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Democracy Vs Dictatorship

The key distinctions between democracy and dictatorship are vast and the similarities are few, a similarity is that both dictatorships and democracies vest their authority on an individual or a group of people. According to Dahl a democracy is a system of government that is completely or almost completely responsive to its citizens and the requirements that are necessary but not sufficient are as follows: the ability of citizens to form and join organizations, freedom of expression, right to vote, free and fair elections such (Dahl 2007) . Shmitter and Karl believe that in a democracy those who govern are held accountable for their actions and that elections are necessary but not sufficient (Shmitter and Karl). In an electoral authoritarian regime citizens may have the ability to vote but such actions may be symbolic or not enforced, it may also be the case that a single party wins the election every election. There are four main types of authoritarian regimes such as a personalist, dominant party, military and monarchies. What sets them apart from democracy is that authoritarian regimes determine what interests and rules benefit a group or an individual. Under Augusto Pinochet, Chile was a military dictatorship but has now transitioned to democracy. Iran has been consistently autocratic due to it's theocratic foundations. Using the normative framework of care-ethics in a democracy people are better able to determine their future and create

their path, a path of helping others and lifting the most vulnerable, and in a democracy one must be able to mobilize and organize people to accomplish a goal.

Iran has a very complex system consisting of an electorate that consists of an electorate that elects a president, parliament, and assembly of experts. The electorate is not sufficient for Iran to be considered a democracy since those in power appoint a supreme leader that is not directly held accountable by its citizens. In the political system of Iran there exists unelected institutions therefore citizens do not have the ability to hold them accountable (Brumberg, Farhi, 2016). Chile has separations of power which ultimately makes sure each branch has limitations and is therefore held accountable by its citizens. The executive branch of Chile may endorse and enforce new laws but it's up to the legislative branch to draft and amend new laws. The supreme leaders of Iran may issue decrees and national referendums, declare war, and appoint or dismiss high government officials. Due to the supreme leader having large amounts of power such as deciding when to formalize elections in Iran the separations of power are almost negligible (Brumberg, Farhi, 2016). Supreme leaders are the theocratic authority which means they can not be held accountable since they are considered to be the most knowledgeable about islam.

In Iran freedom of expression is almost nonexistent and the laws strictly forbid anything that goes against the government or islam. The Iran student protest of 1999 and Chilean Student Movement of 2011 clearly show the differences between dictatorship and democracy. At Tehran University students protested against the killing committed by the police where the victim was brutalized for being part of a peaceful

demonstration against the closing of a newspaper. In the Chilean Student Movement protested against conditions of educational facilities and lack of resources, this was a movement because although many were arrested they had the right to continue and organize. In Iran organizing against the government can have fatal consequences as shown by the brutal killing of a student. Iran has very strong internet censorship therefore its citizens are not able to organize or join associations online. The Chilean Student Movement relied on internet activism as a method for developing the movement, this is not true for Iran because of censorship (Macmillan, 2020).

Care-ethics states that we must show compassion for the vulnerable and democracy in Chile has shown that this can only be accomplished by people having the ability to organize and protest. A perfect example of showing compassion for the most vulnerable is when students demanded better education and better conditions. The Chilean student movement successfully shows that governments do listen and such actions create a society that believes in compassion for the most vulnerable. A democracy would be preferable because when an injustice happens to those who are vulnerable citizens are able to organize and support presidential candidates so that they hold the highest offices, this gives citizens the ability to hold those in power accountable for their actions.

Dahl, Robert Alan. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. Yale Univ. Press, 2007.

Resisting Neoliberal Capitalism in Chile: the Possibility of Social Critique. Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

Brumberg, Daniel, and Farideh Farhi. *Power and Change in Iran: Politics of Contention and Conciliation*. Indiana University Press, 2016.