Subject Name: Constitution Law
Topic Name: Relationship between FRs and DPSPs

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The Indian Constitution embodies the aspirations of a nation striving for social transformation and justice. Rooted in the struggle for independence, its provisions, particularly Parts III and IV, encapsulate the essence of the social revolution envisaged by the framers. The relationship between Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles constitutes the conscience of the Constitution, reflecting India's past, present, and future aspirations.

Historical Context and Genesis

The Indian Constitution's genesis lies in the desire to create a society where liberty is not a privilege but a universal right. The supra committee in 1945 proposed categorising rights into justiciable and directive, emphasising their fundamental role in governance. Recognizing that political democracy alone is insufficient in a poor nation like India, the framers integrated provisions for economic democracy, aligning with the socio-economic realities of the country.

Fundamental Rights: Pillars of Individual Liberty

Fundamental Rights under the Constitution safeguard individual liberties and impose negative obligations on the state. Enshrined as justiciable rights, they aim to foster a society where every citizen enjoys freedom from coercion or restriction, irrespective of social or economic status. The incorporation of Fundamental Rights underscores the commitment to egalitarianism and social justice.

Directive Principles: Catalysts for Social and Economic Transformation

In contrast, Directive Principles articulate a clearer vision of the social revolution, focusing on positive freedom from socio-economic constraints. Designed to usher in social and economic democracy, they mandate the state to take affirmative action for the welfare of its citizens. Unlike

Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles are non-justiciable but serve as guiding principles for legislative and executive action.

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The Evolution of Interpretation

Initially considered mere moral precepts, Directive Principles gained significance as fundamental in governance. Courts recognized their importance in interpreting the Constitution's basic structure, indicating a shift towards harmonising Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles. The doctrine of harmonious construction emphasises giving effect to both sets of provisions to achieve socio-economic justice.

Interplay and Synthesis

The interaction between Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles is dynamic, reflecting the evolving socio-political landscape. While Fundamental Rights protect individual liberties, Directive Principles impose positive obligations on the state to create conditions conducive to their enjoyment by all citizens. Courts have increasingly emphasised the complementary nature of these provisions, fostering a holistic approach to constitutional interpretation.

Enforceability and Implementation

Although Directive Principles are non-justiciable, they hold significant importance in governance. Courts, while unable to enforce them directly, can direct executive action to align with these principles. The legal landscape has evolved from a purely legalistic approach to one of harmonious construction, recognizing the integral role of Directive Principles in shaping public policy.

Cases Highlighting Interplay

- **Golak Nath v. State of Punjab (1967):** This case emphasised the interconnectedness of Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles, forming an essential framework for

governance. The court held that these provisions constitute a self-understood code, encouraging a harmonious interpretation to achieve the objectives of the Constitution.



- **Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973):** In this landmark case, the Supreme Court reiterated the importance of reading Directive Principles alongside Fundamental Rights. It emphasised that both sets of provisions must be given expansive interpretation to promote socio-economic justice.

- **Minerva Mills Ltd. v. Union of India (1980):** The court, in this case, affirmed the supremacy of the Constitution's basic structure, which includes both Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles. It highlighted the need for a balanced approach in interpreting these provisions to ensure the holistic development of society.