

## Democracy

### Outlines:

- What is Democracy
- Core Principles and Benefits of Democracy
- Challenges to Democracy
- Strengthening Democracy
- Case Studies and Lessons Learned
- Conclusions

**“Democracy is the killer of megalomania”**

Democracy is a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives. Thus democracy is a public kind of government. All the classes of people from a layman to a lord take part in democracy. That is why this form of government is widely liked by nations all over the world. There are also other forms of government like communism in Russia, socialism in China etc. This system is entirely different from dictatorship or autocracy.

A former president of America, Abraham Lincoln defined it as:

**“Government of the people, for the people and by the people.”**

The democratic form of government is based on the willing consent of people. General will and not force is the basis of the state. Democracy is the mechanism through which the general will is expressed. Democracy is the best form of government as it is stable, enduring and not liable to drastic changes such as coup d'état revolution or putsch. As Laski has pointed out,

**“Government exists for the satisfaction of maximum desires and maximum desires can be satisfied by maximum consultation”**

Democracy is the guardian of equality, liberty and the fundamental rights of the people. Democracy

**PASS Education System**  
High Quality Essays for Matric / FA-FSc / BA-BSc  
[www.passpk.com](http://www.passpk.com)

stands for the general “General will” and as pointed out by Green, “General will is the only permanent foundation of government”. The basis of democracy is consent not force, persuasion and not dictation agreement and not violence.

As Abraham Lincoln says,

**“The ballot is stronger than bullet”**

The important features of democratic institution are universal suffrage, frequent elections, and well organized parties, liberty of speech, freedom of association and freedom of opinion. Democracy is a milestone to prosperity. The individuals in the democratic State are not like “dumb-driven cattle” but active citizens who take a lively interest in the affairs of the state.

As Paul Wellstone says

**“Education and democracy have same goals, the fullest possible development of human capabilities.”**

They have also the power of making and unmaking their government. The Ministers are responsible to the legislature and as soon as they lose trust they are made to resign. Thus a change in government is brought about by peaceful methods and not by revolution. The government cannot ride roughshod over the wishes of the people for the fear of defeat in the next election “hangs like the sword of Damocles”. The four pillars of democracy are the rule of law, freedom of opinion, freedom of association and freedom of press.

**“Democracy unleashes a tone of objectivity instead of subjectivity.”**

The people can criticize the government, expose the selfish leaders, and condemn the policy of government. The dictum, “Some are born to rule and others are to obey”, is rejected.

As it is well said,

**“Self-criticism is the secret weapon of democracy, and candour and confession are good for the public soul.”**

Democracy has some demerits also. It gives birth to party-politics which destroys the liberty and individuality of the people. Members of the party are duty-bound to follow the dictates of their party. Party system ignores the basic principle of democracy, the right of each individual to have a free say in every matter. The main danger in a democracy is the tyranny of the majority. All the decisions are made by majority vote. It means “Counting of head, not weighing of wisdom”. In spite of its demerits, democracy is a reasonable, useful and successful system of government as democracy slaughters the social evils.

**“The cure of the evils of democracy is more democracy.”**

If we analyze democracy from the point of view of our country we come to know that it has never been successful in Pakistan. The main reasons are lack of education, lack of political sense and interruption of non-political elements. No government has ever been given a chance to run its affairs smoothly. But our political leaders should pay some heed to the golden rules of Islam. The best form, under the circumstances, is the Islamic system which accommodates the opinion of every individual if it is in accordance with the injunctions of the Holy Quran and Sunnah of the **Holy Prophet (SAW)**. One may call it

**“Restricted or controlled Democracy”**

but it is true Democracy.

**“Democracy isn’t perfect; I just don’t know a better system.”**

**(Winston Churchill)**

**PASS**<sup>®</sup>  
**Education System**