

BLOCK: IV
DEMOCRACY

- Unit 1 : Procedural Vs. Substantive Conception of Democracy**
- Unit 2 : Liberal Democracy: Issues and Perspectives**
- Unit 3 : Democracy and Citizenship**
- Unit 4 : Participation, Representation and Majoritarianism**
- Unit 5 : Conditions for Sustaining Liberal Democracy**

UNIT-1

PROCEDURAL Vs. SUBSTANTIVE CONCEPTION OF DEMOCRACY

Unit Structure :

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Objectives

1.3 Procedural Democracy: Meaning and Definition

1.4 Features of Procedural Democracy

1.5 Limitations of Procedural Democracy

1.6 Concept of Substantive Democracy

1.7 Elements of Substantive Democracy

1.8 Comparison between Procedural Vs. Substantive Democracy

1.9 Summing Up

1.10 References/Suggested Readings

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1.1 Introduction:

Democracy is the most desired form of modern political system. From the time of Greek city states the concept and form of democracy is continuously evolving till date. Although democracy is usually understood as a form of government but, it is now signified as a way of life. As a form of government, democracy seeks consent of the people through their political participation. In the Athenian model of democracy, popular during the Greek period, we found the prevalence of direct democracy where there was high degree of direct participation of the people who collectively decides, often through mass meetings on the major issues. It is to be mentioned here that Britain is regarded as the first modern democracy. In the aftermath of the Civil War in the seventeenth century absolute monarchy was brought to an end in

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Britain and powers were transferred from the crown to the two houses of parliament with constitutional monarchy. Although initially, the franchise was restricted, but later in the 19th century it was expanded (<https://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/23668/1/Unit-2.pdf>). In 1779, after declaration of American War of Independence which gave legal sanction to the creation of America, that simultaneously gave effect to democracy in the country. Again with the outbreak of French revolution in 1789, a more radical form of democracy was visible which was driven by the principle of popular sovereignty, liberty, equality, fraternity etc. Later, these principles have become the bedrock of many democratic countries like India also. As such the horizon of democracy has been expanding from time to time. In the process of evolution, democracy has manifested in different forms. Though the underlying principle of all these forms are same, but different forms have different interpretations and distinct differentiations. Democracy must not only be thought about in a procedural way but it must also be conceived from moral principles and from a substantive degree of substantive or material equality. Taking that into consideration, here, we intend to introduce two different forms of democracy – procedural and substantive.

1.2 Objectives:

This unit is an attempt to analyse the concept of procedural and substantive notion of democracy and the different issues and perspective related to these dimensions of democracy. After going through this unit the students will be able to–

- *describe* what is procedural and substantive democracy,
- *explain* the principles and perspectives of procedural and substantive democracy,
- *discuss* the limitations of procedural and substantive democracy,
- *understand* the differences between procedural vs. substantive concept of democracy.

1.3 Procedural Democracy: Meaning and Definition:

Procedural democracy simply indicates existence of certain kind of democratic procedure or mechanism in the democratic system of governance. Procedure in other words means those rules of social practice which determine the legitimacy of the course of action not looking at results or outcome of such action (Barry:1995). The democratic procedures are some sorts of institutional framework that involves people in the decision making process which is totally absent in an autocratic system. The procedural democracy gained prominence with the popularity of indirect or representative democracy in which a procedure is widely followed where people elect their representatives by casting votes in the periodical elections. Modern democracies are largely indirect democracies based on majority rule contrast to the direct democracy practiced during the ancient Greek period, which work through representative institutions. So that democracy is regarded as a procedure which is designed to obtain consent of the people for arriving at public decisions which naturally leads to welfare of the people (Gauga:2016). The foundation of any democracy lies in the popular will that is realised through a free and fair decision making process. Therefore, democracy is termed as a method to arrive at a collective decision which reflects the procedural dimension of democracy. The procedural dimension merely focuses on procedures or means to attain democracy. It argues that regular competitive elections on the basis of universal adult franchise and plural political participation would produce a democratically elected government. The core feature of the procedural democracy is the existence and operation of duly constituted election system and electoral process by which authority is placed in the hands of elected representatives of the people (Ghai: 2019). Thus, Procedural democracy is understood as having certain procedures like conducting regular free and fair elections, maintaining rule of law, constitutionalism, responsibility and accountability of executive to elected assemblies, basic civil liberties, including the freedom of expression and freedom to form associations and organisations for all people and independent and duly empowered judiciary are at work etc.

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Stop to Consider

Rule of law:

The principle of Rule of law defines that law is supreme and laws should be properly defined so that citizens can understand how it affects them. No citizens should be arrested or detained arbitrarily except by the procedure established by laws.

Democracy is most preferred and popular form of government as it is based on people's consent. While analysing democracy many scholar defined it as a method. J.A Schumpeter defines democracy as a political method to arrive at political, legislative and administrative decisions by placing in certain individuals the power to decide on all matters as a consequence of their successful pursuit of people's vote (Ramaswamy:2003).Huntington too put forwarded that "The central procedure of democracy is the selection of leadersthroughcompetitive elections by the people they govern" (<https://www.egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/57889/1/Unit8.pdf>). The governments in Central Asian countries could be described as procedural democracies as the powerhas been concentrated in hands of a single individual although periodic electionwhich are held from time to time.Renowned Indian scholar Atul Kohliclaimed that India's democracy is successful because of its procedural character. He argued that India is marked by gross poverty, diverse caste and religion and inspite of that India's democracy succeeded because of its constitutional and political arrangement. According to him, India's diverse forces are balanced due to its procedural notion of democracy.

Stop to Consider

Constitutionalism:

It is a kind of ideology or doctrine which says that government's authority is determined by some set of laws or the Constitution. It describes the basic principles of the state, the structures and processes of government and the fundamental rights of citizens in a higher law that cannot be unilaterally changed by an ordinary legislative act.

1.4 Features of Procedural Democracy:

Procedural democracy has certain essential principles. These are as follows–

- a. Election of the representatives by the people through a well established free fair periodical election system is an important principle of procedural democracy. Here the principle of ‘government by’ and ‘government for’ the people is well reflected.
- b. Political parties compete during elections under equal conditions for votes of the citizens.
- c. Every citizen gets a democratic platform to exercise equal political rights. Thus procedural democracy promotes the principle of political equality. Everyone should be allowed to vote and participate in the governmental decision making.
- d. The system of procedural democracy supports majority rule. Here, the representatives are elected by the people. The elected representatives have the authority to act and take decisions, and to formulate policies on behalf of the people.
- e. The elected representatives throughout their tenure are responsible and accountable to the common people. They always remain responsive to the public opinion.

1.5 Limitations of Procedural Democracy:

So far democracy is concerned, mere existence of procedure or institution is not sufficient. Procedural democracy is only a formal democracy. The structure of the democracy can't be conducive unless it achieves the desired objective i.e. the welfare of the people. The goal of democracy is the welfare of the people that should take precedence over procedure. While addressing political equality, procedural democracy fails to see the socio-economic inequality exist in the society. These socio-economic inequalities make formal participation in the democracy ineffective. It is a democracy of elected representative political institutions which may or may not act efficiently and effectively for securing the objectives and goals of all round socio-economic-politico-cultural development of all the people (Ghai: 2019).Procedural

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democracy is also criticised as minimalist as it is limited to people’s formal participation in the electoral process to elect representatives. As there is no system of check and balances in the system, the elected leaders could manipulate procedures and power for their own benefit leading to authoritarianism (<https://www.egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/57889/1/Unit8.pdf>). Procedural democracy is also criticised as illiberal as it ignores constitutional limits on their power and deprives citizens of rights and freedoms though governments are elected democratically. Here, elections are there with no freedom e.g. Russia under Vladimir Putin. It is not an open society.

Check Your Progress

1. What is procedural democracy?
2. What are the limitations of procedural democracy?

SAQ

Do you think procedural democracy is the most suitable form of government?

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1.6 Concept of Substantive Democracy:

The concept of substantive democracy not only talks about the institutional aspect but also on the actual working of the government. Substantive democracy insists that, a society of truly equal citizens, who are politically engaged, tolerant of different opinions and ways of life, and have an equal voice in choosing their rulers and holding them accountable (<https://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/23668/1/Unit-2.pdf>). The outcome and decisions are the result of such kind of democratic process that ultimately brings welfare of the masses. So, substantive democracy tries to emphasize that the democracy must function in the interest of the people. The defenders

of substantive democracy do not accept the position of procedural democracy which support that the ‘government by the people’ automatically prove to be ‘government for the people’. They said that the people’s welfare should take precedence over its procedure (Gaub: 2016). It talks about the common good of all the citizens rather than the aspiration of selfish interest of the rulers. The supporters of substantive democracy advocate for the universality, protection and effectiveness of social rights and for the respect of dignity and autonomy of all humans. It further says that a democratic society which is engulfed with the majority disadvantaged, poor and vulnerable people, their voice should be addressed and responded. The social inequality needs to be addressed in order to achieve political equality. The rights of the marginalized section like women, minorities should be protected and the state should intervene to ensure that their rights are protected and participate in the political process of the system. Thus, substantive democracy actively concerned with achieving socio-economic development goals to establish an egalitarian society. Political scientists like John Locke, J.S. Mill, Immanuel Kant etc. have supported this form of democracy where formal democratic institution receive political legitimacy.

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Stop to Consider

Immanuel Kant:

He is a German philosopher who believes in human freedom. Human freedom is very much necessary for moral appraisal and moral responsibility of the individual. He was of the view that if a person could not act otherwise, then his or her act can have no moral worth.

1.7 The Elements of Substantive Democracy:

Following are the elements of the substantive democracy:

- a) **Democracy and Economic Development:** Substantive democracy promotes social as well as economic development. Amartya Sen identifies that economic development

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is closely associated with individual freedom and individual capacity. The economic freedom is the foundation of political rights particularly in liberal democratic system. He also said, ‘no substantial famine has ever occurred in any independent country with a democratic form of government and a relatively free press’. The underling argument of this statement is that political leaders in a multiparty democracy with free elections and free press have incentives to respond to the expressions of needs of the poor (McKinnon: 2008). Democracy is associated with higher human capital, higher economic freedom etc. Democracy is closely tied with economic resources of growth like education levels and lifespan through improvement of educative institutions as well as healthcare (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org>). This reflects the substantive part of democracy that seeks outcome of the governance must reach to masses.

- b) Recognition of Social Rights:** As we have discussed earlier, substantive democracy aims at socio-economic welfare of the people to establish social equality. It is due to the fact that, existence of social inequality makes formal political equality relatively meaningless. Democracy though refers government based on political equality which means consent of every individual is necessary who forms the political community. Substantive democracy believes in free exercise of franchise that require freedom from caste domination, or in the case of women from the male domination etc. so that they can actively participate in the decision making process. Democracy encourages individuals to be free, rational and autonomous.

1.8 Comparison between Procedural versus Substantive Democracy:

The procedural dimension of democracy focuses on the presence of free, fair, competitive election based on universal adult franchise as well as plural political participation. It emphasises that, procedure or method is important

for the attainment of democracy. Whereas, in the substantive democracy although procedural standards are met. More political rights and civil liberties are offered. People are the passive agent of electoral participation in the procedural democracy who is governed by their representatives only. This form of democracy deprives citizen from their rights which are due recognised by the substantive democracy. Only structure of democracy can not ensure people's welfare.

Unlimited majority rule of the procedural democracy can result in some policies unfavourable for minorities. Democratic procedures are often used to advance sectional interests or the interests of the rulers. However, in a substantive democracy, the diverse interests of the masses through their active participation is highly anticipated and addressed. This shows that procedural democracy reflect a minimalist view whereas the substantive democracy shows a maximalist view of democracy.

Procedural Democracy entails some commitment to political quality, but any form of rule involves some kind of political inequality. However, while recognising political equality, procedural democracy sidelined the social democracy. But, substantive democracy aims at social equality amidst heterogeneity to establish active and strong political framework. It tries to mitigate the socio economic differences that could not hamper the political participation of people in the democratic process. So, substantive democracy stresses on common good rather than the benefit of the limited individuals.

In order to understand the difference between the procedural and substantive form of democracy, we can take the example of existing democratic political system in India (<https://thewire.in/politics/procedural-versus-substantive-democracy-how-india-fares>). So, far as procedural democracy is concerned it is functioning quite well in India. Periodical elections are held regularly and India never had any military coup. The three constitutionally mandated institutions – judiciary, President, Election Commission are autonomous and functioning well. The procedural part of Indian democracy is largely successful due to the inclusive nature of Constitution of India. It has

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enumerated provisions like cultural autonomy, by making state and linguistic boundaries roughly coincide, giving religious and linguistic minorities rights to open their educational institutions, and recognizing personal laws as legitimate etc. (<https://thewire.in/politics/procedural-versus-substantive-democracy-how-india-fares>). Moreover, provision of reservation of seats in education and public services has also been included for minorities like other backward caste (OBC), Schedule Caste (SC) and Schedule Tribe (ST) etc. Many scholars opined that, only such procedures help to make Indian democracy successful. However, to make democracy successful the substantive goals are equally important along with the procedural aspect. The Indian Constitution has mentioned the provisions that not only bring political equality but also the social equality. In order to establish political equality i.e. one man one vote, social inequality has to be removed. Therefore we see institutional space has been awarded to the marginal groups due to which the dalit leaders, ST, SC leaders have also come to power. Moreover, Panchayati Raj Institution has ensured space for women by according them 33% reservation in the local level political process. But, mere existence of such arrangements does not mean accomplishing the goals. Substantive democracy focuses whether these arrangements could attain upliftment of the vulnerable groups in true sense of the term. In case of India, the basic problem is the political style that underplays the importance of institutions and structures. Political scientist Rajni Kothari has discussed this situation as 'a crisis of institutions' that has resulted in decline of morale and effectiveness of the leaders. These factors ultimately abandon the goals of substantive democracy.

The debate between procedural democracy and substantive democracy shows that democracy is essentially a holistic and contested concept. Both aspects are complementary, contradictory and dependent. A truly successful democracy encompasses both procedural aspect-free fair election, effective political institutions, political equality, constitutional government, and substantive aspect-socio-economic equality, accountability of the rulers, political engagements etc.

Check Your Progress

1. Discuss elements of India’s procedural democracy?
2. Is substantive democracy successful in India?
3. What do you understand by procedural and substantive variance of democracy?
4. Discuss the essential elements and criticisms of the procedural democracy.
5. Explain the essential components of substantive democracy.
6. Critically discuss the differences between procedural and substantive democracy.

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SAQ

Which form of democracy do you think is functioning in India? Analyse with arguments.

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1.9 Summing Up:

After reading this unit you have learnt that democracy is evolving as a form of government and over the years has become the most acceptable form of government across the world. Thus, democracy as a process of collective self-rule enjoys extraordinary legitimacy in today’s world. Though initiation, establishment of democracy is easy but consolidation of democracy is difficult to achieve. The success or consolidation of democracy largely related to state’s role in managing, organising, limiting, and intensifying the powers through which democratic self-rule is organised and achieved. As democracy is the way of life which is associated with demand for democratisation at all levels, so the need is- those affected by particular institutional decisions

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should have their say and representation in the decision making level. Democracy irrespective of its variance should achieve welfare of all. Democracy has evolved as a concept over the years and has become more inclusive. A democratic procedure must follow democratic principles to fulfil the desire of the common people. To sum up, procedural democracy and substantive democracy reinforce as well as interfere with one another. Thus, successful functioning of procedural aspect of democracy requires some substantive aspect of democracy – tolerance, equality, freedom etc. that would make democracy vibrant.

1.10 References/Suggested Readings:

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UNIT: 2

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY: ISSUES AND PERSPECTIVES

Unit Structure:

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Objectives
- 2.3 Meaning of Liberalism
- 2.4 Liberal Democracy: Concept and Definition
- 2.5 History and Development of Liberal Democracy
- 2.6 Different Perspectives of Liberal Democracy
- 2.7 Principles of Liberal Democracy
- 2.8 Issues and Limitations
- 2.9 Summing Up
- 2.10 Reference/Suggested Readings

2.1 Introduction:

Democracy is one of the most discussed concepts in political theory. The word democracy is derived from the Greek word 'demos' which means 'the people' and 'cracy' which means 'rule' or the 'government'. In simple words, democracy is a system of government where there is equal participation of the people in the government formation or decision making and whereby the government concerned is bound to fulfil the aspirations of the masses. Former President of America Abraham Lincoln said 'democracy is the government of the people, by the people and for the people.' According to J.S Mill democracy is a form of government in which "the whole people or some numerous portion of them, exercise the governing power through deputies periodically elected by themselves". Again C.B. Macpherson said "Democracy is merely a mechanism for choosing and authorising government or in some other way getting laws and political decisions made". Though democracy has a long tradition, but it is only in the contemporary time democracy is the preferred form of government

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across the globe. In ancient Greek period democracy did not enjoy the same status that it has today. Although, democracy was prevalent in the Greek city-states but it was not an ideal and widely acceptable form of government. Plato did not approve the democracy as a best form of government because he thought only the philosopher kings are eligible to form the government, and people in general who are not equipped with education do not have the reason and intellect to select the rulers. Aristotle too termed democracy as a perverted form of government as it signifies the rule of the mediocre who seek for their interest instead of fulfilling the interest of the state. It is based on the false assumption of equality.

Though democracy is considered as the popular form of government but democracy is not merely a form of government confined only to elected representatives and suffrage of the people. Democracy is not only a form of government but it signifies a way of life as well as an order of the society. This wider connotation of democracy is explained by John Dewey who said “To say that democracy is only form of government is like saying that home is more or less geometrical arrangement of bricks and mortar, or that church is a building with pews, pulpit and spire.”

Looking into the wider dimension of democracy, different schools of thought have put forward their own interpretations. In this chapter, we will basically focus on liberal democracy and different issues and perspectives associated with it.

2.2 Objectives :

This unit is an attempt to analyse the concept of liberal democracy and the different issues and perspective related to liberal democracy. After going through this unit you will be able to–

- *describe* what is liberal democracy,
- *explain* the principles of liberal democracy,
- *discuss* the issues and perspectives of liberal democracy,
- *understand* the limitations of liberal democracy.

2.3 Meaning of the term Liberalism:

Before discussing what liberal democracy is, we have to understand the two complex and interdependent terms – liberalism and democracy. We have already discussed about democracy. So let us also briefly discuss what is liberal or liberalism? Liberal or Liberalism is primarily a political ideology. It considers freedom of the individual and liberation from restraints is the ultimate goal of public policy of the state. Liberalism emerged as a transition from feudalism to capitalism. With the rise of capitalism from 16th century onwards, the newly emerged capitalist class sought to put limits on the absolute power of the monarch or the feudal aristocracies in European states. Liberalism believes in an open society where every individual is free. Thus, Liberalism is individualist as it confers same moral status to all individuals. The underlying principles of liberal philosophy are- a) human beings are rational, b) liberalism promotes civil liberties of the individual, c) the power of the government is limited d) in economic front liberalism co-exist with the capitalist economic system, whereas in political side it supports democracy e) Liberal view of freedom, equality, justice, and democracy is a search for right procedure in different spheres of social life (Gauga: 1981). Thus, the core themes of liberalism are individualism, freedom, reason, justice, toleration etc.

In contemporary period, democratic form of government equates mostly with liberal democracy. Accordingly, liberal democracy entails the system of government where people are the ultimate source of power of the state.

2.4 Liberal Democracy: Concept and Definition:

The liberal ideas of democracy gained prominence from 17th century and it continued to retain the significance till today. Among the different models of democracy the liberal model of democracy is considered to be the dominant one. The concept of liberalism and democracy is inseparable. For the early liberals, democracy was meant to be protective, as they thought rights and freedom of the people should be protected and safeguarded from the tyranny

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of the state (Bhargava, Acharya:2009). The first systematic explanation of liberal democracy found place in the two essays '*On Liberty*' and '*Considerations on Representative Government*' which were written by J.S Mill. His idea was to identify the factor that may limit the functioning of democratic government. There should not be any scope for tyranny in democracy. As democracy is a government where power resides in the hands of the people so he thought there is a necessity to 'to limit the power of the people over themselves'. So, Mill tried to analyse the principle to limit the unauthorised exercise of power in the civilised community. Democracies in order to function adequately, certain liberties of the people need to be protected. Thus, the term 'Liberal' represents the ideological basis of democracy which believes in popular sovereignty i.e. people are the source of political power. The fate of the state and the government is based on the consent of the people. This system operates as a transparent, free and fair system of governance. People have the freedom to express their opinion and criticise the government. The government is responsible and accountable to the public opinion. There is free and open political struggle among different political parties and all decisions are taken on the basis of majority consensus. The ideology of liberalism gives highest emphasis on rights and freedom of the individuals. As such the concept of liberal democracy respects freedom of expression of the people, voice of dissent, freedom to form association, open competition for political power, freedom of press etc. (Ghai:2019). Further, it stresses on the existence of a constitution which imposes restraints on the government and also supports institutional checks and balances. So, the key features of liberal democracy are—

- a) the government is elected on the basis of regular and competitive elections based on universal adult franchise.
- b) constraints on the government is imposed by a constitution, institutional checks and balances and protection for individual rights
- c) liberal democracy respects the existence of a vibrant and healthy civil society based upon respect for civil liberties.

Stop to Consider

John Stuart Mill:

He was a British philosopher. He was an ardent champion of liberty. He supported representative democracy because that helps in free development of individual. He was one of the leading early philosophers defending the equal rights for women. His '*The Subjection of Women*' (1869) is one of the significant texts of feminist discourse.

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2.5 History and Development of Liberal Democracy:

In the past democracy did not receive much attention as it has achieved today. Earlier as we have already discussed during Greek tradition democracy was not considered as the rule of the wise. It was treated as a perverted form of government. In the early history democracy was thought to be a rule of the masses that were poor and ignorant, was fatal to individual freedom and to all the graces of the civilised living (Asirvatham, Misra: 1936). French philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville too was critical of democracy who said democracy as the 'tyranny of the majority'. Of late with the end of devastating First World War in the 20th century few countries, particularly the allies tried to follow democratic principles in order to make the world safer. Gradually, most of the countries of the world started to follow democracy as the noble form of government. However, later during the emergence of Second World War, the democratic norms were challenged by the socialist school and state due to its inclination towards capitalism. After the Second World War most of the countries of Asia and Africa achieved independence. Though most of these countries considered themselves as democratic but they did not prefer the principles and ethos of western model of liberal democracy. However, the changed circumstances and time proved that the western model of democracy should not only considered as the only model rather there are other model which too need due consideration. But here, we will look at the background of the triumph of liberal democracy in modern era.

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Capitalism:

It is a mode of economy. This economic system is based on the private ownership of means of production. Under this economic system, the society is divided into capitalist class and working class. The state is dictated by the capitalists. The Marxist school of thought is the greatest critique of capitalism that said, the 'state is the executive committee of the capitalist or the richer class.'

As per the historical fact, capitalism was mostly popularised after the rise of liberalism in the west during 17th century, which supports the growth of an entrepreneurial and restraint state. According to liberalism, market society is a model social organisation and the role of the state should only confine to protection of individual rights and freedoms and maintenance of the law and order. Liberalism rules out the absolute authority of the state. Initially liberalism contradicts the principle of democracy as liberalism particularly classical liberalism promotes the growth of capitalism that results in the gross inequality in the society. Moreover, classical liberalism insisted on property qualification of the people for acquiring the right to vote which is also against democratic norms (Gaub: 1981). However, capitalism induced rapid urbanisation and industrialisation led to the rise of competitive economy, exploitation of working class by the capitalist class led to the emergence of class consciousness among the working class. This assertion ultimately compelled the liberal state to accommodate the democratic principles and the interest of the working class and uplift their rights and freedoms as well. The assimilation of such democratic principles co-existing with capitalist economy within the broad framework of liberal ideology led to the growth of liberal democracy. So, in economic side liberalism promotes capitalism and in political side it promotes democracy. But while democracy aims to fulfil the needs and aspirations of the common people, on the other hand, capitalism promotes concentration of wealth in the hands of the few and this led to inequality in the society. This situation has actually transformed the liberal state into welfare state.

It is found that liberal democracy has become a dominant political regime not only in developed world but also in developing world. In the 'End of History' text F. Fukuyama too mentioned that the end of communism after the end of cold war and emergence of capitalist west as the dominant world, introduction of liberal democratic reforms like electoral democracy, economic liberalisation in newly independent countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America in 1980s has actually made the liberal democracy as the most popular form of democracy (Heywood:1994).

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Welfare State:

It is a way of governing in which the state that takes primary responsibility for the welfare of its citizens and discharge numerous social security services in the sphere of health, education etc.

2.6 Different Perspectives of Liberal Democracy:

John Locke, the British philosopher was one of the early exponents of classical liberalism. Most of the scholars of liberal democracy later were influenced by his ideas. John Lockes's concept of liberal state was based on consent of the people, representative government as well as supremacy of the legislature. He opposed the tyranny of the state power and said that the rights of the citizens must be protected from arbitrary power of the state. So, protective version of democracy is reflected in the explanation of the early liberals. According to him the political authority or the government must be responsive, responsible and accountable towards the masses and it should also respect the rights of the ordinary people. The individuals of the john Locke's liberal state are rational and they have the capacity to judge and criticise their government. Such kind of articulation has stimulated the growth of the conception of liberal democracy. Later scholars like Montesquieu, the advocate of the concept of 'separation of power' were also inspired by the ideas of Locke. He too suggested that the liberal democratic state must have limits of its authority and there must be political checks and balances in the government.

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A kind of developmental aspect of democracy is reflected in the writings of J.S Mill. As already mentioned in the works of J.S Mill we could find a systematic explanation of liberal democracy. He particularly advocated for the liberal democratic representative government which gives space to the people to participate in the process of governance. Mill has emphasised on prevention of the abuse of power, individual rights and liberties, safeguarding the rights of the women, tolerance, and vigilance of the citizens for the adequate functioning of the democracy. When individuals have the liberty to make their own choices, they use different human faculties like perception, judgement, moral preferences etc. Mill has highlighted three kinds of liberty- liberty of thought and expression, liberty of action, and liberty of association. He interpreted democracy as a form government which allows development of individual's personality. Mill further said that socio-economic equality is very much essential for the promotion of liberty as well as democracy (Bhargava, Acharya: 2009).

Alexis de Tocqueville in his book Democracy in America (1835) has talked about equality of status, manners, and customs of American democracy. For him democracy not only means, political participation, it also indicates social and civil equality in the society.

The perspective on liberal democracy is also reflected in the writings of pluralist theorist like Robert Dahl. In his book 'A Preface to Democratic Theory (1956)', Robert Dahl has analysed the pluralistic nature of democratic society. According to pluralists, power does not concentrate in one class rather it is spread throughout the society. Dahl is of the opinion that power is the capacity to influence...the process and outcome of the decision-making (Bhargava, Acharya: 2009). In any society there are diverse groups of people with varied interest. Different group of people adopt different mechanism to promote their interest or to influence the decision making. So, democracy provides such a space that provides opportunities for everyone to articulate interests mobilise support and seek representation (Bhargava, Acharya: 2009).

SAQ

Why liberal democracy is a preferred form of government?

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2.7 Principles of Liberal Democracy:

Liberal democracy is based on certain principles. The significance of liberal democracy is largely identified by the following principles:

- a) **Representative form of government:** in liberal democratic system government is elected by the consent and vote of the people. The system grants universal adult franchise to all the eligible people without any discrimination on the basis of caste, colour, gender, religious faith etc. based on which people elect their representative.

- b) **Periodic election:** In order to select appropriate people’s representative periodic election is very important under liberal democracy. No leader or party is elected for life time. They are elected for a limited period. Election make the leaders and the party responsive and accountable towards the common people and refrain them from being autocratic. Election helps the parties to renew confidence of the people to continue in office and at the same time opposition get an opportunity to bring shortcomings of the ruling party to the notice of the people.

- c) **Consent based Government:** In democracy people is the centre of power and that is why people must think and act rationally. Further the government should also provide proper channels for expression of their opinions. As, modern democracies are indirect democracies that is why it is the responsibility of the elected representatives on behalf of the people to express opinion freely.

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- d) **Constitutional Government:** in liberal democratic system the Constitution decides the rules and laws for the government. It is essential to have a well-established tradition of law and constitution for the stability of a democratic system (Gaubas: 1981)
- e) **Civil liberties:** liberal democratic system respects the rights and freedoms of the people. Right to freedom of speech and expression, freedom of press, freedom to criticise the government, public opinion etc are recognised under liberal democratic government.
- f) **Majority rule and recognition of minority rights:** in liberal democracies which support representative government, decisions are based on majority votes. The principle of political equality which implies one man, one vote is followed. Although, decisions are taken on the basis of majority that does not mean the rights of the minorities are suppressed. Necessary constitutional measures and legal safeguards are undertaken to recognise the rights and maintain the dignity of the minorities.
- g) **Political checks and balances:** mass political participation and public opinion are the essence of liberal democracy. None of the organ of the government is allowed to be autocratic and coerce the masses. Each organs of government has different set of power and functions granted by the Constitution. The division of power among the organs of the government act as the internal brake and prevent the government from becoming autocratic (Ghai: 2019).

Check Your Progress

1. What are the different features of liberal democracy?
2. What are the principles of liberal democracy?
3. Analyse different perspectives of liberal democracy.

2.8 Issues and Limitations:

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The critics of liberal democracy in general regard it as the political expression of either western values or capitalist economic structures. Few arguments against liberal democracy are discussed below-

The Marxian Critique of Liberal Democracy:

The philosophy of liberal democracy is particularly criticised by the Marxian philosopher. This category of criticism was particularly advanced by Karl Marx. Marx particularly criticised the liberal democracy as it exclusively serves the purpose of capitalist economy where class based inequality is very much persistent. The liberal democracy supports representative government, but rather than serving the common masses it promotes the interest of the capitalist. Referring to liberal state as modern state, in the 'Communist Manifesto' Karl Marx said, "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." In a capitalist system, the political power is always based on the economy of the society. As economy is under the control of the bourgeoisie, they control all the political institutions and seek legitimacy from the working or the lower class. The alliance between liberal state and capitalism only serves the interests of the richer section, because of which Marxist criticised liberal democracy which claims equal status of all individual. They further said the liberal democracy fails to address the class inequality and discrimination exists in the society.

The radical view of Liberal Democracy:

The radical view mainly criticised the liberal democracy because as it fails to fulfil the traditional values of democracy like political equality, freedom, accountability of the government etc and also its adherence to capitalist economic norms. Democracy cannot be viewed as maximising the interest of the individual rather it should be concentrate on promotion of common good and co-operation in the society. The radical view of democracy is best reflected in the theory of C.B. Macpherson. Macpherson in his book, 'The Real World of Democracy (1966)', stated that liberal societies which grant universal suffrage, a choice between political parties, and civil liberties

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have no exclusive claim over democracy (Gaub:1981). He also said that liberal democracy needs a more human touch which is absent as liberal democracy exist in capitalist world. He therefore stressed on a society based on 'creative freedom' that leads to human emancipation. He developed the humanist model of democracy in contrast to capitalist model where humanist aspirations are not recognised.

Again, though J.S Mill was a supporter of liberal democracy, but he too was critical of liberal democracy. According to Mill, in democracy or liberal democracy majoritarianism not only excludes the voice of the minority but it also lowers the standard of the government. The preference of majority rule even allows the low intelligence people to perform the task of legislation and administration. As a remedial measure he has suggested for plural voting. Plural voting means that with everyone having at least one vote, some individuals would have more than one vote because they were presumably more qualified.

Stop to Consider

Karl Marx:

He is the propagator of scientific foundation of socialism. The political and economic principle developed by Karl Marx is known as Marxism. Friedrich Engles was his close associates. Few major contributions of Karl Marx are- *Das Capital, Communist Manifesto, Economic and Philosphic Manuscripts* of 1844, etc.

Liberal democracy has also been criticised as the rule of the ignorant and incompetent. The principle of equality which it advocates is not possible in the real sense. The majority can exploit the minorities in liberal democracy. Political parties and interest groups can keep the people fragmented and give rise to the problem of maintaining national unity and integration. Moreover, in the liberal democratic system the periodical election involves a huge expenditure and often takes recourse to unethical means.

SAQ

Do you think liberal democracy is really successful?

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Check Your Progress:

1. What is liberal democracy? What are different principles of liberal democracy?
2. Discuss the historical development of liberal democracy.
3. Analyse the different perspective of liberal democracy. What are the limitations of liberal democracy?

2.9 Summing Up:

After reading this unit you have learnt that today, liberal democracy is the most dominant form of democracy as most of the countries of the world practice this model in one form or other. To aggregate individual choice and preferences liberal democracy is the preferred form of government. Liberal democracy allows widest possible range of views and beliefs. By implementing popular rule it tries to protect people from tyranny of the government. However, we cannot ignore the possible threats that may arise in developing countries like India. The structure of liberal democracy often threatened due to large scale poverty, illiteracy, nexus between politicians and business tycoons etc. and due to these threats often rights of the citizens like freedom of speech and expression, freedom of press etc have been compromised. So, only, the structure of liberal democracy cannot make the principles and objectives of democracy. Political consciousness of the masses and democratic attitude of the power holders is absolutely desirable to make democracy vibrant.

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2.10 References/Suggested Readings:

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UNIT: 3
DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

Unit Structure:

- 3.1 Introduction**
- 3.2 Objectives**
- 3.3 Meaning of Democracy**
- 3.4 Democracy and United Nations**
- 3.5 Variations of Democracy**
 - 3.5.1 Classical Democracy**
 - 3.5.2 Liberal Democracy**
 - 3.5.3 Socialist Democracy**
- 3.6 Types of Democracy: Direct and Indirect**
 - 3.6.1 Direct Democracy**
 - 3.6.2 Indirect Democracy**
- 3.7 Theories of Democracy**
 - 3.7.1 Elitist Theory of Democracy**
 - 3.7.2 The Pluralist Theory of Democracy**
 - 3.7.3 The Deliberative Theory of Democracy**
- 3.8 Citizenship**
- 3.9 Principles of Determining Citizenship**
- 3.10 Theories of Citizenship**
- 3.11 Relationship between Democracy and Citizenship**
- 3.12 Rights, Responsibilities and Participation**
- 3.13 Summing Up**
- 3.14 References/Suggested Readings**

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3.1 Introduction:

Democracy is understood to be a form of government in which individuals have the power to make decisions for them, either directly or through elected officials. Considering the difficulties of system adherence, however, the

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advent of representative democracy has resulted in a more passive than active participation of the populace in the political system. A successful democracy also needs engaged public participation. Participation, freedom, and rights are nevertheless conceivable in a democratic society but are not something that can be anticipated in an authoritarian one. As a result, democracy is necessary for citizenship, and citizenship is only feasible under a democratic government. Therefore, it is crucial to examine and discuss how citizenship and democracy interact.

3.2 Objectives:

The basic objective of the unit is to understand and explore the various concept of Democracy, Citizenship and also their relationship. After studying this unit you will be able to –

- *explain* the concept of Democracy and Citizenship,
- *analyse* the various theories of Democracy,
- *trace* the development of the concept of Democracy and Citizenship,
- *establish* the relationship between Democracy and Citizenship.

3.3 Meaning of Democracy:

The word “democracy” derives from the Greek concepts “demos” and “kratos,” which mean “people” and “power,” respectively. It implies that the term “democracy” refers to a type of governance that upholds people’s authority and will. It does not mean oligarchy, in which a small group of people rule, autocracy, tyranny, or being ruled by one. It excludes even majority rule, which completely disregards the interests of minorities. A democratic government respects all citizens’ wants and desires. Individual liberty and equality are the two fundamental concepts that give democracy moral significance. Individual autonomy, as opposed to equality, which refers to everyone having the same ability to influence societal decisions, refers to a society in which no one is subject to enforced rules. While rudimentary democracy can be found in many regions of the world, democracy as we know it today was founded and established by the ancient Greeks in the

fifth century B.C. In the face of autocratic rules of the time, the Athenian democratic paradigm stood out.

Because there are numerous distinct varieties of democracy and democratic states in the globe, no two political systems can be considered “models” to be followed. In addition to presidential and parliamentary democracies, there are federal and unitary democracies, proportional representation democracies, and so on. People’s representatives have a different role in governing in the modern democratic system than they did in the past. The practise of electing representatives through elections rather than actively engaging in the political process is known as representational democracy. Representative democracies are founded on two guiding principles: equality and individual liberty. When elections are mainly free, transparent, and fair, the term “democracy” is used. Elections are complex enough, but defining “democracy” is even more so. Understanding that elections are more than simply a display of democracy and should reflect popular will rather than institutional voting procedures is critical for determining a country’s democratic standing. A democratic system promotes progress by including everyone, particularly in decision-making, and by providing individuals greater true authority. It is more inclusive, introspective, and receptive to people’s desires.

Those who are not entitled to vote, such as immigrants, workers, prisoners, and juveniles, must still abide by the law in a small number of democracies around the world. Democracy requires much more than merely voting, as was already mentioned. It is essential that common citizens are given as many chances as possible to engage in the governance process. Citizens can accomplish this in a variety of ways. A democratic government should not make decisions that seem to go against democracy or to violate human rights. If it appears that the public’s opinions are not being heard, a democratic government must reconsider its decisions.

The term “democracy” has a wide range of meanings, making it difficult to give a precise definition. It’s a contentious, controversial, and hotly debated

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idea. Although most people think of democracy as a type of government, some experts see it as a way of life. As a result, it is critical to explore the concept of democracy, which is both complex and contentious. When looking at the existing administrations around the world, it is clear that the states are following a democratic governance model. Even governments ruled by military dictatorships claim to be pro-democracy. “The greatest and most real democracies in the world today are the German and the Italian,” Mussolini, the Italian fascist, proclaimed in 1936. Until his death, German dictator Adolf Hitler crucified democratic principles. Democracy, according to George Bernard Shaw, is a nebulous concept that appears to exist everywhere but actually does not.

Democracy is often regarded as one of the best forms of government, serving as the foundation for the majority of today’s states, organisations, and associations. Liberty, freedom, equality, and justice are fundamental democratic principles. In some cases, concepts such as liberty and freedom are jeopardised in the pursuit of justice. Many intellectuals, including Alexis de Tocqueville, John Locke, John Stuart Mill, James Bryce, John Austin, A L Lasswell, A V Dicey, and John Seeley, lauded democracy as the best form of government. The most popular definition of democracy is “government of, by, and for the people,” as stated by Abraham Lincoln.

According to Dicey, democracy is a “type of government in which the governing body includes a proportionately significant portion of the entire nation.” “Democracy is a form of administration in which the people play a major part in the construction of institutions and representatives of the government,” writes MacIver. According to the above-mentioned points of view, the people decide what the government should do or what policies must be adopted and implemented in a democratic system of governance. As a result, democracy can be characterised as a procedure that is strongly related to and determined by people’s well-being. A democratic government can never be absolute; rather, it is an institution that upholds a person’s life values.

3.4 Democracy and United Nations:

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The United Nations (UN) supports fundamental ideals such as human rights, advancement, peace, and security and upholds democracy as a fundamental ideal. In comparison to other international organisations, the UN has prioritised democracy support since the establishment of the UN Charter. The United Nations has aided nations all over the world in encouraging good governance and assisting civil society in supporting democracy and its institutions. Furthermore, it encourages the development of new constitutions in post-conflict settings and ensures self-determination in nations liberated from colonial authority. The UN promotes democracy through many UN organisations, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), and others. The authors of the UN did not mention democracy, but the charter's initial words, "We the Peoples," represent the essential principle of democracy and view the people's will as the sole valid source of power for the ruler. The United Nations emphasises public participation, equality, security, and human rights rather than any specific style of democratic governance.

Since 1990, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has published annual reports on human development, equating democracy with development. The term "democracy" refers to more than just a political system. Democracy is now also thought of as a way of life, referring to a way of life founded on democratic ideas and values. The United Nations has recognised the importance of democracy in the world by proclaiming September 15 as "International Day of Democracy."

Moreover, Human rights and democracy are intertwined and both place a high value on equality. Based on that, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) views that "the will of the people will be the cornerstone of government authority." Three rights related to the concept of democracy are enumerated in numerous sections of the UDHR: freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; freedom of expression; and freedom of assembly and association. However, any violation of other rights may also influence which individuals are denied the ability to express their thoughts, diminishing the importance of their decision.

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3.5 Variations of Democracy:

Democracy is a form of government in which the people wield ultimate power, either directly or through representatives. Democracy can take many forms, but it generally refers to majority rule, individual and minority rights, equality of opportunity, equality before the law, and civil and political liberty. The definition of democracy has been broadening and changing over time. Democracy was once thought to be a government that guaranteed the people's intrinsic rights. For example, John Locke considers democracy to be a part of the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and property, which are all possible in a democratic society. With the rise of liberalism, the state was seen as necessary but limited, and it could exist in a democratic form of government only if it did not interfere with people's daily lives. However, in today's world, democracy is defined as a government that provides security, liberty, freedom, and justice of its citizens. Democracy has taken on several forms throughout its growth, and it may take on multiple forms at any one time. However, the fundamental principle remains the same. Moreover, there are significant disparities between the various democratic forms. We'll look at three different types of democracy here.

3.5.1 Classical Democracy:

Greek city-states were the forerunners of the democratic system of governance. Classical Democracy was utilised in small republics with a limited population who had equal status and actively participated in the functioning of the state. Plato and Aristotle discussed the importance of democracy in Greek city-states such as Athens and others throughout their time. This concept isn't optimal because it lacks numerous democratic government prerequisites. This democratic model, on the other hand, included aspects such as equitable participation, consensus-based decisions, and the idea of state allegiance. They weren't enough to make a perfect democracy, but they laid the groundwork for the concept. Furthermore, while earlier thinkers such as Plato discussed democracy, he did not advocate for its implementation, as he did in his masterwork "Republic," where he favoured an aristocratic ruler in the form of a philosopher king. Aristotle, on

the other hand, saw democracy as the worst form of government and polis as the best. He considered democracy as the government of regular people striving to pursue their own narrow interests, and he believed democracy was predicated on a false sense of equality. In his work “Politics,” Aristotle proposed for a composite constitution based on principles and aristocracy. The relevance of classical democracy in today’s world, on the other hand, is a myth, as governments have risen in size and population.

3.5.2 Liberal Democracy:

The terms “democracy” and “liberalism” have no common predecessor. In contrast, liberalism has a recent history, whereas democracy has a long history. However, the terms are occasionally used interchangeably, and the two have been combined to produce the term liberal democracy. Classical liberalism envisions absolute individual liberty, laissez-faire individualism, and a minimal state that permits capitalism to thrive. To maintain comprehensive individual freedom in a liberal state, they devised democratic criteria that foresee individual freedom. As a result of the combination of the principles, promoting universal adult franchise and the market economy, the popular concept of “Liberal Democracy” emerged. The welfare state concept of liberalism was also capable of closing the gap between capitalists and the masses, as the welfare system enabled the government to see the problems caused by classical liberalism, such as unemployment and the massive gap between the rich and the poor, with minimal intervention. The liberal welfare state concept was popular because it mirrored the desires of all segments of the people and provided the masses with adequate rights and obligations. Liberal democracy has grown in popularity as a result of its emphasis on the value of all aspects of society, particularly minorities. The Liberal Democracy is characterised by consent-based democracy, public accountability, majority rule, an emphasis on minority rights, constitutional government, and judicial independence.

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3.5.3 Socialist Democracy:

The protection of people's social and economic rights is encouraged by socialist democracy, which believes in holding elections or ruling through a multiparty system. Societies, according to socialist democracy, are divided into classes, and true democracy cannot be achieved unless the exploiting classes, such as feudal lords, capitalists, and imperialist powers, are defeated. After such exploitative forces have been eliminated from society, the political system should be managed by the proletariat. Furthermore, it is widely considered that individuals in a socialist democracy are subject to the state, but the Cuban revolution revealed that this is not the case, and the revolution exemplifies individuality and dignity. When it comes to human rights, there is a distinction between liberal and socialist democracy. Furthermore, while social democracy emphasises social and economic rights, liberal democracy places a greater emphasis on civil and political rights.

3.6 Types of Democracy: Direct and Indirect:

In today's world, the most common form of democracy is mostly indirect. In general, there are two types of democracy: direct and indirect democracy. The fundamental differences are procedural in character; namely, the extent of public participation in terms of electing the administration as well as monitoring and managing it.

3.6.1 Direct Democracy:

At the commencement of the democratic administration system, democracy was direct in nature. The procedure for direct democracy is adopted particularly in nations with tiny populations. It alludes to a political structure in which the people have the majority of the authority. Direct democracy, in essence, refers to a system in which citizens directly participate in decision-making rather than relying on representatives, and supporters of direct democracy believe that democracy is more than just a procedural issue. Political choices are determined via a direct democracy in which all citizens of a nation are present and participate in voting. People have the opportunity

to have an impact on the formulation of policies since the system respects all individuals equally. As previously stated, direct democracy was common in Greek city states, some portions of England, and even India at the period since they were less populated. However, due to rising population and industrialization, direct democracy lost its relevance. But certain concepts of direct democracy are still implemented in Switzerland, particularly in the operation of cantons and sub-cantons.

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Stop to Consider:

Ways of direct democracy:

The following are the ways of direct democracy:-

- A. Initiative:** It's a procedure that allows citizens to directly engage in legislation and constitutional amendment. The legislative body cannot ignore a majority vote in favour of enacting laws and amending the constitution. Through this approach, the government can solicit public input on a national issue. In most cases, the government initiates this procedure. In a nutshell, it refers to the electorate's position on issues of national importance.
- B. Referendum:** It refers to a piece of legislation that is presented to a popular vote for final approval. The initiative can be approved or rejected by the general public.
- C. Recall:** Without a question, this is the most effective direct democratic method. This tactic illustrates the people's unrivalled ability to overturn the government.

3.6.2 Indirect or Representative Democracy:

In today's world, indirect democracy is becoming increasingly popular, with various countries implementing it. Indirect democracy, often known as "Representative Democracy," is a type of government in which citizens are represented by representatives who act and make decisions on their behalf rather than engaging directly in the political process. However, because it

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involves multiple institutions and technology in its administration, this system is slightly more sophisticated than direct democracy. The indirect democracy process operates through many techniques such as geographical representation, proportional representation, functional representation, and so on. Citizens in India can participate in the democratic process through many levels of representation. Examples include the federal parliament, state legislative assemblies, and Panchayats and municipalities at the grassroots level. Furthermore, some autonomous council has been established in the northeast India under the sixth schedule of the constitution, to ensure participation and representation of the tribal community.

3.7 Theories of Democracy:

In an effort to explain the degree of public participation in politics, many democratic theories have been proposed. Elite, pluralist, and deliberative theories are the three that are most well-known. Following is a discussion of the theories' specifics.

3.7.1 Elitist Theory of Democracy:

The traditional, egalitarian-based classical paradigm of democracy is opposed by the elite theory of government. The theory aims to explain the continuing power dynamics in society. The conventional definition of democracy emphasises the population's active involvement in politics and also refers to a system that is controlled by the public, either directly or through their representatives. The elite theory, which disagrees with such viewpoints, contends that a small elite group, notably from the wealthy and powerful segments of society, genuinely controls society. Majority of the power in the United States is held by the elites, and this authority is unrelated to the democratic electoral system in place there. Through a variety of routes within the government, whether they be political or economic, they exert influence over the government.

The elite theory contends that democracy is an unrealistic ideal and rejects pluralistic viewpoints. It rejects the autonomy idea in a similar manner.

According to the argument, elites cannot be avoided in a democracy. Since ancient times, the political system has been ruled, controlled, and governed by a small group of individuals known as the elites. Rural and industrial elites, including feudal lords and industry owners, held a disproportionate amount of power over resources and production in both agrarian and industrial cultures. Government is heavily influenced by the same wealthy and powerful elite. Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, Robert Michels, and C. Wright Mill are three significant leading elitist democratic thinkers whose sociological foundations may be found in them. Theorists contend that high levels of citizen participation do not necessarily indicate a successful democracy; rather, they suggest that such participation tends to weaken democratic government. Theorists contend that because citizens lack the necessary education to engage in politics, it is simple to manipulate them and abuse of democratic standards may take place.

The terms “elite” and “masses” were first used by Pareto, who also demonstrated the distinctions between the two. Pareto asserted in his book “The Mind and Society” that the elites are psychologically and intellectually superior to the people. He believed that even the elites come in two varieties: the governing elites and the non-governing elites. Additionally, he held the view that the elites themselves supplanted the previous class, which he popularised as the “Circulation of Elites.” One elite may be replaced by another in a process known as the “circulation of elites,” which also includes the migration of individuals from non-elite to elite organisations and vice versa.

Additionally, Mosca in “The Ruling Class” emphasised the sociological and psychological characteristics of the elites, saying that they are an organised marginal group and the people are an unorganised majority. He claimed that sub-elites and the ruling elite make up the ruling class, or elites. According to Mosca, the elites have superiority in knowledge, morals, and material possessions that support their ability to dominate society.

Michels created the concept of the Iron Law of Oligarchy in his book “Political Parties: A Sociological Study of Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy.” He holds that all forms of government can be reduced to an

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oligarchy, in which the elites make up the minority that rules. He said that since the vast mass of people are typically apathetic, sluggish, and subservient, they cannot govern themselves. Because the majority feels safe under such leadership, he justified the rule of the elites as natural and good.

In his book “The Power Elite,” C. Wright Mills promoted the idea of the “Power Elite” based on his research into American politics and society. The term “power elite” refers to those who hold powerful positions in high-level institutions, notably political ones, and whose decisions have a significant impact on the general public and society in the United States. According to Mills, neither the common people nor the typical rich people have any influence on society. At the pinnacle of the military, economic, and political systems, according to Mills, a very tiny group of people wields power and articulates their interests.

3.7.2 The Pluralist Theory of Democracy:

The Pluralist Theory of Democracy is founded on the idea that democracy is a form of government that involves a plurality of social and political forces. The existence of several racial, ethnic, minority, and other groups in society is reflected in plural elements, which also reflect numerous interest groups, organisations, and alliances. In this context, the term “democratic process” refers to a system of government in which many groups within the political system and society engage in a negotiation process to address their needs, interests, ambitions, and goals. According to the notion, government functions are decentralised rather than centrally controlled, and all parties within a given democratic society really negotiate with the government to have policies favourable to them implemented.

This reduces the pluralist idea of democracy to a negotiation process between somewhat autonomous groups. The paradigm of “Polyarchy” was developed by renowned political scientist Robert Dahl to enhance the pluralist notion of democracy in his book “A Preface to Democratic Theory.” According to this concept, a sizable portion of the adult population is engaged in open competition for political support, which ensures that group interests

are competitive and that relative equality is maintained. A two-party election system is supported by pluralists, who cherish civil liberties like the right to free speech. The paradigm promotes the domination or will of each group based on their capacity for negotiation, social power, and influence, with each group seeking to further its own interests.

Additionally, the idea encourages fully informed citizens to examine the operation and effectiveness of their government as well as their active engagement in the political system. Therefore, in contrast to the elitist thesis, pluralists hold that interactions between various social groups determine how the government functions rather than the elites or elected officials running it. As a result, the system guarantees effective government, and in a similar vein, it also assures that the interests of various groups are represented at various levels of government.

In addition, some academics who disagreed with the pluralist theory claimed that it was too simplistic to describe how the government operated and how that group's ideas came to be formed, which gave rise to the development of Neo-Pluralism. According to the neo-pluralist perspective, there are many pressure groups vying for political influence, but they all have a corporate power tilt. The state is not viewed by Neo-Pluralism as an umpire mediating and balancing between the demands of various interest groups, but rather as a largely autonomous actor that forges and protects its own sectoral interests.

3.7.3 The Deliberative theory of Democracy:

One of democracy's most important components is deliberation, along with the degree of participation. A system that values discussion, debate, and discourse in order to best serve the needs of the general public is known as a "deliberative democracy." It honours decisions made after discussion and exemplifies a culture where contemplation is essential to making choices. Because voting is the sole kind of discussion allowed, it differs from standard democratic thought. Deliberative Democracy acknowledges, "The full and equal membership of all in the sovereign body responsible for authorising the exercise of that authority and creating the common reason and will of

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that body". Both direct and representative democracies get along well with democratic deliberation.

Deliberative democracy is viewed by James Miller as a structure based on deliberation that captures the dialogue among the participants. It represents the viewpoint of the individuals taking part in the deliberative process and changes their own interests and viewpoints in consideration of those of others. Public opinion and the general public's interest are seen as essential elements in a deliberative democracy for advancing the needs of the people. Deliberative democracy places a strong focus on public consensus and is based more on the support of the general public than it is on the support of powerful individuals. The Panchayati Raj system of India, implemented in accordance with the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, is regarded as the best illustration of deliberative democracy. Deliberative democracy and participation are stronger at the grassroots level. It's a right-based strategy, and the institutions working on it balance the conflicts of interest between the opposing groups.

All acceptable political decisions must be made by free, equal, and rational agents, according to the renowned justice and public opinion theorists Rawls and Habermas. According to Rawls, reason reduces self-interest and so fosters the development of the public interest. In addition, Habermas viewed that impartial processes and transparent communication may lead to lawful and consentaneous decisions by citizens. In addition, deliberative theorists contend that publicity is essential because decisions in a democracy should be made public, discussed in an open forum, and held up for public review.

Deliberative democracy is criticised, nevertheless, because some people feel that if certain citizens' voices are not included in the system, the deliberative processes will lose some of their quality and credibility. Additionally, pre-existing societal biases, structural disparities, and social complexities will impede the deliberative form of democracy. However, deliberative democracy brings moral considerations into the arena of democratic decision-making and promotes greater citizen involvement, better outcomes, and a more genuinely democratic society.

3.8 Citizenship:

Citizenship is a relationship between an individual and a state in which the individual must profess allegiance to the state in exchange for state protection. The government grants citizens certain rights, obligations, and duties. They are, however, only partially or not at all available to immigrants or non-citizens living in a country. Citizens of a country have full political rights, including the right to vote and hold public office. Similarly, citizens must exhibit their loyalty to the nation and be ready to serve when called upon. Living in a country does not entitle one to citizenship. A person who lives in another country is considered an alien by the host. Individuals who enter a country legitimately and with valid documents are entitled to legal protection and can own property, create enterprises, and acquire an education, but they cannot hold political office.

Citizenship was first established in Greek city-states, with citizen's recognised based on property, education, and other qualities. Ordinary people, especially women, slaves, and the poor, were denied political rights. Similarly, in England, the term "citizen" originally referred to someone who joined the local municipal corporation. In addition, the phrase was used to symbolise a person's submission to the state or king. The concept of modern citizenship did not exist until the 18th century, following the American and French revolutions. Citizens have since been granted various rights and liberties, and they, too, owe loyalty to the state.

3.9 Principles of Determining Citizenship:

Several principles can be used to determine citizenship at birth: Jus Soli refers to citizenship earned via birth within the state's jurisdiction, regardless of parental citizenship. The second principle is Jus Sanguinis, which stipulates that a person is a citizen of the state regardless of where he or she is born if one of his or her parents is a citizen at the time of birth. In the United States and England, for example, the Jus Soli principle has been recognised as a guiding principle. Other countries, on the other hand, follow the Jus Sanguinis as a guiding principle. Dual nationality is frequently the outcome of nationality

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legislation provisions, and a lack of conventional laws on citizenship acquisition and loss has occasionally resulted in statelessness.

A. Citizenship by Marriage:

By marrying a citizen of another nation, a citizen of one country can become a citizen of another. Marriage is one of the quickest ways to get citizenship in any country. Countries that are primary migration destinations have implemented stringent rules and regulations to detect fraudulent marriages, which occur when a citizen marries a non-citizen for financial benefit rather than to live together.

B. Naturalisation:

Naturalization is the process through which a citizen of one country becomes a citizen of another. The naturalisation procedure varies from country to country. Naturalization is the process by which a person obtains citizenship by vowing to obey and uphold the laws of the country and swearing an oath of allegiance. Furthermore, the country that grants citizenship may impose extra requirements such as legal residency, knowledge of the national language, and cultural assimilation. The process of naturalisation of citizens began with the massive influx of refugees generated by the post-World War I refugee crisis. Interstate conflicts around the world resulted in statelessness, forcing people to migrate and seek asylum in neighbouring countries. Despite the fact that the situation eventually stabilised, affected persons were hesitant to return to their own nation. In such circumstances, countries that absorbed such a population enacted mass naturalisation legislation, albeit many did not.

3.10 Theories of Citizenship:

There are several theories of citizenship explaining the rights of citizens. We will discuss the important theories of citizenship. These are the following:—

A. The Liberal Theory of Citizenship:

The liberal notion of citizenship places a strong emphasis on civil rights and is rooted in individualism. The theory contends that the interconnected

process of state formation is what gave rise to citizenship. The creations of an industrial and commercial society as well as the growth of national consciousness have all contributed to the rise of the notion of citizenship. The concept of civil rights served as the foundation for the concept of citizenship initially, while political and social rights came later. The main proponent of this theory was T. H. Marshall. He examined how the concept of citizenship evolved in Britain in his book "Citizenship and Social Class." He believed that, based on the British experiment, the concept of citizenship evolved in three distinct stages: the first stage involved civil rights, the second stage involved political rights, and the third stage involved social rights in three distinct centuries, namely the 18th, the 19th, and the 20th. Marshall also held the opinion that social rights form the basis for civil and political rights. He argued that by offering citizens the aforementioned rights, societal inequality will be lessened. Marshall was a supporter of the welfare state and thought that by assisting the underprivileged, inequality could be lessened.

B. The Libertarian Theory of Citizenship:

Since the state was unable to deliver social rights, the British conservative administration led by Margaret Thatcher prioritised market rights over them, giving rise to the libertarian position on citizenship. Social rights were opposed when neo-liberalism came into being because it posed a threat to the welfare state model. According to the notion, citizenship results from the creation of individual freedom of choice and contract. According to the thesis, individuals are successful entrepreneurs who gain from free market forces. In order to realise their values and desires, people turn to private action and join voluntary organisations, according to the principal proponent of this theory, Robert Nozick. The necessity for citizenship derives from the fact that independence and critical thinking are prerequisites for obtaining the necessities of life.

C. The Communitarian Theory of Citizenship:

According to the communitarian idea of citizenship, there is no such thing as an individual outside of the community. Communitarians disagree with the liberal notion because they believe that excessive individualism has

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compromised each person's obligations to the community. According to the view, citizens actively participate in shaping society through debating issues and influencing decisions. So, in accordance with the principle, a citizen ought to connect with the community, acknowledge the civic virtues of society, and advance the common good. The most well-known communitarian theorists are Michael Walzer, Benjamin Barber, and Hannah Arendt. Therefore, communitarian theorists give group rights precedence over individual rights.

D. Marxist Theory of Citizenship:

The theory of citizenship advocated by Marxists holds that rights are the outcome of a struggle between classes. The fundamental components of citizenship are the privileges that one class earned through repressing the rights of its rival class. Even though Anthony Giddens deviates from the core principles of Marxism, he is regarded as the leading proponent of this theory. The term "welfare capitalism" was coined by Giddens, who also asserted that citizenship rights could be upheld within the framework of the liberal system. The concept of citizenship, in his view, has evolved with the growth of state sovereignty and administrative structure in the latter half of the sixteenth century. It became impossible for the contemporary state to rule everything through force alone as state sovereignty grew, which opened up additional avenues for weaker groups to exert influence over their leaders.

E. The Pluralist Theory of Citizenship:

Citizenship is a complicated, multifaceted process, according to the pluralist theory. The main proponent of this theory, David Held, emphasised that citizenship is a reciprocal relationship between an individual and the community in his book "Political Theory and the Modern State." Many social movements have emerged in the modern world to combat various forms of social discrimination based on factors like religion, sex, race, occupation, etc. The Pluralists demand an examination of these citizenship issues in light of all of these movements.

3.11 Relationship between Democracy and Citizenship:

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The subject of citizenship must eventually come up in any debate on democracy. Political theorists contend that a good citizen exhibits trust by acting in accordance with the rules. According to some, the common citizen who has never had proper education lacks the knowledge and understanding of the political system needed to rely on their leaders to solve their problems. Others contend that the concept of an active citizen is rapidly fading, and is being replaced by the concept of an active consumerism. But many who care about advocacy and involvement think the problem is not political incompetence. Instead, the problem is the concentration of power in a small number of people. The government and people's quality of life would therefore benefit from increasing public participation in decision-making that affects them.

Citizenship has evolved to symbolise the group voice of individuals residing within a nation's political and physical borders. Additionally, citizenship promotes the welfare of the population and political accountability. A strong base in civic engagement is necessary for a democratic system that is efficient, responsible, and inclusive. As was previously mentioned, citizens can exercise power and civic responsibility either directly or indirectly in a democratic society. The democratic system defends and institutionalises minority rights in addition to human freedom. Similar to this, democracy ensures that everyone has access to equal protection under the law and that governments are held responsible to the rule of law. Citizens also owe a duty to the political system since a democratic system upholds and defends the rights and liberties of the populace. A democratic government also encourages collaboration and compromise in order to further the goals of its citizens. Mahatma Gandhi viewed that the intolerant behaviour is a type of violence in and of itself that prevents the emergence of a real democratic spirit.

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3.12 Rights, Responsibilities and Participation:

Regardless of the kind of democratic governance, including majority rule, there shouldn't be any conflict between the protection of individual rights and the rights of the minority. Majority control in a democratic setting simply means making choices and governing; it cannot lead to oppression or deprivation of the minority groups or individuals of their rights and freedoms. People or groups may still be classified as minorities due to their racial origin, religious affiliation, geographic location, socioeconomic status, etc. They are entitled to certain fundamental human rights, and neither a majority nor an elected government should be able to restrict those rights. Minorities also have faith in the government to protect their rights and sense of identity. Once effective, these organisations can engage with and assist the country's democratic institutions. One of their key responsibilities is to safeguard the cultural identities, social conventions, individual consciences, and religious practises of minorities in addition to preserving fundamental human rights. As long as individuals view diversity in terms of identity, culture, and values as a challenge that can make them stronger and more enriched, it may be extremely advantageous in a democratic society. There is no obvious answer as to how to reconcile the many perspectives and beliefs of minority groups. Agreements between the two incompatible realities of majority rule and minority rights can only be reached through a process of acceptance, discussion, and willingness to compromise.

Apart from that citizens in any democratic society must use vigilance to defend human rights. Citizens have a responsibility to take part in a variety of civic activities that will keep the government accountable to the people and on guard. A variety of international covenants and human rights treaties have been signed by democratic governments of free nations as a formal declaration of their commitment to upholding human rights. In a same vein, democracies everywhere should strive to uphold women's rights, encourage women to participate in all aspects of society and government, and create spaces for uninhibited expression and association.

In democracies, press freedom is essential and ought to be unconstrained by the state. A free press offers a forum for discussion of all local and global issues, informs the public, and holds authorities responsible. A democracy

still holds the government accountable for its deeds, and the people are required to be informed. With the aid of a free press, citizens may hold their government responsible. Because of this, the media must present factual news that is supported by dependable sources. The establishment of the government's accountability to its constituents in democracies depends on civil society. Civil society is essential to the advancement of society because it engages in advocacy, public awareness-raising, education, and behaviour monitoring of the government. The civil society advances the goals of its members and instructs them in how to interact with one another, work together, and learn new skills. Frequently, civil society represents the interests of those citizens who would be left out of government policies and programmes.

A democratic government exists to serve the people, but the people must also return to uphold the rules and regulations that govern them. One of the many liberties that democracies all over the world grant is the freedom to disagree and criticise the government. It is the responsibility of citizens to participate actively, conduct themselves politely, and even to be patient. Every citizen in a democracy is aware of their own rights and duties. Moreover, several democracies force their citizens to perform national service, such as jury duty or mandatory military or civilian national service. Importantly, all democracies around the world are bound by a similar set of rules, including respect for the law, payment of taxes, loyalty to the chosen government, and acceptance of divergent opinions. A citizen in a democracy must therefore take responsibility for their own well-being and protection from the government. A democracy cannot function without active citizens who are aware that their participation determines whether the government is successful or unsuccessful. Similar to this, government officials treat every citizen equally, and corruption is not accepted. In the interim, citizens can organise themselves and change the government in a peaceful manner. A more extensive educational experience, socialisation, political engagement, participation in public life, and everyday experiences all contribute to the acquisition of citizenship. It requires more than merely voting, performing civic obligations, and utilising the system because it involves constructing and altering the structures and laws that govern it.

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Check Your Progress

1. What is Democracy? Analyse the various theories of Democracy?
2. What is Citizenship? Discuss the various provisions to get citizenship?
3. Analyse the various theories of Citizenship?
4. International Day of Democracy is observed on —. (Fill in the blank)
5. Who used the term Elite for the first time?

SAQ:

Is freedom possible for citizens in an authoritarian system? Discuss.

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3.13 Summing Up:

After reading this unit you have learnt that according to the justification provided above, indirect governance has replaced direct government in democratic systems. Direct democracy is no longer possible because of how many country states there are in the current world. As an alternative, nations have created a popular representative democracy system. A successful democracy requires both active and passive participation from the general public in the political process. However, in order to keep its people from considering protesting the executive branch and the political system, a democratic government must ensure that its people have access to essential and inalienable liberties. It would be simpler for a citizen to obey the political system once they have access to these freedoms and protections provided by a democracy.

3.14 References/Suggested Readings:

1. Heywood, Andrew (2007), *Politics*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
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3. Saward, M (2006), “Democracy and Citizenship: The Expanding Domains”, in J. Dryzek, B. Honig and A. Phillips (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
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**PARTICIPATION, REPRESENTATION AND
MAJORITARIANISM**

Unit Structure:

- 4.1 Introduction**
- 4.2 Objective**
- 4.3 Participation: Concept and meaning**
- 4.4 Factors Influencing Political Participation**
- 4.5 Representation: Meaning**
- 4.6 Theories of Representation**
- 4.7 Types of Representation**
 - 4.7.1 Territorial Representation**
 - 4.7.2 Functional Representation**
- 4.8 Methods of representation**
 - 4.8.1 Plurality System**
 - 4.8.2 Majoritarian System**
 - 4.8.3 Proportional Representation**
- 4.9 Methods of Minority Representation**
- 4.10 Majoritarianism**
- 4.11 Summing Up**
- 4.12 References/Suggested Readings**

4.1 Introduction:

Participation, representation and majoritarianism are basic tenants of democratic form of government. With the help of participation and representation people get involved in the decision making process of the democratic system. Majoritarianism is the functional principle of democracy.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to analyse concepts like participation, representation and majoritarianism and its relevance in a political system.

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4.2 Objective:

The basic objectives of this chapter are—

- *to understand* the meaning of Participation, different activities of participation and motivating factors behind participation,
- *explain* the meaning of representation, different theories of representation, types or methods related to this,
- *to understand* the meaning of majoritarianism.

4.3 Participation: Concept and Meaning:

Participation means involvement in the political process. It is one of the necessary ingredients of every political system. The democratization process of the every political system makes participation one of the basic criteria of its success. Vibrant democracies are characterized by a continuous expansion of the available forms of participation. Democracy can be best understood in terms of participation of the people. So participation has emerged as central phenomenon in political debate. UNDP in its Human Development Report, 2002 considered political participation as the most important tool to realize the democratic values in society. ‘Where few take part in decisions there is little democracy; the more participation there is in decisions the more democracy there is’ (Verba and Nie). It is one of the means by which consent is granted or withdrawn in a democracy and rulers are made accountable to the ruled.

Political participation refers to those voluntary activities by which members of a society involve in selection of their rulers and formation of public policy. It is the involvement of the individual at various levels in the political system. Through their involvement people shape and affect the political sphere. To be more specific, participation is an effort that people make in order to

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influence public policy decisions, make authority accountable and responsible towards the citizen. Political participation involves an active interaction between citizens and government. It is a two way process. One party initiate and other party responds. Participation is a means through which people can become an active part of the system and thereby they can shape the system. There are various modes of participation. Hence it is not merely elections or universal adult franchise that defines the process of participation. Becoming a political party member, participation in agenda formulation of the government, criticizing the government's policy and programme etc are some important form of participation along with voting and contesting election.

Scholars have defined the concept differently. According to McClosky, 'political participations are those voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of ruler's and directly or indirectly in the formation of public policy.'

Sidney Verba and Norman Nie define political participation as 'those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of government personnel and/or the actions they take.'

According to Lam, 'Acts of political participation also include political activities that are targeted at private institutions such as university administration and business, and that they are designed to pose challenges to existing rules norms and practices.'

In a democratic polity citizens have variety of ways of participation in the governance of a country. The real meaning of participation is hidden behind the activities of political participation. These activities are –

- A. Voting at the poll:** Voting is the most prominent form of political participation and in fact for many people, it is the primary means of political participation. Every citizen gets one vote that counts equally. Expanded voters registration means more and more people have been able to participate. Through voting in election people choose their representative or decision makers.

- B. Membership of a pressure group:** Supporting possible pressure group by being a member of them is another way of participation. Pressure groups aim to circulate information which will educate and inform the public and make them inclined to participate. Being a member of pressure group people are able to participate in different political activities taken by that group to pressurize the decision makers in different aspects.
- C. Protest:** A protest is an expression of objection, by words or by actions, to particular events, policies, decisions or situation. It is a process through which citizen express their disapproval to government policy or decision. It may include a strike, hunger strike, picketing, peace march, candle march, human chain, processions, slogan shouting, sticking posters on walls, refusing or returning an official prize or honour etc.
- D. Involvement with political party:** One can participate in political system by getting involved with a political party. People can involve with a political party by taking membership, donating money, time and resources, participating in campaign etc.

Lester Milbrath brings these activities under three categories and put all these activities of participation in a hierarchical order under these three categories. These are discussed below–

● **Gladiator Activities:**

It includes all the activities which are parts of routine work of political parties. These activities are performed by small number of party activists who are directly involved with party activities like holding party offices, contesting the election as party candidates, raising party funds, attending party meeting, campaigning for party etc. Gladiator activities represent active political participation and direct involvement in policy making and ruling or selection of rulers.

● **Transitional Activities:**

Transitional activities represent those activities which are performed by well wishers and supporters or sympathiser of political parties. They are less

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active than gladiators regarding involvement or participation in politics. Transitional activities include attending party meeting, coming in contact with party officials, making monetary contribution to the parties etc.

- **Spectator Activities:**

Spectators perform least important activities for political party. Spectator activities include voting, influencing others to vote, making and joining political discussions, wearing a button or putting a sticker etc.

Milbrath's classification of political activities tends to show that political participants are basically of two types- active and passive. Political participation in every society has a cost that involves time, energy and resources. Not all participants are ready to bear these costs. Hence those who bear more cost they are active participants and those who bear less they are passive participants. On the basis of the responsibilities Milbrath put Gladiator activities at the top of hierarchical order and spectator activities at the bottom.

4.4 Factors Influencing Political Participation:

Political participation depends upon variety of factors. It varies from country to country, from era to era from one type of people to another. Too many variables are working behind political participation. Some of these are:

1. **Psychological factors or Cognitive traits:** Political participation is influenced by the psychology of the individuals. People's participation or apathy towards political system is largely motivated by psychology of the individuals. Citizens who are pessimistic about the capacity to influence political events on the grounds that what they do won't matter anyway shows disinterest towards political participation. On the other hand people who are optimistic about their contribution and think that a single step may change the political activity shows keen interest towards the political participation. Sometimes politics may offer the lonely man

new opportunities for association with others through political participation. Thus participation in politics may lead to detest isolation and association with others. Hence social scientists admit that psychological issues like; sense of efficacy, sense of civic responsibility, sociability, sense of alienation and nature of the system etc. motivate the citizen to participate or show apathy towards the system.

2. **Social factor:** The social environment of a system definitely has an impact on political participation. Social environment includes elements like education, occupation, income, sex, ethnicity, race, religion and habitant. All these factors motivate the citizen to participate in political process. However the impacts of these factors do vary from society to society. Higher income persons or people holding higher occupation usually reveal a greater willingness for participation. Likewise Education also plays a role of a dominant factor in participation. It is said that, the higher is the level of education, the greater are one's sense of civic duty, political competence, interest and responsibility and also self confidence and articulateness. Religion, race and ethnicity also play a prominent role in participation. It is found that the more a society is marked by ethnic and communal rivalry the greater will be the rate of participation.
3. **Political factor:** To what extent an individual receives political stimuli to participate in political process, depends on the political environment or the political setting in which he/she finds him/her. If the geographical area of a country is too large, if the machineries of communication do not properly function, if the government institutions are entangled in highly rigid and complicated rules, citizens are likely to develop somewhat a feeling a remoteness that seriously affects the rate of political participation. On the other hand if the political atmosphere is open, election rules are simple, governments are people friendly than participation rate of the people will automatically be high.

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Stop to Consider

Some important points:

- Participation basically means involvement in the political system through different ways.
- There are different ways of people's participation: voting, taking membership of civil society, protesting or campaigning, involvement with political parties etc.
- Lester Milbrath classifies the activities of political participation in three categories: Gladiator, Transitional and Spectator.
- Many factors are working behind the political participation. These are categorised as: psychological factor, social factor and political factor.

Check Your Progress

1. What is participation?
2. Analyse the factors influencing political participation.

4.5 Representation: Meaning:

Representation means a person or organization that speaks, acts or is present officially for someone else. When a group of people or an individual acts on behalf of a group which is too large to directly participate in its deliberation then the need of representation emerges. According to German social theorist, Robert von Mohl, 'representation is the process through which the influence which the entire citizenry or a part of them have upon government action, is with their expressed approval, exercised on their behalf by a small number among them, with binding effect upon those represented.'

The origin of the concept of representation in western political theory dates back to the later centuries of Rome (8th century BC), when prince was regarded as the representatives of the Roman people. In the medieval period both the king and the pope were considered as the representatives of

communities. In this both instances representation does not necessarily mean election or selection of the representative by the people. The concept of representation changed during the time of advent of democracy. Democracy is best understood in terms of people's participation. In the early stages of democracy when it was in pure form of direct democracy or people directly participated in the management of public affairs, the concept of representation was not so popular. But with the expansion of population and territory of state, the system of direct democracy became impractical. Therefore, concept of indirect democracy or representative democracy, where government or state activities are managed or conducted by the elected representatives came into existence. In modern times the term 'democracy' is used as synonym of 'representative democracy'. Thus, representation has emerged as the central point of political debate.

4.6 Theories of Representation:

There are different theories regarding the nature of representation. All the theories expressed their views on the representation system from their own perspectives. These theories basically deal with the role of representatives in the policy making and their limitations. These are-

A. Reactionary theory of Representation:

Thomas Hobbes and Alexander Hamilton are the chief exponents of reactionary theory of democracy. This theory believes that the representatives have superior knowledge and wisdom and they are best custodian of public interest. So there should not be any limitation of the power of representatives. This gives rise to absolute sovereignty. This theory believes that once people surrender their rights to the sovereign cannot be withdrawn.

Critics believe that this theory is democratic only so long as it accepts the primacy of public interest in policy making.

B. Conservative theory of Representation:

Edmund Burks and James Madison are the chief exponents of this theory. This theory is more progressive than reactionary theory. This theory gives some scope to the people in the government affairs without encouraging

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popular participation. People can choose their representatives and convey their messages to the representatives based on the good sense. This theory also allows people to replace the representatives if they are not able to satisfy them. However this theory only allows people to choose their representatives from elite group.

C. Liberal theory of Representation:

John Locke and Thomas Jefferson are the chief exponents of this theory. This theory conveys the true nature of democracy. The liberal theory is based on the wisdom of masses and treats their representatives only as the agents. The representatives also translate the wishes of their constituents into policy. This theory upholds equality of all people who are endowed with equal capacity to rule.

D. Radical theory of Representation:

Its chief exponents are Jean- Jacques-Rousseau and the new left. This theory believes that direct democracy is the pure form of democracy. They give highest esteem to the wisdom of the people. It holds that wisdom of the people bound to be diluted through the process of representation.

4.7 Types of Representation:

Representation system basically denotes the procedure through which people choose their representatives. There are two alternative systems of representation: Territorial representation and Functional representation.

4.7.1 Territorial Representation:

In this system the whole country is divided into some geographical areas of nearly equal population. Each geographical area is known as constituency. This system is based on the assumption that each constituency has a uniform interest. Here voters of each constituency elect their representative or representatives. This system is very simple. Most of the countries follow this system of representation. Voters also enabled to know

their representatives. This system is also known as geographical representation. Constituencies are redrawn on regular basis when the population gets increase.

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4.7.2 Functional Representation:

Functional representation means that representatives are elected by various professional and functional groups like; industrial worker, medical practitioner, lawyers, teachers etc. In this system people belonging to different groups or professions should be allowed to elect their representatives on functional basis. Champion of this system argues that territorial representation cannot fulfil the interest of different professions as it is made on geographical area. Different professional groups have different problems and interests. So representation should be based on functional basis. In this system electorate groups are created on the basis of specific social and economic interest and each of the professional categories is called upon to elect one or more representatives, irrespective of their place of residence in the country. Thus people can send their representatives on the basis of their specific economic and professional interests and not on territorial basis. The guild socialists of Britain have been strong supporters of occupational representation.

Stop to Consider

Representation:

Representation means a person or organization that speaks acts or is present officially for someone else. When group of people or an individual acts on behalf of a group which is too large to directly participation in its deliberation then the need of representation emerges. There are different theories regarding the nature of representation–

- a) **Reactionary theory of representation** believes that the representatives have superior knowledge and wisdom and they are best custodian of public interest. So there should not be any limitation of the power of representatives.

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- b) **Conservative theory of representation** gives some scope to the people in the government affairs without encouraging popular participation. People can choose their representatives and convey their messages to the representatives based on the good sense.
- c) **The liberal theory** is based on the wisdom of masses and treats their representatives only as the agents.
- d) **Radical theory of representation** gives highest esteem to the wisdom of the people. It holds that wisdom of the people is bound to be diluted through the process of representation.

Check Your Progress

1. What are the theories regarding nature of representation?
2. Mention two differences between territorial representation and functional representation.

4.8 Methods of Representation:

There are different methods of representation among the countries and political system regarding the issues like-

- i) How can a voter indicate his/her choice?
- ii) How does the votes of the contestants are translated into the allocation of seats?

Broadly there are three methods of representation which may be identified as widely prevalent under democratic system. These are—

- i) Plurality system,
- ii) Majoritarian system,
- iii) Proportional Representation system.

4.8.1 Plurality System:

This system is most popular representation method among most of the countries of the world. According to this system one who obtains largest

number of votes is declared as winner. This system is very simple. In this system a candidate wins by a simple majority. If there are two candidates than one who gets the majority of the votes he/she is elected but when there are three or more candidates then who gets the largest number of votes he/she is declared as elected. In this system a person can get elected without getting the majority (more than 50%) of total votes. That is why this system is also known as the First Past The Post system(FPTP). The practice of the system is widely followed in the elections held for British House of Commons, American House of Representatives, Lok Sabha in India etc.

Merits of this system:

- i) This system is very simple and totally understandable for the electors.
- ii) This system gives a scope for direct relationship between the member of legislature and the electors. This helps the electors to make their representatives responsible to the electors.

Demerits of this system:

- i) Critics consider this representation method as undemocratic. Because in this system a person can get elected without getting the majority(more than 50%) of total votes. In many cases views of majority are not counted as the votes are scattered among different candidates.
- ii) Its opponent argues that this practice is not fair to the minorities in multicultural societies where there candidates might lose election in most of the constituencies in a small margin.

4.8.2 Majoritarian System:

Under the majoritarian system, the party or candidate winning more than 50% of vote in a constituency is considered as elected. In this system a contestant must gain absolute majority to get elected. If there are two candidates in the field for one seat than there will be no problem in deciding

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the winner. But when there are three or more candidates in a single member seat and no candidates win an absolute majority, some methods must be evolved to decide the winner. Generally in this condition two methods are adopted to decide the winner—

- i) **Alternative Vote:** In this system a voter gets an opportunity to indicate preference for different candidates. During the time of counting of vote initially the first preferences are counted. If no candidate gets absolute majority in first preference votes, the candidate who gets the least number of votes in first preference than his candidature is eliminated and second preferences of his/her votes(eliminated persons) are added with the first preferences of votes of other candidates. This system is repeated till some candidates get absolute majority. This system is followed in the election of Indian president, American President and the election of the lower house of Australia.
- ii) **Second Ballot System:** In this System, a voter is required to vote for one candidate only. If no candidate is able to get absolute majority then there is a procedure for second ballot. In the second ballot, only two contestants; who obtains the largest number of votes and the person who obtains next largest number of votes in the first ballot will be taken for consideration. When there will be only two candidates one will definitely get absolute majority or the required quota.

Merits of this system:

- i) It requires the winning candidate to obtain a majority of vote.
- ii) This method also overcomes the problems like vote splitting: voters can exercise a choice between two similar candidates without the fear that a third, unacceptable candidate may get elected.

Demerits of this System:

- i) The system is very complex and not understandable for the voters. As a result voters may show apathy towards the participation.

- ii) This system is still subject to the winning bonus phenomenon and can also result in the party winning the highest number of votes still not receiving the largest number of seats. Although this factor is largely dependent upon the geographic spread of party support and on the mix of parties contesting the election.

4.8.3 Proportional Representation:

Proportional Representation requires that the distribution of seats should broadly be distribution of popular vote among competing political parties. It seeks to triumph over the disproportionalities that result from majority and plurality system. This system is particularly adopted in multi member constituencies in order to secure a fair representation for the minorities as well as majorities. This is a complex method and practiced by different political systems of the world such as US House of Representatives, Australian Senate, Ireland etc.

Hare system: This system was developed by Thomas Hare in 19th century. Under this system a voter is required to indicate his preference against the name of the candidate. When the ballots is counted a candidate receiving the quota of first preference vote calculated

$$\frac{\text{No of valid votes}}{\text{No of seats to be filled}} + 1$$

is awarded a seat. In the electoral calculation, votes received by a winning candidate in excess of quota are transferred to other candidates according to the second preferences marked by the electors. The candidates who obtained least number of votes in the first preferences is eliminated and the next preferences of the candidate's votes are added with the first preference votes of the candidate. Any candidate who receives the quota is also awarded a seat. This process is repeated from both sides till the number of candidates securing the electoral quota equals the number of seats. This system is also known as single transferable vote system.

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List System: Under this system the elector votes not for a single candidate but for a list of candidates. Each list is generally submitted by different political party. The voter is required to mark one list according to his/her choice. The winners are selected from the lists in proportion to number of votes obtained by the list.

Merits of this system:

- i) The proportional representation system enables due representation of all types of groups, such as ethnic groups, women, minorities etc. Proportional representation thus overcomes the main criticism of plurality and majoritarian system.
- ii) Proportional Representation system rarely produces an absolute majority for one party, however it can be argued that proportional representation system ensures greater continuity of government and requires greater consensus in policy making.

Demerits of this System:

- i) Critics say that Proportional representation system produces a weak coalition government rather than a strong majority government. This may lead to indecision, compromise and even legislative paralysis.
- ii) Proportional representation also encourages formation of political party on narrow political ground like regional, language, ethnicity, caste etc. instead of larger national interest. As a result it would create a challenge before the national interest.

4.9 Methods of Minority Representation:

Democracy is a government ruled by the majority. However the real essence of democracy lies in the representation of all sections of people in society. The traditional methods of representation left very less scope to the representation of minorities. Some other devices or methods, therefore worked out for solving this problem. Some of them are–

- i) **Concurrent majority:** This device is advocated by C. Coqlon. According to this method any decision should be treated as valid only when due concurrence of all the important sectional interest affected by it has been obtained. This implies that if the government takes decision on the basis of numerical majority and the minorities are affected by this decision then the minority may use the power of veto to the decision taken by the government.
- ii) **Limited vote System:** This method is practicable in multi member constituencies. In this system voter has certain number of votes which is less than the number of seats to be filled. These residuary seats are filled up by the minorities.
- iii) **Communal representation:** Communal representation means reservation of seats for separate community separately. In this system each community is able to send their representative at least one, in the decision making body.
- iv) **Coalition democracy:** It is regarded particularly suitable for the governance of the society which is deeply divided by religious, ideological, linguistic, regional cultural or ethnic ground. It involves four basic principles:
- a) Executive power sharing with all the groups.
 - b) Great autonomy to all the segments regarding taking decisions and other developmental issues.
 - c) Allocation of political offices and public funds in proportion to the population of each segment.
 - d) Exercise of minority veto.

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Check Your Progress

1. What is plurality system of representation?
2. Point out the differences between plurality system of representation and proportional representation.

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4.10 Majoritarianism:

Majoritarianism is a belief that the numerically majority community should be able to rule the country in whichever way it wants, by disregarding the wishes and need of minority. It is a traditional political philosophy that emphasises on majority of population sometime categorized by religion, caste, class, gender, ethnicity, language etc. According to this philosophy majority people should be entitled to a certain degree of preferences in society. The classical notion of democracy was based on majoritarian principles. It means that in classical form of democracy everyone is considered as equal. Hence in policy making or its execution the views of majority are counted. Therefore many thinkers especially Jeremy Waldron advocates for majoritarian principle. He has argued that 'Final decisions' about political questions- including individual right and political processes themselves- should be made by majoritarian procedures. Majoritarianism can be supported on a variety of grounds, but the simplest and apparently most basic moral defence is that when 'equal persons' disagree about what the rules or policies should be, the fairest way of settling the disagreement is to give everyone an equal vote and the side that gets the most votes win. Thus majoritarianism instantiates one straightforward understanding of the principle of political equality: equal votes for equal people and the greatest number win. But majoritarianism has a negative connotation also. Many democratic countries in the name of political majority, the numerical majority communities indulge in violence against the minorities. Thus the ideology of majoritarianism establishes a 'tyranny of the majority' in various countries in the form of religious , linguistics, ethnic and cultural majority.

Check Your Progress:

1. What do you mean by Participation? Discuss the activities of political participation.
2. Discuss the categories put forward by Lester Milbrath regarding participation.
3. Discuss the factors influencing political participation.
4. What is the meaning of Representation? Discuss different aspects of representation given by different school of thoughts.

5. What is the plurality system of Representation? Point out its merits and demerits.
6. What is the majoritarian system of Representation? Point out its merits and demerits.
7. What is the proportional system of Representation? Point out its merits and demerits.
8. Discuss different methods of Minority Representation
9. Write a note on Majoritarianism.

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SAQ:

Do you think proportional representation system produced a weak coalition Government?

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4.11 Summing Up:

After reading this unit you have learnt that after reading this unit now you are in a position to understand that participation, representation and majoritisation are the basic tenets of a democratic government. Participation generally refers to voluntary activities undertaken by mass public to influence public policy. You have also learnt that various factors influence this participation. This includes social, political, economic, psychological etc. this unit has also familiarised you with the concept representation. representation implies a group of people or individual acting on behalf of a group. This unit has beautifully analysed different theories of representation like reactionary theory, conservative theory, liberal theory, radical theory etc. this unit has also mentioned about different types of representation like territorial representation and functional representation. You have also learnt about different methods of representation like plurality system, majoritarian system, proportional representation etc. this unit has also enlightened you on the concept of majoritarianism. It implies an agenda where a majority

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based on religion, language, class or category gets a degree of primacy in the society. This majority gets the right to make decisions that may affect society.

4.12 References/Suggested Readings:

1. Arora N.D. Awasthy S.S. Political theory, HarAnand Publication, 2004
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UNIT: 5

CONDITIONS FOR SUSTAINING LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Unit Structure:

- 5.1 Introduction**
- 5.2 Objective**
- 5.3 Liberal democracy: a brief introduction**
- 5.4 Conditions for sustaining Liberal Democracy**
 - 5.4.1 Constitutionalism**
 - 5.4.2 Vibrant civil society**
 - 5.4.3 Equality**
 - 5.4.4 Tolerance**
 - 5.4.5 Democratic tradition**
 - 5.4.6 Education**
 - 5.4.7 Rights and Freedom**
 - 5.4.8 More than one political party**
 - 5.4.9 Free and Fair election**
 - 5.4.10 Independence of Judiciary**
 - 5.4.11 Eternal Vigilance**
 - 5.4.12 Minority Rights**
- 5.5 Summing Up**
- 5.6 References/Suggested Readings**

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5.1 Introduction:

The present world is largely an institutional outcome of liberalism, first in the west and increasingly worldwide. Liberalism has strengthened the intellectual, legal, economic and political status of the individuals within the society emphasising equality of status for the people. The result, among other things, has been the rise of two institutions which exemplify these principles: market

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and liberal democracy. Market is the economic institution of liberalism through which its basic economic principles and development models are reflected and liberal democracy is the political platform of liberalism through which liberal values are legalised. The present chapter is made with an intention to discuss the aspects of liberal democracy, especially the conditions of its success.

5.2 Objective:

After reading this unit you will be able to –

- *understand* the concept of liberal democracy,
- *examine* the condition for sustaining liberal democracy.

5.3 Liberal Democracy: a brief introduction:

As we have studied elaborately about liberal democracy in the earlier chapter of this module so here we will give only a brief outline about liberal democracy. ‘Liberalism’ and ‘democracy’ are two different ideologies. Democracy is a very old concept; liberalism is a new concept in comparison to democracy. Yet both the ideologies are based on many similar principles like equality, freedom, competition, constitutionalism, liberty etc. Both of the concepts support each other and as a result of it a new form of democracy came in the forefront which is known as ‘liberal democracy’. Today, liberalism is generally thought to be inseparable from democracy and the term ‘democracy’ is applied to denote ‘liberal democracy’ unless otherwise specified. Francis Fukuyama, one of the greatest historians in his book ‘The End of History and the last man’ (1992) argued that the worldwide spread of liberal democracies may signal the end point of humanity’s socio-cultural evolution and become the final form of government.

Liberal democracy is generally understood to be a system of government in which people give consent to their rulers and rulers, in turn are constitutionally bound to respect individual rights. Today liberal democracy is distinguished from other forms of political system on the basis of its procedure and institutional arrangements. Peter H. Markle has identified four such procedure

and arrangements in his book 'Political Continuity and Change'. The first procedure of liberal democracy as articulated by Markle is 'government by consent'. Rational consent can be obtained by urging for which an atmosphere of free discussion is necessary. There are some institutional mechanisms or arrangements through which decisions of discussion are channelized from people to government. The second procedure of liberal democracy is the 'majority rule' which means that the decisions in the legislatures, committees, cabinets and the executives are taken by the majority vote on the principle of one man one vote. There is no discrimination on the ground of religion, caste class, gender or race. Each and everyone have equal political power. Third important principle of liberal democracy is 'proper arrangement for the protection of minority rights'. The minorities may be racial, religious, linguistic and cultural, but there is not to be any persecution or harassment of these minorities. Special provision should be made for the protection of the rights of minorities. The fourth important procedure for liberal democracy is 'constitutional government' which means a 'government by law and not by men'. Each and everyone are ruled by the law. No one is above the law. There must be processes and procedures to carry out the government. Alan Ball also identified some characteristics of liberal democracy in his book 'Modern Politics and Government'. These are—

1. **More than one political party:** Liberal democracy seeks reconciliation between diverse interests and ideologies. Election gives a chance to the people to consider various alternatives. According to this test, single party systems do not qualify for liberal democracies. There must be two or more alternatives, so that people can indicate their choices.
2. **Periodic Election:** Since representative government is the only practicable method of establishing democracy in the present day world, periodic election becomes necessary for the purpose. Periodic election requires that the people's representative should be chosen for a limited period and representatives are bound to be responsible for their citizens. The elections are based on universal suffrage. It means that each citizen should have the right to vote on attaining the prescribed age; nobody should be disqualified on grounds of gender, race, culture, religion or sex.

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3. **Civil liberties:** Civil liberties are considered as the backbone of liberal democracy. Protection of civil liberties includes freedom of thought, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of association, freedom of assembly, freedom of movement, freedom from arbitrary arrest etc. On the one hand these civil liberties enable the citizens to form different groups or association to influence the government decisions on the other hand it ensures independence of the press, mass media.
4. **Political offices are open to all:** According to Alan Ball, one of the most important characteristics of liberal democracy is political equality. Political offices are not confined to any privileged class. Entry and recruitment to position of political offices are relatively open. However, in order to secure due representation for all strata of the population, some seats can be reserved for minorities or weaker sections.
5. **Independence of Judiciary:** Liberal democracy opposes concentration of power in one hand. Therefore, it insists on separation of power among the three organs of the government; executive, legislature and judiciary. The legislature and the executive may be interdependent due to their nature of function. But judiciary should always be kept independent. Only independent judiciary can preserve constitutionalism and protect civil liberties. It will also strengthen the faith of the individual towards the system. This ultimately leads to peace and development.

Stop to Consider

Some important points:

- Liberal democracy is also referred to as western philosophy. It is the combination of liberal political ideology and democratic form of government.
- Francis Fukuyama argued that liberal democracy has repeatedly proven to be a fundamentally better system. So he considered liberal democracy as final form of government.
- Liberal democracy has some special characteristics like multiple political party, free and fair periodic election, civil liberties, political equality, independent judiciary etc.

Check Your Progress

1. Who is the author of the book “the End of History and the Last Man”?
2. Discuss the main characteristics of liberal democracy as mentioned by Alan Ball.

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5.4 Conditions for sustaining Liberal Democracy:

Liberal democracy, like the other form of political systems cannot sustain in vacuum. Each system can sustain only on necessary social, political and economic environment, without which the system fails. Liberal democracy also urges a necessary environment with some basic facilities. These are

5.4.1 Constitutionalism :

One of the basic conditions for sustaining liberal democracy is constitutionalism. Constitutionalism means a system in which government powers shall be exercised in accordance with the known set of procedures as laid down in Constitution. There can be no Constitutionalism when either the whole constitution or its main provisions are frequently changed or changed in away that these suit the needs of either a particular group of individuals, an individual or a party. Constitution helps in reconciliation of different demands from diverse groups. If there is no constitution, then there will be lack of rules and regulations. Justice will be denied to the people and a chaotic situation will prevail in the absence of laws. Constitutionalism also ensures civil rights. Liberal democracy can operate only in a society where everyone respect and honour laws. In a chaos situation liberal democracy cannot survive. Therefore, it is one of the necessary preconditions to establish constitutional order for successful implementation of liberal democracy.

Stop to Consider

Constitutionalism:

Constitutionalism means a system in which government powers shall be exercised in accordance with the known set of procedures as laid down in Constitution.

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5.4.2 Vibrant civil society :

A vibrant civil society is another condition for sustaining liberal democracy. Civil society comprises organizations that are not associated with government. They are free from direct state control. They are important source of information for both citizens and government. They monitor government actions and policies and hold government accountable. They engage in advocacy and offer alternative policies for government, the private sector and other institutions. They deliver services, especially to the poor and underserved. They defend citizens right and work to change and uphold social norms and behaviour. Civil society plays a mediator role between government and people. On the one hand it helps in articulation of citizen's problems and places those problems in public platform and thus it helps the policy makers in policy formulations. On the other hand civil society also organizes many campaigns and lectures to make people conscious about government decisions. Thus civil society reduces the chances of conflict and civil war and facilitates peace and development in society. Mark Jensen in his book 'Civil society in Liberal Democracy' argued how a vibrant civil society can strengthen the democratic norms and helps in implementation of liberal democracy. According to Jensen an ideal civil society has a double role; it is the social space in which citizens i) pursue their comprehensive conception of the good life within groups (like association, churches and so forth) and in which citizen can foster a liberal democratic culture.

5.4.3 Equality:

Liberal democracy can sustain in a society if there is equality. The formal principle of equality is that equal must be treated equally. If a given rule justifies A is doing X, then it will justify the same thing for any relevantly similar person in similar circumstances. Liberal democracy is based on achieved values not ascribed values. Each and everyone must compete in a free environment to achieve something. Everything is determined by market. Liberal democracy cannot sustain in a society where people gain everything by virtue of a royal and noble family.

5.4.4 Tolerance:

Tolerance is another precondition for sustaining liberal democracy. Tolerance is vital to the functioning of liberal democracy. Tolerance means allowing or permitting or accepting the ideas, views, object or person which one dislikes or disagrees with. In democracy tolerance means admitting diversity. Diversity comes in many forms: thought and speech, dress and physical appearance, values, ideologies, attitude, lifestyle, language, religion, caste, class, race, ethnicity, culture, gender etc. To sustain liberal democracy in proper way each and everyone should be tolerant to his or her fellow being. Tolerance does not only mean accepting diversity rather it also urges for respecting and appreciating diversity. Respect for diversity means seeing different groups as morally and politically equal even though they may differ fundamentally. Appreciation of diversity means viewing different beliefs, practices or lifestyle as something intrinsically valuable and worthy of esteem. Acceptance of secularism in a multi religious society, accepting and giving due rights to minority ethnic and cultural groups etc. reveals tolerance in a liberal democratic set up.

5.4.5 Democratic Tradition:

The existence of democratic ideas in the minds of the people and democratic traditions in the society is another precondition for sustaining of liberal democracy. Democratic traditions make people adhere to democratic institution. The people in England and the United States have an intense urge to participate in the affairs of the government and they refuse to be 'led by the nose'. The prevalence of such ideas and traditions may be attributed to the success of liberal democracy in the UK and USA.

5.4.6 Education:

Education is considered as the prerequisite of liberal democracy. From the beginning of the liberal democracy, best statesmen and thinkers have seen an essential connection between liberal democracy and liberal education.

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Thomas Jefferson and Robert Mynard Hutchin stated that a free society cannot long subsist without vibrant institution of liberal learning. A proper education system inculcates the value of unity among diversity, tolerance towards others, meaning of rights and responsibility in true sense. These qualities are very essential for the sustaining liberal democracy. Because of the importance of education, J.S. Mill, an ardent supporter of liberal democracy urged for implementation of universal education before universal suffrage.

5.4.7 Rights and Freedom:

Rights and freedoms are most often quoted criteria for liberal democracy. It is stated that if there is no freedom and liberty there is no democracy. Liberal democracy must ensure some basic rights: right to life and security of person, freedom from slavery, freedom of movement, freedom of speech, freedom of the press and access to alternative information sources, freedom of association and assembly, freedom of religion, freedom of education, freedom of contesting election etc. Since no state admits these rights they are not consider as liberal democracy and depicted as tyrannies. Liberal democracies rest on three distinct sets of rights: property rights, political rights and civil rights.

5.4.8 More than one political party:

Liberal democracy cannot sustain in single party system. Liberal democracy requires open competition for power between different political parties on the basis of established and accepted form of procedure. When there is a free competition between more than one political party for power, the people get an opportunity to consider various alternative policies, programmes and personalities to exercise their choice. Liberal democracy cannot sustain in society run by single party system as it does not leave any scope for voters' choice.

5.4.9 Free and Fair election:

Another pre requisite of liberal democracy is free and fair election. In liberal democracy periodical elections are inevitable. In election, groups of different political views have the opportunity to achieve political power. Each citizen has the right to choose his or her representative. There should be a proper mechanism through which citizen can cast their vote without fear or favour and transform those votes into proper representation.

5.4.10 Independence of Judiciary:

An independent judiciary is essential to liberal democracy. It allows the courts to work independently without being under the influence of the rich and powerful people or other branches of state like- the executive and judiciary. Only a free and impartial judicial system can protect the rights of the individual as well as the constitution. A bias or influenced judiciary put challenges to the main tenets of liberalism like- political equality, liberty, free and fair election etc. According to Justice J Chelameswar, 'for the survival of a liberal democracy, an impartial and independent judiciary is important'.

5.4.11 Eternal Vigilance:

Eternal vigilance of the people is another factor necessary for the successful working of liberal democracy. The citizens must try to safeguard their rights against governmental encroachment. They must be able to keep an eye on the government so that it does not grow authoritarian. The people who are ignorant and not interested in what is happening in the country cannot be protector of liberal democracy. The people must cherish the principle of liberal democracy and should have a determination to keep alive the flame of liberal democracy.

5.4.12 Minority Rights:

Liberal democracy can function properly only when most marginalised sections of the society have the capacity to ask question, seek accountability

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from the state and participate in the process of government. Though in liberal democracy views of the majorities are always counted yet minorities should not be neglected. There should be special provision for the protection of the rights of the minorities. Otherwise a sense of relative deprivation may arise among the minorities which will lead to separatist or extremist movement ultimately leading to political imbalances. For instance the fundamental rights of Indian citizen enshrined in 3rd chapter contain some specific rights for the protection of interests of religious and linguistic minority.

Stop to Consider

Like all other political systems liberal democracy also can sustain on some conditions or environment. These are—

1. A system run by constitutional order,
2. A strong and vibrant civil society,
3. Equality,
4. Tolerance,
5. Democratic tradition and culture,
6. Proper education system,
7. Rights and freedom of the citizen,
8. More than one political party,
9. Free and fair Election,
10. Eternal vigilance,
11. Independence of judiciary,
12. Minority rights.

Check Your Progress

1. What is constitutionalism?
2. How a vibrant civil society helps in sustaining liberal democracy?
3. Who gave the statement ‘for the survival of a liberal democracy, an impartial and independent judiciary is important’?

4. What do you mean by Liberal Democracy? What are its basic Characteristics?
5. Discuss the conditions for sustaining Liberal democracy.

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SAQ:

Do you think Education is a prerequisite of Liberal Democracy? Explain.

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5.5 Summing Up:

After reading this unit you have learnt that liberal democracy is a form of democracy in which representatives are able to exercise decision making power under constitutional provisions and citizens are enabled with different rights and liberties. Liberal democracies are characterised by pluralism, individual liberty, independence of judiciary, Periodic election based on universal adult franchise, Political equality etc. There are some conditions for sustaining liberal democratic system. These are; Constitutionalism, a vibrant civil society, tolerance, democratic tradition and culture, rights and liberty of the citizens, more than one political party for competitive election procedure, independent judiciary etc.

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