

Topic: Democracy is the Best Governance System Only for First World Countries

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Essay

Socrates, a renowned Athenian philosopher, famously critiqued democracy, arguing that it was akin to choosing a ship's captain by lottery. He believed that the governance required wisdom and expertise not mere popular opinion. This critique resonates strongly when considering the challenges of democracy in third world countries. Democracy in its

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present form, has taken a long time to emerge, from Athens to 1215 Magna Carta and from American revolutions in eighteenth century, to the adult franchise spread in nineteenth and early twentieth century; It has been established as a form of governance to which every nation is entitled — whether in Europe, America, Asia or Europe. However, the west has found it facilitating in dispensation of services due to reason that the features of democracy are not compromised in west: the rule of law, the free and fair elections, high literacy rates and economic independency. Therefore, from the treaties and lectures delivered, west also preaches democracy. Some factors, however, have the potential to disparage the real essence of democracy as seen in third world countries grappling with high illiteracy rates, socio-economic disparities, undermined rule of law and ethnic or social differences. These factors taint the fair name of the system, making it only good for first world countries and worst form of governance for third world countries. This essay will expound the simple question: Why democracy in its present form is a viable and desirable system for first world countries but remains a worst form

for countries where masses are disenfranchised heavily.

First, the reason behind the democracy as a best form of governance for first world countries is their high literacy rates. In democracy contexts the definition of literacy extends beyond the ability to read and write, but to make informed decisions, critically analyze the minute details of politics and having knowledge about their political rights. As Robert Dahl wrote in his book, "Informed participation is the cornerstone of democracy". In west usually masses are well aware of their political rights and responsibilities, so it becomes difficult for demagogue to manipulate them. For example, high literacy rate in America has led to the public awareness of the power, democracy blessed them with. They use this power to seat or unseat any congress member in the form of impeachment. Donald Trump, a majoritarian demagogue has faced impeachment due to educated public. Hence, in west the high literacy rate leads to the success of democracy and a proper democratic governance.

Second, the rule of law and institutional strength are key features for democracy to thrive in first world countries. Daron Acemoglu and

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James Robinson in book 'Why Nations Fail' wrote,
" Nations are not destined to success or fail due to geography or culture, but because of emergence of extractive or inclusive institutions within them "

In West, mostly in first world countries, the rule of law and institutional strength is not compromised. There exists the same law for poor or wealthy, weak or powerful, elites or common-men.

A case study of American President 'Richard Nixon' can be taken when he was found guilty in watergate scandal, ultimately leading to his resignation with castigation. Moreover, when judiciary is free of any political influence, people are forced to obey law and hence an important feature of democracy is not compromised, making it a best form of governance for first world countries.

Third, Economic prosperity leads to democratic prosperity. In western countries, especially first world countries, after the industrialization and economic growth, the democracy began to thrive at its best. As Amartya Sen in book 'Development as Freedom' wrote, " Poverty and lack of opportunity can severely restrict people's ability to participate in political

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process and exercise their democratic rights". When people are economically rich, they cannot be manipulated or exploited so easily for the greed of basic necessities, rather they examine their political leaders for their long term policies. A case study of West Germany's economic prosperity after World War 2 can be taken which played a significant role in strengthening its democracy. The country's rapid economic growth, high standard of living and reduced income inequality helped create a stable and stable democracy. Hence, the first world countries strengthen their economy first that results in a powerful democracy to emerge.

Four, In western countries that are first world countries, there exists freedom to critique on policies of any political leader. The press is free and everyone has right of information. As Timothy Garton wrote in book, "free speech: Ten principles", "freedom where the press is free and every man is able to read, all is safe". The quote resonates strongly in the case of first world countries where every one is able to get right information. The New York Times' exposure of the Pentagon papers (1971) and the Washington Post's

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Investigation into the Watergate scandal (1972-74) are classic examples of free press in action. Hence, in first world countries, as the freedom of speech and freedom of press is not compromised, the democracy is best form of governance there.

Five, free, fair and transparent elections are always cornerstone for functioning democracy. As in America, Thomas Jefferson believed that there should be free and fair elections and every individual should participate in the ultimate authority of the government. In first world countries they ensure the electoral process is free, fair and reflective of people's will. In America, regardless of many conspiracies against Trump, and many assumptions that he will lose the election, he won. This shows the elections are transparent and free in first world countries, and they are accepted by masses without any allegations of rigging. So free and fair elections are backbone of democracy that is maintained in first world countries that leads the democracy to thrive.

Six, the vibrant civil society in west has potential to transform the country into successful

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democracy, The civil culture in west encourages citizens to participate in the democratic process through voting. The prime example of the role of civil society is the women's suffrage movement that played a crucial role in United States and United Kingdom, ultimately leading to the extension of voting rights to the women. Hence, a vibrant and free civil society in first world countries helps them to be successful in democracy.

As the above paragraphs described the democracy is best form of governance for first world countries, providing stability, security and prosperity; In fact, it can be recipe for disaster in the countries where masses are disenfranchised deeply - Third world countries. The discussion given below is going to demonstrate, how the democracy can be worst form of governance for third world countries.

First, the foremost problem prevailing in third world countries that hinders the democratic path is high illiteracy rates. Generally, public is not aware of their basic political rights and hence ignorant of the powers they have delegated to their representatives. When people are not very well aware of their political rights, they can be

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manipulated or exploited by sweet talk or by charismatic personality. The demagogues often present simple solutions and promises to complex problems during their political campaigns, and people who are unable to analyze the problem and its possible solutions become prey of these demagogues. For example, in many rural areas of developing nations, voting patterns are often influenced by rumors, religious leaders or local elites. A same case was seen in Pakistan where in 1977 legitimize his rule under the cover of islamization and by exploiting religious sentiments of masses. Hence, the illiteracy is the major cause behind the failure of democracy in third world countries.

Second, In third world countries, an important feature of democracy that is freedom of speech and press is compromised. People do not know what is true ^{and} ~~or~~ what is propaganda. The government and elites show them what they wanted to show and hence they are gradually brainwashed. The prime example of how ban on freedom of speech is North Korea, where there is ban on freedom of expression and all media is being controlled

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by government. According to Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, North Korea scores a mere 0.029 out of 10. Hence, the partial or complete ban on freedom of expression ~~renders~~ makes the democracy worst form of governance for third world countries.

Third, in third world countries, the rule of law and weak institutions are major cause of democracy failure. In these countries the judiciary remains under the control of elites and government officials. This leads to impunity of powerful for law resulting more corruption and exploitation of public assets without any fear of accountability. The countries with low democracy index usually have high corruption index. The prime example is Pakistan where many of ministers or even ex-Prime-ministers are alleged of dozens of corruption charges, yet hold important positions. There is no check and balance or a pure castigation for them according to law. This shows, how in third world countries, due to undermined rule of law, democracy makes the worst form of governance.

four, the main reason behind the failure

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of democracy to deliver in third world countries is poverty and socio-economic disparities.

The country where the basic amenities of life are missing, the first concern of people would be basic necessities not democratic norms. They would follow the leader who promises them to provide the basic needs rather than long term policies.

In many countries, the public was exploited during elections by using this scenario as seen in Pakistan where Zulfikar Ali Bhutto famous

slogan Roti-Kapra and Makan gave him a rise among masses. So, in third world countries

masses are indifferent to government system rather whether it is democratic or authoritarian unless

they are provided with basic life amenities. Hence, for the third world countries which are grappled with

poverty and socio-economic disparities democracy makes worst form of governance.

Five, In third world countries, there exists more ethnic or social division where

one group of masses is marginalized on basis

of ethnic or social division. Moreover, when

leaders are elected, they also reflect the

same mentality and add fuels to fire by

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Increasing the division through their speeches. Rwanda's ethnic divisions between the Hutu and Tutsi population led to 1994 genocide which led to deaths of over 800,000 people resulting in the halt of democracy.

Hence, democracy only works when the people are united and working collectively for betterment of nation. Contrarily, the absence of unity and ethnic or social division in third world countries make them vulnerable for democracy to flourish.

In nutshell, democracy is a fragile flower that needs to be nurtured and protected. While democracy is often hailed as an ideal form of governance for first world countries where the basic features of democracy are not subverted: the rule of law, free and fair elections and there exists the economic independence, it has proved as a best form of governance. However, the stark reality is that, democracy in its current form, ^{has} ~~many~~ not ~~be~~ proved to be best fit for third world countries where there exists many socio-economic disparities, ethnic and cultural issues and mass illiteracy. As the Winston Churchill has mentioned, "The best argument against democracy is a five minute talk with the average voter".

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the question about whether the democracy is viable or desirable remains skeptical. form of government for all countries equally remains skeptical.