

Two critiques of democracy and their relationship to governance and policy



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Democracy is the popular universal debate worldwide has been looked down upon for many years. “ The global spread of democracy over the last generation or so has been accompanied by the global spread of criticisms of democracy” (Gilley, 2009, p. 113). We must first have a clear understanding of what democracy means. A democratic society is an established system that provides freedom, ideologies, practices, and movements. Also, this is where authority is conferred in the people that are governed both without obstruction by voted representation and specifically. Democracy simply is the collectivization of independence in a nutshell. This paper will focus on the following: two critiques of democracy, discuss how the two critiques relate to governance and public policy, discuss why and how the critiques might be valid and constructive, discuss why and how the critiques might be invalid and destructive, and my conclusion.

Two Critiques of Democracy

There are various political party views and perspectives on critiques of democracy. “ Now that democracy is the typical form of government, consideration of the “ varieties of democracy” and how they can be improved is a progressive endeavor” (Gilley, 2009, p. 113). One school of thought believes that the exceptional elements that are linked to an open democracy consists of enduring criticisms, conflicts, and expand the knowledge on the pros and cons of democracy in order to enhance the system of government. Also, this perspective involves diverse actors and countries worldwide that supports democracy; and there are large amounts of criticisms when it comes to the specific methods and tools that are utilized in controlling the government system of the democratic states and

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surrounding areas of the democratic confines (Gilley, 2009). A great illustration of this type of democratic system is the United States of America. "The United States was downgraded to a "flawed democracy" in a recent index that examined 167 countries"(Smith and Adams, 2017). Another school of thought that involves the critique of democracy is Plato. "Plato's theory of social justice in the Republic is anti-democratic, by his own lights as well as by historical and contemporary consensus" (Santas, 2007, p. 70). Here Plato's theory is being criticized because of three reasons such as how he views isolated property and capital, liberty, and gaining knowledge. This second critique is that democracy is rejected. There is a strong belief in the fact that the nobles are ruled and decentralized by property landlords where lower class individuals are permitted into the less superior people are admitted to the upper class of society. "Plato's attempt to separate ruling and wealth and to establish economic floors and ceilings for his ideal city seem especially instructive in view of problems in these areas that ancient and modern democracies have experienced" (Santas, 2007, p. 89).

How the Two Critiques Relate to Governance and Public Policy

The way in which the two critiques relate to governance and public policy is displayed by structure and design. The United States has faced a lot of challenges when it comes to its democratic system. Yet, the country's system of democracy is not practicing the democratic principles and values in which our Four Fathers have fought so hard for America and its citizens to keep. When it comes to the United States, it has progressed to an aristocratic form of government where the elite had power over the less fortunate. Also the poor have elected representation. "The public's
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criticisms of the political system run the gamut, from a failure to hold elected officials accountable to a lack of transparency in government”(PRC, 2017).

Problems and criticisms arise about democracy when there is underprivileged governance, citizens are not informed about making sound decisions about their political affiliation, and the absence of community inputs.

One of the most important elements of the democratic system is public participation with public policy. Recently, public participation has resulted in a low turnout of participation. “ The process aspect stipulates that public participation in political decisions and the social choice is a constitutive part of the public policy” (Ruger, 2005, p. 299). Often times when citizen’s outcome is not what he or she placed their vote for, they rebel and decide not to participate in the election process. “ One theory that relates political institutions to human development focuses primarily on democratic principles, such as regular elections, universal suffrage, representation, one person-one vote, multiparty competition, and civil liberties” (Bollen & Paxton, 2000). When it comes to critiques of democracy evidence suggests that expansionism is circulated as a result of self-governing countries. However, the countries solely depend on armed interferences as well as financial endorsements that seek to impend on frailer countries. Democracy is displayed as an economic expansion when it is utilized for self-seeking advances economically and politically. Gilley (2009) contended that “ in a truly democratic society where each person’s voice counts equally, the impact of a single voice is so slight as to make investing in political learning seem irrational” (p. 118).

Why and How the Critiques Might Be Valid and Constructive

The way in which the first critique is valid and constructive in nature is because it consists of citizen's participation and the ability for them to make sound and rational decisions have been limited in terms of democracy and public policy matters. " Participatory democrats have argued that delegation of decision-making power leads to citizens' alienation from politics" (Michels, A and Graaf, 2010). When it comes to equality in a democratic system, everyone has the right to participate and have the right to participate in the political process or not. For example, if we reflect back on the attacks of terrorism on September 11, 2001. This attack clearly shook things up for the United States and restructuring was evident. Public interests as a collective unit are very important in a democratic system. " Any claim to the substance such as the collective good, the public interest or the will of the nation is subject to the competitive struggle and times for gaining the authority of office and government" (Nwogu, 2015, p. 132).

On the other hand, the way in which the second critique is valid and constructive in nature is because democracy stimulates imperialistic society. It is evident that the United States has a strong desire to remain a democratic system, it is hard now for them to stay on target due to the political uproar, clashes in political opinions, and political corruption. Evidence suggests that " it binds regional allies to the United States with foreign aid incentives, which the United States will withdraw if the country does not progress toward democracy" (Jones, 2017). The Middle East is constantly fighting to be a democratic system but has been unsuccessful.

Some critics argue that it is harmful to promote democracy " in countries <https://assignbuster.com/two-critiques-of-democracy-and-their-relationship-to-governance-and-policy/>

without liberal values” because it creates “ illiberal democracies, which pose grave threats to freedom.” (Jones, 2017).

Why and How the Critiques Might Be Invalid and Destructive

The way in which the critiques may perhaps be invalid and destructive because it provides and permits individuals to put into practice their democratic principles and values when it comes to a democracy. Sometimes nations that exercise peacetime may perhaps encourage a democratic system. “ A democratic system’s openness also allows it to attract those with vested interests to use the democratic process as a means to attain power and influence, even if they do not hold democratic principles dear” (Shah, 2017). However, as we reflect on the various types of critiques of democracy, one that stands out is Plato’s take on it and how some critics made his arguments invalid. “ Plato’s criticism of the democratic free choice of occupation is less persuasive than some of his other criticisms of democracy”(Santas, 2007, p. 89).

Conclusion

“ Democracy and nationalism have largely grown together” (Conversi, 2007, p. 20). Looking back on how far our nation has progressed, democracy is very essential. Our Four Fathers laid the foundational map and planted the seeds for the United States to operate in a democratic system. “ Since the French revolution, popular political participation, mass politics and universal suffrage have expanded” (Conversi, 2007, p. 20). The democratic principles allow individuals to have a voice when it comes to the governmental system and public policy. Citizens have a right to elected representation and <https://assignbuster.com/two-critiques-of-democracy-and-their-relationship-to-governance-and-policy/>

participation. Some critics may argue that democratic systems provide too much freedom of reformation and forward-thinking. Depending on your values and morals, it does not make any one's opinion better than the other. If the United States does not come together politically, economically, and socially we will not be operating in a democratic system. Democratic regimes need to analyze the critiques of democracy in order to advance in terms of the governmental process. Nonetheless, dictatorship nations open themselves up to backlash and discourse. Democracy is a hot topic of debate that will always render various critiques and perspectives.

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