

Example of argumentative essay on islam and democracy

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



Introduction

Governance remains an indispensable component in any given state as it promotes economic development. It is within the facet of governance that a country implicitly and explicitly maintains the rule of law, status quo, and order; an idea that promotes political stability and goodwill in the region.

Many nations understand the importance of exercising good governance and have adapted and subscribed to various forms of governance, but democracy remains the dominant form of governance, worldwide.

Democracy refers to form of government where all citizens participate in decision-making process and in the development, implementation, and enactment of laws and policies in a country. In others, democracy accords all eligible citizens equal opportunities and rights to contribute in national development and promotes peace, political stability, and coexistence. It entails economic, political, social, and cultural constructs, which enable the government experience self rule and determination.

Over the years, developed western nations, especially American have championed the initiative of encouraging Islamic states to refrain from monarchy and authoritarian regimes, and instead, embrace democracy.

Some of the Islamic states have supported the idea, but most of the Islamic nations and Middle East nations have condemned and opposed this idea on the premises that it contravenes Islamic Sheria Law and teachings, and propagate westernized ideologies. In the same vein, most of the Islamic states hold the view that American intends to use democracy to reinstate political leaders of their own, support uprising movements, change political trends in the region, and exploit Islamic nations (Munck & Barry 69). In

essence, westernized nations have hidden motives as to why they champion and appeal Islamic nations to embrace and exercise democracy in their regimes.

According to a report published by Freedom House and Economists on democracy index 2006, indicates that Kuwait, Israel, Morocco, Turkey, and Lebanon are some of the Islamic nations and Middle East states with high democracy score. Furthermore, the report affirmed that Egypt, Iraq, and Tunisia are ranked partial democratic, but the rest of the Islamic nations employ authoritarian form of governance (Diamond 67). Although democracy index vary from one nation to the other, the report confirmed that Saudi Arabia and Yemen had the least score index. This assertion affirms that there are minimal chances (if not none) of democracy prevailing in Saudi Arabia, but what factors hinder(s) Saudi Arabia to embrace democracy is the question to address in this discussion.

Discussion

Whether Islamic nations (Saudi Arabia) can embrace democracy or not has remained a controversial topic that elicits diverse view from the public. Some people believe that Islamic nations can embrace democracy whereas oppose this claim. Theorists have also proposed various theories, which elaborate on this subject, but revisionists' theorists articulate that democracy is relatively incompatible with Islamic values, especially in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia is a " Rentier state," in the sense that it generates much of its revenue from external rents. Rentier State is a term that is commonly used to refer to Middle East nations, which derive a greater percentage of their

revenue from oil exports and external rents. More than half of the government revenue in Saudi Arabia is derived from sale of oil, gases, and other valuable minerals. Saudi Arabia is among the leading oil producing countries, worldwide as it has large deposits of oil and gas. The government also collect substantial amount of money through taxation, charge of transit fee, and payment for pipeline crossing on Saudi Arabian soil.

As an oil producing country, Saudi Arabia is wealthy in the sense that it has a lot of money derived from the sale of oil and gases. The country employs monarch form of governance that opposes adoption of democracy thus leading to authoritarian regimes. Saudi Arabia cannot embrace democracy because its political leaders use their power, authority, and money to remain in power. The Saudi Arabian government silences any social movement that criticizes the government, and advocate for political reforms through democracy. The government has employed several concepts of rentier effect including taxation effect, spending effect, and group formation effect (Ehteshami & Steven 78). Taxation effect articulates that a government that derives large revenue from rents and sale of oil and gas is more likely not to tax its citizens highly. In this case, Saudi Arabia generates a lot of money as revenue for sale of oil and it does not tax heavily its population. This means that people would not criticize, oppose, and rebel against the government because it has addressed all their needs. In the same breath, people would not elect new leaders into power to fight for their rights because the rulling government has not exploited it citizens. Based on this assertion, democracy would not prevail because people would not elect new leaders who would advocate and spearhead for democracy and reforms.

Authoritarian rulers employ “ spending effect” to initiate patronized programs intended to dissent democratization and social pressure that may lead to emergence of social movements. The Saudi Arabian government has a large budget that cannot be constrained when the government uses the money to silence uprising social movements. This move hinders democracy because the government uses its resources to condemn and contain emerging uprising movements. In other instances, the Saudi Arabian government has used “ group formation effect,” to prevent the establishment of social movements, which are considered independent from the state. In other words, the government ensures that all social movements obey and subscribe to the government political rights and ideologies. In essence, democracy cannot prevail in such a political environment because social movements are the prerequisite conditions, which propel implementation of democracy.

Islamic doctrines and teachings influence democracy in Saudi Arabia. As an Islamic nation, Saudi Arabia government is premised on strong Sheria Law and principles, which articulate that justice, fairness, prosperity of the nation can be obtained from the Sheria Law, the rule of law, and teachings and traditions of the Quran and Prophet Mohammad denoted as “ pbuh.” This predisposition is further reinforced in Article 7 of the Basic Laws, under the Saudi Arabian constitution, that articulates that the state should derive its political power, authority, prosperity, and justice by observing Sheria Laws and adhering to the teachings of Koran and Sunni sect (Elkann 54). In other words, the main objectives of Sheria Law and Quran teachings is to promote tolerance, equality, justice, and freedom of religions in the society, but by

observing the Sheria Laws and principles. Based on this assertion, Saudi Arabian rulers have observed Sheria Law and principles for many years because it is their moral and religious obligations to uphold the rule of law, traditions of Prophet Mohammed, and observe teachings of the Quran. As a result of this assertion, Saudi Arabia cannot embrace democracy because in doing so would contravene teachings of the Quran, Sheria Law and principles, and traditions of prophet Mohammed, which affirm that state's power remain envisioned in the Sheria Law.

Democracy may promote prosperity in the country, but it cannot be effective in Saudi Arabia based on the following reasons. First, the fact that Saudi Arabia is among the leading oil producing nations in the world has attracted the attention of the many western nations, and especially America. Saudi Arabia has large and unexploited oil deposits, which generate billions of money to the government annually. However, western nations advocate for democracy to reinstate leaders of their choice, spread western culture and ideologies, and create an avenue where they can benefit from the oil and gas business. Second, embracing democracy would lead to widespread diffusion of western culture and ideologies, which contravene Islamic values. Democracy articulate that women have equal rights as men, encourage deviant behavior such as prostitution, sexuality, and reforms; an idea that is contrary to Sheria Law and Islamic values. Third, Saudi Arabia would lose its independence as a sovereignty state by embracing democracy. In other words, western nations would indirectly influence the politics of the country by reinstating rulers who subscribe to western ideologies.

In conclusion, Saudi Arabia cannot embrace democracy because of the

Sheria Law and principles; the move contravenes Islamic values, and the state would lose its independence, and sovereignty. Additionally, authoritarian rulers use “ rentier effect” to silence social movement and reformers who advocate for democracy. Based on these assertions, it is evident that democracy cannot prevail in most Islamic nations as in the case of Saudi Arabia.

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