

# **SOS POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

## **M.A.PUB.ADMN.203**

### **SUBJECT NAME : COMPARATIVE & DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION**

---

#### **UNIT-IV**

#### **TOPIC NAME : PEOPLES PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT**

##### **INTRODUCTION**

People's participation is becoming the central issue of our times. The democratic transition in many developing countries, the collapse of many socialist regimes, and the worldwide emergence of people's organizations- these are all part of historic change, not just urge- to participate in the events and processes that shapes their lives. And that impatience brings many dangers and of social disintegration. But if properly nurtured in a responsive national and global framework, it can also become a source of tremendous vitality and innovation for the creation of new and more just societies. Participation means that people are closely involved in the economic, social, cultural and political processes that affect their lives. People may, in some cases, have complete and direct control over these processes – in other cases, the control may be partial or indirect. The important thing that people have constant access to decision –making and power. Participation in this sense is an essential element of human development. Participation, certainly not a new term, has been a part of the development vocabulary since the 1960s, or even before. But it has generally referred only to people's involvement in particular projects or programmes. But today participation means an overall development strategy, focusing on the central role that people should play in all spheres and greater participation enables people to gain for themselves access to a much broader range of opportunities. People can participate as individuals or as groups. As individuals in a democracy, they may participate as voters or political activists or , in the market, as entrepreneurs or workers. Often, however, they participate more and more effectively through group action- as members of a community organization perhaps, or a trade union or a political party. Since participation requires increased influence and control, it also demands increased empowerment- in economic, social and political terms. In economic, social and political terms. In economic terms , this means being able to engage freely in any economic activity. In social terms, it means being able to join fully in all forms of community life, without regard to religion, color, sex or race. And in political terms, it means the freedom to choose and change governance at every level, from the presidential palace to the village Panchayat. All these forms of participation are intimately linked. Without one, the others will be incomplete. Any proposal to increase people's participation must therefore pass the empowerment test- does it increase or decrease people's power to control their lives? This test applies to all institutions that organize or affect human lives- whether markets, governments or community organizations. Each must advance the cause of the people. Participation, from the human development perspective, is both a means and an end. Human development stresses the need to invest in human capabilities and then ensure that those capabilities are used for the benefit to all. Greater participation has an important part to play here; it helps to maximize the use of human

capabilities and is thus a means of increasing levels of social and economic development. But human development is also concerned with personal fulfillment. So, active participation, which allows people to realize their full potential and make their best contribution to society, is also an end in itself. The dangers arise as the irresistible urge for participation clashes with inflexible systems. Although the achievement in human development have been significant during the past few decades, the reality is one of continuing exclusion. More than a billion of the world's people still languish in absolute poverty, and the poorest fifth find that the richest fifth enjoy more than 150 times their income. Constituting more than half the votes, have great difficulty securing even ten per cent representation in parliaments. Rural people in developing countries still receives less than half the income opportunities and social services available to their urban counterparts. Many ethnic still live like separate nation within their own countries. And political and economic democracy is still reluctant process in several countries. Our world is still a world of differences. But many new windows of opportunity are opening. The cold war in East-West relations is over, and there is a good chance of phasing it out in the developing world. The ideological battles of the past are being replaced by more pragmatic partnership between market efficiency and social compassion. The rising environmental threat is reminding humanity of both its vulnerability and its compulsion of common survival on a fragile planet. People are beginning to move to centre stage in national and global dialogues. Many old concepts must now be radically revised. Security should be reinterpreted as security for land. Development must be woven around people, not people around development, and it should empower individuals and groups rather than take away power from them. And development cooperation should focus directly on people, not just on nation-states. Many of the old institutions of civil society need to be rebuilt, and many new ones created. And because future conflicts may well be between people rather than between states, national and international institutions will need to accommodate much more diversity and difference, and to open many more avenues for constructive participation. All this will take time, for participation is a process, not an event, it will proceed at different speeds for different countries and regions, and its forms and extent will vary from one stage of development to another. That is why it is necessary to pay attention not only to the levels of participation, but also to whether participation is increasing. What is important is that the impulses for participation be understood and nurtured. The implications of widespread participation are profound, embracing every aspect of development, markets need to be reformed to offer everyone access to the benefits they can bring. Governance needs to be decentralized to allow greater access to decision-making. And community organizations need to be allowed to exert growing influence on national and international issues. We must realize the fact that human development is the development of the people, by the people, and for the people. Unless and until we ensure people's participation, democratic development will remain elusive.

The challenges of development have opened many avenues unexplored in the journey of a nation. The traditional approach of centralized planning and top down approach focused on economic growth as an objective. This approach is based on presumption that higher economic growth leads to redistributive justice to all. However, decades of experiments and experiences have proved otherwise. The search for new alternatives has thrown many avenues which focus people centric development, decentralized governance and participatory approach- to development. DC: centralized governance, meaning involving all stake holders in the process of --- development is an instrument for promoting equitable development. In this unit, we will focus on people's participation in governance and development. There have been significant changes in policy directions for development like reactivation of Panchayat Raj in rural India and Municipal Bodies in Urban India. We shall study the meaning of people's participation and why it is a necessity in today's context and how the same is being ensured through formal and informal institutional structures at grass root level. The understanding of the methodologies of decentralized governance and functions of grass root institutions like Gram Sabha and Ward Sabha enables you to comprehend the democratic processes of our political system. After studying this unit,

you should be able to: Explain the meaning and concepts of people's participation. Discuss the importance of local Self Governance, people's participation in development. Comprehend the role of Grass root institutions like Panchayati Raj Institutions, Gram Sabha and Ward Sabha. People's Participation, Leadership and Capacity Building.

Most simply defined, 'participation' means taking part. In the context of development theories, participation means direct involvement of all those people in the decision making process which is likely to affect their lives. The way participation is defined largely depends upon the context and background in which participation is applied. While the Economic Commission for Latin America (1973) considers contribution by the people to Public Programmes to the complete exclusion of any involvement in the decision making process as participation. Cohen and Up Hoff (1977) maintains that participation includes the people's involvement in the entire decision making process. FAO (1982) emphasizes participation in all decision making process but by the People's own Organization and through self organized actions. Paul (1987) introduces the concept of enhancement of well being in terms of values cherished by the communities as being the ultimate objective of participation. Participation can be seen in two extreme forms. It can begin as passive participation where people are told what is going to happen or happened. People are just objects on whom action is thrust. On the other extreme is self mobilization where people participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. Participation starts from the conception stage up to the delivery of the product and its consumption. The process involves decision making at various stages, independent of any external influence. Participation can be categorized into various stages in which degree of involvement varies. The Typology of Participation are: Passive Participation t Participation in Information giving Participation by Consultation Participation by Material Incentives Functional Participation Interactive Participation Self Mobilisation In the above typology passive participation is at the one end of the spectrum where people are told what to do while on the other end is the self Mobilisation where local people themselves are in total command. As one moves from passive participation to self Mobilisation control of local people & creases and outsiders decreases. According to Zubair Meenai (2008) "The principle of participation is widely recognized as a right in itself. The right to take part in the conduct of public affairs means that every person and all people are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy civil, economic, social and political development."

### **IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION**

Participation as a concept has found 'favor among masses, policy makers, politicians, and sociologists. Croft and Bensford (1994) have elaborated some arguments for participation. Most people want to be involved - People have intrinsic desire to get involved. People have right to be involved - people have the legal entitlements to be involved, the rights to redress, to comment and to be consulted on issues impacting their lives and society. Participation has accountability - Accountability means not just being responsive but also answerable to the people. People have the right to know what is happening and why? Increased direct involvement of the service users results in more effective accountability of the service providers. Participation makes more efficient and cost effective services. Involving people challenges institutionalized discrimination.

Participation as an end - Participation as a goal of a policy initiative entails empowering people in terms of their acquiring skills, knowledge and experience to take greater responsibility for their development. People are. Provided access to power and resources to create opportunities which are self sustaining. Bastian (1997) sketches four different thematic variations in the concept of participation. First, participation is employed as a simple means of getting unpaid, labour from the people. It serves the purpose of creating a sense of belonging among the public about the public utilities created. ,, Second, participation is interpreted as an attempt to provide self reliance. Third, participation approach is

resorted as a technique to create ideal villages. Finally, participation is resorted as a method of Project Management.

## **PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN- GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT**

The importance of people's participation in governance and development in recent years is highly recognized both by national and international organizations. , According to Joel and Bore (2003). "The essence 'of development is nothing but peoples' participation. There are many components that are involved in development like money, material, resources, technology, human etc. Of all the social factors, human factors are the crucial elements. People are the pivot around whom the entire development processes are supposed to revolve." The above statement underlines the importance of peoples' participation in development process. Ever since societies have strived to develop, the met)lodes of development have been widely debated. The early phase of development era emphasized on the Top down approach to development based on trickle down theory. During this phase, the emphasis was on planning at the top with focus on achieving higher growth rate. This approach was based on the premise that centralized planning ensures higher growth which automatically tickles down to grass root level. "uri'n 1950s and 1960s - modernization theories had been so pervasive that it was almost impossible to separate modernization from development linked to capitalism and economic growth(Zubair Meenai, 2008). However, the experience gained during this time reflected that these development 1 strategies were losing battle against the poverty and hunger. Even a higher growth ' rate could not ensure equitable growth and disparities in development levels continued to either remain or get wider and wider. Participation as a concept and a strategy of development is an outcome of the profound disillusionment with the established development strategy in post Industrial Revolution period. The experiences of the fifties and sixties have demonstrated the fundamental weakness of the Top down, GNP focused, growth centered strategy of development based on professional expertise and modernized technologies. The development strategy followed during this period emphasized economic growth and industrialization in the context of increasingly centralized planning and control over the distribution of resources (Joel and Bore, 2003). I The origin of participatory approach to development is based on the failure of the growth centered approach to achieve all around development. This phenomenon was observed across the countries and international agencies like UN, UNDP, ADB, FAO, hotly debated the feasibility of this model. Gunnar Myrdal, the Noble Prize winning Economist in the late 1960s urged governments to plan their economies actively, adopt social policies that enhanced people's welYgre and take steps to redistribute income and wealth. This led,& the publication of a major policy document from the UN (1 97 I), 'Social Policy and Planning in National Development.' the shift in focus of development strategy from growth centered to people centered has necessitated planning from grass root level involving all the stake holders in the process. According to Joel and Bore (2003) "People must be at the centre of human development. ~development has to be woven around people not people around development". David C Kurten has articulated such concept People's Participation ire Governance anc. of people's involvement as "People Centered Development". People are the Development primary subject 'matter in people centered development". It is now said that development is no longer a favor or a privilege to the people. It has to revolve around them. They cannot be treated as mute observer or objects or passive receivers as they are powerless and un-endowed. They are supposed to be prime movers of development at any given point of time. FAO, while , emphasizing the role of people's participation in governance and development, has listed various ways by which people's participation can be strengthened. F e Participation by information - a unilateral means of providing information to people without seeking their response. e Participation in information giving - people do not participate in process of decisions but are encouraged to share their views. I Consultation - People participate by being consulted - The programmes and plans are subject to modifications based on response and input from people. However, same is non-obligatory. 41 Joint Planning - people participate

in joint planning, analysis and formulations of new methods. Local groups control local decisions and hence have stake in maintaining structures and practices. Decision making - when consensus is acted upon through collective decision, this marks the initiatives of shared responsibilities for outcomes that may result. Empowerment - The ultimate objective of participation wherein the local community has the right and capability to have a say in decision concerning their lives. Participation in development is now being sought in World over, not because it --.\* is fad but because there has been a consensus on the usefulness of people's involvement tin governance and development. This has several advantages like- .

Efficiency: Participation can ensure effective utilization of available resources. The people and other agencies work towards achieving their objectives, involvement and cooperation among all stake holders to improve efficiency and 1 effectiveness of planning process. Effectiveness: Failure of conventional growth strategy because of lack of grass roots knowledge and absence of people's role in development ma& most of the plans ineffective. People's participation can make the development strategy more effective by granting a say in dividing the objectives and strategies and participation in management ensures effective utilization of resources. Self Re1iance:'More often, it is noticed that people at local level look up to the t external experts or Government for solutions to their problems. This leads to distortions and ineffectiveness of planning due to lack of local knowledge. If the local resources are utilized Dn the basis of decisions taken by the people them: elves, ihe realization groks that many problems faced by the people have local ,solutions at their levels. With 'active involvement of the local people, it is possible not only to break the psychological barrier of dependence, but also to People's Participation, increase their awareness, self confidence and control of the development process. Leadership and In fact, the involvement in decision making, implementation and monitoring Building helps in developing local human resources. Coverage: People's participation in decision making process widens the coverage among all sections including deprived and weaker sections. us&ioability: External interventions through government or other agencies lack potential for long term sustainability of schemes if local participation is not ensured. People's involvement in governing the scheme creates local capability and ownership of resources. It is a sustainable development alterative for long term solutions to local problems.