

# CBSE Notes Class 7 Social Science Civics

## Chapter 1 - On Equality

Equality is a key feature of democracy and influences all aspects of its functioning. In CBSE Notes Class 7 Social Science Civics Chapter 1 - On Equality, you will learn more about equality – what it is, why it is important in a democracy, and whether or not everyone is equal in India.

This chapter introduces you to the concept of dignity. The government's role in passing laws and instituting policies is also discussed. In the end, the chapter briefly describes an issue of inequality in the United States of America to highlight that this is a global phenomenon and a feature of many democratic countries.

### CBSE Notes Class 7 Social Science Civics Chapter 1 - On Equality

#### Equal Right to Vote

In a democratic country, like India, all adults irrespective of what religion they belong to, how much education they have had, what caste they are, or whether they are rich or poor are allowed to vote. This is called **universal adult franchise** and is an essential aspect of all democracies. The idea of universal adult franchise is based on the idea of equality.

#### Other kinds of equality

Apart from being poor, people in India experience inequality which is based on the caste system.

#### Recognising dignity

When persons are treated unequally, their dignity is violated. **Dignity** is the right of a person to be valued and respected for their own sake and to be treated ethically.

#### Equality in Indian democracy

The Indian Constitution recognises every person as equal. This means that every individual in the country, including male and female persons from all castes, religions, tribes, educational and economic backgrounds are recognised as equal.

The recognition of equality includes the following provisions in the Constitution:

1. Every person is equal before the law.
2. No person can be discriminated against on the basis of their religion, race, caste, place of birth or whether they are female or male.
3. Every person has access to all public places.

4. Untouchability has been abolished.

### Steps taken by Government to Implement Equality

The two ways in which the government has tried to implement the equality that is guaranteed in the Constitution is:

- First through laws
- Second through government programmes or schemes

One of the steps taken by the government includes the midday meal scheme.

### Issues of equality in other democracies

In many democratic countries around the world, the issue of equality continues to be the key issue around which communities struggle.

**For example**, in the United States of America, the African-Americans whose ancestors were slaves who were brought over from Africa, continue to describe their lives today as largely unequal. They were treated extremely unequally in the US and denied equality through the law.

The **Civil Rights Act of 1964** prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, religion or national origin. It also stated that all schools would be open to African-American children and that they would no longer have to attend separate schools specially set up for them.