

Ch 1 On Equality

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Exercises

1. In a democracy why is universal adult franchise important?

Answer

Universal Adult Franchise is important in democracy as:

- (i) It is based on the principle of equality.
- (ii) It means that all adult (those who are 18 and above) citizens have the equal right to vote.
- (iii) It does not discriminate on the basis of social or economic backgrounds.
- (iv) It is an important aspect of democratic societies

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

Answer

Article 15 in democracy of the constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.

Two ways in which this Article addresses inequality:

- (i) It suggests States not to discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.
- (ii) No citizen shall be subject to any disability, liability and restriction on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.

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

Answer

In following ways Omprakash Valmiki's experience was similar to that of the Ansaris: (i)

Both of them discriminated by the society on the basis of their caste or religion.

- (ii) Dignity and self respect of both of them get violated.
- (iii) Both suffered from unequal treatment.

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

The term "all persons are equal before the law" means that everyone will be given justice before law by treating them equal. From the President of the country to the common people, all are equal in front of law.

It is important in a democracy because:

- (i) Democracy suggests that no one should be treated on unequal basis because of their wealth, caste, colour, religion, gender etc.
- (ii) It also ensures that no one will be given more preference for the same crime.
- (iii) It provides the people equal opportunity to defend themselves in public court irrespective of their socioeconomic position.
- (iv) It also reflects the true nature of democracy.

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, schools, 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 more accessible for him? How would his being carried down the stairs affect his dignity as well as his safety?

Answer

No, I don't think the above law is being implemented in his case.

According to the Disabilities Act, all public places including buildings, schools, etc., should be accessible and provided with ramps which is not done in this case. Therefore, the buildings should be provided with ramps to make it accessible for the persons with disabilities.

Also, persons with disabilities have equal rights, and that the government should make possible their full participation in society but here the dignity and self respect of that person is hurt as

someone is showing sympathy and extending their helping hands. The boy may feel pity or inferior in this case of being helped by other only due to disabilities. It also affect the safety of that person as he may slip due to imbalance or carelessness.