

Democracy and development

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



In a report by the United Nations edited by Boutros Boutros-Ghali, it was considered that any attempt to explore the interaction between democracy and development should be prefaced with definitions of development as well as what is termed the democratic imperative[1]. Democracy is considered to be an inclusive system of government, which caters to the needs and opinions of all members of society. This inclusion manifests itself at every level of government, from local to national. It therefore necessitates the existence of a parliament or other representative body that is made up of delegates directly appointed by the populace and empowered to act on and in their behalf. This state of affairs is facilitated by, among other things, the practice of electing these persons fairly through universal adult suffrage.

Also necessary to the sustenance of a proper democratic environment is the existence of an independent and fair system of legal adjudication. Individuals who are educated and have been proven responsible in the affairs of the law must exist to formulate and implement legal policies. Democracy also includes the granting of civil justices and rights to the citizens of a particular society, based on (or closely aligned with) those enumerated in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights[2]. This includes transparency in the government and free rights of speech and media granted to the citizens. Therefore, within this system is built in the ability of “correcting its own dysfunctions”[3], and that has the ability to incorporate the cultural aspects of the particular society in which the government is embedded.

Development, as a concept, is inclusive of a wide range of aspects including economic, social, and cultural considerations that work together to make life

agreeable and comfortable to people across the earth. Development must also be sustainable, and this exists on all three dimensions mentioned. It also entails the ability to ensure the continuation of development once it has begun, and not to deplete the resources necessary for the particular type of development being pursued.

These resources vary from physical to human, and include the will of the people to continue on the particular development path. Development entails several forms of rights, and this range includes the right of citizens to education, justice, liberty and the sharing of information. This definition, therefore, removes the concept of development from the mere consideration of alleviating poverty and makes it a more complex and dynamic concept. The alleviation of poverty in itself is rather a more complex issue than can be encapsulated by the ideas of food, clothing, healthcare and shelter.

Rather, this concerns the concept that grants citizens certain rights that makes it necessary that they acquire these things, and this prompts would-be delegates on a governmental level to assure these individuals that they will lobby on their behalf to provide these things that all people need and therefore to which they should have a right. Once sufficient development has taken place on the physical level, it is often noticed that development takes on another visage, in that it seeks what Abraham Maslow has represented in his hierarchy of needs .

Citizens tend to require more freedoms regarding self-actualization, and this comes about in their ability to express themselves and to have a part in the decision that are made on a governmental level that will affect these expressive abilities. Development also involves the ability of citizens to

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explore their talents and to hone their skills without fear of being barred from the cultural, political, or academic areas of service available in society.

When a society routinely allows its citizens to realize their fullest potential on a massive scale (and not just in a manner reserved for the elite) then it can be considered to have achieved a level of true development. Interplay of democracy and development Development and democracy are concepts that have not always been considered complementary to each other; yet developments over the past few decades have led to the realization that economic and social regimes created under democratic governments (as opposed to authoritarian) tend to be more lasting.

The strength of the connection can be found in the fact that such developed regimes (as described above) are naturally inclined to be established by a people that have freedoms that they are interested in retaining. It is, for example, necessary that economic and social development attend democratic regimes in order that the people will continue to empower and place their trust in their political leaders. In such a case it becomes the interest of those leaders to foster sustainable development.

Along these same lines, it is also necessary for the populace to endorse decisions that have the power to affect development in order for such measures to become established in that society . Since the endorsement of such democratically established policies is based on the will of the majority, it becomes more likely that such development will remain in tact, as most persons would benefit from and be in agreement with them.

Democracy and development in Pakistan

The integration of development and democracy in the Southeast Asian states of Pakistan and India has presented a challenge for several decades. Both countries have been adjusting to a large governmental change from colonialism under British rule. Other cultural idiosyncrasies (such as sectarianism, the involvement of external governments, warfare, militarism, and separatism) have presented problems in the establishment and maintenance of democratic governments and the extent to which these have been able to act in favor of development.

The Pakistani government does to an extent present an example of the reasons why authoritarianism and dictatorship impede development. Since the 1999 coup d' etat, one of the fundamental freedoms has been revoked—that of having the ability to choose one's leader . Development in Pakistan has been impeded by the instability of the government, which has involved disintegration of the democratic framework as a result of military action, terrorism, military expansion/spending, and other actions aimed at securing the position of anti-democratic establishments.

Other influences in the interaction between development and democracy have come in the form of India and Islam. Other impediments to complete democracy have existed in the development of Pakistani politics. It is arguable that the Punjabi-Mohajir has in some respects dominated the process of policy making . This has occurred in such a way that Indian influences have had the potential to undermine the ability of the Pakistanis to implement developmental policies based on a democracy that accurately represents their own culture.

The democratic implications of Indian involvement can be connected to such incidents as the Indo-Pakistani war of 1971, in which the Indians sided with Bangladesh in its grievances with Pakistan. This involvement of the Indians did lead to the loss of the large territory of Bangladesh, along with a hefty portion of the population. The harm done to Pakistani development is to be seen in the loss of a large portion of its human resources, as well as natural resources and strategic geographical territory.

However, apart from the Indians' involvement in the war, the Pakistanis' inability to stabilize the democratic government can be seen to have led to the conflict in which the Bangladeshis desired independence. This lack of democratic consensus led eventually to the loss of many resources necessary for development. The involvement of Islam in Pakistan has also been cited as having a significant undermining effect on both democracy and development. Not only does this fact demonstrate the importance of democracy to development, but it also highlights the very real threat that authoritarianism poses to development.

Islam has been responsible for the important role that the military has begun to take in the affairs of the Pakistani state. The events of 1999, which include the military placement of Pakistan under the rule of General Musharraf, marked a blow to democracy that has adversely affected the development of the country. One major reason for this is the sheer financial burden that expenditure on the military has become—which is almost always a necessary condition for military governments to remain in power.

While some argue that this enormous expenditure is based on a perceived threat from India, they do concur that transparency within the military is not

a particular feature of the Pakistani government. Pakistan's developmental problems, as a result, can be seen in the feudal structure that continues to exist in the country. While a 5% annual growth rate has been recorded over the period of 1960-1990, this has not been reflected in areas such as education. This gives the idea that while a large percentage lived just above the poverty level, few other rights of equality and self actualization were being granted them.

Therefore, over-spending on the military has been equaled by a concurrent under-spending in the areas of economic development that would have otherwise been of even more socioeconomic benefit to the Pakistani "plebeian" class within this feudal system. In fact, according to experts, "Pakistan's 1985 income would have been 25 percent higher if Pakistan had had Indonesia's 1960 primary [school] enrolment rate and about 16 percent higher if female enrolment rates had been at the same level as for boys."

Furthermore, while the proportion of those at the lowest class level who drop out of school before the fourth grade is 40%, dropouts at the highest level is only 12%. This demonstrates the lack of equal governmental commitment to education across all social strata. Mismanagement of the country's funds has been facilitated both by the feudal order and the military government, both of which are in direct conflict with truly democratic governments.

Within this structure, it becomes difficult for the interests of the people to be defended, as their voices are either unheard or unappreciated. Though aid is given to the country also through foreign agencies (like IMF and the World Bank) such funds are often squandered by a government that is unaccountable to the people. In contrast to the ideas presented by Kukreja

and Husain is the mention of the increased growth that the Pakistani economy has been experiencing within the last three to four years, since the implementation of the devolution reforms in 2001 .

These reforms occurred as a way of making sure that Pakistani citizens would be “ fully empowered and controlled the decision making process” in their country . The change is one in the direction of democracy, and the developmental improvements that have attended it testify of the inseparability of democracy and development. This period of growth in Pakistan has also been addressed by Tariq Rehman in a paper that speaks about the power of language and its role in influencing Pakistani ideology.

This cultural artifact of language has become a means of empowerment for the citizens, and has in turn led to an increased level of development within this period. This too points toward the importance of the aspect of democracy that incorporates the culture of the citizens involved. The involvement of the citizens even on that level has contributed to their heightened sense of ownership within the economic milieu, and has led to increased developmental efforts even on their parts. These efforts have been rewarded by increased gain for the country as a whole.

Because, however, the state has still been considered only a “ puppet show of farcical democracy” it cannot be said with conviction whether these perceived gains have truly been achieved on an individual level, or just in elite circles. As implied by the definition of development given above, the ability and right of citizens to pursue self-actualization goals within a wide variety of subjects has a bearing on the development of the nation.

Democracy grants that right to all citizens, and well developed countries usually have a thriving academic environment in the social sciences.

Many of the problems that Pakistanis face are social, political, and economic in nature—and this lack of stability in these areas can be connected in theory with the lack of investment in the citizens characteristic of democratic policies. In fact, the lack development in these areas suggested the anti-democratization as an important contributor to the problem, as the six most influential Pakistani organizations in charge of such policies were shown to be lacking in democratic policies .

In fact, membership in these areas was based on elite policies, and length of service for officers was overly extensive . Elections had no place in these organizations, and this had the effect of causing factions and the overall compromise of their efficacy. This state of affairs demonstrates the effect of divorcing democracy from development, as it has left these organizations impotent in the performance of their role as agents of socio-economic research and development.