

FUELING DEMOCRACY: Correlation Between Democratic Performance and the Rights of Women, Labor, and Indigenous People

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What comes first, human rights or democracy? In this paper, we will discuss the way human rights protections, in particular women's rights, labor rights, and indigenous rights, might translate into overall better democratic performance. We aim to look closer into the connection between human rights and democratic performance. To make sense of this, we studied a range of national legislation, protection of civil liberties, percentage of employees that have collectively bargained contracts, and unionization rates. Drawing on findings from statistical data bases, we compared data of multiple countries and their indicators to compare different levels of democratic performance related to the protection of human rights. Do more protections for human rights lead to a better functioning democracy? Which is more important for the improvement of human rights, a strong civil society or a strong democratic process? We expect to find that the more human rights protections that a country has, the better that country's democratic performance will be. Strong civil societies can be an indicator for strong human rights. If there is a strong civil society then it could advocate for more rights without a democracy, meaning that a democracy could not be vital for the protection of human rights. Understanding the relationship between human rights and democracy will further the previous case studies and literature reviews with more concrete and recent evidence to prove or disprove of the relationship. Overall, we wanted to understand if there was a relationship between a nation's protection and promotion of human rights had a completely linear relationship with democratic function.