

Chapter 4 : Social Justice

1. One of the principles is the principle of treating equals equally. It is considered that all individuals share certain characteristics as human beings.
2. Therefore they deserve equal rights and equal treatment
3. Some rights --- civil rights such as the rights of life, liberty and property, political rights like the right to vote
4. Principle of treating equals equally would require that people should not be discriminated against on grounds of class, caste, race or gender.
5. They should be judged on the basis of their work and actions and not on the basis of the group to which they belong.
6. Equal treatment is not the only principle of justice.
7. For justice in society, the principle of equal treatment needs to be balanced with the principle of proportionality.
8. A third principle of justice which we recognise is for a society to take into account special needs of people while distributing rewards or duties.
9. The principle of taking account of the special needs of people does not necessarily contradict the principle of equal treatment
10. People with special needs or disabilities could be considered unequal in some particular respect and deserving of special help.
11. The Constitution therefore for reservations of government jobs and quotas for admissions to educational institutions for people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. (Article 16)
12. A function of governments is to harmonise the different principles to promote a just society.
13. To achieve social justice in society, governments might have to do more than just ensure that laws and policies treat individuals in a fair manner
14. If there are serious economic or social inequalities in a society, it might become necessary to try and redistribute some of the important resources of the society to provide something like a level playing field for citizens
15. Constitution abolished the practice of untouchability (Article 17) to promote social equality and ensure that people belonging to 'lower' castes have access to temples, jobs and basic necessities like water
16. Different state governments have also taken some measures to redistribute important resources like land in a more fair manner by instituting land reforms

17. Justice does not require absolute equality and sameness in the way in which people live
18. A just society should provide people with the basic minimum conditions to enable them to live healthy and secure lives and develop their talents as well as equal opportunities to pursue their chosen goals in society
19. Various methods of calculating the basic needs of people have been devised by different governments and by international organizations.
20. Providing people with their basic needs is considered to be one of the responsibilities of a democratic government.
21. States could step in to ensure a basic minimum standard of living to all people so that they are able to compete
22. It might also be necessary for the state to give special help to the old and the sick who cannot compete
23. Justice implies something which it is not only right to do and wrong not to do; but which some individual person can claim from us as his moral right.