

Young People Participated in Indian Politics



Political Science

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Mr. BASAPATTAN S. A

Asst: Professor & HOD, Dept. of Political Science, Govt. First Grade College KALAGI
Tq: CHITTAPUR Dist: GULBARGA, STATE: KARNATAKA-585312

ABSTRACT

Participatory democracy is a process emphasizing the broad participation of constituents in the direction and operation of political systems. Etymological roots of democracy imply that the people are in power and thus that all democracies are participatory. However, participatory democracy tends to advocate more involved forms of citizen participation and greater political representation than traditional representative democracy. Participatory democracy may also be a form of semi-direct democracy (representative democracy with instruments, elements, and/or features of direct democracy). Participatory democracy strives to create opportunities for all members of a population to make meaningful contributions to decision-making, and seeks to broaden the range of people who have access to such opportunities. Since so much information must be gathered for the overall decision-making process to succeed, technology may provide important forces leading to the type of empowerment needed for participatory models, especially those technological tools that enable community narratives and correspond to the accretion of knowledge. Effectively increasing the scale of participation, and translating small but effective participation groups into small world networks, are areas currently being studied. Other advocates have emphasised the importance of face to face meetings, warning that an overreliance on technology can be harmful.

Introduction:

India attained freedom from British colonial rule in 1947, subsequently becoming the largest and one of the most diverse democracies in the world. In 1950, it adopted the longest constitution of any sovereign country, consisting of 395 articles in 12 schedules and 94 amendments. With a current estimated population of around 1.15 billion (India Online 08.03.2010), making it the second most populous nation in the world, India is making rapid strides toward transforming its traditionally agriculturally based, command-style economy into a free market system, thanks to a liberalization and structural adjustment program initiated in the early 1990s.

Role of youth

Democracy is the buzz word for our political system. But is it really so? Is it democracy that a nation where a majority of population is below 40 elects a majority of people above 60 to power? Are we really satisfied with the way our country is being governed? Should it not bother us that at the age people generally take retirement and rest, our politicians actually become eligible to be at the helm of affairs? Why is it so that people below 50 years are considered as political 'kids'? The country desperately needs some young leaders who personify energy, enthusiasm, morality, and diligence. No doubt we have progressed a lot in the last 62 years but the development pace would have been completely different had some young torchbearers led this process of development.

At the time of independence, Gandhi called upon the youth to participate actively in the freedom movement. Young leaders like Nehru came to his reckoning and led the movement. But this is not the case now. Nowadays we have only a handful of young leaders like Rahul Gandhi, Sachin Pilot, Varun Gandhi etc, but they are in the political scenario because they belong to influential political families. It is next to impossible to find a young leader with no political family background in the furor of politics. There can be two reasons for this deplorable scene of Indian politics. One may be that the youth today are not interested in actively participating in the political field. They are content with what they are doing and how the country is being governed. But this reason seems to hold no ground seeing the discontent shown by the youngsters towards cases like reservation, Jessica Lal murder case etc. The youth of modern India are aware of the problems facing our country and the world at large. Given a chance they would be ready to change the political condition of the country for better.

Second reason may be that young people are not given opportunities to prove themselves claiming that they are not equipped with experience to participate actively in the governance of the country. This reason

seems to be more logical seeing the monopoly of old leaders in almost all the major political parties of the country. Old people should realize that proper development can take place only when they make way for younger people to take control of the activities. There are few things which need to be clarified. One that youngsters do not mean people who are 20 years old with no experience at all. Youth in this context is meant to refer people in their 30's or early 40's with a good mix of energy and experience. Two, it is not intended to mean that old people should leave the political scene and rest. What is wanted is that they should be there but for guidance because they are treasures of invaluable experience.

On the roads of Indian democracy, we have travelled for about 63 years now and shall continue the journey for years to come in the same rickety ancient grubby vehicle of ours that has driven us for so long. The list of travellers is an assemblage of young dazzling men and women. The blatant contrast between them arouses debates. It makes us ponder over the role of youth in Indian politics. There have been certain qualities constantly attributed to youth such as passion, aggression, and impetuosity, which have been viewed in both negative and positive lights. Many argue that "youth" is an inexperienced and immature stage of life and are in disagreement as to whether the qualities of youth can be beneficial for politics, or detrimental. Speculation has also led to debates about whether young adult brains are biologically ready to make tough decisions. At the same time, for the establishment of "Rule by the People" in the world's largest democracy as we proudly declare ourselves to be, it is important to understand who these "people" really are. According to 'Indian Youth Portal' 41.05% of the total population of the nation comes under the category of youth. Hence, it is obvious that participation of youth in the functioning of our country's political practices is integral. The methods of working need to be revolutionized at a grass root level which can be attained by giving them the power to create a world in which they wish to live. Their innovative way of assessment and unacceptability towards injustice and unfair practices, makes them the ideal class of people to work for the people and strengthen their representation.

Conclusion

There should be a retirement age for politicians as well which may be around 65 years. There should also be some educational qualification for politicians. How can we give those illiterates the key to our country whom we can not give the key to our house? People with serious criminal background should not be allowed to contest elections. As for the youth of our country, they can contribute in more ways than just contesting elections. Much can be done in areas like educating people, raising awareness about various social ills, and many other areas.

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