

Theories of Democracy

What is democracy?

We are living in the age of democracy & there has been an enormous expansion of democracy in present times. Along with the age of democracy, we are also living in the age of democratic confusion. There are multiple models of democracy. Liberal model, socialist model, guided democracy, basic democracy, etc. Like all concepts of politics it is also a contested concept.

Samuel P. Huntington's ~~idea~~ Waves of Democracy

Expansion of democracy around the globe has been in waves. He talks abt 3 waves of democracy & 2 reverse waves.

1st wave:

The oldest democracies of the world like Britain, France, USA came into existence.

1st reverse wave:

During interwar period we see democratic countries going back to authoritarian model. ex. Germany, Italy, Portugal, etc.

2nd wave:

It starts after 2nd WW because of decolonization & many countries of 3rd world accepted democracy. Ex. India adopted.

2nd reverse wave:

By 1960's democracies collapsed in most of 3rd world countries

3rd wave:

It begins with disintegration of USSR & expansion of democracy in eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa.

✶

Meaning of Democracy

Even if we are living in age of democratic confusion, which happens because of multiple models of democracy, but still we can understand the essence of democracy. Essence of democracy is empowerment of masses. Giving power to those who have been deprived of the power. Democracy has to be understood at two levels.

- Democracy as an idea or as a value system
- Democracy as a form of government.

Democracy has 2 aspects

Procedural & substantive.

Substantive is more important than procedural but procedural is not also important. Without going for procedural democracy we may not achieve substantive democracy. We have to build the institutions of democracy.

Democratically elected parliament, competitive party system, free & fair elections, independent media, constitutional guarantees to rights of people.

independence of judiciary, transparency & accountability of administration.

Substantive democracy means empowerment of masses. Empowerment has different components: Political, economic, social, psychological, cognitive.

Models & Theories of Democracy

- Elaborate on Macpherson's contribution to the field of democracy.

Introduction of Macpherson as a thinker

Macpherson has dealt with theories of democracy, different forms of democracies & has given his own model of democracy.

Macpherson's works on democracy

- Life & times of Liberal Democracy
- Democratic theory: Essays in retrieval

Macpherson is treated as critical liberal & an egalitarian thinker whose concern is equity.

Works of Macpherson

He has analysed existing model of democracy.

He has classified existing models as following.

Classical		Behavioural	
Protective	Developmental	Elitist	Pluralist
Locke, Bentham	J.S. Mill		

Classical models:

Classical theories are philosophical rather than empirical. They tell us about idea of democracy rather than real world of democracy.

Protective model

Hobbes's model, Bentham's model.

Democracy is a form of govt which grants protection to the rights of the people.

Developmental model

J.S. Mill viewed democracy as a form of govt which provides avenues for development of personality.

Behavioural model

Empirical investigation of democracy.

Elitist theory/Market model of democracy

They limit democracy to the electoral system. Democracy is nothing more than election of elites to govern. Masses have limited scope for participation. It is also known as market model or economic theory of democracy. Democracy is a market place where voters are consumers & leaders are entrepreneurs.

Max Weber, Schumpeter, Anthony Downs - Market model

Pluralist model

Pluralist theory is a modification over elitist theory. Participation of masses in

political process is not as narrow as suggested by elitists. Masses participate in the system through pressure groups.

Robert Dahl describes democracy as polyarchy and deformed polyarchy.

MacPherson's views on these models

Classical models lack empirical understanding.

Behavioural models neglect substantive & normative angle.

Pluralist model is not betterment or elitist model.

Both view democracy as a procedure. He mentions

Schumpeter - Dahl axis. Both model view democracy as procedure.

MacPherson's theory of democracy

- He goes for empirical understanding of democracy & also deals with normative angle of democracy.

- He has critically analysed capitalist democracies.

He found capitalist democracies are inequalitarian.

He established that capitalism can't have claim monopoly over democracy.

- Other models can also be democratic.

Analysis of Liberal ^{capitalist} democracy:

He found defects in liberal capitalist models

as found in western countries. Democracy means

empowerment. Liberal democracies are not egalitarian

from that perspective. There are 2 types of powers

- Power of extraction
- Developmental power

In Capitalist societies, capitalists may be having maximum extractive & developmental powers & workers have negligible extractive and developmental powers.

Types of Power

Classes	Extractive	Developmental
Capitalist	99-100%	99-100%
Worker	0-1%	0-1%

Where liberal democracy should move?

It should move towards equal opportunity of development
 extractive power of capitalist is 0%
 extractive power of worker is 0%.

classes	Extraction	Development
capitalist	0	100%
worker	0	100%

What is developmental ^{power} according to MacPherson?

Developmental power means creative freedom or functional freedom for Macpherson. Form of ^{capacity building} democracy is not so imp as idea of democracy. ^{Amartya Sen} For him there can be a democracy in communist Country also subject to condition they promote internal democracy in communist party.

Democracy is possible even in country with 1 party system subject to condition there is a mass support & mass mobilisation towards the program of that party.

20/9/14

Cosmopolitan model of Democracy

David Held

Context of the theory

David Held has analysed the impact of globalisation on democracy. He believes that on one hand globalization has strengthened democracy, at the same time it has weakened the democracy.

Though no. of democracies has increased around the globe but at the same time globalisation has undermined the voice of the people. Institutions of global governance like UN Security council, IMF, World Bank suffer from democratic deficit. Hence

there is a need to strengthen the democracy in global governance. He has given no. of suggestions to strengthen democracy. His suggestions include long term & short term

- As a long term measure he proposes World Government and Global Parliament.
- As a short term measure he supports reforming UNSC, IMF, IWB making their functioning more transparent & accountable & membership more representative.
- As a short term measure he also supports creation of Regional Parliaments inline of, European Union, so that people should have their voice in regional organisations.
- He suggests strengthening of grassroot democracy empowering people, greater independence

- for media & judiciary.
- He also proposes referendums on many such issues where we see deadlocks. Ex: Climate change talks, trade talks, etc.

Models of Democracy

- Representative Democracy
- Participative Democracy
- Deliberative Democracy

Representative Democracy

- Direct Democracy is an ideal democracy.
- However considering the emergence of modern complex societies representative democracy has also been accepted as the second best. The concern of political theorists is how to ensure the representativeness in democracy. Representative democracy primarily deals with procedural aspect of democracy. One of the focus of the theorists is on improving the models of representation. Some of the views related to the representative democracy can be discussed as
- On powers of representatives

- Delegate model - Bentham

- He is not in favour of giving autonomy to the representatives. They should act as a delegate and stick to the mandate.

~~Enlightened~~
- Enlightened representation. - J.S. Mill, Edmund Burke

According to J.S. Mills our representatives are more experienced and enlightened and we should have faith in them & should give sufficient autonomy to take decisions.

According to Edmund Burke, a national parliament should not be hijacked by narrow local interest. It should give primacy to the collective interest. Hence representatives should have greater autonomy.

Types of electoral systems

Objective of electoral system

Distillation of general will

Types

Plurality system FPTP	Proportional Representation
Percent Single member constituencies	multi member constituency
winner takes all	

Systems within Plurality System

Simple Majority system	Second ballot	Alternative Vote System
FPTP	ex. Af, Fr, Maldives	ex. 1st, 12th Australian parliament

SMT

The system may result into a situation where a person elected may be representing

minority votes. No. of people not favouring him as their representative may be more than those favouring him.

It results into wastage of votes.

Strength is its simplicity and can be introduced in those societies where illiteracy dominates.

& is prevalent.

Second ballot system

eg. Election of French President.

Here the winning candidate needs absolute majority not simple majority of the total valid votes cast. It is called as second ballot because if in first round of election no candidate gets absolute majority, then 2nd round of elections take place in which only top 2 candidates are retained & others are eliminated. It results into a situation where one candidate is able to secure absolute majority.

The defect is unnecessary expenditure, causes electoral fatigue.

Alternative Vote system

Winning candidate needs absolute majority. To avoid second ballot, voters have to give their preferences.

Proportional Representation

— Single Transferrable Vote System

— List System

Single Transferrable Vote System

Here winning candidates require to achieve quota of minimum no. of votes. In this system also voters have to mark their preferences. Countries may go for different formula of quota. If on 1st round of counting all seats are not filled then 2nd round of counting will take place. Candidates who are least preferred will be eliminated.

The second preference of the voters will be counted. Here voters means those who have given first preference to the eliminated candidate. Now multiple round of counting will take place. It is more representative.

List System

It is most representative of all systems.

The election is based on parties, eliminates/minimizes the impact of personality factor. Parties will put up the list of candidates. Voters vote for party. Each party will get seats in Parliament in proportion of the votes it gets. There can be some minimum no. of votes set as a benchmark. Ex. In Germany, parties securing $< 5\%$ will not be given representation in Parliament.

This should be an ideal system for societies which are heterogenous. The system is favourable to parties having national reach & unfavourable

to smaller parties.

Germany has adopted mixed system where some seats are elected on the basis of proportional representation & some by simple majoritarian type. Simple majoritarian system is adopted so that territorial interest can also be taken care of.

On types of ballot

J.S. Mill supports open ballot rather than secret ballot.

Compulsory Voting
ex. Australia, Be

It is proposed for countries with low voter turnout. There is a decline of social capital in many advanced countries.

- Why compulsory voting?

If voters' participation is less, it challenges legitimacy of the govt

- Argument against compulsory voting

It is against principle to freedom of speech and expression. It is an aggression on individual. It is manufacturing the legitimacy. The biggest drawback is it dilutes the decision of serious voters.

Participative Democracy

It means Direct democracy. It also means Partyless democracy.

- According to Rousseau, Englishmen are free only once in a 5 year. In order to protect freedom direct participation of people in decision making is required.
- In India M.N. Roy, Gandhi & J.P. Narayanan proposed partyless democracy. Gandhi supported democratic decentralisation.

The institutions of direct democracy are

- Initiative : People taking the initiative w.r.t. a particular legislation.
ex. Switzerland.
- Referendum : When Bill can become act only with the consent of the governed.
- Recall : Calling back the representatives at any time if people are not satisfied with the work of representative. This ensures accountability of representatives.

Plebiscite is not an institution of democracy. Plebiscite is taking opinion of people on any issue. Whereas referendum deals with legislation.

referendum
direct
democracy

22/9/14

Deliberative Democracy

Aristotle

J.S. Mill

Rousseau

Mahatma Gandhi

Rawls

Amartya Sen

Hannah Arendt

Habermas

Joshua Cohen

What is deliberative democracy?

Deliberative democracy has gained relevance in our times. Amartya Sen links "Public Reasoning" to good governance. Until and unless there is a civic participation & public

debate it is not possible to have good

policies which are responsive to the

needs of citizens. In his book "Uncertain Glory"

he points towards the defects of health

policy in India and the major reason is

health issues have not become a matter

of public debate. Today public reasoning

& good governance have become interlinked.

Actually democracy is deliberative in itself &

there is no need of hyphenation. But still in

our times we see the loss of deliberative

character of democracies. Some of the paradoxes

of democracy today are

- Democracy means participation of the people.

However in modern societies there has been

emergence of representative democracies.

Representative democracy for some scholars gives illusion of democracy. Elitist and Pluralist scholars have reduced democracy to market mechanism to the process of interest articulation & interest aggregation.

- Today democracy ~~so~~ has become another name for 'Tyranny of majority'. Th

These are the concerns of the scholars of deliberative democracy. The 2 prominent concepts of deliberative democracy are

- Public reasoning
- General will

Intellectual influences on theorists of deliberative democracy

Pericles

Political leaders should not view discussion as a stumbling block in a way of action but indispensable first step to any wise action at all.

Aristotle

Ordinary citizens discussing & debating together reach to a better results rather than experts who claim to have true knowledge.

Thus these scholars have recognised the importance of deliberation for sound public policy. In our times Amartya Sen talks about public reasoning as a way of arriving at sound policies.

J.S. Mill

He advocated freedom of speech & expression as a necessary prerequisite for democracy.

He goes to the extent of suggesting that even a person who is considered mad by others should be given opportunity to speak.

By now by not allowing freedom of speech & expression or censoring those views which we may not like does not benefit us.

In the works of J.S. Mill, one important concern about democracies emerge, i.e.,

tyranny of majority. It is in this context

Mill proposes toleration & suggest that

if all mankind minus one has 1 opinion

the majority is not right in silencing that

opinion by force as that man will not be

justified in silencing the majority by force

if he had enough. To protect minority

from tyranny of majority, Mill proposes

Proportional Representation Democracy

should not be confused as majority rule

only. Democracy should be treated as a

means of empowerment. The idea is to

support the better argument irrespective of

the fact whether it is a majority argument

or minority argument.

Rousseau

Rousseau talks about the general will.

General will is never the aggregate of selfish

interests. General will represents aggregation

of the real wills or the good will.

Thus democracy should not be understood as balance of contending ~~for~~ interest. Democracy is recognition of better argument. Participation in deliberation should be to achieve the collective good rather than individual good.

Hannah Arendt

She also advocates the necessity of civic participation & calls it as the necessary human condition. H

Habermas

He gives the concept of communicative action. ~~com~~ It means that citizens should communicate with each other to overcome the obstacles that may come in the process of public policy making. Through deliberations ~~pvt~~ interest get transformed into common interest. Preconditions of communicative action are when free and equal participants are able to participate without discrepancies of power & circumstances. This opinion highlights the importance of empowering people so that they can deliberate as equal participants.

R. John Rawls

Rawls has shown the application of active deliberation among citizens as a right procedure to arrive at principles of justice. He also mentions the precondition that is people are in original position when they participate in formulation of the principles.

x ban on public opinion / exit polls.
✓ regulation of public opinion

Joshua Cohen

He has written an article on deliberative democracy & gives following features.

- Democracy is not aggregating individual preferences. Individual preferences are never shaped independently.
- People's preferences are formed during political processes not prior to it.
- Deliberative democracy expects people to be tolerant of each others' views.
- It supports persuasion or rather coercion.
- People should aim at fair laws.
- Process of deliberation reflect mutual respect.
- Democracy is not the rule of elites and people are not unfit to rule.
- All actions taken by the govt has to be justified by the govt.