

• Can human equality be achieved without achieving political equality?

Outline

1) Introduction

Human equality is both an economic and a political phenomenon. But without achieving political equality, achieving human equality is a far distant dream. Political realities actually shape the economic realities.

2) Significance of achieving political equality for achieving human equality.

3) Political equality is a pre-requisite for achieving human equality

a) Without political equality; human equality can not be preserved.

b) Narrow ruling elite misrules the majority in the absence of political equality.

c) Without political equality, the power concentrates in the hands of few people

d) Political inequality causes discrimination based on gender.

e) Absence of political equality make minority a subject of discrimination by the majority.

4) Human equality is an economic determinant

a) The absence of economic equal footing disrupts the human equality.

b) Ruling elite controls economic means to exert influence over the people

c) Economic disparity is the responsible factor for concentration of power in few hands.

d) Lack of economic opportunities for women are the reason behind discrimination against them.

e) Less economic opportunities are reason behind

- poor treatment of minorities.
- 5) Political equality is essential for achieving human equality and it determines economic equality.
- a) Economic equality stems from political inequality.
 - b) Elite uses political influence to gain an upper hand over means of production.
 - c) Power is a political terminology and political inequality is responsible of concentration of power in few hands.
 - d) Gender discrimination against women is an issue of political inequality.
 - e) In scenario of political inequality, minorities can not be strengthened economically.
- b) Conclusion

1. The slavery under British gained pace in United States of America (USA). Slave trade was a profitable business and slave owning was a profitable source of cheap labour. Once USA gained independence from Britain in wake of War of Independence, two opinions emerged. One favoured slavery while other opposed. After the civil war, the slavery was permanently abolished under the comradeship of Abraham Lincoln. Once USA gained independence and the doors for political equality were opened, resulted into human equality that black people were acknowledged equal human's for the first time. Had there been no political independence, abolishment of slavery would not have been possible. Human equality is both an economic and political phenomenon. But without achieving political equality, achieving human equality is a far distant dream. Political realities actually shape the economic reality. The destination of human equality is unachievable unless the ground is not smooth for political equality. If a society is deprived of political equality, the preservation of human equality in that society becomes difficult. In the absence of political equality, the power concentrates in the hands of narrow ruling elite which misrules the public and only seeks their interests. Discrimination against women and minorities are also manifestations of absence of political equality. However, economic realities also determines the

availability of human equality and the absence of economic equal footing disrupts the human equality. As far as phenomenon of elite capture is concerned, its the economic clout of elite that enables them to concentrate power in their hands. Deprivation of women and minorities from economic opportunities generates discrimination against them. But, economic disparity also stems from political inequality. To gain economic resources, elite uses political influence and only through political equality is it possible to achieve human equality. In scenario of political inequality, abolishment of discrimination against women and minorities is not possible.

Political equality is the first step towards a bigger goal of human equality. In their book 'Why Nations Fail', James Robinson and Daron Acemoglu elaborates that only those nations are prosperous in human indicators that have strong inclusive political institutions. These institutions frame inclusive policies for the betterment of the whole society. On the other hand, countries with extractive political institutions are always more likely to fall under the trap of human inequality as in such countries, elites enjoy an influence over the majority of the population. Political equality does not only mean the right to contest elections and running political campaigns but the most important indicators that defines this phenomenon are

rights for freedom of speech, expression and thought. Political equality is a culture that fosters citizen participation, inclusivity and respect for fundamental rights. At the heart of this culture of political equality lies certain core values like equality, freedom, justice and human rights. Achieving these values in a society means achieving human equality in actual sense of term.

Having political equality is very important for preservation of human equality. Political equality is the foundation of human equality and it provides the basis over which human equality stands. Political equality encompasses some norms such as active citizen participation, rule of law and productive dialogues that paves the way of more pluralism in a society which creates a favourable environment for human equality in that particular society. Political rights in ~~Switzerland~~ Switzerland are the reason behind labour rights as labours were deprived of the economical rights in first half of 20th century (**Immigrant and Associations in Switzerland, 2018**). This is why political rights are important.

As political equality is important to preserve human equality, the absence of political equality allows the narrow ruling elite to rule for

their interest. Political inequality make it feasible for ruling elite to extend their interests rather than the interests of the public. Various dimensions of political system makes the rulers to behave above the law such as lack of right policy direction, non-obeyance of law. For example, On April 16, 2023, Former Finance minister of Pakistan Miftah Ismail in an article published in Dawn Newspaper called Pakistan 'one percent republic', because of similar phenomenon of elite capture in the country to secure interest by narrow ruling elite. That is why, absence of political equality over-powers the ruling elite and as a result they ferociously exploits their own public which diminish every aspect of human equality.

~~As~~ As the absence of political equality allows the ruling elite to extend their interests, similarly, its absence concentrates power in few hands. The powerful people take advantage of the political inequality and assume the charge of de-facto rulers. This culture of political un-equality further bleaks the prospects of human equality when it become difficult for ordinary people to participate in political process. Social contract theorist Thomas Hobbes in his book 'Leviathan' considers that people are brutal, cunning and egoistic by their nature and this nature would

shape the economic reality. The destination
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pose threat to other humans unless this nature is not settled through social contract among them. In this way, absence of political equality becomes a threat for human equality that only few people can rule and majority can not rule.

Along with concentration of power in few hands, absence of political equality also causes gender discrimination against women. Equal opportunities for every person without any discrimination is the most important feature of political equality. Absence of political equality creates a trend of patriarchy in society which deprive the women from playing their due role. For example, ~~India~~ Pakistan is thought to be a country with lesser political equality and due to this the society has observed a huge trend of patriarchy with very less rights for women. In this way, concentration of power in few hands paves the way for patriarchy.

→ As women faces discrimination, minorities are are also not treated fairly in the absence of political equality. Societies that enjoy political equality treats its minorities as equal citizens as those of majority. Minorities are considered as most vulnerable segment of the society and political inequality leaves them at the behest of majority. In India, the authority regime led by Narendra Modi has

enormously defenestrated Muslims out of political arena and deprived them of basic human rights (Deepa Kumar, Plight of muslims under Modi, 2019). Consequently, the deprivation from political equality deprives the minorities-

However, another opinion that exists associate human equality with economics. The supporters of this view opines that economic disparity is responsible for not achieving human equality. The economic disparity stratifies the society and treats the people according to the hierarchical arrangements of stratification. Economic disparity widens the gulf between richer and poor segments of the society. According to the marxist doctrine, society has two stratas that are bourgeoisie and proletariat and proletariat are always a subject of exploitation from bourgeoisie. Resultantly, economic disparity is the factor responsible for not achieving human equality as society is divided into stratas.

As some believe that absence of political equality is responsible for misrule by narrow ruling class, they ignore that rulers take advantage of economic superiority to misrule people. Through monetary dominance ruling elite assume the power to use it for their interests and benefits. Most of the governments in the world are seen as encompassed by the persons driven by their interests especially the

Governments in third world countries. Only 1 percent of the world population owns more than ~~the~~ rest 99% of wealth. (World inequality index, 2022). This phenomenon explain the vicious economic disparity that is enstrangling today's world.

Along with the opinion that political inequality concentrates power into few hands, there also exists another opinion that due to economic disparity some people are observing huge surge in their wealth with each passing day. due to which that segment is becoming more powerful. Such kind of people exploits the interrelation between power and wealth to become more powerful. For example, according a study conducted by an independent organisation only 50 richest world people have more wealth as compared to 50% population of the world. This is how economic disparity is the reason behind a lackage in human equality as it strengthens few people.

→ The people who holds the view that gender discrimination against women is a political issue ignore the economic nature of the issue. Women are considered as secondary to men with their limitation upto household affairs. Men enjoys financial dominance over women and in many instances manipulates women's

reliance for financial support. The main reason behind the patriarchy is men's economic and financial dominance over women and vulnerability of women to cope with the dominance of the men

(Dr Asif Khan, Causes of Women

reliance on men, 2022) That is how, women are vulnerable because of economics.

Poor treatment of minorities is not a political but an economic issue. The root cause of discrimination against minorities is deprivation from sources to gain economic opportunities. Doors for economic well-being of minorities remain close and they people of minority community are forced to do jobs that are not appropriate for any ordinary person. In Pakistan, the literacy rate is 60% and among minorities it is well below 30%, confirms by a source of BBC Urdu. The minorities are kept deprived of basic rights and they can not participate for societal well being

→ All the arguments given by those favorable with economic factor for achieving human equality are wrong due to one reason or the other. Seeing the evidence provided by the supporters for economic equality to achieve political equality regarding the political equality for achieving human equality one may observe that their arguments are not valid. They ignore the fact that

economic disparity is inherently a political issue itself. Political policies are involved in shaping economic realities that hinders achieving human equality. Without achieving political equality, economic equality is not possible, and in return human equality can also not be achieved. For example, "Politics is what precipitates economics and politics determines the economics and indicators in imperialistic society" (V.I Lenin, **State & Revolution, 1919**). This is why, economic inequality is itself a political issue and the way of its resolution is also political.

→ The supporter of opinion of economic equality for achieving human equality ignores that elite uses a political influence to gain an upper hand over means of production. Political disparity manifests elite nexus where those elitist figures who hold political power finds their interests associated with other elite people. The proximity of interests make elite to adopt policies that strengthens them with more economic resources. In Pakistan, feudal lords are not favorable to the realization of land reforms as they themselves hold huge lands and land reforms might mitigate their existing role. (**Dr Iqbal Khan, Marxist thought in Pakistan, 2006**). This is how the alignment of interest by elites is a political phenomenon.

People who holds the opinion that discrimination against the women is due to economic disparity mitigates the political significance of the issue. The only avenue available to resolve the issue of discrimination against women is political equality. Women through acquiring political equal rights for them could take part in legislation and policy making for making appropriate policies for the whole women community. Only through political equality can the women be allowed to represent themselves to address their issues. In European countries, female participation in parliaments are highest among the world and world best destination for legislation on women rights are European countries too.

→ People who holds the view that minorities are deprived only because they lack economically are wrong because how come the economic ~~the~~ opportunities can be provided under the scenario of political disparity for minorities. Without equal political rights, minorities can not prosper as only second class citizens are supposed to be like this. Equal political opportunities for minorities gives them chance to make decision for them.

In a nutshell, achieving political equality is a prerequisite for achieving human equality. Though economic factor is also involved but achieving political equality is the most important factor. Human equality should involve the democratic values which provides a way for reaching to the bigger destination of human equality. Human equality demands every person to be equal in all respects beyond the restriction of religion, caste, creeds, colour or race. Political equality is the foremost step for achieving human equality. Only through political equality, it becomes possible to abolish constraints on social or economic disparity. The ~~only~~ remedies are only possible through the political equality.