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The Dilemma of Democratic Theory and Political Participation in the Era of Globalization

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ABSTRACT - Democracy is only meaningful when conceptualized in terms of popular participation in the political and governmental processes. This fact generates and sustains struggles by states to claim the democratic label, which then leads to numerous theories and concepts of democracy. Some of these theories place political control in the ordinary citizens while others give pre-eminence to political elite. Elite and citizens theories of democracy are the principal contending theories of democracy. Political participation also generates some theories, some of them are atomistic/individualistic while other are holistic/generalistic. If democracy cannot be conceptualized without participation, it then become necessary to determine which democratic theory and what participatory models are either complementary or congruous.

KEY WORDS: Democracy, Participation, Globalization, Theory.

INTRODUCTION

When democracy is dressed in 'peoples rule' apparel it becomes exquisitely attractive to claim numerous adherents and admirers in virtually all political systems. No political system wants to be seen as not deriving the power to govern from the people, even if it is as authoritarian as the former Soviet Union. This is the problem of democracy: political systems of contradictory dispositions all claim to be democratic; indeed every one claims

to be more democratic than the other. The need to justify their various claims generate the various theories of democracy. When the problem centers on the explication of who constitutes the *people* and the extent of their involvement in *ruling* in a democracy, democratic theorists are divided into elitists and citizens theorists. When dispute arises from what constitutes appropriate strategy for achieving peoples rule, another two groups of theorist also emerge: those that support *majoritarian* democracy and their antagonists that propose *consensus* democracy.

Another problem is encountered when democratic theorists attempt to establish empirical standards and characteristics to assess the level of democraticness of political systems. Those that limit democracy to participation of the people in periodic election of rulers are called the *minimalist*, while those who define democracy with an array of rights and privileges are regarded as the *maximalists*. But when the genuineness of democracies are tested, the contending issues are whether peoples rule can be authentically effected through representatives or direct participation. Although very few people in contemporary states would argue for *direct democracy*, nevertheless it remains a model that stands in contradistinction with *representative democracy*.

In all these theories and models of democracy, the dominant issues are the degree and scope of involvement of the people (participation) in the ruling process. Since the people can participate directly by themselves or indirectly through representatives, the focus of participation can then be either *people centered* or *representatives centered*. Besides, participation can be viewed from the perspective of the individual which calls for discrete and disjointed interpretations of the variables influencing political participation. This is what some theorists describe as *atomistic approach* to political participation. But then participation could also be taken from group perspective, which requires a generalized explanation of variables taken in combinations. This is the *holistic approach* to political participation.

An explication of the different models of democracy will reduce them to two major positions. The first sees democracy from an empirical standpoint as a system in which government is constituted through competitive election. This position enhances elites dominance of the democratic process. The second position is more or less a passion for orthodox and classical conception of democracy. Here democracy seeks to realize equality of participation for all citizens and so is defined with an array of privileges and rights which are so morally persuasive. But the real problem lies with the link between democratic theories and participatory models. Is there any relationship between a certain theory of democracy and a particular model of participation

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in practice? Are some democratic models supportive of some participatory perspectives while some are unacceptable? Specifically, between the two dominant democratic theories, which model of participation supports which theory? Invariably, our objective here is to establish the link between democratic theories and their congruent participatory models.

THEORIES AND MODELS OF DEMOCRACY

Elitist Theory of Democracy

The chief proponent of elitist theory of democracy is Joseph Schumpeter. He defines democracy as "that institutional arrangement in which individuals acquire the power by means of a competitive struggle for the peoples votes (Schumpeter, 1952:269). Superficially, this definition appears adequate because electoral competition engenders and sustains the three important components of democracy namely, participation, representation and accountability. But critically considered, this definition, to a large extent, devalues mass participation and projects selection of elites in a competitive election because, according to Schumpeter, the notion of mass participation especially in decision making is empirically unrealistic.

Another elitist, Robert Dahl, also supports the choosing of leaders in competitive elections as the paramount indicator of democracy. According to Dahl, democracy, which he christened polyarchy is the rule of multiple minorities; that is rule by elites of the numerous groups within society (Dahl, 1963:133). Through election of leaders ordinary citizens exert a relatively high degree of control over leaders. As explained by Wolfe (1985:374), citizens do not participate to control the leaders, rather mass control is built into the electoral process in which the leaders compete for the people votes.

To promote the efficacy of the vote, Dahl suggests three institutional conditions necessary for the realization of democracy, and these are tied closely to the citizens. Necessarily, all citizens should have the freedom and opportunity to (1) formulate their preferences; (2) signify their preferences to their fellow citizens and the government by individual and collective actions; and (3) have their preferences weighed equally in the conduct of the government (Dahl, 1971:1-2). Other conditions later added by Dahl (1982) are free, fair and frequent election of officials; right to vote by all adults; and right to form independent associations. All these conditions, however, have only sought to improve the conduct and quality of elections rather than provide socio-economic basis of democracy.

In contemporary literature, elitist concept of democracy is subsumed by the *minimalist* definition. The minimalists emphasize the institutional and operational conditions which strengthen elections. According to Shahid

Qadir, *et al* (1993:416) in the “minimalist definition, the criteria of democratization are regular electoral competitions, usually in a multi-party system, and thus governmental succession by constitutional, electoral procedures, guaranteeing the rule of law”.

On the other side of the fence is the *maximalist* definition of democracy. This perception defines democracy to include “criteria such as redistributive socioeconomic reforms, broadened popular participation, social justice, and human rights” (Qadir, Clapham and Gills, 1993:416). The strength of the maximalists seems to be derived from the fact that “the formal requirements of multiparty democracy cannot be sustained unless they are legitimized by the achievement of basic human needs” (Qadir *et al.*, 1993:416). The maximalist definition of democracy sees the average citizen as a rational political entity who can combine with other citizens to participate in politics to realize the common good of the community.

The most popular of the maximalist perspectives is the *citizens theory* of democracy. This is also referred to as *expansive democracy* by Mark Warren (1982). This entails:

Increasing participation in and control of collective decision making whether by means of direct democracy in small settings or through stronger linkages between citizens and institutions that operate on broadcast scales. They are often concerned with expanding democracy beyond traditional spheres into arenas of power that are privatized in standard liberal democracy.

Thus, for the citizens theory, greater emphasis is placed on active participation of the ordinary citizens in election of rulers as well as decision making. Without this degree of participation, citizenship loses meaning. Citizens theory suggests that what the ignorant and phlegmatic citizens require is not exclusion, but more participation. Similarly, Mark Warren (1982), argues that democratic participation has a unique capacity to foster and develop autonomy which he defines as the capacity for independent judgement. As citizens interact with each other in the process of participation, they tend to develop greater autonomy. This position raises a fundamental moral and practical question for the elitist/minimalist theorists: can a citizen who is not enlightened formulate his preferences and signify them to fellow citizens and government through individual and collective actions? Can preferences be formulated outside citizens perception of proposed policies and actual performance of the government in socio-economic arena? Indeed, given the two conditions above, participation will sometimes require citizens involvement beyond vote casting.

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In America, Western Europe and Japan, the world's major democracies, it is observed that these countries are going through what Crozier, *et al* (1975) describe as "crisis of democracy". This crisis was of immense concern to American social scientist such that the President of American Political Science Association made it the substance of his keynote address to the associations congress (Lijphart, 1997). The crisis of democracy emphasizes the existing link between democracy and socio-economic well being of citizens. Though socio-economic well being of citizens cannot be stated in empirical terms in the definition of democracy, nevertheless, it constitutes a veritable legitimation factor for democratic regimes. Democracy is hereby pushed beyond the realms of election into policy evaluation. If this is important for democracy retaining its claim to peoples rule, then government responsiveness to the interest of citizens should be made an overt condition/ factor in the conceptualization of democracy.

Majoritarian democracy simply entails the concentration of political power in the hands of the majority. Theoretically, it tends to be regarded as the crucial decision rule and the defining criterion and essence of democracy (Lijphart, 1996:105-106). It connotes the simple but powerful maxim "majority carries the vote". This captivating yet dangerous aphorism has created the tendency for democracy to be defined almost exclusively in terms of majority rule. Consensus democracy, on the other hand, advocate society wide agreement on important issues of policy and governance. It rejects a situation in which a permanent government and permanent opposition groups exist in the society. Rather, it fosters the sharing, dispersal, restraining and limiting of power in a variety of ways (Lijphart, 1996:106). However, the situation is not like placing societies on a continuum because, as Lijphart has further noted, practically strict application of majority rule is extremely rare:

Especially with regard to the most important decisions and to issues that cause deep splits in societies, democracies almost uniformly deviate from majoritarian decision-making rules, to adopt mechanisms more likely to rally a broad consensus (Lijphart, 1996:106).

Although the majoritarian and consensus models can combine with other types and sub-types of democracy, the appropriateness and congruity of these combinations vary from society to society. For instance, in a homogeneous society without deep seated cleavages, majoritarian democracy could be operated without much problem.

However, majoritarian democracy is malapropos for plural societies with entrenched cultural, ethnic and religious cleavages which are sectionally organized, such as are found in Nigeria, Indonesia, Kenya, India, Uganda and most other developing countries. But unfortunately most of the developing countries have adopted the Western-liberal democratic model with all its institutions, including what Richard Joseph describes as "theoretical norm of majority government". This, as he observed, the developing countries find it more difficult to exercise and justify than the Western liberal democracies (Joseph, 1991:23)

In what could be regarded as a classical work on consensus democracy in Africa, Sir Arthur Lewis (1965) argues that accepting democracy as the will of the majority clearly vitiates the spirit of democracy. Plural societies cannot function peaceably if politics is regarded as a zero-sum game, which functions according to the erroneous definition that the majority is entitled to rule over the minority. Indeed, majority rule, as he stated further, is "totally immoral, inconsistent with the primary meaning of democracy, and destructive of any prospect of building a nation in which different people might live together in harmony (Lewis, 1965: 65-66).

Invariably, most of the democratizing and nearly democratic countries need consensus democracy even more than the stable and mature democracies that have been in existence for a long time, because they tend to suffer from more serious internal cleavages, and face more sensitive and divisive issues (Lijphart, 1996: 112). Moreover, consensus decision making is consistent with political traditions of African people. African democratic process is more consensual than majoritarian; it is a consensus process based on a strong concern for harmony (Lijphart, 1996:111). As argued by Rupert Emerson, the natural inclination of African societies "is generally toward extensive and unhurried deliberation aimed at ultimate consensus, the gradual discovery of areas of agreement is the significant feature and not the ability to come to a speedy resolution of issues by counting heads (Emerson, 1960:284),

A special type of consensus democracy that has now attained an independent status as a democratic model is *consociational democracy*. According to Arend Lijphart, the most elemental feature of consociational democracy is government by a grand coalition of the political leaders of all significant segments of the plural society. There are three other supportive attributes: (1) the mutual veto or concurrent majority which serves as an additional protection of minority interests; (2) proportionality as the principal standard of political representation in civil service appointments and allocation of public funds and (3) a high degree of autonomy for each segment to run its own internal affairs (Lijphart, 1997:25).

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Representative democracy is the closest synonym of peoples rule in contemporary democracies. There is no society in which direct democracy is practicable, hence representation remains the best option. In a representative democracy, the representative rather than the people directly make choices among policy alternatives. Representation, according to William Flanigan and Nancy Zingale (1998:6), is built on elections and, to a degree, representation is disciplined by them as well.

There are two sets of problems that arise with representative democracy. The first deals with the general concept of representation while the second is concerned with the structure of representation. In the first part, numerous findings gathered by Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman and Henry Brady (1995) have shown that elected representatives especially in demographic terms, are not descriptively representative of the population from which they are drawn. Instead they are more likely to be male, affluent, educated and of the dominant racial and ethnic groups. Achieving descriptive representation among political elites is equally problematic because society is divided in complex ways along multiple axes of cleavages.

With regards to the structure of representation, the major question arises from who the representative is, and how he is to represent. The first view follows the Burkean tradition that the representative is a *trustee* of the broad interest of the entire society. Hence, representatives could vote against the narrow interests of their constituents as their conscience and perceptions of national needs dictate (Bangura, *et al*, 1996:99). The second view is that the representative is an *instructed delegate* who is supposed to carry and present the views of the majority of the electorate that voted him into office. This is the direct implication of the meaning of democracy where citizens participate through their elected representatives. Thirdly, there is the view that the representative is an *agent*, and as such should use his wisdom and all other abilities to protect, project and represent the interest of members of his constituency.

Democracy like any other social process is capable of development just like the society itself. Societies that hitherto were not democracies must undergo a transition period. This transition begins with elections to usher in a new set of rulers or legitimize the old ones now dressed in democratic apparels. When a transitional democracy fails to develop beyond this election stage, it is a model known as *electoralism*. Electoralism involves arrangement of a reasonably free and fair electoral contest even when the country is poor and underdeveloped and suffering from ethnic/regional tensions, rampant clientelism and limited democratic experience. Electoralism according to Richard Sanbrook (1996), has two requirements: that domestic and external

forces compel recalcitrant autocrats to accept political reform; and that donors provide the resources and electoral technology to run a national election. Democratic transitions in a sense is amenable to a 'technical fix'. When the environment in which this type of democratization occurs is hostile, democracy tends to stall at this stage (Sandbrook, 1996:69; Callaghy, 1994).

Electoralist democracy has occurred in many developing countries such as El Salvador in Latin America (Munck, 1993) and African countries like Ghana, Mali, Niger, Zambia, Tanzania and Madagascar (Sandbrook, 1996). Indeed, out of the six African countries studied by Richard Sandbrook in 1996, only Ghana appears to be moving away from electoralism to consolidation.

When democracies remain for a longtime at this electoral stage and begins to develop the major features of stable democracies without actual consolidation, the emerging model is known as *delegative democracy*. According to Guillermo O'Donnell (1994:55), delegative democracies may endure for a long time, devise its own logic of fitful survival without imminent threat of an authoritarian regression, or, of advances toward consolidation. This is characteristic of democracies in Latin American countries like Paraguay, Mexico, Brazil and Chile. India also falls into this group; it has been a democracy of long standing, but the democratic process is yet to stabilize. Although delegative democracies could still be described as pseudo-democracies (O'Donnell, 1994; Schedler, 2001), it is superior to façade democracy that are found in African countries like Zambia, Nigeria, Mali, Ivory Coast and Gabon (Luckham, 1995; Kamrava, 1993:711). Most of the new democracies in Africa are still between the electoralist and the delegative stages.

But when democracy survives beyond the electoralist stage with political institutions such as political parties, legislature, executive and judiciary all functioning to enhance democratic stability, then such a democracy is moving toward *consolidation*. This is what Andreas Schedler (1998:100) describes as "the shift of emphasis from democratic survival to issues of democratic quality". And so, consolidation entails institutionalization of democracy constitutionally, behaviourally and attitudinally, such that democracy becomes the "only game in town" (Linz and Stepan, 1996).

THEORIES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Political participation is fundamental to the concept and practice of democracy universally. No matter the perspective from which democracy is conceptualized: citizen, elitist, representative, majoritarian and so on. for

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the system to be democratic, the citizen must have a way of participating in the political process even if this is restricted to choosing political leaders at elections. According to Ronald Pynn, democracy is predicated upon the right and ability of the citizens to choose their own representatives (Pynn, 1984:336). But then, participation must not be a perfunctory activity; rather it must be goal oriented and designed to influence politics (Conway, 1991:4). For Verba, Nie and Kim, political participation comprises those legal acts by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions that they take (Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba, Nie and Kim, 1978:1). This could be in the form of voting, campaign activities, citizen-initiated contacts and cooperative activities.

This suggests, as pointed out by Margaret Conway (1991:4), that participation has two dimensions, namely, conventional participation which covers activities in the party and electoral arenas, while unconventional participation (not necessarily illegal) concerns all forms of political protests seeking to change existing policies. Where the formal channels of participation are kept open, like in many industrial democracies, the conventional mode of participation dominate with unconventional activities occurring intermittently. But where formal channels are not open or non-existent, like in many African and other developing countries, the dominant mode of participation is unconventional.

PARTICIPATORY MODELS

There are two most popular models of political participation: *atomistic* and *holistic* models. The atomistic model uses discrete political, psychological, sociological, economic and legal variable to explain patterns of political participation in any given society. For instance, it is well known in the literature that political participation is influenced by a persons level of education, size of income, nature of occupation, types of regulations governing voter registration, religious affiliation, gender and patterns of socialization. The atomistic approach is to a large extent similar to what Lester Milbrath (1965) describes as micro level analysis of political participation. However, the atomistic model analyses political behaviour/participation not only from the individual perspective, but the variable are taken discretely. This is to emphasize the relative strength of each variable with regard to participation.

The holistic model represents an attempt to provide a generalized explanation to political participation in a particular social setting. It tries to combine all the atomistic variable into one holistic explanation. According to Michael Parenti (1995) issues that appear discrete are not isolated and unrelated as one may be tempted to think. Rather all the issues are interrelated

in direct and indirect ways, and they serve, for the most part, to maintain the larger system, especially the overriding class interest.

There are two popular holistic approaches that have been used to study political participation, the political culture theory and political economy approach. The fundamental assumption of the political culture theory is that participation in any society is markedly influenced by the dominant political culture of that society. Political culture is defined by Almond and Verba (1963:12) as:

the specific political orientations – attitudes toward the political system and its various parts, and the attitudes toward the role of the self in the system when we speak of the political culture of a society, we refer to the political system as internalized in the cognitions, feelings and evaluations of its population.

The political culture theory therefore seeks to explain the particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among members of the nation. Thus, the political culture of a society consists of all attitudes and beliefs held communally by the people which form the basis for their political behaviour (Shively, 1987:110).

According to Almond and Verba, there are three ideal types of political cultures, namely, parochial, subject and participant cultures. The parochials are marginally aware of the existence of the central political system, they have not developed any particular type of feeling toward this system, and also have not internalized any norms to regulate their relationship with it. Participation in a parochial system would therefore be very minimal. The second pure type is the subject political culture in which there is a high frequency of orientation toward the state and its objects. But orientation toward the role of the self in the system is almost zero. Lastly, there is the participant culture in which the citizen is comprehensively oriented to the system as a whole and to both the political and administrative structures and processes, and, of course, oriented toward an activist role of the self in the polity.

Another holistic approach is the political economy approach. Political economy entails the impact of the economic or the productive system on political and governmental processes of any given society. In this case it refers to the impact of the system of production on political participation and democracy. In the Marxist political economy, this relationship is embodied in the theory of historical materialism. For this theory, the economic structure

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or the productive system of a society is the real foundation on which rests a legal, administrative and political superstructure, and specific forms of social consciousness. In other words, a specific mode of production conditions a specific social, political, and intellectual reality (Marx and Engels, 1973:504). Claude Ake (1981) expanded this assumption to show that those who are economically privileged in the society are interested in maintaining the status quo, especially its system of wealth distribution.

The liberal-capitalist political economy centers on the public choice theory. The individual actors are the **primary focus** of the public choice theory, and the fundamental premise of this theory is that political decision makers (voters, politicians, bureaucrats) and private decision makers (consumers, brokers, producers) behave in similar manner. That is, they follow the dictates of rational self-interest; that political and economic decision-makers are often one and the same person – consumer and voter (Ekelund and Tollison, 1986:440).

The public choice theory is directly applied to voting behaviour by Anthony Downs (1957). According to Downs, the voters' main concern is to assess which party's policies will benefit him most while in office. To arrive at a decision, the voter compares the benefits, including income, he receives from the incumbent government with those he thinks he would have received if the alternative parties had been in power (pp. 31-34). The central argument of Downs and other rational/public choice theorists (Ferejohn and Fiorina, 1974; Riker and Ordeshook, 1968; Silberman and Durden, 1975) is that voters behave rationally when voting; they balance the cost of voting against its benefits, and on this basis arrive at a decision.

DEMOCRATIC THEORIES AND MODELS OF PARTICIPATION

In their characteristics and modes of operation, some democratic theories are similar to each other. For instance, elitist theory is in consonance with the minimalist and representative democracy, and partially consistent with the majoritarian model. The elitist/leadership model seems to agree with the atomistic perspective of participation. This perspective highlights those factors that encourage or limit participation. For instance, high levels of education, income and occupation leads to high socio-economic status (SES) and higher levels of participation. The mass of the citizens lack these qualities while the elites have them in abundance.

The political culture theory ostensibly sought to explain participation in general terms, but in the process it has only succeeded in justifying the dominance of the elitist/leadership model of democracy. The critique of Carole Pateman (1980) on the political culture theory exposes this hidden

attempt to promote elitist/capitalist democracy. According to Pateman, if Almond and Verba's choice of the best polity is the civic culture exemplified by the American and British political systems, then quite obviously, a participant political culture is the liberal-democratic/capitalist system.

Secondly, in the civic culture, the idea of a large number of parochials and subjects existing alongside participants in an attempt to legitimize elite domination in liberal democracies. It rationalizes the rule of the elite in the absence of a politically active people. The system (elite rule) is justified because it provides a potential for citizens activity, not because citizens are actually, or even need to be active. As Pateman has concluded, civic culture rests not on the participation of the people but on their non-participation. Its practical focus is on the role of the upper SES (male) citizens as participants and decision makers (Pateman, 1980:60). To this extent, the political culture theory agrees consummately with the elitist/leadership model.

The Marxist political economy theory of participation seems to agree theoretically with the citizens theory of democracy. It supports the dispersion of wealth without a concentration in a particular class. This, it is assumed, will make it difficult for a single class to control economic power and hence political power. But this perspective raises more problems than it solves. First, like most Marxist theories, it highlights the problem of participation inherent in the liberal-capitalist system, but fails to practically suggest ways of combating these problems other than a revolution by the workers and masses. Where this so-called proletarian revolution has occurred, like in the former Soviet Union, political democracy failed to follow. Indeed, the Soviet Union was an elitist society, controlled by a small cabal of the Communist Party. Thus, the Marxist theory of participation has no practical demonstration to give; it preaches citizens democracy but practices the elitist model.

GLOBALIZATION, DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIC THEORY

Globalization is a process that defies any precise definition because its conceptualization and analysis depend on the standpoint of the analyst. Nevertheless two theoretical perspectives dominate the study and analysis of globalization, namely, the modernist and post modernist perspectives. The modernist perspective focuses on the emergence and consolidation of a single world economy and the intensification of human interdependence. The liberal version of this perspective enumerates all the possible benefits while the radical view sees it as a new strategy to preserve inequality, hierarchy and exclusion (Kessler, 2000:932).

Post modernism emphasizes the emergence of a single human community whose members have become complexly involved in one

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another's lives through the development of the so-called new information and communications technologies. This is a world compressed in time and space and shrunk in terms of distances, manifesting in the way in which and the speed with which money can be transferred round the world and communications generally (Kessler, 2000:933).

According to James Mittleman (2000:923), globalization is not a single, unified process but a set of interactions that may be best approached from different observation points. First, it is a complex historical process occurring differently in different parts of the world but all tied up, directly or indirectly, with the central institutions and growth mechanisms of the world economy. For instance Africa and most of the developing countries were connected to the world market through colonial imperialism. Second, globalization may be understood as a material process closely related to the accumulation of capital. It is caught up with the innovations in capitalism, especially the inner workings of competition, pressures that maybe called hyper competition. Third, globalization may be regarded as an ideology; the neo-liberal belief in free markets and faith in the beneficial role of competition. Hence globalization is an extensive set of interactions, dialectically integrating and disintegrating economies, politics and societies around the world. Under globalization, capital is in ascendance, while labour and nationality are weakened and fragmented (Mittleman, 2000:923). Again, globalization trend offers gains in productivity, technological advances, higher living standards, more jobs, broader access to consumer products at lower cost, widespread dissemination of information and knowledge, reductions in poverty in some part of the world, and release from traditional social hierarchies in many countries. Yet globalization also leads to disintegration of tighty knit communities and sources of solidarity, dilutes local cultures, and portends a loss of control, particularly in very poor countries.

From the foregoing, globalization is, invariably, a process borne out of capitalist accumulation of global resources. It is a process through which capitalism reforms and strengthens itself to meet the exigencies of the 21st century. It is a stage in the development of capitalism where high technology has rendered time and space irrelevant in the movement of capital, investment and trade across the world. As a capitalist process for surplus accumulation, globalization adopts liberal and neo-liberal policies and strategies such as liberalization of trade, finance and investment, deregulation and privatization. The major capitalist powers of the world, through their financial institutions such as the IMF, World bank, World Trade Organization (WTO) and the lending clubs pressurize third world countries into undertaking neo-liberal reforms to globalize the capitalist culture and practices in order to foster 'the emergence and consolidation of a single world economy (Kessler, 2000:932).

The major operators of globalization are the multi-national corporations, a factor which supports its linkage with capitalism. In the days of mercantilism when globalization was in its infancy stage, it was represented by large trading companies such as the British East Indian Company. In its youthful stage, globalization assumed the form of imperialism dominated by larger companies, in dominated foreign lands, cartels and combines, with excessive dominance of finance capital. Globalization is now in its adult and mature stage and is now dominated by Trans-national Corporations, but joined by global financial firms and funds. According to Martin Khor, this is the process of trans-nationalization in which fewer and fewer transnational corporations are gaining a large and rapidly increasing proportion of world economic resources, production and market shares. In place of a single multinational company dominating the market of a single product, a big transnational company now produces or trades in a variety of products, services and sectors. Through mergers and acquisitions, fewer and fewer of these TNCs now control a larger and larger share of the global market, whether in commodities, manufactures or services. By early 1990's, the top 200 global corporations accounted for \$21,900 billion (26.8%) of the World GDP (Khor, 2000:4).

How then does globalization affect the future of democracy in both developed and developing countries? In the developed/industrial democracies, it is worthy of note that the principle of comparative advantage is now in its highest stage and there is intensive competition by capitalist firms particularly in the developed capitalist states to increase their accumulation of world surpluses. States are relevant to the extent that they help the corporations through domestic and foreign policies to realize this objective. Thus, state policies will concentrate more on groups that generate surpluses from within and outside the state.

These groups will wield the strongest influence on government policies and government is more likely to be responsive to their needs than the needs of individuals. Elites of the various conglomerates will determine substantial part of public policies, including the selection of those to occupy top policy making positions in the state.

CONCLUSION: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRACY

As long as capitalist strategies for accumulation continues to modify in this era of high technology, conglomerates, organizations and groups will continue to exercise more influence than individual citizens. The meaning is that government will be more responsive to the needs of these organization

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than those of the citizens, especially in developed countries. In effect, democracy will truly become a polyarchy with government controlled by the elites of the organizations. The anxiety expressed by Arend Lijphart, Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki, Pharr, Putnam and Dalton about the decline of popular participation will aggravate and the "crisis of democracy" will deepen. Not only will the number of citizens participating in politics decline drastically, but their relevance in the determination of public policy will also depreciate. Consequently, democratic societies face monumental moral crisis when people's rule is restricted to a handful of participants, while the majority are phlegmatic and apathetic. When this happens, many citizens will be withdrawn from the political system following dissatisfaction and disaffection with government.

Democratic societies need to be reminded that democracy is peoples rule. This is the function and utility of the citizen's theory: to call society to order when democracy is threatened by massive withdrawal of citizens from participation. Democracy will lose meaning and relevance when less than 40% of eligible voters participate in election. Indeed, a high incidence of nonvoting amounts to an indictment of leaders for unresponsiveness and insensitive representations.

The situation would be much more deleterious in developing countries and nascent democracies where levels of ignorance and elite manipulations are high. Democracy here needs to be brought down to the level of understanding of the people, which centers principally on the benefits of governance. Unlike the Western countries where class interests are clearly defined, and a market economy governs all kinds of allocation of resources, in Third World countries, the private sector is weak with enervated productive capacity. This forces the state to play a dominant role in the socio-economic lives of the people. If then the people understand democracy and governance in terms of personal welfare and benefit, then democracy here should tilt toward the citizens model and defined within the purview of governance based on the production and distribution of socio-economic goods.

Unfortunately, all the democratic regimes in the Third World countries are strong adherents of elitist model, even though in their policy statements they profess citizens participation, welfare and rights. Yet the only tangible thing democratic about them is the conduct of elections on multi-party basis, a requirement imposed by international donor agencies and organizations. Once this condition is met, the country in question would be given the label of democracy.

However, in both developed and developing countries, it is not good enough for political leaders and elite theorist to argue that the system does

not restrict anyone from participation, that only those who are capable of participation actually participate. This is the pattern of thinking that has produced declining participation in modern times, which is now disturbing theories and practitioners of democracy. To justify the system as a democracy, a large percentage of qualified voters must participate in elections, and the electorate should influence policies so as to increase the level of responsiveness. This calls for citizenship and general education to increase citizens' capacity for participation. It also calls for constant interaction between the citizens and their representatives in formal and informal forums to communicate the need of the people to the rulers and also increase the level of affection for the political system. Although these will be difficult to build into the theory, definition and conceptualization of democracy, yet, it will make democracy more worthy of the name peoples rule.

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