Class 10 Political Science Chapter 5: Outcomes of Democracy - Notes, Important Questions and MCQs (2026-27)

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These Outcomes of Democracy Class 10 notes cover Class 10 Political Science Chapter 5 completely: how to assess democracy's outcomes, accountable, responsive and legitimate government, economic growth and development, reduction of inequality and poverty, accommodation of social diversity, and dignity and freedom of citizens.

You also get an expected vs actual outcomes table, the NCERT growth and inequality data, South Asia survey figures, the Nannu RTI case, NCERT-style questions with answers, 10 MCQs and a free PDF with no signup.

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Chapter Overview

Democracy is seen as better than dictatorship because it promotes equality among citizens, enhances individual dignity, improves decision-making, provides a method to resolve conflicts and allows room to correct mistakes. Yet many people who support democracy in principle are not satisfied with it in practice.

The chapter shows that democracy is just a form of government that creates conditions for achieving goals; citizens must use those conditions. It then examines what we can reasonably

Important Topics and Concepts

How do we assess democracy's outcomes?

- Over a hundred countries practise some form of democracy, with constitutions, elections, parties and rights, but they differ in social situations, economic achievements and cultures.
- We often expect democracy to solve all problems and blame it when it does not.
- The first step is to recognise that democracy is just a form of government: it can only create conditions for achieving goals, and citizens must take advantage of them.

Accountable, responsive and legitimate government

- The most basic outcome of democracy should be a government that is accountable to citizens and responsive to their needs and expectations.
- Non-democratic rulers can decide quickly, but democracy is based on deliberation and negotiation, so some delay is natural. Decisions taken after following procedures are more acceptable and effective, so the cost of time is worth it.
- Democracy ensures decisions follow norms and procedures, and citizens have the right and means to examine the process. This is transparency.
- Practices to look for: regular, free and fair elections; open public debate on major policies and laws; citizens' right to information.
- Record: democracies have done well in holding elections and allowing debate, but fall short in giving everyone a fair chance, subjecting every decision to debate and sharing information. They often ignore people's needs and are not free of corruption, though non-democracies are not better.
- Democracy is certainly better in one respect: it is legitimate government, the people's own government. Its ability to generate its own support is itself an important outcome.

Support for democracy in South Asia

Surveys (State of Democracy in South Asia, 2007) show overwhelming support: 94 per cent in South Asia agree with rule by leaders elected by the people (India 95 per cent), and 88 per cent find democracy suitable for their country (India 92 per cent). Democracy is preferred over dictatorship everywhere except Pakistan. About 65 per cent in South Asia say their vote makes a difference (India 67 per cent).

Economic growth and development

- Evidence shows many democracies did not produce higher development. Between 1950 and 2000, dictatorships had a slightly higher growth rate (4.42) than democracies (3.95).
- But among poor countries, the difference is negligible: 4.34 under dictatorship vs 4.28 under democracy.
- Economic development depends on many factors: population size, global situation, cooperation from other countries and economic priorities.
- Democracy is not a guarantee of development, but we can expect it not to lag behind dictatorships; given its other positive outcomes, it is better to prefer democracy.

Reduction of inequality and poverty

- Democracies are based on political equality, but economic inequalities have grown: a small number of ultra-rich enjoy a highly disproportionate and rising share of wealth, while those at the bottom have declining incomes and struggle to meet basic needs.
- Within democracies there can be very high inequality: in South Africa and Brazil, the top 20 per cent take more than 60 per cent of national income, leaving less than 3 per cent for the bottom 20 per cent. Denmark and Hungary are much better.
- The poor form a large share of voters, yet elected governments are not as keen to address poverty as expected. In Bangladesh, more than half the population lives in poverty, and several poor countries depend on rich countries even for food.
- Democracies do not appear very successful in reducing economic inequalities.

Accommodation of social diversity

- Democracies develop procedures for competition among groups, reducing the chance that tensions become explosive or violent. Belgium is an example.
- No society can permanently resolve conflicts, but democracies help people respect differences and negotiate them; non-democracies often suppress them. This is a definite plus point of democracy.
- Two conditions (from Sri Lanka’s lesson): democracy is not simply rule by majority opinion; the majority must work with the minority, and majority and minority opinions are not permanent.
- Rule by majority must not become rule by a majority community of religion, race or language. Democracy remains democracy only as long as every citizen has a chance of being in the majority at some point.

Dignity and freedom of citizens

- Democracy is superior to all other forms of government in promoting the dignity and freedom of the individual; the passion for respect and freedom is the basis of democracy.
- Dignity of women: long struggles have made respect and equal treatment of women accepted principles; once recognised, it is easier for women to fight what is legally and morally unacceptable.
- Caste: democracy in India has strengthened the claims of disadvantaged castes for equal status and opportunity; caste-based inequalities and atrocities still occur but lack moral and legal foundations.
- Democracy’s examination never gets over: as it passes one test, people demand more. Complaints show its success, as they turn subjects into citizens who look critically at power holders. Most people believe their vote makes a difference.

Economic Outcomes: NCERT Data

Learn the trend, not every number.

Type of regime / country	Growth rate (1950–2000)
All democratic regimes	3.95
All dictatorial regimes	4.42

Type of regime / country	Growth rate (1950–2000)
Poor countries under dictatorship	4.34
Poor countries under democracy	4.28

Inequality of Income in Selected Countries

Share of national income (%).

Country	Top 20%	Bottom 20%
South Africa	64.8	2.9
Brazil	63.0	2.6
Russia	53.7	4.4
USA	50.0	4.0
United Kingdom	45.0	6.0
Denmark	34.5	9.6
Hungary	34.4	10.0

Case Study: Nannu and the Right to Information

A favourite NCERT case question.

- Nannu, a daily wage earner in a Delhi slum, lost his ration card and applied for a duplicate in January 2004.
- For three months, officials ignored him.
- He filed an application under the Right to Information Act asking for the progress of his application, names of responsible officials and action against them.
- Within a week, an inspector told him his card was ready, and he was treated warmly at the office.
- Lesson: RTI makes government accountable and transparent and empowers ordinary citizens.

Expected vs Actual Outcomes of Democracy

Outcome	What we expect	Actual record
Government	Accountable, responsive, transparent, legitimate	Good on elections and debate; weak on information sharing and corruption; always legitimate
Economic growth	Development	Slightly lower than dictatorships overall; almost equal among poor countries
Inequality and poverty	Reduced disparities	Not very successful; high inequality in some democracies
Social diversity	Peaceful accommodation	Definite plus point, if majority works with minority and majority is not fixed by community
Dignity and freedom	Respect and freedom for all	Superior to all alternatives; women and disadvantaged castes gain legal and moral support

Important Definitions and Terms

Term	Meaning
Accountable government	Government answerable to citizens for its actions
Responsive government	Government attentive to the needs and demands of people
Legitimate government	Government accepted as the people’s own
Transparency	Citizens’ right and means to examine whether decisions followed correct procedures
Deliberation	Careful discussion before taking decisions
Economic inequality	Unequal distribution of income and wealth
Majoritarianism	Rule by a permanent majority community ignoring the minority
Right to Information	Citizens’ right to know about the government and its functioning
Dignity	Respect and equal treatment as a human being

Short Answer Questions

Q1. How does democracy produce an accountable, responsive and legitimate government?

Democracy holds regular, free and fair elections, allows open public debate and gives citizens the right to information, making government accountable and responsive. Decisions follow procedures (transparency), and since the government is chosen by the people, it is legitimate.

Q2. What are the conditions under which democracies accommodate social diversities?

First, democracy is not simply rule by majority opinion; the majority must work with the minority. Second, rule by majority must not become rule by a majority community based on religion, race or language; every citizen must have a chance of being in the majority.

Q3. Is democratic government less efficient than a dictatorship? Explain.

Democracy takes more time because it is based on deliberation and negotiation. But its decisions, made through procedures, are more acceptable and effective. So the cost of time is worth it.

Q4. What is transparency in a democracy?

Transparency means that decisions are taken according to norms and procedures and that citizens have the right and means to find out whether a decision was taken through the correct process.

Q5. What does the evidence say about democracy and economic growth?

Between 1950 and 2000, dictatorships grew slightly faster (4.42) than democracies (3.95), but among poor countries the difference was negligible (4.34 vs 4.28). Democracy is not a guarantee of growth but does not lag much behind.

Q6. Why has democracy not reduced economic inequality much?

Despite political equality, a few ultra-rich hold a growing share of wealth while the poor’s incomes decline. Elected governments are not as keen to address poverty as expected, and countries like South Africa and Brazil have very high inequality.

Long struggles have made equal treatment of women a recognised legal and moral principle in democracies. This makes it easier for women to fight discrimination, which would lack legal basis in a non-democracy.

Q8. Why is public dissatisfaction considered a sign of democracy's success?

Complaints show that people have become aware and able to look critically at power holders. Democracy has transformed them from subjects into citizens who expect more.

Long Answer Questions

Q1. Give arguments to support or oppose: "Industrialised countries can afford democracy but the poor need dictatorship to become rich."

Oppose: among poor countries, growth under dictatorship (4.34) and democracy (4.28) is almost the same.

Economic growth depends on population, global situation, cooperation and economic priorities, not just the type of government.

Democracy provides legitimacy, accountability and dignity, which dictatorships do not.

Democracy accommodates social diversity and reduces violent conflict, which helps stable development.

So poor countries do not need dictatorship to become rich.

Q2. Explain the outcomes of democracy in terms of accommodation of social diversity and dignity of citizens.

Democracies develop procedures for peaceful competition, reducing violent tensions, as in Belgium.

They help people respect and negotiate differences instead of suppressing them.

Conditions: majority must work with minority, and majority should not be a fixed community.

Democracy promotes dignity and freedom better than any other system.

Women's struggles have made equal treatment a legal and moral principle; disadvantaged castes have gained stronger claims to equality.

People's complaints and expectations show they have become citizens.

Q3. Identify challenges and suggest mechanisms: a temple with separate doors for dalits; farmer suicides; a fake encounter allegation.

Separate temple entry is a challenge of caste discrimination; enforcement of laws against untouchability and court action (as the High Court did) deepen democracy.

Farmer suicides show economic distress and inequality; policies for credit, crop insurance, fair prices and income support are needed.

A fake encounter allegation is a challenge to rights and accountability of the police; independent enquiries, human rights commissions and judicial oversight are needed.

In each case, institutions like courts, commissions and laws help democracy correct its mistakes.

MCQs with Answers

1. Democracies have successfully eliminated(a) Conflicts among people (b) Economic inequalities (c) Differences of opinion on marginalised sections (d) The idea of political inequalityAnswer: (d) The idea of political inequality

2. In assessing democracy, which is the odd one out? Democracies need to ensure(a) Free and fair elections (b) Dignity of the individual (c) Majority rule (d) Equal treatment before lawAnswer: (c) Majority rule

3. Studies on 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 democracyAnswer: (b) Inequalities exist in democracies

4. The growth rate of all democratic regimes (1950–2000) was(a) 3.95 (b) 4.28 (c) 4.34 (d) 4.42Answer: (a) 3.95

5. In which country do the top 20% take 64.8% of national income?(a) Brazil (b) South Africa (c) USA (d) RussiaAnswer: (b) South Africa

6. Which country has the lowest inequality in the NCERT table?(a) UK (b) USA (c) Hungary (d) RussiaAnswer: (c) Hungary

7. The right of citizens to examine the decision-making process is called(a) Legitimacy (b) Transparency (c) Accountability (d) EfficiencyAnswer: (b) Transparency

8. Democracy is preferred over dictatorship in South Asia everywhere except(a) India (b) Nepal (c) Pakistan (d) Sri LankaAnswer: (c) Pakistan

9. Nannu got his ration card by using the(a) Right to Education (b) Right to Information Act (c) Consumer Protection Act (d) Right to EqualityAnswer: (b) Right to Information Act

10. Democracy is best suited to(a) Produce fast decisions (b) Accommodate social diversity (c) Eliminate all inequality (d) Guarantee economic growthAnswer: (b) Accommodate social diversity

Quick Revision Points

- Democracy is better: equality, dignity, better decisions, conflict resolution, correcting mistakes.
- Democracy is just a form of government; citizens must use its conditions.
- Basic outcome: accountable, responsive, legitimate government; transparency.
- Practices: free and fair elections, public debate, right to information.
- Democracy is legitimate and generates its own support (94% in South Asia support elected rule).
- Growth: democracies 3.95 vs dictatorships 4.42; poor countries 4.28 vs 4.34.
- Inequality: South Africa, Brazil top 20% get 60%+; Denmark, Hungary better.
- Bangladesh: more than half in poverty.
- Social diversity: majority must work with minority; majority not fixed by community.
- Dignity and freedom: women and disadvantaged castes gain legal and moral claims.
- Complaints show success: subjects become citizens.

Chapter Summary

Democracy is preferred because it promotes equality, dignity, better decision-making, conflict resolution and correction of mistakes, but it is only a form of government that creates conditions for these goals. It produces accountable, responsive and transparent government with a mixed record, but it is always legitimate, the people's own government.

Democracies have not clearly outperformed dictatorships in economic growth and have not reduced inequality and poverty much. However, they accommodate social diversity well, provided the majority works with the minority and is not a fixed community, and they promote dignity and freedom better than any alternative. People's growing expectations and complaints are themselves proof of democracy's success.

Exam Tips and PYQ Pattern

- Learn the expected vs actual outcomes table for 5-mark questions.
- NCERT objective answers: democracy eliminated political inequality; majority rule is the odd one out; inequalities exist in democracies.
- Use the growth and inequality data to support arguments in "support or oppose" questions.
- The two conditions for accommodating diversity are asked very often.
- Case-based questions may use the Nannu RTI passage or South Asia survey graphs.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the outcomes of democracy?

Accountable, responsive and legitimate government; economic growth; reduction of inequality; accommodation of social diversity; and dignity and freedom of citizens.

Is democracy better for economic growth?

Not necessarily; dictatorships grew slightly faster overall, but among poor countries the difference is negligible.

Why is democracy called legitimate government?

Because it is the people's own government, chosen by them.

Is Outcomes of Democracy in the 2026-27 syllabus?

Yes. It is Chapter 5 of Democratic Politics II for 2026-27.

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Conclusion

Outcomes of Democracy shows that democracy may be slow and imperfect, but it is legitimate, accommodates diversity and protects dignity better than any alternative. Revise the outcomes table, the data and the conditions for accommodating diversity to answer every question with confidence.

More Notes: Class 10 Political Science Chapter 4: Political Parties notes | Class 10 Political

Author Bio: Written and reviewed by the Nextoper Editorial Team, a group of CBSE social science educators who build chapter notes directly from the NCERT textbook and past board paper patterns.

Freshness Note: These notes follow the NCERT Class 10 Political Science textbook, Democratic Politics – II (Reprint 2026-27), and the CBSE syllabus for the 2026-27 session. Last checked on 8 November 2026.