

OUTCOMES OF DEMOCRACY

The chapter deals with different outcomes produced by democracy and how to assess them. An analysis to look at the expected and actual outcomes of democracy in various respects: quality of government, economic well-being, inequality, social differences and conflict and finally freedom and dignity. The concept of democracy and its outcomes has been dealt with several case studies and examples in this chapter. In the end, the outcomes finally reveal that democratic governments are better than other types of governments.

TOPIC 1

ASSESSMENT OF DEMOCRACY'S OUTCOMES

Democracy is a better form of government when compared with dictatorship or any other alternative.

We feel that democracy was better because it:

- (1) Promotes equality among citizens;
- (2) Enhances the dignity of the individual;
- (3) Improves the quality of decision making;
- (4) Provides a method to resolve conflicts; and
- (5) Allows room to correct mistakes.

Most people support democracies over the rule by a monarch, military or religious leaders in theory. Democracy is seen to be good in principle, but not considered as efficient in practice.

More than hundred countries across the world claim to practice some kind of democratic politics. This is facilitated through formal constitutions such as elections and the presence of political parties.

These states have also guaranteed rights to citizens. Despite the similarities, these democracies are different from one another in terms of their social situations, their economic achievements and their cultures. Consequently, the ideals achieved or not achieved under each of these democracies will be very different.

Our generic expectations from democracy are that it can address all socio-economic and political problems. Any underachievement pushes us to complain about the principle of democracy. We question the idea or existence of democracy itself.

It is necessary to recognise that democracy is just a form of government. It can only create conducive conditions for achievement of some goals. To realise them, citizens have to avail those opportunities and achieve those goals.

MOST LIKELY Questions

Very Short Answer Type Questions

[2 marks]

1. Mention any two common features of democratic politics.

Ans. Features of democratic politics are:

- (1) Free and fair elections are organised.
 - (2) The principle of 'one person, one vote, one value' is followed.
 - (3) Major decisions are taken by elected leaders.
 - (4) The rule of law prevails.
- (Any 2 of 4 points can be written to get full marks.)



Related Theory

Democracy is a form of political system in which the government of a country is elected by the citizens through free and fair elections.

Short Answer Type Questions (SA)

[3 marks]

2. What are the expected outcomes of democracy? Explain.

Ans. The expected outcomes of democracy are as follows:

- (1) Democratic government produces a chosen and accountable government, elected by the people.
- (2) A government that is responsive to the needs of the people.
- (3) Democracy produces economic growth and development, reducing all forms of inequality and end of poverty.
- (4) Democracies accommodates all social diversities.
- (5) Ensuring the dignity and freedom of the individuals.

Support for Democracy

A democratic government should be attentive to the needs and demands of the people. It is also very common to expect a democracy to be largely free of corruption. However, democracies do not fare well on these two counts. Democracies frustrate the needs of the people and often ignore the demands of a majority of its population. Democratic governments and administration are filled with corrupt officials. However, no study proves that non-democracies are less corrupt or more sensitive to the needs of the people.

Democratic government is certainly better than its alternatives in one respect- it is a legitimate government.

It may be slow, less efficient, not always very responsive or clean. It is however a popular government. A democratic government is people's own government. Democracy is supported all around the world.

Important

↳ Democracy is preferred over dictatorships everywhere except in Pakistan.

With accompanying evidence South Asia shows, this support exists in countries with democratic regimes as well as countries without democratic regimes. People wish to be ruled by representatives elected by them. Democracy's ability to generate its own support is one of the most important outcomes of democracy.

Important

↳ On an average dictatorial regime have had a slightly better record of economic growth. But when we compare their record only in poor countries, there is virtually no difference.

↳ Within democracies there can be a very high degree of inequalities. In democratic countries like South Africa and Brazil, the top 20 per cent people take away more than 60 per cent of the national income, leaving less than 3 percent for the bottom 20 per cent population. Countries like Denmark and Hungary are much better in this respect.

MOST LIKELY Questions

Very Short Answer Type Questions

[2 marks]

5. Study the data given below and answer the question that follows:

	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
<input type="checkbox"/> Democracy is preferable	69	70	62	37	71
<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes dictatorship is better	6	9	10	14	11
<input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't matter to me	25	21	28	49	18

- (A) Which of the following countries promise the most support to Democracy?
(B) What does the category 'Does not matter to me' entail?

Ans. (A) India

- (B) It entails that the political literacy and participation is low in countries with greater number of people in this category. People are not aware of their rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

6. How does democracy produce an accountable development?

Ans. Democracy produces an accountable government by giving the citizen the right to examine the process by which decisions are made.

7. What is meant by transparency?

Ans. Transparency means that every citizen belonging to any democratic country has the right to information, the right to examine or investigate whether the laws, plans, action, policies or decisions taken by the government are correct or are beneficial to them or not.

Short Answer Type Questions (SA)

[3 marks]

8. "Democracy is accountable and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens." Evaluate the statement.

Ans. Democracy is accountable and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens because:

- (1) In a democracy people have the right to choose their representatives and the people will have control over them.
- (2) Citizens have the right to participate in decision making that affects them all. This ensures that the working of the government is transparent.
- (3) Everybody expect the government to be attentive to the needs and expectations of the people.
- (4) It is expected that the democratic government develops mechanisms for citizens to hold the government accountable.

Long Answer Type Questions (LA)

[4 & 5 marks]

3. **Democracy is more effective than its alternatives. Justify the statement.**

Ans. Democracy is more effective because:

- (1) Democracy promotes equality among citizens.
- (2) It enhances the dignity of the individual.
- (3) It also improves the quality of decision-making among the citizens.
- (4) It provides a method to resolve conflicts.
- (5) It gives room to correct mistakes.
- (6) Democratic government is a legitimate government.
- (7) It accommodates social diversity.

4. **Describe any five features of democracy.**

Ans. Features of democracy are:

- (1) **Elected representatives:** The people elect representatives from among who would govern them.

(2) **Civil liberties:** Civil liberties such as freedom of speech, expression, etc. are provided to the people.

(3) **Independent judiciary:** The judiciary is free from the control of the executive and hence results in a more democratic resolution of disputes.

(4) **Organised opposition party:** An organised opposition party is an essential part of the democracy as it keeps a check on the government.

(5) **Rule of law:** Rule of law prevails in a democracy and no one is above the law. The law is supreme and all citizens are equal in the eyes of the law.

(6) **Majority rule:** It is the system of government which is based on parliamentary majorities.

(Any 5 of 6 points can be written to get full marks)

TOPIC 2

ACCOUNTABLE, RESPONSIVE AND LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT

In a democracy, it is important to ensure that people have the right to choose their rulers and people have control over the rulers. Whenever possible and necessary, citizens should be able to participate in making decisions on matters that affect them all. The most basic outcome of democracy should be to produce a competent government, accountable to the citizens and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens.

It is a common belief that democracy produces less effective government. Non-democratic rulers do not have to bother about deliberation in assemblies or worry about consensus and public opinion and thus the decision making is quick and simple, and the implementation, efficient and effective.

The following are a few features of democracies:

- (1) Democracy is based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation.
 - Democracy ensures that decision making will be based on norms and procedures. It is bound to take some time to reach a consensus and decide.
 - Even though the decisions are slow because the procedure takes a lot of time, they are popular and accepted by the public- which leads to greater compliance. The cost of time that is paid by democratic governments is thus worth it.
- (2) A democratic government has to be transparent. It should facilitate its citizens if they want to know whether a decision was taken through the correct procedure, right information within a decent time period.

- Every citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision making. This factor is often missing from a non-democratic government.

- (3) A significant outcome of a democracy is to produce a government that follows procedures and is accountable to the people.

It can be expected that the democratic government develops mechanisms for citizens to hold the government accountable. It should also build mechanisms for citizens to participate in decision making whenever they think fit.



Frequently Asked

↳ To measure if a country does well on these parameters, the following institutions or practices must be checked:

- (1) Regular, free and fair elections;
- (2) Open public debate on major policies and legislations;
- (3) Citizens' right to information about the government and its functioning.

↳ Democracies show an average performance on these parameters.



Important

↳ Democracies have had greater success in setting up regular and free elections and in setting up conditions for open public debate. Most democracies fall short of free and fair elections.

↳ Democratic governments do not have a very good record when it comes to sharing information with citizens. Democratic governments are better than non-democratic governments in this respect.

- (5) The opposition parties can also question and criticize the government policies. They keep a check on the ruling party and make sure that it does not misuse the power.

(Any three points to be explained)



Related Theory

- ↳ Democracy is a form of government which is for the people, of the people and by the people. Democracy is based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation.

TOPIC 3

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Democracies are expected to produce both good governance and development. However, democracies have not been able to fulfil these expectations. During the period between 1950-2000, a comparison between democracy and dictatorships shows that dictatorships have a slightly higher rate of growth.

The inability of democracy to achieve higher economic development is concerning. However, the concept of democracy can just not be rejected because it gives a slightly less economic growth.



Important

- ↳ Economic development depends on several factors:
- (1) A country's population size,
 - (2) Its global situation,
 - (3) Cooperation from other countries
 - (4) Economic priorities adopted by the country, etc.

The difference in the rates of economic development between less developed countries with dictatorships and democracies is negligible. Democracy cannot be called a guarantee of economic development. However due to the nature of democracy, people expect democracy not to lag behind dictatorships in terms of economic development.



Frequently Asked

- ↳ Despite differences in the rates of economic growth between countries under dictatorship and democracy, it is better to prefer democracy as it has several positive outcomes.

MOST LIKELY Questions

Very Short Answer Type Questions

[2 marks]

9. Give any one example of economic development in dictatorial regimes.

Ans. Dictatorships have higher rates of economic growth as compared to democracies. For example, China's growth rate is higher than most of the other democracies in the world.

Short Answer Type Questions (SA)

[3 marks]

10. What is the relationship between democracy and economic development? Explain.

Ans. Economic development depends on several factors:

- (1) Country's population size
- (2) Global situation
- (3) Cooperation from other countries
- (4) Economic priorities adopted by the country

The difference in the rate of economic development in democracies and dictatorships is negligible. In practice democracy cannot give us the guarantee of economic development.

But we can expect democracy not to lag behind dictatorship in this respect.

Long Answer Type Questions (LA)

[4 & 5 marks]

11. "Democracies do not appear to be very successful in reducing economic inequalities." Justify the statement.

Ans. A democracy doesn't guarantee economic development. In most of the democracies, a small number of ultra-rich enjoy a highly disproportionate share of wealth and income. For example, in countries like South Africa and Brazil, the top 20% people take away more than 60% of the national income. Unfortunately, those who are at the bottom of the society have a very little share (less than 3%) to depend upon. Thus, it can be concluded that in actual life, democracies do not appear to be very successful in reducing economic inequalities.

The situation is much worse in some other countries. In Bangladesh, more than half of the population lives in poverty. People in several other poor countries are now dependent on the rich countries even for food supplies.

TOPIC 4

REDUCTION OF INEQUALITY AND POVERTY

It is reasonable to expect democracies to reduce economic disparities. It is a common dilemma whether a democratic country achieves economic growth, so that the wealth will be distributed in a way that benefits all classes of citizens equally. It is a common question whether a democracy will lead to a just distribution of goods and opportunities. Questions such as will the wealth be distributed in such a way that all citizens of the country have a better life will be in minds of people.

Economic growth in democracies is accompanied by increased inequalities among the people.

Democracies lead to a just distribution of goods and opportunities. Democracies are based on political equality. All individuals have equal weight in electing representatives. Parallel to promoting political participation, economic inequalities grow

in a democracy. A small number of ultra-rich enjoy a large amount of wealth and incomes. This share keeps increasing. The poorest classes do not have much resources to depend upon. Their incomes have been declining to the point that sometimes meeting basic needs of life, such as food, clothing, house, education and health becomes difficult.

However, democracies are not very successful in reducing economic inequalities. The poor voters make or break a party in elections but even then, the democratically elected governments do not appear to be as keen to address the question of poverty. In most countries, the situation is terrible.

Important

↳ In Bangladesh, more than half of its population live in poverty. People in several poor countries are now dependent on the rich countries even for food supplies.

MOST LIKELY Questions

Very Short Answer Type Questions

[2 marks]

12. How is democracy based on political equality in India?

Ans. In India, every citizen above 18 years of age has the right to vote. Every citizen has the right to contest elections irrespective of his/her caste,

religion, creed, economic status, etc. if he/she is 21 years of age. Hence, democracy is based on political equality in India.



Related Theory

↳ Democracy is a form of government which is for the people, of the people and by the people. It promotes equality and discourages all forms of discrimination-social, economical or political.

TOPIC 5

ACCOMMODATION OF SOCIAL DIVERSITY

It is a fair expectation that democracy should produce a harmonious social life. Democracies accommodate various social divisions. Belgium has successfully negotiated differences among ethnic populations. A harmonious social life can only be attained in case of accommodation and provision of equal respect to all social groups and tribes.



Frequently Asked

↳ Democracies develop a procedure to conduct their competition. This reduces the possibility of these tensions becoming explosive or violent.

No society is capable of resolving conflicts among different groups.

We have to learn to accommodate the differences and evolve mechanisms to negotiate the differences.

Democracy is best suited to produce this outcome. Non-democratic regimes suppress internal social differences. Ability to handle social differences, divisions and conflicts is thus a definite plus point of democratic regimes.

The situations in Sri Lanka reminds us that a democracy must fulfil two conditions in order to achieve this outcome:

- (1) Democracy is not simply ruled by majority opinion. The majority has to work with the minority so that governments function to represent the general view. Majority and minority opinions are not permanent.

- (2) It is also necessary that rule by majority does not become rule by majority community in terms of religion or race or linguistic group, etc. Rule by majority might make that government despotic. In case of every election, different persons and groups may and can form a majority. Democracy

can be called democracy only as long as every citizen has a chance of being in majority at some point of time. If there is discrimination in those terms, then the democratic rule ceases to be accommodative for that person or group.

MOST LIKELY Questions

Short Answer Type Questions (SA)

[3 marks]

- 13. Democracy accommodates the social diversities. Support with examples.**

Ans. Democracy accommodates social diversities and this can be asserted as follows:

- (1) Democracies develop a procedure to conduct their competition. This reduces the possibility of these tensions becoming explosive or violent.
- (2) A Democratic society learns to respect these differences and can evolve a mechanism to negotiate these differences.
- (3) Ability to handle social differences, divisions and conflicts is a benefit of democratic regimes.

Long Answer Type Questions (LA)

[4 & 5 marks]

- 14. "Democracies lead to peaceful and harmonious life among citizens." Support the statement with examples.**

Ans. Democracy lead to peaceful and harmonious life among citizens:

- (1) Democracy accommodates various social divisions.
- (2) Democracy reduces the possibility of tensions becoming explosive and violent.
- (3) Ability to handle social differences and conflicts among different groups is a plus point of democracy.
- (4) Democracy develops procedure to conduct healthy competitions among different groups in a society.
- (5) Democracy respects differences and provides mechanism to resolve them.
- (6) Democracy always accommodates minority view.

(Any five points to be explained)

Case Based Questions (VSA Type)

[4 & 5 marks]

- 15. Read the source and answer the questions that follow:**

Democracies usually develop a procedure to conduct their competition. This reduces the possibility of these tensions becoming explosive or violent. No society can fully and permanently resolve conflicts among different groups. But we can certainly learn to respect these differences and we can also evolve mechanisms to negotiate the differences. Democracy is best suited to produce this outcome. Non-democratic regimes often turn a blind eye to or suppress internal social differences. Ability to handle social differences, divisions and conflicts is thus a definite plus point of democratic regimes.

- (A) Which is the best form of government to handle social differences?
- (B) How does Democracy handle Social Differences?
- (C) Suggest two ways to increase peace and harmony in a socially/communally divided country.

Ans. (A) Democratic Governments are better suited to handle social differences than Non-democratic regimes.

(B) Democracy accepts, acknowledges social differences and gives less volatile mediums to express it without violence in the country. It develops its own method of competition.

(C) Two ways to reduce differences and promote peace and harmony:

- (1) one should try to first bring total equality among all communities or social groups. No group should be preferred for any favours.
- (2) one should try to develop national unity by reminding them of shared struggles, culture and historical events.

TOPIC 6

DIGNITY AND FREEDOM OF THE CITIZENS

Democracy is superior to any other form of government in promoting dignity and freedom of the individual. Conflicts arise among individuals if they feel they are not being treated with respect. The passion for respect and freedom are the basis of democracy. Democratic governments recognise that, at least in principle.

Non-democratic societies are built on the basis of subordination and domination. They are unable to recognize that all individuals are equal. Most societies across the world were historically male dominated societies.

Long struggles by women have changed the mindset of the society. It has now been established that respect and equal treatment of women are necessary ingredients of a democratic society. However, women are not actually always treated with respect. Recognition of a principle makes it easier for women to wage a struggle against unacceptable behaviour legally and morally. In a non-democratic set up, this unacceptability would not have legal basis because the principle of individual freedom and dignity does not have the legal and moral force there. This can also be said in case of caste inequalities.

Democracy in India has strengthened the claims of the disadvantaged and discriminated castes for equal status and equal opportunity.

Instances of caste-based inequalities and atrocities are still reported, but these lack the moral and legal foundations. The recognition of their claims makes ordinary citizens value their democratic rights.



Frequently Asked

↳ Expectations from democracy can be used as parameters to judge any democratic country. For a democracy, its examination is never over. As democracy passes one test, it produces another test. As people get some benefits of democracy, they ask for more and want to make democracy even better.

Because its test never ends, people always come up with more expectations, and many complaints.

The fact that people are complaining is itself a testimony to the success of democracy: Because it shows that people have developed awareness and the ability to expect and critically analyse power holders and people with authority.

A public expression of dissatisfaction with democracy shows that a democratic project is successful: it transforms people from the status of a subject into that of a citizen. Individuals have begun to believe that their votes make a difference to the way the government is run and to their own self-interest.

MOST LIKELY Questions

Very Short Answer Type Questions

[2 marks]

16. Read the data about people's opinions expressed in forms of numbers about their support for democracy and answer the questions that follow:

	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Democracy is preferable	69	70	62	37	71
Sometimes dictatorship is better	6	9	10	14	11
Doesn't matter to me	25	21	28	49	18

- (A) According to the table, do you think Democracy is a popular form of government in these countries?
- (B) Which country do you think has the highest probability of having an autocratic government according to the given table?

Ans. (A) Yes, Democracy is a popular form of government in most of these countries according to the given data. Most votes are in favour of having a democratic form of government in their countries.

- (B) According to the given table, Pakistan has the highest probability of having an autocratic government. It has the highest number of citizens who do not care or would not want to have a democratic government.



Caution

↳ Data Based Questions involve application of the concepts learnt and understood in the classes. Here, in such questions, students should try to follow the question word by word. Keywords mentioned in the question direct the students to analyse the data accordingly.

Short Answer Type Questions (SA)

[3 marks]

17. How can we assess democracy in the enhancement for the dignity of the individual? Explain.

Ans. Democracy enhances the dignity:

- (1) Equal status without any discrimination.
 - (2) Respect and freedom are the basis of democracy.
 - (3) Equal opportunities to all.
 - (4) Democratic rights to all.
 - (5) Participation in decision making.
 - (6) Conflict resolution.
- (Any three points to be explained.)

18. What are the expected outcomes of democracy? Explain.

Ans. The expected outcomes of democracy are as follows:

- (1) Democratic government produces a chosen and accountable government, elected by the people.
- (2) A government that is responsive to the needs of the people.
- (3) Democracy produces economic growth and development, reducing all forms of inequality and end of poverty.
- (4) Democracies accommodates all social diversities.
- (5) Ensuring the dignity and freedom of the individuals.

Long Answer Type Questions (LA)

[4 & 5 marks]

19. "Democracy is best suited to produce better results." Examine the statement.

Ans. Democracy produces better results because:

- (1) Democracy is a popular form of government. People participate in making decisions that affects them, including choosing of their representatives. This makes results acceptable.
- (2) Regular elections offer a chance to the people to change the current rulers. People can vote for other leaders in the following elections.
- (3) Democracy provides an efficient method to deal with differences and conflicts, which are bound to arise in a diverse society, in a peaceful manner through negotiations.
- (4) Only a democratic setup is able to accommodate various social divisions without violence.
- (5) Democratic governments have a formal constitution.
- (6) In a democracy there is room to correct mistakes.

(7) Since democracies have popular support, are inclusive of all diversities provide regular chances to express dissatisfaction with administration, they are best suited to produce better results than authoritarian rulers who don't pay much attention to the needs of common people.

20. 'Democracy is based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation'. Examine the statement.

Ans. Democracy is based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation:

- (1) Democracy gives importance to deliberation and public opinion.
 - (2) The democratic government will take more time to follow procedures before arriving at a decision.
 - (3) Its decisions may be both more acceptable to the people and more effective.
 - (4) Democracy ensures that decision making will be based on norms and procedures.
 - (5) Transparency as Persons have the right and the means to examine the process of decision making.
 - (6) It follows procedures and is accountable to the people.
 - (7) The democratic government develops mechanisms for citizens to hold the government accountable.
 - (8) Democratic govt. follows mechanisms for citizens to take part in decision making whenever they think fit.
 - (9) Any other relevant point
- (Any five points to be explained.)

21. "Democracy stands much superior to any other form of government in promoting dignity and freedom of the individual." Justify this statement.

Ans. Following are the ways in which democracy promotes dignity and freedom of people:

- (1) Democracy ensures that it addresses possible conflicts that arise among the individuals because they might feel alienated or unequal. It ensures equality of socio-political and economic rights to all classes.
- (2) Every individual wants to receive respect from fellow beings. Democracy recognises that all individuals are equal.
- (3) Freedom and respect are the bases of democracy.
- (4) All individuals are treated with respect and dignity, citizens are not subjects of the government. They enjoy equality.

- (5) Democracy in India has strengthened the dignity of women and discriminated caste by granting them equal status.

22. Describe any five features of democracy.

Ans. Features of democracy are:

- (1) **Elected representatives:** The people elect representatives from among who would govern them.
- (2) **Civil liberties:** Civil liberties such as freedom of speech, expression, etc. are provided to the people.
- (3) **Independent judiciary:** The judiciary is free from the control of the executive and hence results in a more democratic resolution of disputes.
- (4) **Organised opposition party:** An organised opposition party is an essential part of the democracy as it keeps a check on the government.
- (5) **Rule of law:** Rule of law prevails in a democracy and no one is above the law. The law is supreme and all citizens are equal in the eyes of the law.
- (6) **Majority rule:** It is the system of government which is based on parliamentary majorities.

(Any 5 of 6 points can be written to get full marks)

Case Based Questions (VSA Type)

[4 & 5 marks]

23. Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow:

Over a hundred countries of the world today claim and practice some kind of democratic

politics: they have formal constitutions, they hold elections, they have parties and they guarantee rights of citizens. While these features are common to most of them, these democracies are very different from each other in terms of their social situations, their economic achievements and their cultures. Consequently, what may be achieved or not achieved under each of these democracies will be very different.

(A) Explain the fascination for democracy amongst various countries.

(B) Explain democracy on the basis of expected and actual outcome.

(C) Name two democratic countries.

Ans. (A) Democracies give freedom of speech, expression and religion along with promoting dignity and freedom of human beings. It provides people with a free and dignified life and reduces possibilities of social conflicts. This is why countries are fascinated with democracy.

(B) People often say that democracies have different expected and actual outcomes.

Where it is expected to deliver fair and free elections and acceptable and quick outcomes, it is unable to produce the same due to corruption, inefficient working and delay in decisions. It is expected to reduce economic inequality but it has not been able to do the same.

(C) India and USA are both democracies.



Glossary

- (1) **Dictatorship:** A type of government in which a state is ruled by one person and all authority resides in him.
- (2) **Military rule:** A type of government in which the control of the state/government is with the military.
- (3) **Accountable:** Responsible and answerable.
- (4) **Deliberation:** Discussion and debates.
- (5) **Transparency:** State where all procedures of the government and administration are open to the examination of the citizens.
- (6) **Legitimate:** Approved by majority.
- (7) **Atrocities:** Incidences of violence against citizens.