

OUTCOMES OF DEMOCRACY

VERY SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS [1 MARK]

1. How can you say that democracies are based on political equality?

Answer:

Democracies are based on political equality as individuals have equal weight in electing representatives.

2. What is 'transparency' in a democracy?

Answer:

Democracy ensures that decision making will be based on norms and procedure. Every citizen has the right and means to examine the process of decision making. This is known as transparency.

3. Why is democracy preferred as the better form of government than dictatorship?

OR

Why is a democratic government better than other alternatives?

Answer:

Democracy is preferred as the better form of government because it ensures people's rule based on popular consensus and enhances the dignity of the individual.

4. What are the basic elements of democracy in practical sense?

Answer:

The basic elements of democracy are formal constitutions, regular, fair and free elections, political parties and fundamental rights to citizens.

5. What thoughts should be put in to assess the outcome of democracy?

Answer:

The first step towards thinking carefully about the outcome of democracy is to recognise that democracy is a just form of government.

6. What should be the basic outcome of democracy?

Answer:

The most basic outcome of democracy should be that it produces an accountable, responsive and legitimate government.

7. Why are decisions delayed in democracy?

Answer:

Decisions are delayed in democracy because democratic governments are based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation.

8. What do democracies ensure regarding decision-making?

Answer:

Democracies ensure that decision-making is based on norms and procedures.

9. Is a democratic government efficient and effective? How?

Answer:

Yes, a democratic government, to some extent, is efficient and effective as it produces an accountable government and develops a mechanism for citizens to take part in decision-making.

10. Democracy is not free from corruption. Is it true?

Answer:

There is no denying the fact the democracy is not free from corruption but, it is only in a democracy that people can openly expose this evil and ask for its elimination.

11. List any two factors on which economic development depends.

Answer:

Economic development depends on several factors like

- (a) country's population size
- (b) global situation
- (c) cooperation from other countries
- (d) economic priorities (any two)

12. Do democracies appear to be successful in reducing economic inequalities?

Answer:

In actual life, democracies do not appear to be very successful in reducing economic inequalities.

13. In what ways are democracies different from each other?

Answer:

In spite of common basic elements, democracies are different from each other in terms of social situation, economic achievements and cultures.

14. 'Democracy cannot solve all economic and social problems but still it is perceived.' Why?

Answer:

Not only democracy but no other form of government can fully solve all economic and social problems, however, it is democracy which creates situations that help citizens to solve their social and economic problems.

15. Which country is suffering from adverse form of economic inequality?

Answer:

Bangladesh is suffering from the adverse effect of economic inequality, i.e. poverty, as more than half of its population lives in poverty.

16. Trace any two provisions of Indian government to eradicate caste inequalities.

Answer:

The following are the two provisions of Indian government to eradicate caste inequalities.

- (a) Legal and moral rights have been granted to fight for equal status.
- (b) The practice of untouchability has been banned.

17. List two valid points which promote dignity of women in a democratic government.

Answer:

Two valid points which promote dignity of women in a democratic government are as follows.

- (a) Women empowerment through reservation and freedom
- (b) Freedom to launch movements against ill practices

18. List the countries which have the most stable democracies in the world.

Answer:

The United States, Canada and Switzerland have the most stable democracies because there is 100 per cent literacy and they have very successful welfare schemes for all citizens.

19. Name any two basic constituents of democracy.

Answer:

The basic constituents or aspects of democracy are:

- (a) Political: government by consent.
- (b) Social: social and economic equality.
- (c) Economic: equal opportunity, equal status and equal distribution of income. (any two)

20. What is the dilemma regarding the practical aspect of democracy?

Answer:

The main dilemma regarding the practical aspect of democracy is that democracy is seen to be good in principle but felt to be not so good in practice.

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS [3 MARKS]

21. The ideals, principles and norms of democracy require certain conditions to be implemented. Justify the statement.

Answer:

The ideals, principles and norms of democracy require certain conditions to be implemented. This statement can be justified giving the following arguments.

- (a) Democracy is not simply rule by majority opinion. The majority always needs to work with the minority.
- (b) It is also necessary that rule by majority does not become rule by majority community in terms of religion, race, etc.
- (c) Democracy remains democracy only as long as every citizen has a chance of being in majority at some point of time.

22. How do democratic governments ensure transparency? Explain any three points.

Answer:

- Democracy ensures that decision-making will be based on norms and procedures. So a citizen, who wants to know if a decision was taken through the correct procedures, can find out as democracy guarantees to the citizens the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making.
- In a democracy people have the right to choose their rulers and people will have control over them. Whenever possible and necessary, citizens should be able to participate in decision-making that affects them all. Thus it ensures transparency by producing a government that is accountable to the citizens and is responsive to their needs and expectations.
- It is right to expect democracy to produce a government that follows procedures and is accountable to people. To do so, the democratic government develops mechanisms for citizens—regular, free and fair elections, open public debate on major policies and legislations and citizens' right to information about the government and its functioning.

23. What are the differences between democracy and dictatorship in the decision making process?

Answer:

Democracy	Dictatorship
(i) Based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation. Thus, the necessary delay in implementation.	(i) Do not have to bother about majorities and/or public opinion, thus can be quick and efficient in decision-making.
(ii) Decisions are acceptable to people and are more effective.	(ii) May take decisions not accepted by the people.
(iii) A citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making. There is transparency.	(iii) Transparency is missing from a non-democratic form of government. There is no accountability of the government to the people.

24. “An ideal government would not only keep itself away from corruption but also make fighting corruption and black money a top priority”. Justify the statement.

Answer:

The values attached to the above statement signify the following practices and institutions:

- Regular free and fair elections, open public debate on major policies and legislation and citizens' right to information about the government and its functions.
- An ideal government in a democracy follows procedures and is accountable to the people.
- A citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision making. This is known as transparency.

- An ideal government is attentive and responsive to the needs and expectations of the people and is largely free of corruption as it is a legitimate government. It is peoples own government.

25. ‘Democracy is seen to be good in principle, but felt, to be not so good in practice.’ Justify the statement with suitable arguments.

Answer:

If we look at some of the democratic policies being implemented in more than one hundred countries of the world, democracy seems to be good. For example, having a formal Constitution, holding regular elections, guaranteeing the citizens certain rights, working for the welfare of the people, etc. make us advocate that democracy is good.

But if we look in terms of social situations, their economic achievements and varied cultures, we find a very big difference in most of the democracies. The vast economic disparities, social injustice based on discrimination, standard of life, sex discrimination, etc. create many doubts about the merits of democracy. Whenever some of our expectations are not met, we start blaming the idea of democracy. Since democracy is a form of government, it can only create conditions for achieving our goals if they are reasonable.

26. How is democracy accountable and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens? Analyse.

Answer: A democracy is concerned with ensuring that people have the right to choose their rulers and have control over the rulers:

- Whenever possible and necessary, citizens should be able to participate in decision-making in a democracy.
- Democracy ensures that decision-making is based on norms and procedures. A citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making. Thus democracy entails transparency.
- For a democracy to produce an accountable, responsive and legitimate government, it must ensure the following:
 - Regular, free and fair elections.
 - Open public debate on major policies and legislations.
 - Citizens’ right to be informed about government policies.
 - A government free from corruption.

27. “Democratic government is legitimate government?” Support the statement with arguments.

Answer: Democratic government is a legitimate government. It may be slow, less efficient, not always very responsive or clean. But a democratic government is peoples’ own government. That is why there is an overwhelming support for the idea of democracy all over the world. People’s wish to be ruled by representatives elected by them. As a democratic government is peoples’ own government, they believe that democracy is suitable for their country as it is a legitimate government. Democracy’s ability to generate its own support is itself an outcome that cannot be ignored.

28. “Democracy accommodates social diversities.” Support the statement with examples.

Answer: “Democracy accommodates social diversities” in the following ways:

- Democracies 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 can evolve mechanism to negotiate these differences.
- Example, Belgium has successfully negotiated differences among ethnic population. This reduces the possibility of tensions.

- Ability to handle social differences, divisions and conflicts is thus a definite plus point of democratic regimes.

29. Analyse any three values that make democracy better.

Answer: We feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form of government because:

- Democracy promotes equality among citizens.
- It enhances dignity of individual. It promotes dignity of women and strengthens the claims of the disadvantaged.
- It improves the quality of decision making. There is transparency in a democracy.
- It provides methods to resolve conflicts.
- Democracy allows room to correct mistakes.

30. On the basis of which values will it be a fair expectation that democracy should produce a harmonious social life? Explain.

Answer: No society can fully and permanently resolve conflicts among different groups. But we can certainly learn to respect these differences and evolve a mechanism to negotiate the differences. Belgium is an example of how successfully differences were negotiated among ethnic groups. Therefore, democracy is best suited to accommodate various social divisions as it usually develops a procedure to conduct their competition. But the example of Sri Lanka shows how distrust between two communities turned into widespread conflict. Thus, a democracy must fulfil the following conditions and be based on these values in order to achieve a harmonious social life:-

- Majority and minority opinions are not permanent. Democracy is not simply rule by majority opinion. The majority needs to work with minority so that government may function to represent the general view.
- Rule by majority does not become rule by majority community in terms of religion or race or linguistic groups, etc.
- Democracy remains democracy so long as every citizen has a chance of being in majority at some point of time. No individual should be debarred from participating in a democracy on the basis of religion, caste, community, creed and other such factors.

31. Why do we feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form? Explain.

Answer: Democracy is a better form of government than any other form because:

- It is based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation. Thus the necessary delay in implementation.
- Decisions are acceptable to people and are more effective.
- A citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making. There is transparency in a democracy.
- Democratic government is a legitimate government, people's own government.
- Ability to handle differences, decisions and conflicts is a positive point of democratic regimes.
- Democracy has strengthened the claims of the disadvantaged and discriminated castes for equal status and equal opportunity.

32. Why do we feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form of government? Explain.

OR

How do you feel that democracy is better than any other form of government? Explain.

OR

“Democracy is more effective than its other alternatives.” Justify the statement.

Answer:

We feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form of government because:

- Democracy promotes equality among citizens.
- It enhances dignity of individual. It promotes dignity of women and strengthens the claims of the disadvantaged.
- It improves the quality of decision making. There is transparency in a democracy.
- It provides methods to resolve conflicts.
- Democracy allows room to correct mistakes.

33. “Most destructive feature of democracy is that its examination never gets over.” Support the statement with appropriate arguments.

Answer:

Suitable arguments:

- As people get some benefits of democracy, they ask for more.
- People always come up with more expectations from the democratic set up.
- They also have complaints against democracy.
- More and more suggestions and complaints by the people is also a testimony to the success of democracy.
- A public expression of dissatisfaction with democracy shows the success of the democratic project.

34. “Democracy is seen to be good in principle but felt to be not so good in practice.” Justify the statement.

Answer:

If we look at some of the democratic policies being implemented in more than one hundred countries of the world, democracy seems to be good. For example, having a formal Constitution, holding regular elections, guaranteeing the citizens certain rights, working for the welfare of the people etc. make us advocate that democracy is good.

But if we look in terms of social situations, their economic achievements and varied cultures, we find a very big difference in most of the democracies. The vast economic disparities, social injustice based on discrimination, standard of life, sex discrimination, etc. create many doubts about the merits of democracy. Whenever some of our expectations are not met, we start blaming the idea of democracy. Since democracy is a form of government, it can only create conditions for achieving our goals if they are reasonable.

35. Examine the political outcomes of democracy.

Answer:

The following are the political outcomes of democracy.

- (a) Democracy produces an accountable, responsible and legitimate government.
- (b) It ensures right to the citizens to choose their leaders and put a check on them.
- (c) It provides procedures and develops mechanism for decision-making.
- (d) If required, people can participate in decision-making either directly or through representatives.
- (e) It promotes regular, free and fair elections.
- (f) It generates its own political support for itself. (any three)

36. Discuss the economic outcomes of democracy.

Answer: The following are the economic outcomes of democracy.

- (a) Rather than economic growth and development, democracies can reduce economic disparities. This is because when a country achieves economic growth, wealth is equitably distributed among all citizens for leading a better life.
- (b) Eradication of poverty by government through programmes and policies is possible only in democracy and not in any other forms of non-democratic governments.
- (c) Though economic growth and development is slow in democracy, it cannot be considered the worst form of government as it has its own positive aspects.

37. Examine the forms of economic inequality in democracy.

Answer: The following are the forms of economic inequality in democracy.

- (a) A small number of ultra-rich enjoy a highly disproportionate share of wealth and incomes.
- (b) The have-nots have very little to depend upon. Their incomes have been declining.
- (c) The poor constitute a larger proportion of the voters and no party would want to lose their votes. Yet democratic governments do not seem to be as keen to address the question of poverty as we expect them to.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS [5 MARKS]

38. “Democracy stands much superior in promoting dignity and freedom of the citizens”. Justify the statement.

Answer: Examples to illustrate that dignity and freedom of citizens are best guaranteed in a democracy:

- (i) Dignity of women. Democracy recognizes dignity of women as a necessary ingredient of society. The one way to ensure that women related problems get adequate attention is to have more women as elected representatives. To achieve this, it is legally binding to have a fair proportion of women in the elected bodies. Panchayati Raj in India has reserved one-third seats in local government bodies for women. In March 2010, the Women’s Reservation Bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha ensuring 33% reservation for women in Parliament and State legislative bodies.
- (ii) Democracy has strengthened the claims of disadvantaged and discriminated castes. When governments are formed, political parties usually take care that representatives of different castes and tribes find a place in it. Some political parties are known to favour some castes. Democracy provides for equal status and opportunities for all castes.
- (iii) Democracy transforms people from the status of a subject into that of a citizen. A democracy is concerned with ensuring that people will have the right to choose their rulers and people will have control over the rulers. Whenever possible and necessary, citizens should be able to participate in decision-making that affects them all.
- (iv) A citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making. There is transparency in a democracy like India. In October 2005, the Right to Information (RTI) law was passed which ensures all its citizens the right to get all the information about the functions of the government departments. In a democracy, people also have the right to complain about its functioning.

39. How is democracy a better form of government in comparison with other forms of governments? Explain.

OR

“There is an overwhelming support for the idea of democracy all over the world.” Support the statement.

Answer: Over a hundred countries of the world today claim and practice some kind of democratic politics.

- They have formal constitutions, hold elections, have parties and they guarantee rights of citizens.
- Thus, in most countries, the democracy produces a government that is accountable to the citizens and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens.
- No society can fully and permanently resolve conflict among different groups. But we can learn to respect these differences and evolve mechanisms to negotiate them. Democracy is best suited as it develops a procedure to conduct competitions. Belgium is a successful example of negotiating difference among ethnic population.
- Passion for respect and freedom is the basis of democracy and has been achieved in various degrees in various democracies.
- The support for democracy is overwhelming all over the world and is evident from South Asia, where the support exists in countries with democratic as well as undemocratic regimes.

- People wish to be ruled by representatives elected by them as a democratic government is people's own government and makes them believe that it is suitable for their country as it is a legitimate government.

40. Explain the ways in which democracy has succeeded in maintaining dignity and freedom of citizens.

OR

“Democracy stands much superior to any other form of government in promoting dignity and freedom of the individual.” Support the statement with suitable examples.

Answer: The passion of respect and freedom are the basis of democracy:

- Economic disparity in society has been minimized to a great extent.
- In many democracies women were deprived of their right to vote for a long period of time. After long struggle they achieved their right, respect and equal treatment.
- Democracy in India has strengthened the claims of the disadvantaged and discriminated castes for equal states and opportunities, for example, SCs and STs.
- In democracy all adult citizens have the right to vote.
- Democracy evolves a mechanism that takes into account the differences and intrinsic attributes of various ethnic groups. In a democracy majority always needs to work taking into account the interest of the minority so that the minority do not feel alienated.

41. How do democracies accommodate social diversity? Explain with examples.

OR

Explain the conditions in which democracies are able to accommodate social diversities.

OR

“Democracies lead to peaceful and harmonious life among citizens”. Support the statement with suitable examples.

Answer: No society can fully and permanently resolve conflicts among different groups. But we can certainly learn to respect these differences and evolve a mechanism to negotiate the differences. Belgium is an example of how successfully differences were negotiated among ethnic groups. Therefore, democracy is best suited to accommodate various social divisions as it usually develops a procedure to conduct their competition. But the example of Sri Lanka shows how distrust between two communities turned into widespread conflict, and thus a democracy must fulfil the following two conditions in order to achieve a harmonious social life:

- Majority and minority opinions are not permanent. Democracy is not simply rule by majority opinion. The majority needs to work with minority so that government may function to represent the general view.
- Rule by majority does not become rule by majority community in terms of religion or race or linguistic groups, etc.
- Democracy remains democracy so long as every citizen has a chance of being in majority at some point of time. No individual should be debarred from participating in a democracy on the basis of religion, caste, community, creed and other such factors.

42. Explain the role of democratic governments in reducing economic disparities.

OR

“Democracies do not appear to be very successful in reducing economic inequalities”. Examine the statement with examples.

Answer: Over the years, careful evidence has been gathered to see what the relationship of democracy with economic growth and economic inequalities is.

- It is seen that on an average dictatorial regimes have had a slightly better record of economic growth, i. e., 4.34%. But when we compare their record only in poor countries (4.28%), there is no difference.
- There is enough evidence to show that within democracies there can be very high degree of inequalities. In 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 per cent for the bottom 20 per cent population.

Perhaps more than development, it is reasonable to expect democracies to reduce economic disparities. Democracies are based on political equality, but despite equality in the political arena there are growing economic inequalities. The poor constitute a large proportion of our voters and no party would like to lose its votes. Yet democratically elected governments do not appear to be keen to tackle the problem of poverty.

Democracies are expected to produce good government, but there is no guarantee that they would also produce development. As evidence shows, the economic development depends on several factors, such as country's size, global situation, co-operation from other countries, economic priorities adopted by the country etc.

43. "A public expression of dissatisfaction with democracy shows the success of democratic project." Justify the statement.

Answer: A public expression of dissatisfaction with democracy shows the success of democratic project. The statement can be justified by giving the following arguments.

- (a) When citizens show their dissatisfaction, it clearly shows that they are actively taking part in democratic projects, because this system is their own.
- (b) A public expression of dissatisfaction shows that people are not just forcefully following or agreeing with whatever they are told.
- (c) It shows that they are enjoying their freedom and hence they are no more subjects but are responsible citizens.
- (d) Freedom and transformation of people from the status of subjects to that of citizens is the main aim of democracy.
- (e) As people get benefits, they ask for more. This makes democracy better.

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