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Freedom

# Introduction

The constitution is defined as a set of principles that help in governing any entity like country, organization, etc. After the first election took place in the USA there was an immense need to make a constitution based on which country should be governed. The majority of the congress-people helped in making the constitution. However, as the time changes certain issue arises that needs to be addressed. For this purpose, the modification of the constitution was mandatory. Due to this, amendments were done to cover all the issues that the country was facing.

**Freedom of speech**

In democracy freedom of speech is very essential. The ideas and information contribute in inform political debate and are therefore necessary to public liability and transparency in the government (Sunstein). Freedom of expression through any means is the fundamental right of every human being. It also helps in establishing other rights and allow them to succeed. According to the US constitution “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech”. However, this law should be “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech until it is not threatening basic rights”. Freedom of speech aid people to know about the perspective and ideas of others which they can use to achieve difficult tasks. However, there should be some limitation on free speech to benefit society because everyone is different and perceive the situation differently causing the extreme risk for harm. Therefore, it is important to decide what good speech is and what bad speech is to solve this issue.

Due to the tremendous increase in the use of social media freedom of expression has become a necessity for common people to voice their opinions. Like every modern state, the US also puts limitations on freedom of speech. Although the constitution did not specifically mention the limitation yet the Supreme Court has ruled certain principles that dictate what people can say or what they cannot legally. Like everything freedom of speech also has its pros and cons some of them are as follows:

Advantages of freedom of speech:

Freedom of speech protects every citizen from the influence of special interests of any person in the authority. As when people possess the power they do whatever they can to retain it as long as they can. These powers include changes in the board of directors of any company or suppressing minorities even changing the constitution for one’s benefit (Sunstein). By having the right to free speech all the individuals can express their views and criticism of those in the powerful position. Having the freedom of speech no one can compel any citizen to speak any kind of specific message not even the government. It also prevents the requirement to act or behave in a specific way. It is, therefore, important to at least think before sharing anything as it is ethically wrong to impose one’s opinion upon others. When every individual has the right to express the thoughts and ideas prevailing in their minds they can help a lot in benefiting the society. Even the people in power cannot suppress them. This allows society to progress and flourish.

Utilizing the ideas and information from other people it becomes easy to make discoveries and inventions that in turn benefit the society and people living in it.When people have freedom of speech without any threat of prosecution people can easily report any crime they see or any injustice that they see of facing themselves. However, there it is difficult to find a line between expressing everything freely in order to protect others or the information.

Disadvantages of freedom of speech:

Due to freedom of speech, there are some people who are misusing this right to spread rumors and false information that leads to certain consequences. Another problem with this freedom is violence. When an individual commits a crime or any kind of violence against others because of the hate speech they must be held responsible for their actions. Although the person who encouraged them for doing certain act by giving hate speech must also be held responsible. Many people use the right of free speech to spread negativity causing other people to endure racism and discrimination. Free speech also reduces the desire to compromise in certain situations as everyone is entitled to their opinion and feel that they are always right.

**Freedom of Religion:**

Freedom of religion is defined as freedom to manifest, practice and chose the religion freely. It allows people to worship freely and changing one’s religion as well (Sullivan). According to the US constitution “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof”. However, this law should be “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise of any religion”. Although there is only a minor change in both the statements yet the impact is huge. The first statement is limited to only having the right to worship freely while the other statement is vast in terms that people can choose the religion they want to and it is not necessary for them to follow the same religion as their family. Freedom of religion is a fundamental of every citizen especially living in a country with a state religion. The establishment clause is the reason that the USA has no official state religion, therefore, the government does not favor any institute that promotes the religion. Although freedom of religion is necessary and has many advantages yet it still does have some disadvantages well. They are listed below:

Advantages of freedom of religion:

Freedom of practicing religion provides a sense of identity to a person. Most people spend their whole life based on a foundation that is provided to them by their religion. The religion provides its practitioners with guidelines, ethical values, and principles that are mandatory to follow. By following these guidelines one can achieve rewards that are promised by their religion. Freedom of religion also allows individuals to choose and practice whatever religion they think is best for them without the threat to be prosecuted by any authority or government and can celebrate and practice any religious event they want (Dickson).

Disadvantages of freedom of religion:

Religion is not defined by how it followers act however there are people who might use religion in order to justify their wrong-doings. In every religion, there are some teachings that can easily be misinterpreted due to which some people and organizations are using it for their benefit to spread negativity and crimes. Another problem that freedom of religion causes is the division it creates. As every person is entitled to their own choices and opinion yet if a person in a community chooses a different religion from others a division in a community occurs. People tend to stick together with the people who have the same religion as they have due to which they isolate the person who chooses a different religion. Moreover, due to freedom of religion people start to discriminate against people having a different religion. As people might look upon the individuals as subordinate to them if they are of a different religion. Also, people consider their religion as superior to others causing an imbalance in the society.

**Freedom of the press:**

Freedom of the press or in other terms freedom of media is defined as the right of communication and expression through media that include print and electronic media (Lebovic). The US constitution states that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press” however this law should be stated as “the people shall not be deprived of their right to write or to publish their sentiments, and the freedom of the press shall be inviolable.” Freedom of the press is very much related to the freedom of expression. Due to the tremendous increase in the use of electronic devices people rely upon certain online sites to be updated regarding the latest issues. Also, social media is a platform that connects all the people making it popular among every age group. However, like many other freedoms there are some advantages and disadvantages of freedom of the press as well they are as follows:

Advantages of freedom of press:

If the press is to report issues and express opinions it can help in highlighting the performance of a government that helps people to form an opinion about the government. Free media allows people to share their ideas and opinions freely. It safeguards against manipulations by the government while encouraging critical thinking that will lead to developing new ideas.

Disadvantages of freedom of speech:

Free media can itself manipulate people. As more people are using electronic media to stay updated and therefore becomes an easy target of manipulation and false news. Specifically talking about social media people often use this freedom to post hateful things about other communities and religion that leads to violence (Schmidt Jr).

**Works cited**

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