- c) Favoritism towards disadvantaged communities
- d) Reservation based on economic backgrounds

Answer: b) Equal rights for everyone

2. Which program was introduced in government elementary schools to provide cooked lunch to children?

- a) Evening Tuition Program
- b) Early Morning Exercise Scheme
- c) Midday Meal Scheme
- d) After-School Activities Initiative

Answer: c) Midday Meal Scheme

3. How did the midday meal program help reduce caste prejudices?

- a) By segregating meals based on caste
- b) By employing individuals from disadvantaged communities
- c) By excluding certain castes from the program
- d) By limiting the availability of meals to specific groups

Answer: b) By employing individuals from disadvantaged communities

4. What was the significant impact of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in the United States?

- a) Mandatory segregation in schools
- b) Equal rights for African-Americans
- c) Limitations on employment opportunities
- d) Denial of basic human rights

Answer: b) Equal rights for African-Americans

5. What remains a challenge in many democratic countries despite movements for equality?

- a) Discrimination based on economic status
- b) Upholding social hierarchy
- c) Achieving complete democracy
- d) Struggle for recognition of equality

Answer: d) Struggle for recognition of equality

On Equality Summary:

The NCERT Class 7 Social and Political Life – II Chapter 1 talks about the following topics:

1. Equal Right to Vote
2. Other Kinds of Equality
3. Recognizing Dignity
4. Equality in Indian Democracy
5. Issues of Equality in Other Democracies
6. Challenge of Democracy

‘Social and Political Life – II’ is an important book for Class 7 Social Science subject. Apart from this chapter, the full set of [NCERT Solutions for Class 7 Social Science](#) is given in the linked article.