

Gender, Religion and Caste | Case Based Questions | Chapter 3

These case-based questions from *Gender, Religion and Caste* are designed to test your understanding and application skills. Regular practice will make you confident, improve your speed and accuracy, and help you score full marks in the board exams.

Q.1 Read the given extract and answer the following questions.

The Census of India records the religion of each and every Indian after every ten years. The person who fills the Census form visits every household and records the religion of each member of that household exactly the way each person describes it. If someone says she has 'no religion' or that he is an 'atheist', this is exactly how it is recorded. Thus we have reliable information on the proportion of different religious communities in the country and how it has changed over the years. The pie chart below presents the population proportion of six major religious communities in the country. Since Independence, the total population of each community has increased substantially but their proportion in the country's population has not changed much. In percentage terms, the population of the Hindus, Jains and Christians has declined marginally since 1961. The proportion of Muslim, Sikh and Buddhist population has increased slightly. There is a common but mistaken impression that the proportion of the Muslims in the country's population is going to overtake other religious communities. Expert estimates done for the Prime Minister's High Level Committee (popularly known as Sachar Committee) show that the proportion of the Muslims is expected to go up a little, by about 3 to 4 per cent, in the next 50 years. It proves that in overall terms, the population balance of different religious communities is not likely to change in a big way.

i) What do you mean by atheist? (1)

Answer:- Atheist means a person who does not believe in the existence of God or any divine power.

ii) What change has been observed in the proportion of the Muslim population since 1961? (1)

Answer:- the proportion of Muslims has only increased slightly and will go up by about 3–4% in the next 50 years.

iii) What did happen in population proportion of six major religious communities in India since independence? (2)

Answer:- Since Independence, the total population of each community has increased, but their proportion in the country's population has not changed much. For instance, the population of the Hindus, Jains and Christians has declined marginally and the proportion of Muslim, Sikh and Buddhist population has increased slightly.

Q.2 Read the given extract and answer the following questions.

Caste is an important source of economic inequality because it regulates access to resources of various kinds. For example, in the past, the so-called 'untouchable' castes were denied the right to own land, while only the so-called 'twice born' castes had the right to education. Although this kind of

explicit and formalised inequality based on caste is now outlawed, the effects of centuries of accumulated advantages and disadvantages continue to be felt. Moreover, new kinds of inequalities have also developed.

i) Why is caste considered an important source of economic inequality? (1)

Answer:- Because it regulates access to resources like land, education, and other opportunities.

ii) Which castes were denied the right to own land in the past? (1)

Answer:- The so-called untouchable castes.

iii) Explain how caste-based inequality has changed from the past to the present. (2)

Answer:- In the past, caste-based inequality was formal and explicit. The so-called untouchable castes were denied the right to own land, while only the so-called twice-born castes were allowed access to education. Today, such practices are legally banned, but the effects of centuries of advantages and disadvantages still continue. In addition, new forms of inequality have also developed, showing that caste remains an important factor in social and economic life.

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