

# How development leads to democracy essay

[Politics](#), [Democracy](#)



Democracy is can be described as a style of government whereby each and every citizen has a say in matters that influence their lives. Democracy the most common form of government practiced around the world. Several countries have embraced democratic principles due to its fairness. This paper seeks to analyze how development leads to democracy

In the late 1980's and early 1990's several countries around the world embraced democracy. However, in the recent past some countries such as Nigeria, Venezuela and Russia have relaxed their democratic processes.

In most cases democracy flourishes in societies when the right conditions are in place. Results of several studies indicate that modernization or development can be an effective catalyst of democracy. Modernization as a process results in a marked change in the social life of members of a given society.

The changes in literacy levels, increased life expectancy, increased professionalism and urbanization results in a transformed social life that enables more and more people to participate in the political process of a given country. If this happens for a longer time then democratization is likely to take place (Inglehart & Welzel, 2009).

The establishment of the association between democracy and Development has taken a long time. It was initially thought that poor countries remained poor and by extension undemocratic due to exploitation by rich western countries.

However, research indicates that countries that are involved less in international trade such as Cuba and North Korea have remained poor for a long time while countries that were in similar situations such as Taiwan and South Korea have developed more through international trade. It is thus believed that when a country produces goods for the world market, it gains higher returns that boost its citizens' social wellbeing, particularly by expanding the middle class.

When the middle class of a country grows, it tends to get more involved in the running of the country's affairs and thus presses for a more effective and transparent political system (Inglehart & Welzel, 2009)

In contrast to the previous knowledge, modernization does not directly result into democratization. Currently, modernization is seen to take place in phases and each phase is responsible for a particular change in a society's world view. Industrialization triggers the change that leads to bureaucratization, centralization of command or authority accompanied by a profound shift from the traditional values to secular values (Inglehart & Welzel, 2009)

. The phase that follows often emphasizes on individual freedom characterized by quest for self expression and liberation from authority. Different societies often manifest these changes differently depending on religion and other traditional influences.

It's not appropriate to liken modernization to westernization as purported by the earlier ethnocentric account of the modernization theory. Some East

Asian countries such as Japan have higher scores in modernization those of Western countries.

It has also been established that modernization does not directly result into democracy, rather, in the long term it creates the social cultural conditions that make democracy viable.

Evaluation of values in different countries show a pattern where poor countries or those at the lower end of the middle income tend to put emphasis on religion and customary gender roles as compared to developed countries. It has been shown that the distinction often runs along two value aspects; traditional against secularism and survival against self expression. Change in the two sets of values is brought about by modernization and is seen to set the stage for modernization (Inglehart & Welzel, 2009)

Inglehart, R., & Welzel, C. ( 2009). How Development leads to Democracy. *Foreign Affairs* , 88(2): 33-48.