

\*Ques type 1

What are the Determinants of Human Rights

### **The Determinants of Human Rights**

According to model of Poe and Tate, a government's decision to respect human rights is determined by six areas.

(i) The level of democracy

(ii) The level of economic development and its growth rate

(iii) Population size and its growth rate

(iv) The prevalence of a military and/or leftist regime

(v) British cultural influence, and

(vi) Recent experience with international and/or civil war.

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#### **i) The level of democracy;**

In Poe and Tate's model, human rights repression is a tool for governments to solve conflicts. If a government is threatened, it reacts by repressing human rights, for instance, through imprisonment, torture or killings. Since in democracies, processes involve the bargaining of parties, conflicts can be solved in a more peaceful manner compared to autocracies (Henderson 1991; Poe and Tate 1994). In democracies, repressive governments can be ousted from office in elections. Moreover, the characteristic freedoms in democracies allow citizens to publicize and decry abusive actions. Overall, democracy is expected to improve governments' respect for human rights (see also Davenport and Armstrong 2004).

#### **ii) The level of economic development and its growth rate;**

Regarding economic conditions, Poe and Tate argue that human rights abuses should decrease with economic development, yet increase with

economic growth. The better the economic situation, measured by the quantity and quality of goods and services available, the less scarce are goods. Consequently, the potential for conflict, and thus repression, decreases (Mitchell and McCormick 1988; Henderson 1991). Since economic growth is the engine of economic development, it should improve human rights practices in a country. However, growth usually involves winners and losers, and temporarily, increase inequality of income and wealth (Kuznets 1955). Consequently, social and political tensions rise and the probability of abusive actions increase.

**iii) Population size and its growth rate;**

Population growth increases the scarcity of products and resources. Furthermore, rapid population growth increases the percentage of younger people in terms of the total population, which as a group is generally more destabilizing (Poe and Tate 1994). Therefore, both population size and population growth may increase the probability of repressive governmental actions.

**(iv) The prevalence of a military and/or leftist regime;**

Military regimes depend on the power of the armed forces, and conflicts are frequently solved by military order and hierarchy. Hence, military regimes are most likely to control a country through abusive actions and disrespect of human rights whenever possible. Similarly, “leftist regimes,” which are defined as socialist or communist governments that do “not allow effective electoral competition with non-socialist opposition” (Poe and Tate 1994: 858), which is based on the Marxist-Leninist theory that there is a need for the dictatorship of the proletariat, are most likely to show less respect for human rights.

### **(v) British cultural influence, and**

The colonial experience has prejudiced the shape of present postcolonial political culture, and that the British colonial experience was associated with postcolonial development of democracy. British cultural influence in this sense is therefore assumed to involve greater respect for human rights.

### **(vi) Recent experience with international and/or civil war.**

Finally, Poe and Tate point out that experience with external or internal war increases the probability of human rights violations. As Burkhart (2002: 158) puts it, civil liberties “disappear in even the most democratic of countries come wartime.”

\*Ques type 2:

### **Globalization's Impact on Human Rights**

It is evident that, instead of spreading economic growth and wealth, globalization has brought in its train, great inequities, mass impoverishment and despair. It has fractured society along the existing fault lines of class, gender and community while, almost irreversibly, widens the gap internationally between the rich and the poor nations. In sum, the major threats of economic globalization can be divided as follows;

#### **A. Widening the gap between the rich and the poor**

A primary effect of economic globalization is the exacerbation of gaps between the rich and the poor. Statistics show that this gap is widening both within and between nations and that, in many countries, poverty is both increasing by numbers and by depth. Few studies doubt that the giant transnational corporate enterprises have played their part in

creating both strands of this globalization of poverty. The weakness of international rules, bad policies and weak governance in developing countries, and corporate practices priorities short-term profit over long-term human development, are undermining the capacity of poor countries and poor people to benefit from international trade. In many cases, economic liberalization has been accompanied by greater inequality and people are left trapped in utter poverty. The Human Development Report of 1997 revealed that poor countries and poor people too often find their interests neglected because of globalization.

### **B. Violation of fundamental human right**

Economic globalization has resulted in the violation of the internationally proclaimed human rights underlined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The rights most likely to be violated by the TNCs include non-discrimination, women rights, life, liberty and physical integrity of the person, civic freedoms, employees' rights, child labour, slavery, forced and bonded labour, right to food, health, education and housing and lastly, the environmental rights. On the other hand, in their drive for profits, the TNCs have been restructuring their operation on a global scale. This has resulted in massive unemployment and underemployment, the worst situation since the 1930s. Similarly, in many industrialized countries unemployment has soared to levels not seen for many years and income disparity to levels not recorded since last century. The collapses of the economies of the Asian Tigers are examples of this. Because of this, more people are crossing borders in search of jobs and in most conditions; people are forced to work in inhuman conditions for lower wages.

### **C. Threatening the states sovereignty and democracy**

Constraints on state sovereignty have come about through the process of globalization, which largely is a form of Westernization. Some people also have termed this process as “Americanization” or “McDonaldization” due to tremendous participation of TNCs from the United States. This process naturally affects non-Western societies more than Western ones. Globalization therefore has created a situation where the role and importance of nation-state is becoming irrelevant. In addition, the globalization of recent decades was never a democratic choice by the peoples of the world. The process has been business driven, by business strategies and tactics, for business ends. Thus, globalization has also steadily weakened democracy and states sovereignty.

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