

# The difference between liberalism and socialism

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The Difference between Liberalism and Socialism Socialism and liberalism are arguably the most discussed political ideologies in the world. The two ideologies are very closely related, to the extent that many confuse one for the other. This paper discusses the differences between the two political ideologies in light of their components and goals.

### Socialism

Socialism refers to a political and economic ideology where all property is owned by the state (Wallerstein 73). As such, the system is that which does not condone private ownership of property. To these socialist system, all wealth is supposed to be shared amongst everyone in the society, irrespective of their status. Nevertheless, wealth is shared in accordance with the individual's contribution in the creation of that wealth (Wallerstein 73). This implies that those who involved a lot in the creation of the wealth get more share than those who does not contribute much in the creation of wealth. Socialist ideology also discourages the formation of classes or groups since it does not support competition among individuals (Wallerstein 74). To socialists, everybody in the society is considered equal, meaning that no one is considered superior to others. It is also noted that, in a socialist government, all resources are collectively owned by the people who also determine how the resources are to be utilized for the development of the society. Socialists also believe in equality and, therefore, discourage accumulation of capital in the hands of a few according to Wallerstein (73). China is a good example of a socialist state, which has also practiced the liberal system of government. Germany and the U. K. are another classical example of a country that have practiced both socialism and liberalism (Wallerstein 76).

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## Liberalism

Liberalism is a political ideology which believes in the freedom of people in the society (Wallerstein 74). This implies that it is opposed to any restrictions on people in the society. According to liberalists, the state has the power to control all industries with the aim of eliminating malpractices. However, unlike in a socialist system that discourages private ownership of property, liberalists encourage private ownership of property (Wallerstein 75). The liberalist economic system, like a socialist system, is also structured in a manner that ensures fair distribution of national resources to every individual in the society as noted by Wallerstein (75). However, in a liberalist system, the activities of private welfare is regulated by the government or laws aimed at barring them from exploiting their customers or employees (Wallerstein 75). In addition, liberalists concentrate on individuals who are considered autonomous from each other. Liberalism exists in two types: classical and modern liberalism. The U. S is a good example of a modern liberal country.

## Differences between the two ideologies

Generally many people have found it difficult to recognize the difference between the two ideologies and mistake one for the other. Nevertheless, there are some differences that can be pointed out between the two. For instance, in a socialist system, the government has absolute control over the economy and the labor market (Wallerstein 76). The system also requires every citizen to put up with the law of the land. In addition, the state also determines how wealth is distributed to the citizens mainly done in proportion to their contribution in the creation of state wealth. This position is different from that of the classical liberalism system which is opposed to <https://assignbuster.com/the-difference-between-liberalism-and-socialism/>

government's interference with the businesses of its citizens (Wallerstein 76). However, despite that fact that the modern liberalists supports governments interference with the activities of its citizens as a way of maintaining economic and political security, it does not provide for total control of the nationals as is the case with a socialist system. The main aim of monitoring the affairs of citizens according to liberalists is only to uplift the status of the government.

#### Work Cited

Wallerstein, Immanuel. *After Liberalism*. New York, NY: The New Press. 1995. Print.