



Fraternity in India

For Prelims: [Preamble](#), [42nd Amendment Act](#), [Fundamental Duties](#), Constituent Assembly

For Mains: Meaning of Fraternity, Challenges of Achieving ideals of Fraternity

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

Fraternity, one of the core values enshrined in the Indian Constitution, plays a pivotal role in fostering unity and equality in society. However, the practical application of fraternity in India raises several questions and challenges.

What is the Origin of the Concept of Fraternity?

▪ Ancient Greece:

- Fraternity, the idea of brotherhood and unity, has a long history.
- In Plato's *Lysis*, the philosopher invokes the **word philia (love) for the strong desire to pursue wisdom.**
 - In this context, fraternity was seen as the strong desire to share knowledge and wisdom with others, making friendship more meaningful through intellectual exchange.

▪ Aristotle's Idea:

- Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, added to the idea of fraternity by highlighting the importance of the **"polis," the city-state where people belonged as political beings** and friendships among citizens in a city-state (polis) is crucial.

▪ Middle Ages:

- During the Middle Ages, fraternity took on a different dimension, **primarily within the Christian context in Europe.**
 - Here, fraternity was often associated with **religious and communal bonds.**
 - It was fostered through shared **religious beliefs and practices**, emphasizing a sense of brotherhood among believers.

▪ French Revolution:

- French Revolution in 1789, which gave rise to the **famous motto "liberté, égalité, fraternité" (liberty, equality, fraternity).**
 - This marked the introduction of **fraternity into the realm of politics, alongside liberty and equality.**
 - Fraternity, in this context, symbolized the **idea of unity and solidarity among citizens** as they fought for their rights and freedom.

What is the Concept of Fraternity in India?

- India's fraternity has its own journey within **India's sociology**, and the current nature of India's fraternity is different from the political fraternity espoused in its Constitution.

- **Fraternity is a constitutional value in India, alongside liberty and equality, aimed at achieving social harmony and unity.**
 - The framers of the Indian Constitution recognized the importance of fraternity in a **society marred by hierarchical social inequalities.**
- **Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar** stressed the inseparability of liberty, equality, and fraternity, considering them as fundamental tenets of Indian democracy.
- **Constitutional Provisions Related to Fraternity:**
 - **Preamble:**
 - The principle of fraternity was added to the principles in the **Preamble** along with liberty, equality, and justice.
 - **Fundamental Duties:**
 - **Article 51A** on **Fundamental Duties**, added to by the **42nd Amendment** in 1976 and further amended by 86th Amendment (2002).
 - **Article 51A(e)** generally refers to the duty of every citizen 'to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India.'

What are the Limits and Challenges to Fraternity in India's Context?

- **Social and Cultural Differences:**
 - India's diverse cultures and traditions can lead to **misunderstandings and conflicts among different communities.**
 - **Religious or caste-based differences** often result in mistrust, discrimination, and even violence, eroding the spirit of brotherhood.
 - Incidents of **religious intolerance or conflicts** can disrupt social cohesion and unity, making it difficult to foster fraternity.
 - Religious minorities have faced such social and political opprobrium countless times in this country.
- **Economic Disparities:**
 - The significant **economic gap between different sections of society** can breed resentment and feelings of discrimination.
 - When people perceive economic barriers to their success, they may hesitate to cooperate, hindering social cohesion, a crucial element of fraternity.
- **Political Differences:**
 - **Political ideologies can create deep divisions in society**, impeding cooperation and dialogue.
 - Such differences often **lead to polarization**, fostering an atmosphere of hostility and intolerance that obstructs constructive engagement.
- **Lack of Trust:**
 - A lack of **mutual trust and understanding among groups** can undermine fraternity.
 - When trust is lacking, working together toward common goals becomes challenging.
- **Failure of Constitutional Morality:**
 - **Constitutional morality**, based on Indian constitutional values, is vital for maintaining fraternity.
 - Its failure can lead to a loss of **confidence in institutions and the rule of law, creating instability and undermining brotherhood.**
- **Inadequate Moral Order:**
 - A functioning moral order in society, including adherence to ethical values and social responsibility, is crucial for democracy's success.
 - Failure in this area can result in the erosion of brotherhood, with unethical actions eroding trust among citizens.
- **Educational Disparities:**
 - Disparities in **access to quality education can perpetuate social inequalities and hinder fraternity.**
 - Educational inequities often result in unequal opportunities, reinforcing divisions among communities.
- **Regional Disparities:**
 - India's vast geographical and regional diversity can lead to disparities in economic development and infrastructure.
 - These **regional inequalities may create a sense of marginalization** among certain

communities, challenging efforts to promote brotherhood.

▪ **Language and Cultural Barriers:**

- India's multitude of **languages and dialects can sometimes create communication barriers.**
 - Language and cultural differences can hinder effective dialogue and cooperation, affecting the spirit of fraternity.

Way Forward

- Initiatives that **promote social and cultural harmony** among diverse communities are essential to overcoming differences and fostering a sense of brotherhood. These programs should encourage dialogue, understanding, and cooperation among people of different backgrounds.
- **Civic education** should **instill values of fraternity, equality, and social justice** from a young age. Ethical leadership at all levels of society is essential to set an example of responsible citizenship and moral conduct.
- Encouraging **respect for religious and cultural diversity is vital.** Interfaith dialogues, protections for religious and cultural minorities, and promoting a culture of tolerance can help maintain social cohesion.
- Encourage ethical leadership at all levels of society to set an example of moral conduct and responsible citizenship.
- Implement **policies and programs that address economic disparities**, ensuring equitable access to opportunities and resources for all citizens.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year's Questions (PYQs)

Prelims:

Q. Which one of the following objectives is not embodied in the Preamble to the Constitution of India? (2017)

- (a) Liberty of thought
- (b) Economic liberty
- (c) Liberty of expression
- (d) Liberty of belief

Ans: (b)

Exp:

- Preamble to the Constitution of India WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens:
 - JUSTICE, social, economic and political;
 - LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;
 - EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all
 - FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation;
 - IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twentysixth day of November, 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.
 - The Preamble does not embody the economic liberty.
 - **Therefore, option (b) is the correct answer.**

Mains

Q. Discuss each adjective attached to the word 'Republic' in the 'Preamble'. Are they defensible in the present circumstances? (2016)

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