

CBSE CLASS X
Social Science (087)

ANSWER KEY

*AI-generated question paper***Code: D1A1WZ****Questions: 23****Maximum Marks: 71****Generated: 2026-06-26 09:34****SELECTIONS USED**

Subject	Social Science
Lessons	3 Gender, Religion and Caste
Level of understanding	Thorough understanding
Question selection	Curated chapter coverage (~5 questions per section + 8 synthesis)
Model	claude-sonnet-4-6

Composition — Difficulty: 1 straightforward · 11 medium · 11 deep | Types: 14 Short · 5 Long · 3 MCQ · 1 Very short

Q1. deep thorough-understanding § Overview

[3]

In a democracy, political expression of social differences can sometimes be desirable rather than threatening. Using gender as an example, explain how raising a social difference as a political issue can lead to a positive outcome for society and democracy.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Gender is a social difference that, when raised as a political issue, can lead to positive outcomes. Women have historically faced discrimination — unpaid domestic labour, unequal pay, low literacy, and exclusion from public life. These inequalities were rarely addressed until feminist movements made them a political issue.

When women organised and agitated for equal rights, it led to concrete gains: the right to vote, access to education and professional careers, and legal protections like the Equal Remuneration Act. In India, raising the issue politically resulted in one-third reservation for women in Panchayati Raj bodies, producing over 10 lakh elected women representatives.

Thus, expressing gender differences in politics gave disadvantaged groups the space to demand their share of power, strengthening democracy rather than threatening it.

Source: *Democratic Politics II, Chapter 3 — Gender, Religion and Caste*

Explanation

- The question asks you to link "political expression of social differences" → "positive outcome," using gender as the specific example.
- The key logical chain examiners look for: **problem identified (discrimination)** → **political mobilisation (feminist movements, agitations)** → **concrete gains (voting rights, reservations, legal protections)**.
- The textbook explicitly states: "*Gender division is an example that some form of social division needs to be expressed in politics... disadvantaged groups do benefit when social divisions become a political issue.*" Quote or paraphrase this idea to score full marks.
- Don't confuse this with communalism (negative example) — gender is the **positive** example the chapter highlights.

Q2. medium thorough-understanding § Gender and politics

[3]

The gender division of labour is described as a social construct rather than a natural or biological one. What evidence from the real world supports this claim?

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Gender division is a social construct because it is based on social expectations and stereotypes, not biology.

Evidence supporting this:

1. **Men can and do domestic work when paid:** Most tailors and hotel cooks are men — showing that men *can* do household tasks but choose not to when unpaid.
2. **Women already work outside the home:** Women in villages fetch water, work in fields; urban poor women work as domestic helpers — proving women are not biologically limited to domestic roles.
3. **Boys and girls are *taught* their roles:** Children are brought up to believe housework is women's responsibility — this is social conditioning, not nature.

Thus, the division exists due to social norms, not any biological incapacity.

Source: *Gender and Politics, Chapter 3 — Sexual Division of Labour*

Explanation

Examiners want three clear pieces of evidence, each linked to the claim that gender roles are socially constructed (not natural). The key examples from the textbook are: (1) men doing domestic jobs when paid, (2) women already working outside the home, and (3) children being socialised into roles. Avoid writing generally about inequality — the question asks specifically for *evidence against the biological/natural argument*. Keep examples precise and tie each back to "social expectations, not biology."

Q3. medium thorough-understanding § Gender and politics

[3]

An average Indian woman works more hours per day than an average Indian man, yet her contribution is considered less valuable. Why does this contradiction exist?

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Model Answer

This contradiction exists due to the **sexual division of labour** rooted in social expectations, not biology. Women perform most household work — cooking, cleaning, childcare — which remains **unpaid and invisible**, while men's work mostly generates income and is therefore visible and valued.

According to the Time Use Survey, an average woman works **7.5 hours daily** versus a man's 6.5 hours, yet women spend 5 hours on household-related work that earns no wages. Since only paid work is counted as economically productive, women's labour is systematically undervalued. This reflects India's **patriarchal society**, which gives men more power and values their contributions more, regardless of actual time or effort invested.

Source: *Gender and Politics, Chapter 3 — Sexual Division of Labour / Time Use Survey*

Explanation

- The examiner expects you to use key terms: **sexual division of labour, patriarchy, unpaid/invisible work**.
- Cite the Time Use Survey data (7.5 hrs vs 6.5 hrs) — it directly answers the "yet her contribution is less valued" part.
- The core logic is: **paid = visible = valued; unpaid = invisible = undervalued** — make this link explicit.
- Don't write about women in politics here; that's off-topic for this specific question.

Q4. medium thorough-understanding § Gender and politics

[1]

Which of the following best explains why women's issues do not receive adequate attention in India's political system?

- (A) Women's issues are already fully addressed by existing laws, leaving little to debate.
- (B) Political parties tend to prioritise economic issues over social ones.
- (C) Women remain significantly under-represented in elected bodies, so their concerns lack sufficient advocates in power.
- (D) Reserved constituencies give women representatives less authority than general constituency representatives.

A Women are not interested in political participation.

B Women lack the educational qualifications required to enter politics.

C Women remain under-represented in elected bodies, so their concerns lack sufficient advocates in power.

D The Constitution does not permit women to contest elections.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

(C) Women remain under-represented in elected bodies, so their concerns lack sufficient advocates in power.

Explanation

The textbook (Chapter 3) explicitly states that issues related to women's well-being do not receive adequate attention, leading feminists to conclude that **unless women control power, their problems will not get adequate attention**. Women's representation in Lok Sabha was only ~14% in 2019 and below 5% in state assemblies. Examiners expect you to link under-representation directly to lack of political advocacy – that is the core logic the chapter presents.

Q5. deep thorough-understanding § Gender and politics

[5]

Reservation of seats for women in Panchayati Raj institutions is often cited as a positive step, yet critics argue it is an artificial solution. Justify why such a legal provision was considered necessary, and explain what it has achieved so far.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Women's representation in Indian politics has historically been very low — less than 5% in state assemblies and only about 14% in Lok Sabha. In a patriarchal society where women face discrimination in education, employment, and wages, their concerns rarely receive adequate political attention unless they hold power themselves.

Why the legal provision was necessary:

- Women's issues cannot be adequately addressed unless women themselves are decision-makers.
- Social barriers and patriarchal attitudes prevent women from entering politics on their own.
- A legal mandate was the only practical way to ensure their participation in governance.

What it has achieved:

- One-third of seats in Panchayats and municipalities are reserved for women.
- This has resulted in over **10 lakh elected women representatives** in rural and urban local bodies.
- It proved that women can effectively participate in governance when given the opportunity.
- The success of this model influenced the **Women's Reservation Act, 2023**, which provides 33% reservation in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.

Source: *Gender and Politics, Chapter 3*

Explanation

The examiner expects you to: (1) justify the *necessity* of reservation using evidence of discrimination, and (2) cite the *concrete achievement* — the 10 lakh figure is key. Mention the 2023 Act as an outcome. Avoid vague statements; use data from the textbook. The question has two parts — justify + explain achievements — so balance your answer between both.

Q6. deep thorough-understanding § Gender and politics

[3]

Studies show that girls perform as well as or better than boys in school examinations, yet their enrolment drops sharply at the higher secondary and college levels. How would you explain this trend, and what does it suggest about the factors that actually drive gender inequality in India?

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Girls perform as well as, or better than, boys in school examinations, yet their enrolment drops at higher secondary and college levels. The textbook explains this with a clear reason: **parents prefer to spend resources on their sons' education rather than spending equally on sons and daughters.** This forces girls to drop out despite their ability.

This trend reveals that gender inequality in India is driven not by capability but by **social expectations, patriarchal attitudes, and economic priorities** rooted in the sexual division of labour. Society assigns women primarily to domestic roles, making families view girls' higher education as less worthwhile. Thus, the real factors are social stereotypes and unequal resource allocation within families, not academic performance.

Source: Chapter 3 (Gender and Politics), Section on women's disadvantages in India

Explanation

- The textbook directly states the reason for dropout: parental preference to invest in sons' education. Quote this explicitly — examiners expect it.
- The deeper point the question asks for is: inequality stems from **social/patriarchal attitudes**, not biology or merit. Make this connection clearly.
- Avoid padding with unrelated points (e.g., communalism, caste). Stay focused on gender inequality causes.
- For 3 marks: one factual point (dropout cause) + one analytical point (what it suggests about root causes) + brief conclusion = ideal structure.

Q7. deep thorough-understanding § Religion, communalism and politics

[3]

Gandhiji believed religion should guide politics, yet India's Constitution establishes a secular state that keeps religion separate from state power. Are these two positions contradictory? Explain why or why not.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

These two positions are **not contradictory**. Gandhiji did not mean any particular religion like Hinduism or Islam; he meant the **moral and ethical values** common to all religions. He believed politics must be guided by ethics drawn from religion.

India's Constitution establishes a **secular state**, which means no official religion, freedom to follow any religion, and no discrimination on religious grounds. It does not reject moral values — it rejects using religion to dominate or exclude others.

Thus, Gandhiji's view supports ethical politics, while the Constitution prevents **communal politics**. Both oppose religion being used for partisan domination. They complement, not contradict, each other.

Source: Religion, communalism and politics, Chapter 3

Explanation

- The key is understanding what Gandhiji meant by "religion" — **not institutional religion but universal moral values**. Examiners expect this distinction.
- The secular state doesn't ban morality in politics; it bans **religious exclusivism and state-sponsored religion**.
- Connect both ideas to show they share the same goal: ethical, non-discriminatory governance.
- Avoid writing that India is "anti-religious" — that is factually wrong and will lose marks.

Q8. medium thorough-understanding § Religion, communalism and politics

[3]

Communalism can exist in politics even without any communal riots or violence. Explain any two forms in which communalism commonly appears in everyday political life.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Communalism can appear in politics in the following forms:

- 1. Communal prejudices and stereotypes:** The most common form is everyday beliefs involving religious prejudices, stereotypes about other communities, and the belief in the superiority of one's own religion. This is so common that we often fail to notice it.
- 1. Political mobilisation on religious lines:** This involves the use of sacred symbols, religious leaders, emotional appeals and fear to unite followers of one religion in the political arena. In elections, this means making special appeals to voters of one religion over others.

Source: *Religion, Communalism and Politics*, Chapter 3

Explanation

- The question asks for **two forms** from the broader list in the textbook. The four forms given are: (i) everyday prejudices, (ii) quest for political dominance, (iii) religious mobilisation in politics, (iv) communal violence. Since the question specifies "without riots or violence," avoid the fourth form.
- Write each form with a **bold heading + 1–2 lines of explanation** to score full marks. Examiners look for correct identification + brief elaboration.
- The phrase "communalism can exist without riots" is the key framing — it signals you must focus on the subtle, non-violent forms.

Q9. straightforward thorough-understanding § Caste and politics

[1]

What makes the caste-based division of labour in India fundamentally different from the division of labour found in other societies?

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Unlike other societies where occupational inheritance is merely customary, India's caste system made hereditary occupational division **sanctioned by rituals**, giving it a religious justification absent elsewhere.

Source: Caste and politics, Caste inequalities

Explanation

The key phrase examiners look for is "**sanctioned by rituals**" — this is the exact distinction the textbook draws. Don't just say "hereditary occupations passed down" (that's true of other societies too); the *ritual/religious sanction* is what makes India's caste-based division unique. One crisp line quoting or closely paraphrasing the textbook is all that's needed for 1 mark.

Q10. medium thorough-understanding § Caste and politics

[3]

Despite the constitutional prohibition of untouchability and caste-based discrimination, caste inequalities have not completely disappeared in India. Give two specific pieces of evidence to support this statement.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Despite the constitutional prohibition of untouchability and caste-based discrimination, caste inequalities persist in India. Two specific pieces of evidence are:

1. **Untouchability has not ended completely** — Even today, Dalits continue to face social discrimination and untouchability in practice, especially in rural areas, despite it being banned under the Constitution.
1. **Caste is strongly linked to economic inequality** — According to the National Sample Survey, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have the highest proportion of population living below the poverty line (SC: 35.9% rural; ST: 45.8% rural), whereas upper castes have far lower poverty rates (Hindu upper castes: 11.7% rural). Upper castes remain over-represented among the urban middle classes due to centuries of accumulated educational and economic advantages.

Source: *Democratic Politics II, Chapter 3 — Caste Inequalities / Caste Inequality Today*

Explanation

- This question asks for **two specific pieces of evidence**, so you must give two distinct, factual points — not general statements.
- Examiners reward **data or examples** from the textbook (poverty line table, untouchability persistence). Quoting the NSS figures adds precision and earns full marks.
- Avoid vague answers like "caste discrimination still exists" without supporting detail.
- Mention both social (untouchability) and economic (poverty data) dimensions for a well-rounded answer.

Q11. medium thorough-understanding § Caste and politics

[1]

Which of the following best explains why no single caste can be treated as a guaranteed 'vote bank' for any political party?

- (A) India's Constitution bans voting along caste lines.
- (B) No parliamentary constituency has a single-caste majority, so parties must win support across multiple castes.
- (C) The Election Commission disqualifies candidates who appeal to caste sentiments.
- (D) Upper-caste voters always outnumber lower-caste voters in every constituency.

A India's Constitution bans voting along caste lines.

B No parliamentary constituency has a single-caste majority, so parties must win support across multiple castes.

C The Election Commission disqualifies candidates who appeal to caste sentiments.

D Upper-caste voters always outnumber lower-caste voters in every constituency.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

(B) No parliamentary constituency has a single-caste majority, so parties must win support across multiple castes.

Explanation

The textbook explicitly states: "No parliamentary constituency in the country has a clear majority of one single caste. So, every candidate and party needs to win the confidence of more than one caste and community to win elections." This directly explains why no caste can be a guaranteed vote bank. Options A and C are factually incorrect; Option D is false and unsupported.

Q12. medium thorough-understanding § Caste and politics

[3]

Explain the difference between 'caste in politics' and 'politics in caste'. Why is this distinction important for understanding the relationship between the two?

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Caste in politics refers to how caste influences political processes — parties nominate candidates considering caste composition, make caste-based appeals during elections, and form governments giving representation to different castes.

Politics in caste refers to the reverse influence — how politics shapes caste identities. Caste groups expand by merging with neighbouring sub-castes, form coalitions, and new groupings like 'backward' and 'forward' castes emerge in the political arena.

This distinction is important because it shows the relationship is **two-way**: it is not just that politics gets caste-ridden, but that caste itself gets politicised. This helps us understand both the positive effects (marginalised groups gaining political voice) and negative effects (caste-based tensions and neglect of development issues).

Source: Chapter 3 — Caste and Politics; Politics in Caste

Explanation

- Examiners expect both terms to be clearly defined with examples from the textbook.
- The key phrase from the textbook is: *"it is not politics that gets caste-ridden, it is the caste that gets politicised"* — quoting or paraphrasing this earns marks.
- Always link back to **why the distinction matters** (the two-way relationship) for the final mark.
- Avoid writing a long essay — three tight points are enough for 3 marks.

Q13. medium thorough-understanding § Caste and politics

[3]

Even though legal equality has been established in India, economic inequalities along caste lines continue to persist. Explain two historical reasons why Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes remain economically disadvantaged compared to upper castes.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Two historical reasons for the continued economic disadvantage of SCs and STs are:

1. **Denial of land ownership:** In the past, 'untouchable' castes were denied the right to own land. Since land was the primary source of wealth and livelihood, this exclusion prevented them from accumulating economic resources over generations.
1. **Denial of education:** Only the so-called 'twice-born' upper castes had the right to education under the old caste system. SCs and STs were either denied access or actively prohibited from acquiring education. Since educated groups have done well in modern education too, those excluded have naturally lagged behind economically.

As the textbook states, "effects of centuries of accumulated advantages and disadvantages continue to be felt today."

Source: *Democratic Politics II, Chapter 3 – Caste Inequality Today*

Explanation

- The examiner expects two **distinct** historical reasons drawn directly from the textbook — not vague statements.
- The two specific points the chapter gives are: (1) denial of land ownership, and (2) denial of/prohibition from education. Use these exactly.
- Quoting or closely paraphrasing the textbook line about "centuries of accumulated advantages and disadvantages" strengthens the answer.
- Do not write about present-day policies like reservations — the question asks for **historical** reasons.

Q14. deep thorough-understanding § Caste and politics

[5]

A student argues: 'Casteism and communalism are both harmful because they divide people, so raising caste-based demands in politics is just as bad as communal politics.' Do you agree? Using evidence from the caste system's history and its political expressions, critically evaluate this argument.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

The student's argument is **partially correct but oversimplified**. While both casteism and communalism divide people, caste-based political demands are not always equivalent to communal politics.

Similarities: Like communalism, casteism is rooted in the belief that caste is the *sole* basis of social community. Both can divert attention from issues like poverty and development, and can cause social tensions or violence.

Key difference — historical injustice: Caste system was based on hereditary discrimination, untouchability, and denial of land and education to "lower" castes. NSS data shows SCs and STs still have the highest poverty rates. Dalits and OBCs together form two-thirds of India's population yet remain economically disadvantaged. Raising caste-based demands helps these groups gain access to power and resources — this is a **corrective response** to injustice, not division-mongering.

Conclusion: When caste identity is used to oppress or pit groups against each other, it is harmful. But when disadvantaged castes organise to demand dignity and equal opportunities, it is a legitimate democratic exercise. The two must not be equated.

Source: *Democratic Politics II, Chapter 3 — Caste, Religion and Gender*

Explanation

Examiners expect you to: (1) partly agree with the argument to show critical thinking, (2) use evidence from the textbook (NSS poverty data, untouchability, Ambedkar/Phule), and (3) draw the key distinction the textbook makes — caste politics has *both* positive and negative aspects, unlike communalism which is presented as largely negative. The phrase "politics in caste vs. caste in politics" is a useful framing. Avoid simply agreeing or disagreeing; the evaluative balance is what earns full marks.

Q15. medium thorough-understanding § Caste and politics

[3]

What is the central belief on which casteism is based? Give two reasons why this belief does not hold true in real life.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Central Belief of Casteism: Casteism is rooted in the belief that caste is the sole basis of social community. People of the same caste are assumed to share the same interests, which they do not share with anyone from another caste.

Two reasons this belief does not hold true:

1. No parliamentary constituency has a single-caste majority, and no party wins all votes of one caste — this shows caste alone cannot unite people politically.
1. People within the same caste have different interests based on their economic condition — rich and poor, or men and women of the same caste often vote very differently.

Source: *Democratic Politics II, Chapter 3 — Caste in Politics*

Explanation

- The definition of casteism is directly lifted from the textbook: "casteism is rooted in the belief that caste is the **sole** basis of social community." Use this exact phrasing.
- For the two reasons, examiners expect examples from the electoral/social context given in the chapter. The most scorable points are the ones explicitly stated: no caste majority in any constituency, and intra-caste differences based on economic status/gender.
- Avoid vague answers like "people are different." Be specific and textbook-grounded.

Q16. deep thorough-understanding § Caste and politics

[5]

Social reformers like Jotiba Phule, Ambedkar, and Periyar dedicated their lives to dismantling caste inequalities, yet caste has not disappeared from contemporary India. Analyse two social or economic changes that have weakened the traditional caste hierarchy AND two ways in which caste continues to shape life in modern India.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Changes that have weakened caste hierarchy:

1. **Urbanisation and occupational mobility:** Economic development and large-scale urbanisation have broken down old caste hierarchies. In urban areas, people of different castes work together, eat in the same restaurants, and take up occupations different from their ancestors, weakening the rigid link between caste and occupation.
1. **Constitutional provisions:** The Indian Constitution prohibited caste-based discrimination and laid the foundation for policies like reservations to reverse historical injustices, giving lower castes greater access to education and public life.

Ways caste continues to shape modern India:

1. **Marriage:** Even today, most people marry within their own caste or tribe, showing that social boundaries remain strong.
1. **Economic inequality:** Caste and economic status remain closely linked. Dalits and Adivasis have the highest poverty rates, while upper castes are over-represented among the wealthy and urban middle classes — a direct result of centuries of unequal access to land and education.

Source: *Democratic Politics II, Chapter 3 — Caste and Politics; Caste Inequality Today*

Explanation

- Examiners expect **two distinct points for weakening** and **two for persistence** — label them clearly.
- Quote specific examples from the textbook (urbanisation, Constitution, marriage, poverty data) rather than general statements.
- The poverty-line table and the discussion on upper-caste dominance in middle classes are key evidence for the persistence of caste — mention them briefly.
- Avoid writing a general essay; keep each point tight and evidence-backed.

Q17. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[5]

Gender division, communalism, and casteism are three distinct social divisions, yet democracy treats their political expression very differently — one is seen as largely positive, one as largely negative, and one as having both aspects. Identify which is which and explain the reasoning behind this distinction.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

The textbook identifies **gender division** as largely **positive**, **communalism** as largely **negative**, and **casteism** as having **both positive and negative aspects**.

Gender division (positive): Raising gender issues in politics has helped disadvantaged women gain rights. Political mobilisation through feminist movements led to gains like reservation of one-third seats for women in Panchayati Raj bodies and the Women's Reservation Act (2023). This shows that expressing social divisions politically can benefit disadvantaged groups and reduce inequality.

Communalism (negative): Communalism treats religion as the sole basis of community and pits one religion against another. It leads to prejudice, violence, riots, and threatens national unity. It is fundamentally divisive and undermines democracy. Hence, its political expression is largely negative.

Casteism (both): On the positive side, caste-based mobilisation has helped Dalits and OBCs gain access to power and decision-making. On the negative side, exclusive focus on caste diverts attention from poverty and development and can cause social tensions and violence.

Source: Chapter 3 — Gender, Religion and Caste; sections on Gender and Politics, Religion/Communalism and Politics, Caste and Politics

Explanation

- The textbook explicitly states: gender = largely positive; communalism = largely negative; caste = both. Use these exact labels.
- Examiners expect you to **identify** each division correctly and then **explain the reasoning** — don't just list them without justification.
- For caste, name specific examples: Dalits/OBCs gaining power (positive) vs. diverting focus from development/creating conflict (negative).
- Cite the Women's Reservation Act 2023 and Panchayati Raj reservation — these show concrete political gains from gender mobilisation.
- Avoid writing a general essay on these divisions; keep each explanation tight and reason-focused.

Q18. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[3]

Both communalism and casteism are considered threats to democracy, yet they operate through different social divisions. What fundamental flaw do they share in how they represent their respective communities, and why does this flaw undermine democratic functioning?

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Both communalism and casteism share the fundamental flaw of treating their respective communities as **monolithic** – communalism assumes all followers of one religion have identical interests, while casteism assumes all members of one caste form a single natural community with the same interests.

This belief is fundamentally flawed because people within the same religion or caste have different economic conditions, needs, and aspirations. As the textbook notes, "there are many voices inside every community." By projecting a single unified interest, both ideologies **suppress internal diversity** and ignore other pressing identities.

This undermines democracy because democracy requires equal participation of all voices. When leaders mobilise voters purely along religious or caste lines, it diverts attention from real issues like poverty and development, creates conflict, and reduces citizens to a single identity rather than recognising their full humanity.

Source: Chapter 3 – Religion, Communalism and Politics; Caste in Politics

Explanation

- The examiner wants you to identify the **shared flaw**: treating a community as homogeneous/monolithic with identical interests.
- Quote or closely paraphrase the textbook line: "*any attempt to bring all followers of one religion together... is bound to suppress many voices within that community*" – the same logic applies to caste.
- Then link this flaw directly to **why it harms democracy** (suppresses voices, diverts attention, causes conflict).
- Don't write separate long sections on communalism and casteism – integrate them to show they share the same flaw, as the question asks.

Q19. medium thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[3]

The Indian Constitution addresses social inequalities arising from gender, religion, and caste. Choose any two of these and explain, with specific provisions, how the Constitution responds differently to the kind of discrimination involved in each case.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Gender: The Constitution responds to gender inequality by guaranteeing equal rights to women. It prohibits discrimination based on sex. To address underrepresentation in political power, one-third of seats in Panchayati Raj bodies are reserved for women, and the Women's Reservation Act (2023) provides 33% reservation in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.

Caste: Caste discrimination involved ritual exclusion and untouchability. The Constitution directly prohibits caste-based discrimination and bans untouchability. It also provides affirmative action through reservation of seats and government jobs for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to reverse centuries of accumulated disadvantage.

Thus, for gender the Constitution focuses on equal rights and representation, while for caste it combines prohibition with compensatory policies.

Source: Chapter 3 – Gender, Religion and Caste

Explanation

- The examiner wants you to pick **two** of the three (gender, religion, caste) and show the **specific constitutional provisions** for each – not just say "the Constitution prohibits discrimination."
- Key contrast: Gender gets **reservation in local bodies + Women's Reservation Act**; Caste gets **ban on untouchability + SC/ST reservations** (affirmative action). This "different response" is what the question is actually testing.
- Avoid writing about religion unless you choose it – the question says "choose any two."
- At 3 marks, ~2–3 lines per case is enough; don't pad.

Q20. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[1]

Assertion (A): Raising gender inequality as a political issue has benefited women, but raising caste identity as a political issue has produced both benefits and harms.

Reason (R): When a disadvantaged group uses political mobilisation to claim rights, it strengthens democracy; when mobilisation is used to establish the dominance of one group over another, it weakens it.

- A Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
- B Both A and R are true, but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
- C A is true but R is false.
- D A is false but R is true.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Answer: (A)

Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A. Gender mobilisation aimed at removing inequality (benefiting women), while caste politics has both helped disadvantaged castes gain power and harmed democracy through divisive dominance — exactly as R explains.

Source: Caste and politics; Gender and politics, Chapter 3

Explanation

The textbook explicitly states that caste politics "has both positive and negative aspects" — helping Dalits/OBCs gain decision-making access (democratic benefit) but also causing tensions and violence (harm). Gender mobilisation is described as largely positive. Reason R from the textbook's broader theme directly explains this contrast: mobilisation for rights strengthens democracy; mobilisation for dominance weakens it. So R correctly explains A, making option A correct.

Q21. medium thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[3]

Across gender, religion, and caste, the chapter shows that social inequalities tend to persist even when laws explicitly forbid discrimination. Identify one example of this from any TWO of the three social divisions and suggest a common reason why legal prohibition alone is insufficient.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Gender: Despite the Equal Remuneration Act (1976) prohibiting unequal wages, women continue to be paid less than men for the same work across fields like factories and cinema.

Caste: Despite the Constitution prohibiting caste-based discrimination, untouchability has not ended completely, and Scheduled Castes remain disproportionately represented among the poor, with 35.9% below the poverty line in rural areas.

Common reason: Legal prohibition alone is insufficient because centuries of accumulated social attitudes, economic disadvantages, and structural inequalities cannot be erased overnight by law alone. Deep-rooted prejudices persist in everyday life and require continuous social reform alongside legal measures.

Source: Chapter 3 – Gender and Politics; Caste Inequalities

Explanation

The examiner expects two clear examples (one per division) with brief supporting evidence, and ONE shared reason – not two separate reasons. The key insight the textbook gives is that laws address formal rules but not informal social attitudes or historical economic gaps. Mentioning specific Acts or data (poverty line figures) strengthens your answer and signals textbook grounding. Avoid writing generic statements like "society is bad"; link directly to what the passage says.

Q22. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[3]

India's secular state model is offered as the constitutional answer to communalism. Why is the same model NOT directly applicable as a solution to caste inequality, even though both communalism and casteism are described as threats to democracy?

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

India's secular state model addresses communalism by ensuring the state remains neutral among religions — it gives no official status to any religion, prohibits religious discrimination, and treats all citizens equally regardless of faith.

However, caste inequality is not merely about equal treatment between groups. It involves **accumulated economic disadvantage** over centuries — Dalits and OBCs lag in education, wealth, and opportunities due to a hereditary, ritually sanctioned system. Simply prohibiting discrimination (as the Constitution already does) is insufficient because the effects of centuries of exclusion persist. Therefore, the Constitution also mandates **positive interventions** — reservations and special policies — to reverse historical injustices, something the secular model (which focuses on neutrality, not correction) does not provide.

Source: Chapter 3, "Caste and Politics" and "Secular State" sections.

Explanation

The key contrast examiners expect: secularism = **state neutrality** between religions; caste inequality demands **active correction**, not just neutrality. The textbook explicitly states the Constitution "prohibited caste-based discrimination and laid foundations of policies to *reverse* the injustices," acknowledging that equal treatment alone cannot fix centuries of structural disadvantage. Mentioning that caste is "peculiar to India" and linked to hereditary, ritual-based exclusion adds precision. Avoid writing a general essay — focus on *why neutrality is insufficient* for caste.

Q23. deep thorough-understanding § (whole-chapter synthesis)

[5]

Explain what it means to say that caste has been transformed by its entry into the political arena, rather than politics being corrupted by caste. Using evidence, compare how a similar transformation has occurred when gender inequality has been raised as a political issue, and evaluate whether both transformations have been equally beneficial for democracy.

◆ Gender, Religion and Caste

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Model Answer

Caste transformed by politics: The textbook argues it is not politics that becomes caste-ridden; rather, caste itself gets politicised. When caste enters politics, caste groups expand by merging with sub-castes, form coalitions with other communities, and new broader categories like 'backward' and 'forward' caste groups emerge. Most importantly, universal adult franchise gave disadvantaged Dalit and OBC communities new consciousness and access to decision-making power they were historically denied.

Similar transformation through gender: When gender inequality entered politics, it was not merely "dividing society" — the political arena transformed the issue itself. Women organised feminist movements demanding legal equality, voting rights, and reservation. This led to the Women's Reservation Act (2023) giving 33% seats in legislatures and over 10 lakh elected women representatives in panchayats.

Evaluation — equally beneficial? Both transformations have largely benefited democracy by giving voice to the marginalised. However, caste politics also carries negative effects — it can divert attention from poverty and development and cause communal-type tensions. Gender politics, by contrast, is assessed as largely positive since it corrects a universal injustice without pitting communities against each other. Thus, both have been beneficial, but gender's political expression has been more consistently positive for democracy.

Source: Chapter 3 — Gender, Religion and Caste; sections "Politics in caste," "Gender and politics," "Women's political representation"

Explanation

Examiners look for three things here: (1) the specific textbook argument that **caste gets politicised, not that politics gets corrupted** — with evidence (coalitions, new group identities, Dalit empowerment); (2) a **parallel with gender** showing the same logic — raising inequality in the political arena transforms both the issue and politics; (3) an **evaluative comparison** — don't just describe, judge. The textbook itself signals caste politics has both positive and negative sides, while gender politics is framed as "largely positive." Use that to structure your evaluation. Avoid padding; stick to textbook evidence only.

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