

Class-6<sup>th</sup>

Civics

Lesson-2

Diversity and Discrimination

Dear students

Diversity has been the main reason for discrimination, prejudice, inequality and formation of stereotypes in the society. Today in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Civics we will learn about Diversity and Discriminations, stereotype and Prejudice.

**Discrimination.**

Discrimination is the practice of treating one person or group of people less fairly or less well than other people or groups.

Discrimination refers to treating people differently on the basis of their caste, creed, colour, language, gender etc. we discriminate when we do not treat people equally.

Before our constitution came into force in 1950, there was a lot of discrimination in Indian society. Caste rules prevented some people from using public facilities, accessing wells and meeting with the rest of the society.

After gaining Independence, the constitution declared everyone to be equal and also guaranteed fundamental rights to all the citizens without any discrimination.

**Prejudice**

It is an unreasonable dislike of a particular group of people or things, or a preference for one group of people or things over another. It is a **preconceived** opinion formed about someone or

something that is not based on reason or actual experience or fact. Prejudice can lead to discrimination. For instance children who are overweight are often believed to be below average in sports. Therefore, in some cases they are prevented from taking part in sports altogether. Prejudice can lead to many harmful effects on our society. It leads to conflicts between communities, creates disunity, causes racial arrogance and hampers the development of the nation.

**Stereotype** is a widely held but fixed opinion of a person or a group of people. Which is often not true? It is a set idea about a particular type of person or a thing. When judgements are made about people without knowing them and without basing those judgements on facts, stereotypes are created. People generally unconsciously create stereotype out of bias about a particular group of people or religion. Women are usually expected to do house hold chores while men are expected to earn their daily bread. Just like prejudice, stereotype can often lead to discrimination. For instance, boys who cry are often ridiculed for behaving like girls. It is the collective responsibility of both the people and the government to work towards changing the age old beliefs and opinions.

Before forming pre conceived notions about a person or a group of people we must stop to think whether it is based on a fact or it is just what many people say. We must respect people and their individuality and not judge them on the basis of their economic background, race, religion or appearance.

### **Discrimination and Inequality in India**

Throughout the ages, India has been characterized by people who are well established and unlikely to change and there are social

hierarchies defined by caste, gender, region and religion. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century these characterizations continue to be an enormous problem in the Indian society endorsing privilege and limiting opportunities for the poor and the backward sections of the society. Major concerns for the future include money lending reforms, ensuring the breakdown of the worst aspects of the caste system and improving educational opportunities for women.

## **Social Inequality**

### **Caste system**

In the ancient times in India, the Hindu society was divided into four castes on the basis of the work that people did. The caste system led to the lowest caste being treated in a highly unequal manner. They were denied the opportunity to be educated and earn money, and consequently remained backward and poor. The caste system discriminated among people on the basis of their birth and a person born in a particular caste had to perform the duties assigned to that caste. The constitution of India finally abolished untouchability in the year 1950, and declared all the people to be equal.

## **Economic Inequality**

### **Being rich or poor**

Poor people have to face discrimination in all areas of life. They have to do menial jobs to earn their livelihood as they do not have proper education to get better jobs. There is a huge difference in the facilities available to them and those available to the rich in India. The rich enjoy facilities like good education, healthcare, shopping in malls, and access to the best restaurant and hotels, holidays, visiting other countries and other such things. The poor,

on the other hand, have to struggle hard to make ends meet. They are hardly able to make their basic ends meet for food, clothing and shelter. Poverty has become a major challenge for our country.

### **Discrimination and Inequality in the world**

Religious discrimination is common in different parts of the world. People often discriminate against religions. Religious groups often clash with each other over their beliefs.

Gender discrimination is another issue for which women struggles have taken place.

Women face discrimination and are subjected to unequal laws all over the world even in the developed countries. They have to constantly fight to get their due place in society. Many protests were organised by different groups of women to get women suffrage.

### **Breaking stereotypes**

In the changing world, we must consciously try to break stereotypes and develop a broad minded perception of people and situations around us. Events such as the Paralympics have significantly changed the prejudices and stereotypes associated with people facing any kind of physical disability. They have events ranging from athletics for Para-athletes, to football matches between visually impaired teams. These events draw huge crowds and are very popular among sports enthusiasts. There is an increasing number of examples of breaking stereotypes from all around the world and all walks of life as a ray of hope that things are gradually changing.

## **Towards Equality**

**The Preamble to the Indian constitution is a statement of all the ideals that our country strives to achieve. It envisions a society, free from any discrimination, a society where all citizens are equal. The diverse character of the Indian society must be respected and allowed to grow. The term fraternity is used in the Preamble, encourages people to embrace the spirit of brotherhood. The fundamental rights given in the constitution of India safeguard people from discrimination and exploitation and promote equality and diversity. The right to vote is also extended to all the citizens of India, who are 18 years and above without any discrimination. Government of India is making constant efforts through varied welfare schemes to end discrimination.**