

Chapter 5 Outcomes of Democracy

ACTIVITY AND IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

In-text Questions

Q 1. Can you think of what and how the government knows about you and your family (for example ration cards and voter identity cards)?

Ans 1: The government gathers information about me and my family through several methods:

1. A census is carried out every decade, which includes detailed records of each adult family member, including their gender, age, and educational background.
2. There is also a requirement to register significant life events, such as births, marriages, and deaths, with government agencies.

Q 2. What are the sources of information for you about the government?

Ans 2: The following are the primary sources through which we obtain information regarding the government:

1. **Right to Information:** Every citizen possesses the fundamental right to access details about government policies, plans, operations, and its organizational structure.
2. **Political Leaders:** Both local and national political figures serve as key informants for the public, keeping them informed about government policies and decisions that have been made.

In-text Question

Q 1: Cartoon on this page and next three pages tell us the gains of economic growth be evenly distributed? about the disparities between the rich and poor. Should How can the poor get a voice for a better share in a nation? What can the poor countries do to receive a greater share in the world's wealth?

Ans 1:

- (1) Naturally, the benefits of economic growth ought to be distributed fairly among all citizens to foster a more equitable society. This aligns with one of the fundamental principles of democracy, which is the pursuit of economic justice.
- (2) Achieving this requires that the group in question is granted appropriate representation and opportunities to engage in the decision-making process.
- (3) They must come together to advocate for their interests; only then can they secure their rightful share. Additionally, they should take steps to enhance their internal democratic processes and make the most of their available natural resources.

In-text Question

Q 1: What would be your verdict on democracy if you had to base its purely on economic performance of democratic regimes in terms of growth and equal distribution?

Ans 1: (1) When evaluating the economic performance of democratic systems over the last 50 years, it becomes evident that authoritarian regimes have outperformed their democratic counterparts. On average,

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democratic regimes have achieved a growth rate of 3.95%, whereas authoritarian regimes have seen a higher rate of 4.42%.

(2) Interestingly, in poorer nations governed by democratic systems, the growth rate is higher at 4.28%, surpassing the overall average growth rate of 3.95% for democratic regimes. This indicates that the economic growth rates between the two types of government are not vastly different.

(3) The issue of income distribution presents a similar trend. In many countries, the wealthiest 20% of the population receives over 50% of the national income, while the poorest 20% receive less than 10%. This highlights a significant disparity in income distribution.

(4) However, democracy offers numerous advantages that authoritarian regimes do not provide, which is why I advocate for democratic governance.

In-text Question

Q 1: Democracy is a rule of the majority. The poor are in majority. So, democracy must be a rule of the poor. How can this not be the case?

Ans 1:

(1) Democracy is defined as the governance by the majority, which reflects the prevailing opinions of the populace.

(2) However, majority rule should not be interpreted as favoring any specific religion, race, linguistic group, or socioeconomic status.

(3) This concept implies that for any decision-making process or election, various individuals and groups can establish a majority.

(4) Consequently, asserting that democracy should solely represent the interests of the poor could create further societal divisions and lead to conflicts.

(5) A true democracy exists only when each citizen has the opportunity to be part of the majority at different times.

In-text Question

Q 1. All you are saying is that democracy ensures that people do not break each other's head. This is not harmony. Should we be happy about it?

Ans 1:

(1) In a democracy, accommodating social diversity does not guarantee that conflicts will never arise among people.

(2) Democracies operate based on practical considerations, recognizing that no society can completely and permanently eliminate conflicts between various groups.

(3) Rather, democracy encourages us to appreciate these differences and develop methods for addressing them through dialogue.

We should be grateful for the opportunity to coexist with dignity and freedom, embracing our differences, which is possible only in a democratic environment.

Let Us Revise

Q 1. The two images depict two different kinds of effects democratic politics, can have on social divisions. Take one example for each image and write a paragraph each on the outcome of democratic politics in both situations.

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Ans: (1) When democratic politics is founded on existing social divisions such as race, religion, or caste, it exacerbates societal divides and fuels conflict. This is detrimental to the health of democracy itself.

(2) In contrast, when democratic processes are used to reduce these divisions for moral and practical reasons, it fosters national unity. This approach supports the progress of all societal classes, creating an environment where individuals can thrive and succeed together.

Let Us Revise

Q 1. The above cartoon and graph illustrate a point made in this section (Dignity and freedom of the citizens). Underline the sentences from this section which connect to the cartoon or graph.

Ans 1: (1) The cartoon highlights the inequality that women experience globally today, indicating a threat to their dignity.

(2) The graph illustrates that despite numerous complaints, democracy remains the most praised system of governance in South Asian countries.

EXERCISES

Q 1. How does democracy produce an accountable, responsive and legitimate government?

Ans 1:

(1) Democracy fosters an accountable government in several ways:

- It ensures regular, free, and fair elections.
- It promotes open discussions on significant public issues and legislation.
- It grants citizens the right to access information regarding governmental operations and decisions.

(2) A responsive government emerges in a democracy because it is composed of representatives elected by the people. These representatives engage with societal issues and create policies and programs that reflect the community's needs, ensuring that these initiatives are enacted to tackle existing challenges.

(3) Democracy establishes a legitimate government, as it is fundamentally a government created by the citizens. Through their elected representatives, citizens are directly involved in forming and managing the government that serves their interests.

Q 2. What are the conditions under which democracies accommodate social diversities?

Ans 2: For a democracy to effectively embrace social diversities, two key conditions must be met:

(1) It is essential for individuals to recognize that democracy does not equate to mere majority rule. The majority must engage with the minority to ensure that the government truly reflects the collective perspective of the populace.

(2) The concept of majority implies that various individuals and groups can emerge as the majority in different decisions or elections. If any group is systematically excluded from attaining a majority due to factors such as their background, the democratic system fails to be inclusive for that individual or group.

Q 3. Give arguments to support or oppose following assertions:

1. Industrialised countries can afford democracy but the poor need dictatorship to become rich.
2. Democracy can't reduce inequality of income between different citizens.

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- 3. Government in poor countries should spend less on poverty reduction, health, education, and spend more on industries and infrastructure.**
- 4. In democracy all citizen has one vote, which means that there is absence of any domination and conflict.**

Ans 3: Here's a brief argument for and against each assertion:

1. Industrialised countries can afford democracy but the poor need dictatorship to become rich.

- **Support:** Dictatorships can implement rapid economic reforms and control corruption without the delays of democratic processes, potentially leading to quick growth.
- **Oppose:** Democracies, even in wealthier nations, allow for citizen participation and accountability, leading to sustainable development. Evidence shows that many poor countries have thrived under democratic governance.

2. Democracy can't reduce inequality of income between different citizens.

- **Support:** Democracies may perpetuate inequality as wealthy individuals influence politics and policies to protect their interests, leading to systemic income disparity.
- **Oppose:** Democracies can implement progressive taxation and social welfare programs aimed at reducing inequality, allowing for greater social mobility and equitable resource distribution.

3. Government in poor countries should spend less on poverty reduction, health, education, and spend more on industries and infrastructure.

- **Support:** Investing in industries and infrastructure can create jobs and stimulate economic growth, which might eventually reduce poverty levels.
- **Oppose:** Neglecting health, education, and poverty reduction undermines long-term development; a healthy, educated population is essential for sustainable industrial growth.

4. In democracy all citizens have one vote, which means that there is absence of any domination and conflict.

- **Support:** One person, one vote theoretically promotes equality among citizens, reducing the likelihood of domination by a few.
- **Oppose:** The reality is that socio-economic disparities can lead to unequal influence in democracy, where powerful groups may dominate the political landscape, leading to conflicts and disenfranchisement.

Q 4. Identify the challenges to democracy in following descriptions. Also suggest policy/institutional mechanism to deepen democracy in the given situation:

- 1. Following a High Court directive a temple in Orissa that had separate entry door for Dalits and non-Dalits allowed entry for all from the same door.**
- 2. A large number of farmers are committing suicide in different states of India.**
- 3. Following allegation of killing of three civilians in Gandwara in a fake encounter by Jammu and Kashmir police, an enquiry has been ordered.**

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Ans 4: Here's a brief overview of the challenges to democracy in each situation along with suggested mechanisms to address them:

1. Temple Entry for Dalits and Non-Dalits:

- **Challenge:** Social discrimination and caste-based segregation undermine equality and the principles of democracy.
- **Mechanism:** Implement awareness campaigns and community engagement programs to promote social harmony and educate about the rights of marginalized groups. Establish strict enforcement of anti-discrimination laws and provide support for inter-caste dialogue.

2. Farmers' Suicides:

- **Challenge:** Economic distress among farmers reflects systemic failures in agricultural policy and access to resources, threatening the democratic right to a decent livelihood.
- **Mechanism:** Create a comprehensive agricultural policy that includes debt relief, better access to credit, insurance schemes, and mental health support for farmers. Establish a dedicated task force to monitor farmer welfare and implement reforms based on their needs.

3. Fake Encounter in Jammu and Kashmir:

- **Challenge:** Human rights violations and lack of accountability in law enforcement agencies erode trust in democracy and governance.
- **Mechanism:** Strengthen independent oversight bodies to investigate police conduct and establish transparent procedures for accountability. Enhance community policing initiatives to rebuild trust between law enforcement and local communities.

These measures can help address the specific challenges and foster a more inclusive and robust democratic environment.

Q 5. In the context of democracies, which of the following ideas is correct-democracies have successfully eliminated:

- (A) conflicts among people
- (B) economic inequalities among people
- (C) differences of opinion about how marginalised sections are to be treated
- (D) the idea of political inequality

Ans 5: In the context of democracies, the most correct idea from the options given is:

(D) the idea of political inequality.

Democracies aim to minimize political inequality by ensuring equal voting rights and participation opportunities. However, they have not completely resolved conflicts, economic disparities, or differing opinions on marginalized groups' treatment, leading to ongoing debates and discussions on these issues.

Q 6. In the context of assessing democracy which among the following is odd one out. Democracies need to ensure:

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- (A) free and fair elections
- (B) dignity of the individual
- (C) majority rule
- (D) equal treatment before law

Ans 6: (C) majority rule

Q 7. Studies on political and social inequalities in democracy show that

- (A) democracy and development go together.
- (B) inequalities exist in democracies.
- (C) inequalities do not exist under dictatorship.
- (D) dictatorship is better than democracy.

Ans 7: (B) inequalities exist in democracies.

Q 8. Read the passage below:

Nannu is a daily wage earner. He lives in Welcome Mazdoor Colony, a slum habitation in East Delhi. He lost his ration card and applied for a duplicate one in January 2004. He made several rounds to the local Food and Civil Supplies office for the next three months. But the clerks and officials would not even look at him, leave alone do his job or bother to

tell him the status of his application. Ultimately, he filed an application under the Right to Information Act asking for the daily progress made on his application, names of the officials, who were supposed to act on his application and what action would be taken against these officials for their inaction. Within a week of filing application under the Right to Information Act, he was visited by an inspector from the Food Department, who informed him that the card had been made and he could collect it from the office. When Nannu went to collect his card next day, he was given a very warm treatment by the Food and Supply Officer (FSO), who is the head of a Circle. The FSO offered him tea and requested him to withdraw his application under the Right to Information, since his work had already been done.

What does Nannu's example show? What impact did Nannu's action have on officials? Ask your parents their **experiences when they approach government officials to attend to their problems**

Ans 8: Nannu's experience illustrates the effectiveness of the Right to Information Act in empowering citizens to hold government officials accountable. Initially ignored, his persistent action prompted the officials to address his request promptly. His inquiry led to a swift response from the Food Department, highlighting how transparency can compel bureaucrats to act.

To gather insights from your parents, you can ask them about their experiences dealing with government officials, focusing on whether they faced similar challenges, how they approached their issues, and if they found success after taking specific actions like filing complaints or requests for information.

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