

Compare and contrast the way economic development affected assignment

[Sociology](#)



Overall, the first two English colonies in the Americas had extremely separate ways of creating economic and Economic velvetten usually has a lasting influence on the political structure of any up-and- coming area. This certainly was the case for Virginia and Massachusetts. The Southern economy was based on the production of cash crops, predominantly tobacco, rice, and indigo. Crops were grown on large plantations that, by the mid sass's, had begun to use African slaves and lowly whites as the labor source. This meant that a lot of people worked for only a few people.

Thus, the plantation owners tended to be wealthy, and they acted like it too. Many landowners hired a person in England to ship them goods that would fit the lifestyle. As a result, the South was cash poor, but the land and products owned had great potential value. The Massachusetts economy could not have been more different. Although the use of slaves and other servants did exist, it was miniscule compared to what was occurring in Virginia. Also, while plantation success depended on one system that could fail at any time, the Northern economy was more stable and diverse.

In part because of the Netscape, the Massachusetts colony was dependent on anything from shipbuilding, fishing, and whaling to farming, store-owning, and other types of artisan work. This allowed for a flexible economy with a large middle class that likely would survive if one market crashed.

Meanwhile, if there had been a drought or drop in demand for tobacco, the whole Southern economy would have dissipated and collapsed. The different economic systems of Virginia and Massachusetts directly influenced how laws were made and who had power.

In Virginia, only the tiny elite class had power. In their economy, the landowners had direct and unlimited control over their slaves and servants, and this theme reappears in Southern political structure. Not coincidentally, this powerful “ rich class” was the only group of people allowed to vote on governing members. Thus all laws passed favored this class, and usually did a disservice to slaves and other poor farmers. The Massachusetts system, although still different, had some similarities to that of Virginia.

In New England, towns had assemblies with a majority rules attitude. This is definitely more of a democratic system than that of Virginians. However, once the Puritan dominance in the colony was threatened, the system tightened. Only church members were allowed to govern, and these elders set strict requirements for how to operate in society, all based on Puritan belief. Although Virginians small elite class held absolute power, Massachusetts adopted a similar policy when they only allowed church members into the political system.

Despite the similar times of settlement, Virginia and Massachusetts varied greatly in the economic and political structure of their societies. In Virginia, the heavy dependence on cash crop production and slaves caused strong influence from a very minimal percentage of the population. In Massachusetts, the hard work ethic, diverse economy, and large middle class led to general equality, even with voting restricted to church officials. These two settlements serve as an example as how economic development creates and influences political systems.