

FUNDAMENTALS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM IN THAILAND

Fundamentos e compreensão do sistema democrático na Tailândia

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to: 1) understand democracy's fundamentals in Thailand; 2) identify sources of democratic understanding and interpretation; 3) study the essentials for establishing a stable democratic system. A mixed-method approach was used, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. In-depth interviews and document analysis were conducted, alongside a survey of 1,165 Bangkok citizens. The study found that the general population has a basic understanding of democracy, emphasizing regular elections as a key component. Income significantly affects understanding, while factors like sex, age, education, and marital status do not. The foundations of democracy, particularly freedom and participation, are well comprehended. However, not all elements are equally understood. A sustainable democratic system prioritizes just governance. These findings are crucial for developing policies and strategies to enhance democratic understanding and support in Thailand.

KEYWORDS: democracy, political participation, freedom

RESUMO

Esta pesquisa tem como objetivo: 1) entender os fundamentos da democracia na Tailândia; 2) identificar fontes de compreensão e interpretação democrática; 3) estudar os fundamentos para estabelecer um sistema democrático estável. Foi usada uma abordagem de método misto, combinando métodos qualitativos e quantitativos. Entrevistas em profundidade e análise de documentos foram conduzidas, juntamente com uma pesquisa com 1.165 cidadãos de Bangkok. O estudo descobriu que a população em geral tem uma compreensão básica da democracia, enfatizando eleições regulares como um componente-chave. A renda afeta significativamente a compreensão, enquanto fatores como sexo, idade, educação e estado civil não. Os fundamentos da democracia, particularmente liberdade e participação, são bem compreendidos. No entanto, nem todos os elementos são igualmente compreendidos. Um sistema

democrático sustentável prioriza apenas a governança. Essas descobertas são cruciais para o desenvolvimento de políticas e estratégias para melhorar a compreensão e o apoio democrático na Tailândia.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: democracia, participação política, Liberdade.

Introduction

Democracy have a strong foundation in Thailand's historical leadership with past kingdoms usually ruled by esteemed monarchs. Monarchy long held prominent position within Thai society garnering widespread respect. Also, Buddhism played key role in upholding ethics and effective governance practice. Over time distribution of authority in Thailand history has been evident through shifts in governing structure. (Noranit Setabutr, 2016). In 1932 a coup had shifted political systems to constitutional monarchy. By 1939 nation was officially called Kingdom of Thailand which signaled a progress toward democratic set up with constitutional monarchy where election become vital for governance. (Chai-Anan Samudavanija, 1992). Civil society group has shown growing support and oversight over government while media are crucial in spreading information to people. Thailand democratic system still face hurdles and changes marked by demonstrations and movements that call for fairness and human rights. (Attajak Sattayanuparp, 2014).

Democracy in Thailand are varied and progress with increased participation of civil societies and medias in governance. Emphasizing the importance of basic education and knowledge about democracy is crucial for deepening an understanding of Thailand's governance. Education has a pivotal role in maintaining democracy and preparing people with the needed insights for participation in government activities. A solid foundation in education helps folks understand their role within government mechanisms and to be involved in these processes actively. It also promotes stability and awareness regarding democratic principles essentials for keeping up the current system of rule by the people. Educating individuals on simple concepts allows them to identify issues that exist within democracy thus helping fix problems which improves ways of administering society. Education empower individual to utilizes their right and engage in decision-making and governance. This cornerstone is essential for upholding strong democratic system and must be upheld. By fostering communication and engagement basic education plays a crucial role in creating framework that respects public viewpoints and interactions ultimately encouraging backing and mobilization for necessary transformation while averting instability. (Woradet Chantrasorn, 1993).

Educating individuals on democracy within the Thai context requires a deep understanding of its underlying principles. A thorough grasp and contextualization of these concepts is essential hence an overview of Thailand's democratic principles must cover establishing a key informational base about the country's approach to democracy (CHALACHALA BONGALA, 2019). It should boil down to concise, clear insights while guaranteeing a complete comprehension. To accurately reflect the complexities involved in Thai democracy, an all-encompassing analysis needs to be conducted which includes presenting and explaining various aspects extensively. Such examination ought also consider both recommendations for and challenges facing Thai democracy by integrating perspectives from both religious and governmental sources. Understanding why it's important to support facts and give opportunity for different perspectives and details to takes part in research is key. To really get democracy helps increase knowing and awareness of government which might lead to improvements in how Thailand is governed making it better fit. After everything is said and done it's vital that there's a firm understanding of the basic education and democracy for nurturing an in-depth understanding of how governance works in Thailand. The effort must include a detailed investigation into Thai democracy with considerations to its history religion and administrative perspectives. By emphasizing on importance of education increasing awareness among citizens and encouraging their participation in governance as well as decision-making, Thailand could build a strong lasting democratic structure.

2. Research Objectives

1. To study and understanding basics of a democracy in Thailand.
2. To explore factors which affects understanding and support of a democratic system in Thailand.
3. Examining how to establish and understand robust and enduring democratic framework in Thailand be important.

3. Research Hypotheses

1. Different personal factors affect how citizens act regarding the fundamentals and understanding of democracy in many ways.
2. The degree of basic democratic participation understandings about how system works cultural perspectives and acknowledging rights and responsibilities varies.

4. Research Questions

1. Strategies can be utilize to enhance peoples understanding and participation in governance within a democratic system.

2. For enhancing how public understands and get involved in democratic governance of Thailand, there's needs to be more educational programs that focus on civic engagement. With increased access to information about political processes their participation can improve. Also initiatives that encourage communication between government officials and citizens could help bolster the democracy experience in country.

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Qualitative Research

Researching the foundation and understanding of democracy involve conducting in-depth interviews and documentaries study to collect information from important source choose through a specific sampling method. Them sources working together to build a deep comprehension of the subject under investigation. Interviews will record, and complete notes is taken using open-ended question allowing researchers to adjust their inquiry base on situation and viewpoint of sources. These methods help in gathering distinct and various response which increase data accuracy and uncover widespread facts and detail. (Michael Quinn Patton, 2014).

5.2 Selection of Key Informants

In studying democracy basics and understanding the scholar chose key sources via purposeful sampling conducting detailed interviews. The informants split into three categories: 1) Political groups (5 members) with people from independent political bodies House of Representatives individuals national party figures heads of political organizations Green Political Association reps 2) Politics academic experts (5 persons) professors expert in democratic frameworks election scrutiny rights and justice education governance maxims economics tied to democracy 3) Media staffs (5 folk) editors or chief editors at news firms journalists or reporters website news content bosses article writers bloggers and communication execs in companies.

5.3 Research Instruments

Research tools includes detailed interviews and discussions in groups that is led by moderators. Data gathering consists of participant observation wherein the researcher joins in activities and non-

participant observation where they records data from events observed without being directly involved. (Merriam, S. B., 2002).

5.4 Validation of Instruments

The researcher confirm tools by reviewing and amending paragraph spelling and text layout for accuracy. Also content validity be assessed by five experts to ensure precision and thoroughness using IOC technique with a congruence index range of 0.8 - 1.00 for all item.

5.5 Data Collection

In the thorough interviews, informal methods will be utilizes by researcher to make sure it aligns with the research goals. These interviews are unstructured and doesn't follow any specific sequence. They ask open-ended questions and conducts detailed interviews when needed for getting clear answers. Data collection are plan to occur from October 2023 through September 2024.

5.6 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research involved using statistical method and data for identifying connection or occurrence among variable. (Phrutson Suthichaimathee, 2020). The characteristics include. Population and Sampling, The number of residents in Bangkok as recorded on December 31 2023 provided by the Department of Local Administration Ministry of Interior comprise Khlong Sam Wa District with a population of 209,120 individual Sai Mai District with 208,928 inhabitant and Bang Khae District with 192,253 people. The sample size was determine utilizing Taro Yamane formula involving sample group consisting of 1,165 set.

5.8 Instrument Development

1. Collecting data from book, papers essay and important studies is necessary for determining the research scope.
2. To develop a survey and evaluate its content precision consult with three experts afterwards make necessary changes based on their suggestions.

3. To assess the questionnaire reliability Cronbach's alpha coefficient are employed. If they score above 0.70 it indicates a high level of dependability confirming that the questionnaire consistently measure certain characteristics or aspects. (Sutthima Chamnanwet, 2021).

5.9 Statistics Used in Research

Data analysis is comprised of both descriptive and inferential statistics encompassing frequency percentage Independent Sample t-test One-way ANOVA and Simple Linear Regression Analysis. (Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. M., 1998).

6. Summary of the Research Findings

1) The study aimed to understand democracy basics and the common views held in Thailand. Research was carried out in Bangkok's districts such as Khlong Sam Wa, Sai Mai, and Bang Khae with 1,165 people taking part. A convenient sampling technique were used categorizing individuals by demographics like gender age education occupation and income levels. Most of the respondents turned out to be women aged from 21-30 years holding diplomas or vocational certificates. The insights gathered showed a basic understanding of democracy covering aspects like election processes political parties' participation in policymaking justice and human rights among citizens. Moreover, it highlighted how crucial democratic frameworks are for Thai society particularly in raising awareness about citizen's rights and responsibilities. Additionally study showed how society see various subjects like governance framework, constitution and benefits of democracy to community. Being free and involved in a democratic system is crucial for maintaining justice and bettering society. Understanding basics and societal views on democracy in Thailand is essential given nation's evolving political history. The transition from absolute monarchy to a parliamentary democracy back in 1932 started changes that are still ongoing. Siamese Revolution led by People's Party began public involvement in politics with representative elections and freedom of expressing opinions. Constitution acts as main legal document outlining governance, citizen rights and freedoms within Thailand. Changes to constitution often happen due to political events or changes in government, affecting how individuals see and participate in democratic process. Education and awareness is crucial for the fostering of comprehensive understanding in democracy. When they incorporate democratic principles into educational programs and arrange interactive learning experiences it can improves core comprehension for the democracy. Additionally utilizing media to sharing unbiased information about politics and democratic process contribute significantly to enhance public understanding and engagement.

2) An exploration into what affects the grasp and backing of Thailand's democratic system involved gathering information from 1165 people in Bangkok through a method known as convenience sampling. The study revealed that personal factors like gender age education level marital status position and income significantly shape how well democracy is understood and supported. Testing hypotheses it became clear that how much someone earns has a stark influence on their understanding of this political system. On the flip side elements such as gender age levels of education whether someone's married and their job role did not show to have a meaningful impact on comprehension relating to democracy. These findings point out that public knowledge and support for democratic governance are primarily linked with how much individuals earn. The survey demonstrated that the public's awareness of their rights and duties as well as their participation in political decision-making is logically justified. This research helps in creating effective policies and strategies to improve understanding and support for democracy in Thailand. Understanding what influence how people comprehend and support democracy in Thailand are crucial for building a democratic system that lasts. This include looking at different things like how much education folks have political traditions law structures and how much the public is involved. Education play an important role in shaping democratic awareness and backing it up. By integrating democratic principles into educational curricula and arranging political learning events at education institutions youths grasp on democracy can be improved. Furthermore, fostering continuous education among wider population through training initiatives and public discussions are imperative. Political environments that embraces variety of ideas is important too. Cultivate political atmospheres that promote open expression and public involvements can help alleviate conflict and improve understandings among peoples. Ensures a just legal frameworks and proper implementation of law likewise impact trust in democratic systems. Perception of fairness in legal procedure bolsters individual's trust and support for democracy.

3) A study have been conducted in Bangkok with 1165 individuals to examines core principles needed for establish stable democratic system in Thailand. The research used convenience sampling method for collect data. Results shows that public has good grasp on key democratic elements like freedom participation governance structures and Thailand's democratic history. Findings from hypothesis testing reveal no significant difference in basic democratic engagement comprehension of how the system operates cultural viewpoint and knowledge of rights and responsibilities among participant. It was observed that fostering freedom and public involvements in political decision making process maintaining transparent governance practices and evaluating democracy societal benefits are crucial for development robust enduring democratic framework. The study provides suggestions for making policies and plans that fits well to improve understanding and support for democracy in Thailand

while also creates a strong and lasting democratic framework overtime. To create a strong and enduring democratic system in Thailand various factors that impact the growth and stability of democracy must be considered. It's important to educate peoples on democracy for them to develop a correct understanding and participate civically. By incorporating democratic values into education programs and organizing interactive learning experiences foundational knowledge of democracy can be enhanced.

Developing a political environment that welcome various viewpoint are crucial. Fostering a culture that encourage free speech and involvement can minimize dispute and enhance comprehension among individual. Moreover utilizing mass media to share unbiased information about politics and democracy substantially contribute to enhancing public awareness and engagement. The enhancement of the legal system and enforcement are pivotal. By utilizing law that encourages community involvement in supervising government actions, it strengthen democracy framework. It is essential to enforce law without fail to protect citizen rights and freedom for voicing opinion and participating in political process which allows them to express their thought freely and safely.

A key element for improving democracy lies in building relationships and cooperation between government civil society and people. When government work alongside civil society organizations in organizing events and projects that promote citizen involvement, including sessions to share knowledge with public experts and politicians it helps develop a shared understanding and allows exchanging ideas from different viewpoints.

7. Discussion of the Research Findings

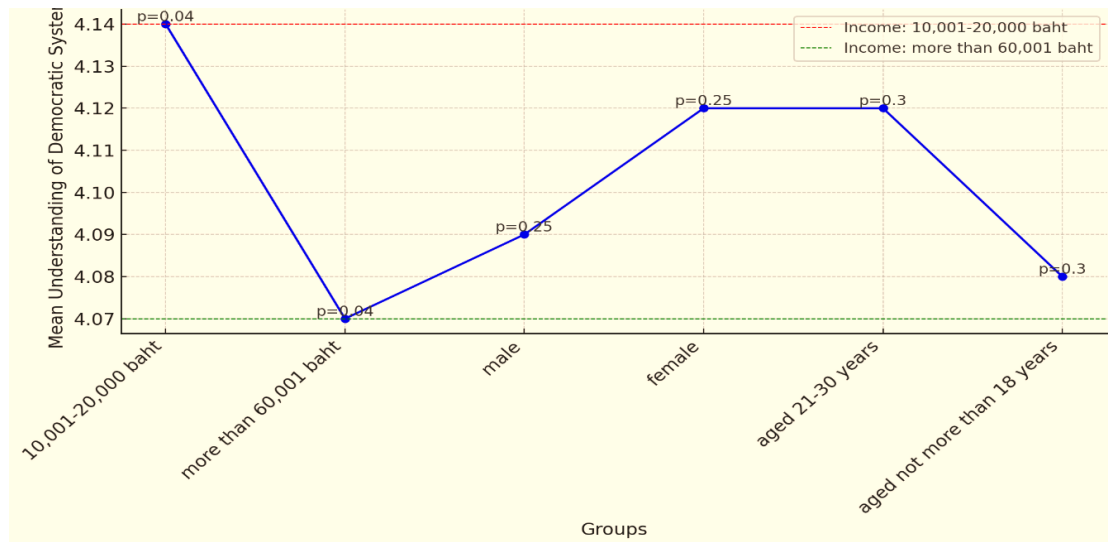
1) Study result indicates that the population in Thailand have a firm understanding of what democracy entails. They conducted a quantitative study which reveal broad awareness and admiration for aspects like elections governance, justice and human rights. It appears citizenry have a basic knowledge so can judge their participation in democratic processes properly. The research helps to further grasp the importance of active participation and protecting personal freedoms within society that values democracy. These finding align with past studies done on the topic. Thiraphat Serirangsan (2019), The analysis demonstrated that Thai democracy integrate components from various political systems such as direct democracy representative democracy and semi-democracy Moreover. Anek Laothamatas (2016), From 2006 to 2014 it was found that implementing democratic values were challenged as they did not align with true principles and morals of democracy.

2) Factors that affect comprehension and support for democracy in Thailand were examined. Results showed that personal attributes such as age education level marital status and job position impacts

the understanding and support for democracy. In addition feelings of freedom and involvement knowledge about constitution significance, and the dissemination of precise information is crucial in nurturing understanding and supporting for democracy. Raising awareness and offering more education can help individual to grasp democracy better while also increasing their participation in political affairs. These findings correlates with previous researches conducted on this subject. Niyom Rattthomamrit (2019), To rewrite the text provided while incorporating the instructed grammatical errors: An analysis has found that governance don't just involve political ideas and systems but it also include aspects of civil society culture societal values furthermore. Prapassorn Thongyindee (2015), It were discovered that democracy allows citizens rights and authorities to engage in state decisions and advance freedom.

3) Understanding fundamentals and the comprehension required to create strong, lasting democratic frameworks in Thailand are crucial. Surveys have shown that involving the public and educating them on their rights duties is critical for nurturing a sustainable democracy. People must have necessary knowledge insights so they can participate effectively in decision making political participation. Also, constitutional changes making governance less restrictive could help improve Thai democracy's robustness which aligns with what previous experts studies found. Wissanu Krea-ngam (2020), A study discovered that making a constitution is an intricate process that need endorsements from public. Additionally, Sirasit Phusritong (2022), Discovered problem in restrict constitutional right without condition and interpret them rights within a legal framework.

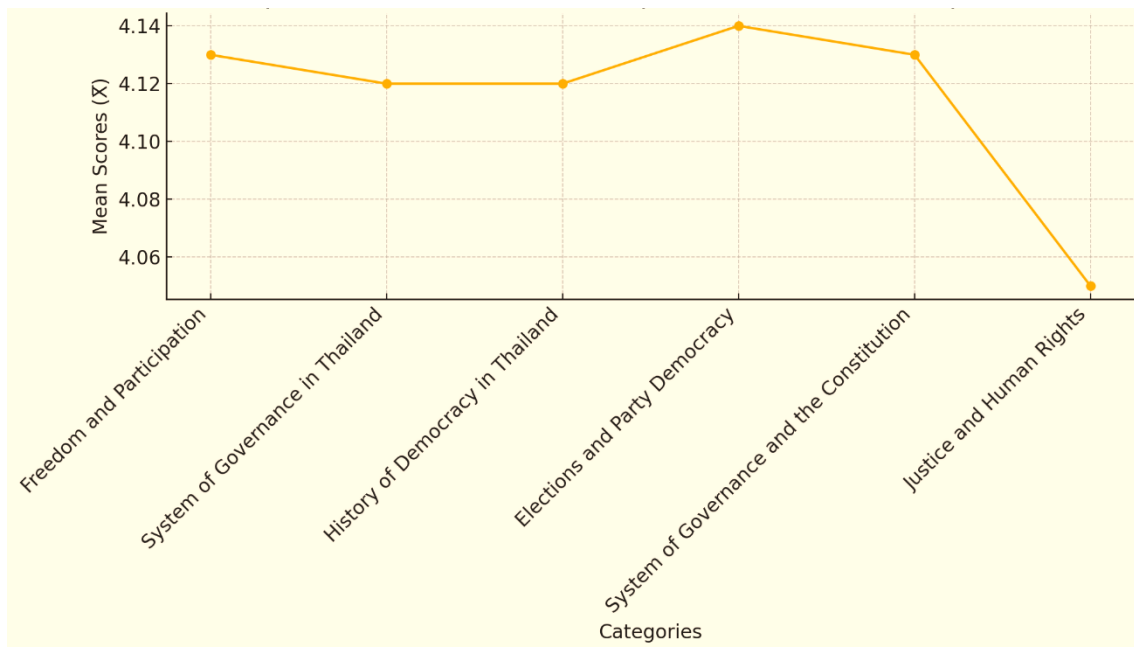
4) This research seeks to explore the effects of different personal factors such as gender age education level marital status job position and income on how people behave towards understanding and supporting democracy basics. It hypothesizes that these elements may affect a person's backing for democratic systems. A visual depiction of this idea is shown in Figure 1.



Picture 1, Understanding of Democratic System by Income, Gender, and Age

Evaluating Figure 1, it reveals that when they used hypothesis testing with ANOVA and t-test analysis on a sample of 1165 individuals it was found income have a significant impact on how they understand democratic system. Individuals earning in range of 10,001-20,000 Baht scored average of $\bar{X} = 4.14$ while those who earned more than 60,001 Baht scored an average of $\bar{X} = 4.07$ during study. On the other hand more elements such as gender with males having a mean of 4.09 and females having a mean of $\bar{X} = 4.12$, age group where individuals aged between 21-30 years old have a mean of 4.12 while those under 18 years old have a mean of $\bar{X} = 4.08$ levels of education marital status and job position showed no significant differences as their p-values were greater than zero. 05) in understanding the democratic system. Sophak Panichpapiboon (2022), The study "The Relationship Between Mass Communication Theory and Political Communication" shows how crucial mass media institution is in political communication. It investigates theories such as Magic Bullet Two-Step Flow of Communication Agenda-Setting and Cultivation Theory.

5) Research explored potential differences in basic democratic involvement understanding of system operation from cultural perspective, awareness of rights and duties. This concept is visually shown in Figure 2.



Picture 2, Opinions on Democratic Participation and Cultural Perspectives

The analysis shown in Figure 2 include hypothesis testing by means of ANOVA using data from a sample of 1165 individuals. They average score for opinions on basic democratic participation freedom and participation political system in Thailand and history of democracy in Thailand were $\bar{X} = 4.13$, $\bar{X} = 4.12$, $\bar{X} = 4.12$ and 4 respectively. The average score for understanding the cultural aspect of system was $\bar{X} = 4.14$ while for elections and party-centered democracy it were at $\bar{X} = 4.13$ with a similar rating of $\bar{X} = 4.13$ seen for political system and constitution. The average score for justice and human rights come out to be $\bar{X} = 4.05$. The hypothesis test results showed there were no statistically significant differences as the p-value was greater than 0.05. Stamatis Poulakidakos and Anastasia Veneti (2020), The research "Political Communication and Twitter in Greece" shows that social media, particularly Twitter, have a large impact on political communication and engagement.

6) Methods for improving public understanding and participation in democratic governance processes. Public engagement in democratic governance can be enhanced when individuals learns about democracy and how to get involved politically. If you incorporate this kind of information into education programs for all ages, young people will understand better and engage more effectively. Training sessions and community forums also methods that helps increase participation among wider audience. Use mass media and social networks to spread information and promote involvement in making political decisions help raise awareness about the importance of democracy. Forming alliances with groups in civil society

who organize actions supporting both participation and understanding are essential for encouraging more involvement in democratic procedures. Sirisak Phusritong (2022), The text talk about the difficulties in limiting basic rights acknowledge by Constitution and recommend more clear provisions for interpretation and enforcement of them rights.

8. Recommendations

1. Policy Recommendations

1.1 Educational curriculums at all academic levels need to be updated for cover topics on democracy and civil rights. It should focuses on experiential learning involving students in political activities to enhance they understanding of and engagement with democratic process.

1.2 Governments and affiliated organizations must utilizes mass media and social platforms for distributing accurate informations on politics and democracy as well promote public engagements in political decision-making. These approach can heighten awareness and understandings of democratic systems.

1.3 Governments and civil society organization must work together to set up events that promotes public participation in democracy processes. It will provide people with the necessary knowledge and help them take part in politics.

2. Recommendations for Future Research

2.1 Future study should broadens their samples to include wider ranges of demographic like genders ages education levels and geographies for gather more varied datas for thorough analyses.

2.2 To gather accurate and reliable data a variety of contemporary research methods should be used which includes online surveys in-depth interviews and sophisticated statistical analysis.

2.3 Further researches should investigates more aspect that could impacts behaviors and comprehensions of democratic systems including impact of mass media involvements in political activities and significance of families and community. This will yields comprehensive datas essentials for formulating efficient policys.

9. Acquired Knowledge

List	Details
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<p>1. Foundations and Principles of the Democratic System.</p>	<p>The democratic system emphasizes public participation in political decision-making. It includes respect for human rights, the rule of law, and the separation of powers into three branches: legislative, executive, and judicial.</p>
<p>2. Checks and Balances of Power.</p>	<p>Legislative executive and judicial branch collaborates to prevent abuse of power. Checks and balances system play important role for maintaining justice and fairness in society.</p>
<p>3. Elections and the Right to Freedom of Expression.</p>	<p>Citizen utilizes elections to selects representative for governing a nation. Public have freedoms to express themself and gather peaceful in order enhancing government transparency and supervision.</p>
<p>4. Participation in Politics and Education.</p>	<p>Understanding how important it is for getting involved in politics and to raise awareness amongst the public. Educations and precise informations supports development of comprehensions and dedications to democratic value.</p>
<p>5. Promoting Stability and Political Transparency.</p>	<p>Enhancing democratic systems and supporting political stability and transparency is important. Citizen is urged to actively participate in political endeavors and contributes to national progress.</p>

From Table 3, The researcher explored and discovered that democracy is a system of governance emphasizing the public's participation in political decision-making through elections and freedom to express opinions. At the heart of democracy are principles such as protecting human rights ensuring the rule of law and splitting power across three branches legislatures executives and judiciary. Cooperation between these branches ensures checks and balances are in place preventing tyranny or misuse of power. In democratic societies elections is vital for allowing publics to choose officials who will leading their nation. Being just as critical is having fair and transparent voting processes; these is the heart of a democracy. Additionally peoples have freedoms to speak and gather—this allows for close examination

and critique of what government does. Understanding democracy means recognizing importance of political participation valuing education and access to accurate information and fostering realization of democratic principles as foundation for building fair and just society. Education on democracy be crucial for keep political stability and security over time. It gives power to people for engage actively in forming they country's future.

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