

Majority Rule presented by Changno, Kwon

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A. Why do we need majority rule?

Majority rule in technical terms

A political principle providing that a majority usually constituted by fifty percent plus one of an organized group will have the power to make decisions binding upon the whole.

Majority rule in political perspectives

Decisions are made by voting with a majority determining the position of the entire group. In modern democracies, many decisions such as electing representatives are made by majority rule.

Justification of majority rule

Majority rule maximizes the number of self-decision man in group decision. It guarantees that the most citizens live willingly under their choice of law. According to *Aristotle*, if we gather others' decision, we can have higher probability to make a wise decision and lesser to make a big mistake.

Considering Utilitarianism, when we estimate welfare about something, most of all judges basically like utilitarian. If we have roughly more profits than loss on a policy, we have to choose it. Considering this, majority is more probable to be right than minority.

B. Is this evidence for democratic society?

We are extremely doubtful of the argument that democracy requires necessarily majority rule, since majority's faults are too serious.

Majority's faults

We are not faced up to only two kinds of alternative. Let's think about more than two alternatives. Suppose we have three alternatives, A, B, C. In case we do not have majority on any one of them, A- 40, B- 35, C- 25, how can we solve this?

We can manipulate the results by way of controlling a subject. If a chairman is in favor of alternative A and he controls the subject, he requires citizens to vote among B and C. The result is B wins by 75-25. Then, he requires to vote among B and A. The result is A wins by 65-35. This shows us how we can be impotent against the standards of final control.

Whenever we say 'majority rule,' what is majority? Majority of what? Majority of citizens, majority of voters, or majority of legislatures?

Even in direct democracy, majority rule is weakened when citizens avoid presenting.

Does the majority rule maximize the utility?

Maybe we can not say that majorities stand neutral and charitable and they select the policy to maximize entire utility. Preferably, if we give some profit to members of them, they could choose an alternative even if they have to deny the alternative considering Utilitarianism. The lesser difference between majority and minority-majority 51%, minority 49%, the worse the result.

Whenever majority fails to consider minority's interest equally, it violates the standard of justification on democratic process and majority rule.

C. How can we enforce the majority's opinion to the minority?

In real democratic world, it is very hard to achieve something that is nearest democracy process. But as possible as we achieve it, majority rule is the best means of decision. Therefore, we can justify majority's opinion.

D. This is possible when fundamental values can be shared although important values are different.

It is possible as long as we protect procedural legitimacy.

But if we guarantee the procedural legitimacy, can we say that we guarantee substantial legitimacy?

No, we have already seen this problem in majority's faults.

E. Alternatives

Extremely, we can require Unanimity. But this lets the situation get worse, since whoever is in opposite has a veto.

What about supermajority?

Super-majority means that some other proportion of the vote higher than 51%, but lesser than 100%, is needed. It decreases the number of self-decision man, since minority is able to deny majority's opinion. Also, supermajority has an interest in maintaining status quo, prevents the reform by majority rule, and preserves existing inequality.