

Preface

We usually presume that high inequality prevails in developing countries, even after democratization. This is an accepted fact, but the logic behind it is not self-evident.

Economic, social, and demographic factors generate income inequality. Similarly, politics plays a crucial role in determining inequality. Assuming that the majority of the population in developing countries comprises the lower income group, democratic institutions are assumed to reflect their preferences regarding government intervention in the inequality problem. Predicted public policy should reduce inequality. Nevertheless, it seems that this mechanism does not necessarily function. Although some countries have achieved lower inequality after democratization, high inequality levels have persisted in others. The question posed is as follows: What determines the level of inequality reduction among democratized countries?

Many studies have been conducted on inequality in advanced democracies, primarily focusing on class-based coalitional politics. However, it is difficult to apprehend the development of many emerging democracies in this framework. Accordingly, we identify three political determinants of income inequality, namely multidimensional preference, political market failure, and weak state capacity.

The effects of these political factors are not limited to the issue of income inequality, but rather are related to the functions of democracy in general. In this book, we hope to develop our argument that reveals the conditions determining the functioning of democracy. In this sense, this study is regarding democracy, particularly in newly democratized countries.

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