

Free essay on comparing and contrasting human rights in a democratic and communis...

[Politics](#), [Communism](#)



Introduction

Human rights can be said to be the rights that people enjoy to fulfill the values of life. They cover the relations between people and nature, other people and/ or the society. In a social context, they are the rights enjoyed by a nation and sovereign rights of a country (Cohen, 12).

The value of respect, freedom for human rights and the principle of holding periodic free and fair elections by universal suffrage are crucial elements of democracy (Cohen, 45). The election must be by secret ballot as the expression of the will of the people. In turn, democracy provides the natural environment for the protection and effective realization of human rights and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The other essential elements of democracy are the freedom of association and freedom of expression and opinion. In Democratic government, transparency and accountability in public administration should be paramount. Government should have judiciary that is independence. In democratic government, the participation of citizen is essential (Darraj, 14).

A communist state is a sovereign state with a form of government characterized by single-party rule or dominant-party rule of a communist party and a professed allegiance to a communist ideology as the guiding principle of the state. Communism is a concept in which the major resources and means of production are owned by the community rather than by individuals. The freedom of expression is diminished hence there is no freedom for human rights. In theory, society practicing communism provides equal distribution of all work, according to capacity and all benefits,

according to need. In these two types of government, there are mere similarities but the differences over do the similarities.

Political System:

In democratic government, there is practice of holding periodic and genuine elections by universal suffrage and by secret ballot as the expression of the will of the people which aid in voting for newly elected officials while in communist government, no elected officials, since leaders are directly directed by the citizens. This has at no time been essentially practiced, and the political system uses single party system.

The two governments, that is communist and also democratic, political systems are built on different political principles. The economic and political fabrics are markedly in different ways in the two system of the government structure. In the economic sphere, communist government takes control of all the capital and industry in the country in an effort to get rid of economic inequality. While on the other hand, democratic government respects individuals' right to own property and means of production. This shows that human rights are highly considered in democratic government.

Citizens' Rights:

In the two governments, the political landscape is greatly different. In a democratic society citizens are free and allowed to create their own political parties and participate in contesting elections. This electoral assistance is based on the principle established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which ensures that the will of the people is expressed through periodic and fair elections and become the basis of government authority,

while also distinguishing the principles of state authority and national ownership of elections. While in a communist society, the government is controlled by one political party hence political opposition is not accepted. In democratic government, every citizen possesses certain basic rights that the government must consider. These rights are highly and internationally guaranteed and recognized. Every citizen have the right to have their own beliefs, this includes their religious beliefs (Cohen, 56). There is right to seek different sources of ideas and information of every citizen. Organization and joining of citizens is allowed in democratic government. However, the obligation is to exercise the rights in peaceful manner with respect to law and the rights of others. On the other hand, communist government gives a chance of the society's best interest not individuals interests. The only reason being to make the society better.

Social Structure:

In democratic government, social structure is paramount to aid in balance and equality. Therefore, class differences can become obvious due to capitalist society. However, social structure varies from state to state. Democracy and freedom are the central values in the democratic government. Social power is the basic and common element in any democratic government. It is believed that a society based on a democratic structure of power can bear in the long run. In communist government, social structure does not allow class distinctions. The government believes in equal shares to raise the poor and attain financial and social status equal to that of middle-class.

Discrimination:

In communist government, the system does not allow discrimination at all. All the members of the system are considered equal. This is to enhance balancing of the classes, therefore in financial and resources are equally distributed to the citizen fairly. On the side of government, that is democratic government, the entire citizens have a proportional and equal participation in the system, however the tyranny of the number in citizen rules over the minority.

Freedom of the media

In a communist state, there is no freedom of the media and expression and very limited if any. The media is strictly controlled with the internet, theatre, TV, cinema and papers being subject to stern censorship and any antagonism is not tolerated. Any information that is aired must be in line with the wishes of the government and if any the aired information contravenes the wishes of the government in anyway, a serious crackdown may befall the particular media. In a democratic government, on the other hand, the media is free to air and express any kind of information. However, this must be done within the stipulated legal parameters that guide the media and its operations.

Freedom of choice

In the current form of communism practiced by states in the contemporary world, all choices including education, employment, religion and marriage are in the sole control of the state. This is so devastating as virtually all choices regarding human life are made by the state. The citizens have no

right to make choices that would have a large bearing in their own lives. In a democratic government, freedom of choice is guaranteed. Citizens choose what they prefer best for them. The universal declaration of human rights requires that all individuals are given the freedom to make any choice that affects their lives in one way or the other. Making basic choices on behalf of the citizens is therefore an infringement on their right to choice.

Freedom of movement

Freedom of movement asserts that a citizen of a state in which that citizen is present has the permission to travel, reside in, or work in any part of the state where one pleases within the limits of respect for the liberty and rights of others and to leave that state and return at any time. A democratic government allows this. However, in a communist government an individual's freedom of movement is limited. Any individual has to report to the authorities before making any movement. The government has authorized any movement. Some states require that citizens possess a valid visa when leaving or entering the country. However, the right of movement does not include trespass. Some zones are no go zones and in either state an individual found guilty of trespassing in those areas is considered to have committed a crime.

Right to access basic necessities

A democratic government should ensure that its citizens live a life that is adequate for their health and well-being. This is by providing medical care, housing, food and clothing and the right to security in the event of

widowhood, instability, sickness, unemployment, old age or other lack of livelihood in situations that are beyond the control of the citizen (Darraj, 23).

Right to property

In a democratic state, everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. Such governments protect individuals from being arbitrarily deprived of their properties. Individuals are free to own property in any part of the country so long as they acquire it by following the prescribed mechanism. Individual ownership of property is highly acclaimed.

A communist government prohibits individual ownership of property.

Property is owned communally.

The state is therefore considered to be sole owner of every property within the borders of the country. An individual is expected to give out their property to the government so that the property can be used for the good of the general public. Unlike a democratic state where an individual can use their property for any purpose, in a communist state the use of the resources must be agreed by the members of the community. Generally, a communist government enforces the communist ideology while a democratic government enforces capitalism.

Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

A democratic government allows its citizens to change their, thought, belief or religion, to be in line with those of others or individual, either in public or private (Cohen, 61). This is to enable the citizens to manifest religion or belief in teaching, worship and adherence. This manifestation should be expressed freely without any interference whatsoever. A communist

government does not allow its citizens to freely change their, religion or thought. Any idea that opposes that of the leaders is highly oppressed and holders of such ideas risk being assassinated. Assassination is a clear violation of an individual's right to life but a communist government seems to care less about this.

Similarities between human rights in democratic and communist governments

Human rights in a democratic or communist government are similar in various aspects. These are typically the characteristics of human rights. They are entitled to all persons since they are human beings. They are the same for everyone and they apply everywhere they may appear as natural or legal rights. The rights in the two types of government are similar in that they are universal, relative, particularity, inherent, inalienable and expansion. These similarities discussed below.

Universal: no matter the type of government in a country, whether communist or democratic, all human beings have rights that are meant for all persons regardless of their geographical area, sex, race, religion, state or culture. These rights belong to each person equally and no one can be deprived. These rights have been there and will always continue to be regardless of the type of government in a country or state.

Relative: relativists argue that human rights are culturally constructed. This means that human rights will be determined by such factors as culture, religion or government. Therefore, a democratic government and a communist one share this similarity which can also be seen as a difference.

In such a scenario, the human right will be determined by the type of

government in one's country.

Particularity: human life is limited and it is illustrated at a particular time and space. Therefore, human rights are different in search historical times. The rights are relative to the particular community or society and therefore they are developed according to the historical occasions be it political or social. In this respect, human rights in a democratic and communist government are similar in that their civil and political definition arises from historical happenings.

Inherent: human rights are inherent in that they are not given by someone but rather they are natural or legal to all human beings. The qualification is not granted but just the fact that one is human. They are not bought or earned. Being in a democratic or communist governmental country does not deprive or deny one to enjoy these rights because they are not determined by such factors as religion, culture, race, sex or form of government.

Inalienable: either in a communist or democratic government, human rights cannot be taken away from an individual. This means that no matter the circumstance or when the individual is not allowed to enjoy the rights, they still hold. Even though the government can restrict the enjoyment of a particular right, it does not mean the right is no longer enjoyable once the situation that called for the restriction is solved.

Expansion: three generation. These are the similarity that human rights have three categories called first, second and third generations. The first generation consists of civil and political rights. The second generation consists of economic, social and cultural rights while the third generation is made up of solidarity rights. All governments including communist and

democratic have this form of categorization of human rights.

However, both forms of government may prohibit an individual's intention and willingness to leave or enter the country despite having the visa or passport due to various reasons. For instance if one is considered to have committed a serious crime, indebted or policy restrictions may cause an individual's right of movement to be recanted.

Work cited

Cohen, Carl. Communism, Fascism, and Democracy: The Theoretical Foundations. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 2007. Print.

Darraj, Susan M. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 2010. Print.