



“Egalitarianism in a Globalized World: An Indian Perspective on Equality and Equity”

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Abstract

The main purpose of working on this research paper is to know the status of the application of the principles of Egalitarianism in the present-day globalised world, mainly from India’s point of view. It is known that the main idea of Egalitarianism is Equality i.e., treating all the subjects of the state equally, which also includes treating people equally irrespective of their categories like caste, class, race, religion, gender, etc. The concept also talks about providing equal opportunities to all and about the fair allocation and redistribution of resources and wealth in a fair manner by avoiding discrimination of people based on several categories mentioned above. These principles are also considered in making new laws and it is also part of the concept of the rule of law that says that all are equal before the law and no one is above the law.

This paper will begin with an introduction to the concept of Egalitarianism, its evolution, and its basis, followed by the Dogmas and principles laid down in Egalitarianism including the distinction between Equality and Equity. Impact of Egalitarianism in a globalised world, and its impact in Indian scenarios like the economic, social, political, gender, health, education, and labour rights, along with the Constitutional provisions that imbibe and implement these principles. The paper concludes with the challenges that are being faced in implementing these principles of Egalitarianism, the Future and consequences of Egalitarianism, and recommendations for the lawmakers that help in promoting these principles that can ultimately result in bringing Equality among everyone and ensure equal and fair distribution of wealth.

Keywords: Egalitarianism, Globalization, Equality, Equity, India, Redistribution of Wealth, Non-Discrimination.

Research Questions

1. What is the impact of globalization on the administration of principles of Egalitarianism in India’s economic, social, and political aspects?
2. How did India’s legal and social frameworks manage to apply the principles of Egalitarianism in the present-day globalized world and what are the challenges faced in this process?

Research Objectives

1. To study and analyze the concept of Egalitarianism, its evolution, and its application in the modern globalized world.
2. To examine the impact of this concept on various elements of the Indian society like economic, social, political, health, education, etc.
3. To assess the Indian Constitution’s role in promoting the main principles of Egalitarianism which are Equality and Equity.
4. To recognize the challenges in the implementation of Egalitarianism in India and give some necessary and possible recommendations for the lawmakers to promote equality and fair distribution of resources.

Both the research questions and research objectives of this paper are aligned closely. Questions seek to investigate and explore the impact of globalization on Egalitarianism and the objectives focussed on the concept and its impact on Indian frameworks along with the rule of the Constitution in implementing these principles and also to recognize the challenges or problems and solutions or recommendations to promote and encourage equality in India. Thus, with this, it is clear that both the questions and objectives depict a structural approach to understanding Egalitarianism and its effects on India.

Research Methodology

The research method used in writing this paper is the Doctrinal Method i.e., secondary data was collected from different books, research papers, and websites and with this it is declared that this paper is of an objective nature rather than subjective. Personal choices and opinions were not depicted in this paper and only findings that were mentioned and published in different sources were only used to write this paper.

Literature Review

A study by P. S. R. Anjaneyulu in 2010, assessed the status of Egalitarianism in modern Indian society. A study in 2018 by R. A. Kapoor found out how the principles of egalitarianism and social justice are interrelated and reflected Indian scenarios. A study by Nitin B. Dandekar in the year 2021 examined the relationship between caste and economic inequality in modern India. And, a study by Nisha S. in the year 2021 examined the caste-based reservation in promoting educational equality. In the year 2022, a study by Manisha B. Desai investigated the role of caste, gender, and social justice in women's empowerment. A study by Anita Patil in the year 2022, analyzed how gender and caste affect access to resources and opportunities for development for the people. Ranjit Singh's study in the year 2023 studied the relationship between caste, class, and political power in India. A study by Deepak Kumar in 2023 studied the relationship between health inequality and public policy in India.

Introduction

Egalitarianism¹ is a concept that promotes equal rights and opportunities by treating all in the same way irrespective of their social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. It aims to eliminate oppression on the basis of race, sex, caste, and class and ensures providing everyone with fundamental rights moral status, and dignity.

Overview of Egalitarianism in a Globalized World²

In this globalized world, there are certain drawbacks that concern this concept of Equality which is the primary principle of Egalitarianism in several fields and sectors like Economic, Environmental, Cultural, and based on gender, race, and access to technology.

Economic Inequality: Globalization has increased the gap between people of different incomes and wealth. There is a saying that also exists in reality, i.e., the rich becoming richer and the poor becoming poorer. Thus, to address this issue, the concept of Egalitarianism calls for the redistribution of resources and aims to provide fair access to essentials to everyone to reduce inequality.

Gender Inequality³: Globalization has increased the opportunities for women in all sectors and allowed them to work in all departments but even in these affairs of employment there exists a form of inequality based on gender that includes variation in pay i.e., the pay of the women is less when compared to the pay of men in some workplaces for the same type and amount of work. Along with this, there is another issue of violence against women that has to be completely restricted, and to address these issues, Egalitarianism promotes equal pay for equal work and also calls for equal representation of women in the positions for which they are eligible.

Cultural and Racial Inequality: With the increase in international trade all around the globe, there is an increase in migration of workers from one place to another and meanwhile we can see discrimination of people and treatment unequally based on their culture and race. For example, blacks are treated differently and are discriminated against by whites even today. This concept calls for the removal of such discrimination and promotes equality.

Environmental Justice: Environmental benefits and fruits won't be the same and equal for everyone due to the presence and existence of people in different parts of the globe and with different geographical conditions. Thus, the concept of Egalitarianism also addresses this issue and calls for fair distribution of environmental resources or their substitutes and balancing the climatic conditions and actions.

Technological Access: There exists inequality even in this aspect of use and access to the utilization of technology. That means there is no access to technology for everyone in the world because of the differences in incomes and wealth of different people. Thus, Egalitarianism calls for providing equal opportunity and access to technology for everyone that benefits everyone.

Evolution of Egalitarianism

When we go back to the time when the concept of Egalitarianism was first traced, it was during ancient civilizations like Greece, when philosophers like Plato and Aristotle had spoken about the need for social and political equality. When we look into the basis of different religions like Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, etc even they have prioritized and promoted the idea of Justice and stated that all are equal before God. Later different thinkers brought this concept of Egalitarianism into the modern era with their different ideas and theories.

John Locke gave a theory of Natural Rights and Equality⁴ that discusses the need for natural rights like the right to life, liberty, and property. Alongside, also spoke about the importance of Equality with which all individuals will be free and equal. And made it clear that the Government or the administration has to protect these rights from getting violated.

J. J. Rousseau proposed a theory about Social Contract and General Will⁵ that states that people are born free but societal institutions lead to inequality and thus there is a requirement for a contract that collects the general will of all and ensures the common good and equality among everyone.

¹ Dhawal Shankar Srivastav- RAWLS'S THEORY OF JUSTICE THROUGH AMARTYA SEN'S IDEA- [Indian Law Institute- 2016](#)

² Piketty, T. (2014) *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*; Oxfam Report on Global Inequality (2021)

³ Fraser, N. (2005) *Reframing Justice in a Globalizing World*; UN Women Report on Gender Equality, 2020

⁴ Locke, J. (1689) *Two Treatises of Government*

⁵ Rousseau, J-J. (1762) *The Social Contract*

Karl Marx's work about the Class Struggle and Communism⁶, it demanded a society without different classes of people which led to inequality and increased exploitation of labor. Thus, he suggested common ownership of properties of the state and explained how important it is to have the principle of Equality.

John Rawls's theory of Justice as Fairness⁷ proposed the principle of the 'Veil of Ignorance' to show and ensure fairness in society. It also emphasized other principles like equal basic liberties and difference principles and stated that inequality can be justified only if it benefits the less advantaged people.

Amartya Sen's Capability Approach⁸ stated that Equality must be measured in terms of the capabilities of the people not just based on the distribution of resources or wealth.

While speaking about the Indian stance, the concept of equality does exist even in ancient India even though the caste hierarchy adversely affected the resource distribution system. After Independence, the father of the Constitution Dr. B. R. Ambedkar laid the foundation for the principles of Egalitarianism and focused on justice and equality while framing the provisions of the Constitution. Abolishing the Zamindari system, introducing reservations for the backward classes of people, and welfare schemes amounted to promoting the distribution of wealth and equality.

Even the 20th century saw different ideas relating to Egalitarianism like the importance of civil rights, feminism, etc with which people fought to achieve equality in race, and gender. And even today there are issues for which people fight and it does consist of the achievement of egalitarianism principles, such issues include economic equality, gender rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and social justice.⁹ Which ultimately aims to fight for fair distribution of resources and provide equal opportunities.

Dogmas and Principles of Egalitarianism

Some main principles that were laid down and discussed in the concept of Egalitarianism include the following:

Equality of Opportunity¹⁰: Egalitarianism calls for providing equal opportunities for people of all categories and groups irrespective of their race, caste, religion, region, etc. These opportunities should be in the education sector as well as in the employment sector. For this, governments are trying their level best by providing reservations for backward communities of people who are considered marginalized categories like SCs, STs, OBCs, and also to those who are economically weaker and to women to promote equality economically as well as to promote gender equality.

Equality Before Law¹¹: This is one of the main principles of Egalitarianism, and this was inducted in the Constitution of India in Article 14 which states that all are equal before the law no one is above the law, and people's status and category of caste, race, religion, region are not considered in this aspect and everyone is considered equal in front of the law, and also says that rule is rule and rule for all.

Fair Distribution of Wealth¹²: There is an imbalance in the wealth of the people of India, i.e., India consists of the wealthiest people in the world and the poverty level of India is also not too low but relatively it is high. With this, we can say that the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. To bring in a level of equality, and to support low-income people and provide them equal opportunities like others. To address these problems, the government introduced several schemes and policies to ensure and provide access to financial resources for the poor. These policies include the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana which provides financial support and assistance to the needy.

Non-Discrimination¹³: Egalitarianism and its principles are completely against discrimination on any basis like caste, class, gender, etc. Thus, this concept aims at bringing in equality among everyone regarding all the sectors and promotes equality in promoting equal opportunities and distributing the resources fairly.

Equitable Distribution of Resources: This concept of Egalitarianism insists on the fair distribution of all types of resources like wealth, healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. Providing all these resources to everyone helps bring equality shows no disparity among them and tries to reduce them at maximum.

Equality and Equity

Equality means to treat everyone in the same way and give resources and opportunities equally to everyone without any differences based on their categories like caste or gender etc. It is based on the concept of Sameness which means to treat everyone in the same way. The main goal of Equality is to give equal treatment without considering anyone's background or problems and disadvantages. It is assumed that all are in the same position and that the capacity of everyone is the same and this can lead to inappropriate results as neither everyone has the same needs and requirements nor everyone has the same problems.

The Reservation-free system¹⁴ can be called one of the examples of this concept of Equality, in which all the students are expected to get the same and high marks to get admission in a college or a course regardless of their categories like caste, social or economic background.

Whereas, Equity means to provide resources and opportunities to only those people who need them and to those who need to achieve a level of equality or financial, social, and economic assistance. This principle is based on the concept of Fairness which ensures people get what they

⁶ "The Communist Manifesto" (1848)

⁷ "A Theory of Justice" (1971)

⁸ "Development as Freedom" (1999), "The Idea of Justice" (2009)

⁹ Fraser, N. (2005) *Reframing Justice in a Globalizing World*

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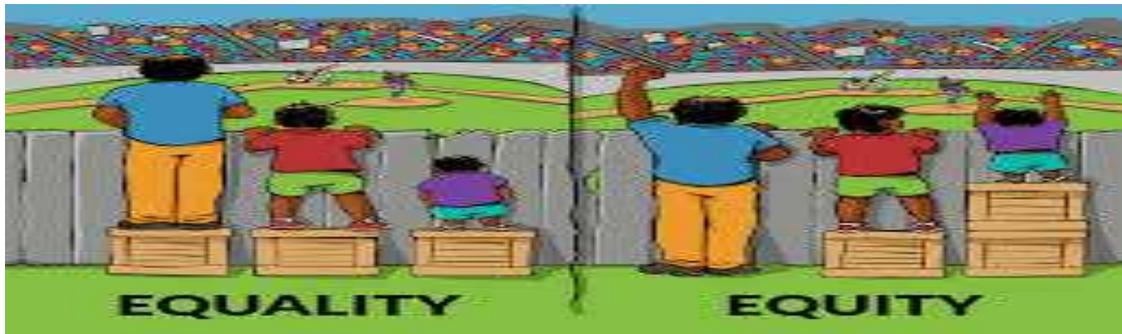
¹² Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. Oxford University Press

¹³ Ambedkar, B. R. (1936). *Annihilation of Caste*. Navayana Publishing

¹⁴ Ghosh, A. (2016). *Equity in education: Concepts and Indian experience*. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, 62(2), 230-244

need to fairly distribute resources and opportunities to bring them to the same level as someone who already has those resources or opportunities. Its main goal is to address those who are treated unequally and to bring and achieve a balanced outcome and result.

The Reservation-system¹⁵ is an example of bringing equity in which a certain number of seats or admissions in a particular institution or a course are reserved for a certain group of people or category of people, this happens not only in the educational sector but also in the employment field where certain jobs in the public sector are reserved for a particular caste or category's people. This is implemented to address the inequality problem being faced by some people who were discriminated against in the earlier days because of which they do face problems like lacking proper resources and that helps in excelling in their respective fields.



Impact of Egalitarianism

Egalitarianism is a concept that promotes equality and ensures providing of the same, and equal rights, opportunities, and treatment for everyone. In present-day society, all nations are interconnected and working together globally by following the ideas of Egalitarianism and bringing shape to social, economic, and political reforms. Particularly in India, Egalitarianism is important due to its caste-based discrimination, gender inequality, and economic disparities that used to be in existence earlier as well as now. Though there has been some progress with the policies and reforms of the government challenges remain even today, because of the strong use of such old practices. Some global changes continue to influence India's policies and efforts towards curbing inequalities.

Economic Inequality: Principles of Egalitarianism promote the sharing of resources and opportunities fairly and guide global leaders and governments about how to reduce wealth inequality. There are initiatives taken by different governments of respective nations. In India, there is a policy named MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) that ensures minimum wages for rural workers and also guarantees employment for people residing in rural areas and contributes to reducing economic inequality.

Indra Sawhney & Ors. vs Union of India & Ors., AIR 1993 SC 477; (1992) Supp (3) SCC 217, this case was about reservations in government jobs for Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

Social or Societal Inequalities: This is another form of inequality that prevails in society, in which people are discriminated against based on race, caste, etc. The concept of Egalitarianism calls for eliminating such inequalities and unnecessary unstructured and unauthorized hierarchies globally and promotes equality. To work on this issue, the Government brought the concept of reservations to ensure equal opportunities in education and jobs for people from marginalized communities.

Unequal Representation in Politics: As per the policies of Global Governance laid down by the United Nations, it is required to follow democracy and have equal representation of people in the respective governments of the respective nations. So that inequality among people in Political scenarios can be avoided. To address this issue, a new system of local government was introduced and there are reservations in such levels of government by making it mandatory for women to contest in certain constituencies or for a certain percentage of represented by women or by people belonging to a marginalized group or caste of people.

Gender Equality¹⁶: Another issue that is so active in India even today is Gender Discrimination, women are still dominated by men due to the historical and habituated Patriarchal Mentality and behaviors that have been in practice for so long, and this concept of Egalitarianism also concerned about this issue of gender inequalities and calls for bringing equality among men and women globally. The Government of India brought several policies like Beti Bachao Beto Padhao that promote education and other opportunities for women to empower them.

Access to Healthcare¹⁷: Egalitarianism calls for providing access to healthcare services for everyone equally, especially for marginalized and unprivileged people globally whose income level is less. Indian Government initiated a scheme called Ayushman Bharat that provides free healthcare for low-income families with the idea of ensuring equal access to medical facilities for everyone.

Educational Opportunities¹⁸: It also promotes access to education for everyone irrespective of their economic and financial background. With this, it helps in providing individuals to learn and develop their skills and settle in their lives. For this purpose, the Indian Government brought legislation called the Right to Education Act (RTE) that guarantees free and compulsory education for all children aged 6-14 and also ensures that children of all groups and categories get access to schooling and other after-study opportunities.

Labour Rights: Workers must be provided with equal wages and the same working conditions without any discrimination and with this, we can protect labour mainly those who belong to marginalized groups worldwide. To fulfill this the Indian Government brought some legislation

¹⁵ Government of India. (2006). *Report of the Oversight Committee on Implementation of the Reservation Policy in Educational Institutions*. Ministry of Human Resource Development

¹⁶ Mitra, A. (2018). *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao: The role of education in women's empowerment*. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 25(2), 198-212

¹⁷ NITI Aayog. (2018). *Ayushman Bharat: National health protection scheme*. Government of India

¹⁸ Jha, P., & Parvati, P. (2010). *Right to Education Act 2009: Critical gaps and challenges*. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 45(13), 20-23

like the Minimum Wage Act that ensures fair and equal wages, for all for the same kind of work. Along with this, there are certain other schemes and programs like the Skill India Program that provide training to underprivileged workers and let them have more opportunities in the employment sector.

Constitutional Provisions¹⁹

Some provisions of the Indian Constitution promote the principles of Egalitarianism, which mainly focus on bringing equality, treating everyone equally in front of the law, and avoiding discrimination based on several categories and groups of people like caste, class, religion, gender, region, etc. These provisions mainly focus on bringing equality among the people in sectors like education, employment, and politics, particularly for marginalized groups like SCs, STs, and women. Those provisions are as follows:

1. **Article 14:** - This provision provides for the Right to equality for all the citizens of the country by protecting them from getting their rights violated equally and this provision aligns with Egalitarianism's principle of promoting legal equality which means to say that law is the same and equal for everyone and also another principle that prevents discrimination of people based on different categories. *Maneka Gandhi vs. Union of India & Anr.*, AIR 1978 SC 597; (1978) 1 SCC 248
2. **Article 15:** - This provides for the prohibition of discrimination of people on the grounds of religion, race, caste, class, Sex, or place of birth. This provision lines up with the principle of Egalitarianism that encourages equal treatment of everyone in public places and institutions. Clauses of this provision i.e., Article 15(4) and (5) also allow the State to make special provisions and reservations for advancing socially and educationally backward classes of people and also by offering appropriate actions for marginalized groups of people. *National Legal Services Authority vs. Union of India & Ors.*, AIR 2014 SC 1863; (2014) 5 SCC 438
3. **Article 16:** - This provision calls for providing equal opportunities to the people in the public sector and also talks about different appropriate actions taken to develop people of marginalized or unprivileged groups. This also promotes providing fair and equal employment opportunities.
4. **Article 17:** - This provision talks about abolishing untouchability among some categories of people like the people of some backward class. This lines up with one of the principles of Egalitarianism that ensures providing social equality by addressing the issue of discrimination based on caste.
5. **Article 21A:** - This provision grants the right to education and makes it compulsory to every kid who is between 6 to 14 years of age and this was made a fundamental right, this comes under the Right to Life and Liberty of Article 21. *Unni Krishnan, J.P. & Ors. vs. State of Andhra Pradesh & Ors.*, AIR 1993 SC 2178; (1993) 1 SCC 645
6. **Article 39:** - This provision is a part of the Directive Principle of State Policy, these are not justiciable, which means when these provisions are not followed then a suit or a case cannot be filed against the government to enforce these provisions because these are only framed for the sake of guiding the governments in making laws. Thus, this provision talks about paying equal wages for equal work done by either a man or woman and aligns with the principle of Egalitarianism i.e., promoting economic equality and protecting labour rights.
7. **Article 46:** - This directs the state and the governments to promote the educational interests of some marginalized and weaker sections like Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and other sections like economically weaker sections. This aligns with the principle of Egalitarianism like encouraging social justice. Providing political equality includes giving voting rights to everyone without any prejudice.
8. **Articles 325 & 326:** - These provisions talk about Universal Adult Suffrage which provides every person whose age is 18 and above will be granted the right to vote irrespective of their other background. This aligns with the policy of Egalitarianism that Provides political equality including giving voting rights to everyone without any prejudice.

Challenges in Implementing the Principles of Egalitarianism

1. **Caste System:** - Despite having several provisions and exclusive laws to promote equality, still there exist caste-based discrimination mainly in rural areas due to the old-schooled ideas that are rooted in their minds and it is difficult to change their minds and way of thinking and bringing awareness about these things to people who are uneducated, helps in solving this issue up to some extent but still it stands as a challenge.
2. **Economic Inequality²⁰:** - Wealth is concentrated in a very small group of people and the rest of the people have very little wealth and income. This gap between the rich and poor groups brings inequality economically or financially and this challenge is difficult to overcome due to a lack of proper skill and knowledge about investing and increasing the money people are having, thus giving them money or wealth is not the solution for this issue but to also educate them how to use and increase their wealth is also important.
3. **Gender Discrimination:** - Though there are several feminist movements that call for equality among women and men, still there is a problem of discrimination against women in many sectors like education, employment, property rights, etc.
4. **Corruption²¹:** - Government servants and other authorities work for the ones who have money and who corrupt these officials to get their work done. But the poor cannot do such things and officials and authorities show the disparity and differences among these and slow down the progress of equality.
5. **Social Resistance:** - Old-schooled and traditional mindsets of people in rural areas find these new policies and laws to implement and execute which also slows down the progress toward equality and this makes it difficult to accept and implement such laws.
6. **Political Barriers:** - People of Marginalized groups and unprivileged groups always find it difficult to contest or participate in elections and politics due to the fear of misrepresentation by influential people and affecting their decision-making.
7. **Regional Disparities²²:** - There are many differences and difficulties in developing the urban and rural areas which leads to unequal allocation and distribution of resources like healthcare, education, etc.

¹⁹ The Constitution of India (1950), Government of India

²⁰ Patnaik, P. (2020). *A theory of economic inequality: Causes and consequences*. Oxford University Press

²¹ Bhargava, R. (2019). *Corruption and democratic processes in India*. Cambridge University Press

²² Saxena, N. C. (2015). *Unequal development: Regional disparities in India*. Oxford University Press

8. **Religious and Cultural Differences:** - Some religious principles and values stand against the principles of modern concepts like Egalitarianism and this clash between these may affect the progress of implementation of principles like equality and other principles of Egalitarianism.

Recommendations

1. **Progressive Taxation:** - It is suggested to implement a higher tax rate for the wealthy people to redistribute such amounts collected to those who have less income. This method is already followed in India as per the Income Tax Act, which follows this method of progressive taxation through which higher earners pay high taxes.
2. **Strengthen Welfare Programs:** - New programs and schemes have to be brought into implementation that improve the welfare of the poor by providing housing and food security. In India, there is a scheme called Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana in which cash is transferred to the poor who are in need whoever is eligible for such programs.
3. **Universal Basic Income:** - This aims to bring the ability for people to earn a basic income which is the minimum amount to be earned. Measures have to be taken by the governments and states so that people will become eligible and able to earn such basic income by providing them with certain skills and other necessities.
4. **Education and Health Access:** - Facilities like Education and Healthcare have to be given to everyone and some schemes like in India like the Midday Meal Scheme encourage students to come to school for a meal and with that even students can be made nutritious. And schemes related to healthcare like the Ayushman Bharat Scheme provide free healthcare to low-income people.
5. **Employment Opportunities:** - The Government has to provide more employment opportunities by bringing and encouraging more industries and supporting entrepreneurship that can provide more jobs and employment opportunities to the youth to implement this, the Indian Government has started schemes like Startup India and Make in India which promotes more businesses and new entrepreneurs.
6. **Support for Businesses:** - Financial support has to be given to small businesses to encourage them to get permission and get into the markets to do business as not everyone is skilled and educated and some are into businesses and trades. Schemes of Government like Mudra Yojana provide finances by granting loans with low rates of interest.
7. **Land Reforms:** - Lands have to be distributed among people in a fair mode. Previously lands were distributed among the poor by implementing a policy of capping, that restricts owning a certain limit of land and other lands were gathered and acquired to distribute among the poor to encourage them by providing the opportunity to develop themselves by farming and other options.
8. **Financial Inclusion:** - The government and states have to provide access to everyone to banking services even for the poor to provide financial identity and inclusion. The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) scheme of the Government of India provided people with millions of bank accounts and helped in promoting financial inclusion.

Conclusion

Egalitarianism as we have discussed in this paper, is an important principle that focuses on ensuring equality among people. In simple words, it promotes treating everyone equally irrespective of their caste, class, gender, race, religion, or race, etc. It is difficult to implement these principles in the present globalized world as these contrast with traditional and old-schooled religious concepts and ideas. While speaking about the impact of Globalization on India there are several sectors and fields like economic, social, and political that require equality to be implemented but it is difficult to implement due to several challenges that are mentioned in the paper. But still, the Indian Constitution contributes to promoting these principles through its provisions like Articles 14, 15, 16, 21, and other provisions that were also added to this paper.

There are a lot of challenges that are faced by the authorities and governments in implementing the principles of Egalitarianism in the present globalized world that were mentioned in the paper. This paper also includes some recommendations for the lawmakers to consider while making laws, to promote and encourage the implementation of the principles of Equality, though the present government has implemented several schemes and programs through which equality can be achieved and it requires some more rapid and rigorous actions to be taken to execute these principles.

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