CHAPTER - II

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION :

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Social scientists broadly define political participation as being the process through which an individual plays a role in the political life of his society, has the opportunity to take part in deciding what the common goals of the society are, and the best way of achieving these goals¹. Political participation refers to actual participation in these voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of rulers, and directly or indirectly, in the formation of public policy.

It should be obvious that people participate in polities in many different ways, with different degrees of emotional involvement and at different levels of the system. Traditional democratic theory generally regards participation by the individual in political activity as a virtue in its own right. Participation has been seen as a civic duty, as a sign of political health as the best method of ensuring that one’s private interests are not neglected and as a sine qua non of a democracy. Generally this perspective was predicted, upon a Greek view, of the private man as an animal or idiot, or the more calculative eighteenth century view, at participation as being caused by a deliberate weighing, of the alternatives to tyranny or oligarchy. In any event an important factor in this view of democracy was that it

implied and encouraged a high level of popular involvement. Today except at value level, people should be encouraged to participate – it is difficult to sustain a proposition to the effect that in democracies people actually do display high rates of political participation and interest except in general elections. The rates of political participation as voters, are quite variable between democracies, and even at the minimal level of voting, there is considerable national variation. Invariably the rate of expressed interest in politics and the level of knowledge about political institutions and events among the electorate, although variable between countries, and within countries, is far below the implicit in the classical models of a democracy.

It is widely felt that the extent and manner of the public’s involvement is a key lest to the democratic character of the system and is central to democratic theory. Put another way we are interested in the performance of the political system and feel that the extent and pattern of the public’s participation can be related to the system’s performance both in the narrow sense, of the decisional outcomes from that system, and in the much broader sense of the nature of the political process, and the achievement of certain functional goals for the system, such as “integration” “stability” and “democracy”\(^2\).

People’s conception of politics may be broadly categorized into two; one, polities is an area, where self interested competing individuals with a desire to control offices remain in power. The other

concept has a moralistic tinge as it views politics primarily as a “means for coming to grips with the issues and concerns of civic society; it also emphasizes the notion that politics is ideally a matter of concern for every citizen, not just for those who are professionally committed to participate in the political affairs of the community.  

There are variety of ways in which citizens can manifest a meaningful “engagement” with a political system, many of them, not overt acts of “influence”, and there are a great variety of motivational orientations which underlie a citizen’s “engagement” with the political system. Yet it is not to presume that one type of activity is more “meaningful engagement” in the political process than another. This depends on the individual and the culture, he or she resides in. Thus distributing party literature or attending a political meeting may be no more or less meaningful as a measure of citizens involvement or keeping informed on politics via the media, or joining a political procession. It is deceiving on the one hand to accept voting as the true test of involvement, or on the other hand to limit oneself to actions related to directly “influencing governmental decisions”. There are may other ways in which citizens are “engaged with” or “involved with” their political system and such narrow approaches limit the study of the role of the public in that system.

Attending a political meeting may in no say be motivated by a desire to “influence governmental decisions nor objectively need it be instrumental to that end. To isolate therefore one set of public

activities in politics and argue that these are the most essential because they are linked to and motivated by, desires to influence political decisions, is both empirically unsound and leaves out much of the important meaning of the public's 'engagement' with the political order. In a country like India if one would operationalise participation in "decisional influence", terms, subjectively most citizens and most participatory acts would not qualify.  

If we have look at the variety of ways in which Indians manifest their engagement with the political system, we could order them or list them on many different ways, making many different distinction, electoral and non electoral, in a local context; or state or national context in a social group interactional setting or individually initiated; passive or active, expressive versus instrumental, and so on. It is extremely important in our study of Indian political behaviour to discover the 'pattern' and meaning of the citizens involvement, in the sense of determining to what extent and in which ways citizens are engaged with the political system (knowledgeable about it, psychologically identifying with it, supporting it or protesting against it) with the political group infrastructure of that system (joining political parties or other group associating actively with others in a political group context) or with leadership sector of the society (selection leaders, mobilizing support for leaders, contacting leaders etc.)

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### A model of political involvement types relevant to India

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The basic thought premise under which social evolution has been viewed are

(i) Human societies since the inception of civilization are striving to evolve from a lower order to a higher order.

(ii) Human societies are striving to express unity and enlargement towards a global human society; and

(iii) Human societies are constantly striving towards a better and more comprehensive social harmony.

Social change is a small phenomenon, over a large and stable base of past social equilibrium. Society allows only certain individuals and few segments of the population to experiment the change, watch it, observe, and then slowly absorb it in its whole body as its integral part. The social change is being viewed under the following broad headings (1) Rational Thought (2) Social status by Achievement vs. Birth (3) Participation in Organized sector of the economy (4) social security by the large society and (5) Participation in the power process.

Theoretically participation in power process is possible to every adult. The improvement in it is a qualitative proposition, and as such difficult to envisage. The concepts of grass root planning, local self government and better appreciation and resolve towards national

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6 *Ibid*, p.109
issues, will deepen considerably in quality, with additional experience.

Since the time of the ancient Greeks, the question of the relationship between participation and social and human development, has been much debated. However one of the most extended considerations of the effects of participation is that of Aristotle. He analyses the Greek City States, to assess what arrangements, most likely contributed to human happiness and "the good life". According to him participation in the affairs of state as a citizen, was essential to the development and fulfillment of the human personality. To be excluded from politics as slaves, were meant that one did not develop fully the faculty of reason, a sense of responsibilities for others welfare, a disposition towards prudent and balanced judgments. While participation did not unfailingly produce such virtues in all persons, its denial contributed to ignorance and selfishness.\footnote{S.N. Mishra, Neena Sharma, Kushal Sharma \textit{, Participation and Development}, NBO Publishers Distributors, New Delhi, 1984. p 29}

Accepting Aristotle’s theory at the societal level, the prevailing view was that political participation would increase as development process and probably the most important work along with these lines was by Almond and Verba, "The Civic Culture". In the book the two authors found that citizen participation was greater in the US and Great Britain than in Germany Italy or Mexico. Fortunately these two countries happened to be the most advanced countries in regard to
educational and economic development. As roles become specialized, and persons become oriented to the inputs and outputs of the government; a participant political culture was seen as growing out of economic and social development. On the bases of Deutsch's cross national analysis, it was argued that a more active citizenry would result. He found that political activity and demands increased as a concomitant of such factors, as economic growth, spread of mass communication and occupational mobility. With the advent of 'modernization', the orientations of 'traditional society' should be changed and replaced by a new and more participatory set of values.

Conventionally politics - deals with the formal political structures but now it has been widened by political theorists to include movements protests and struggle as legitimate expressions of political behaviour. Political sphere thus includes the "spheres in social relations where power relations are generated, instutionalised and used to encourage, control or move people's attitudes, beliefs in a specified direction to control and regulate distribution of resources".  

Kazenstein Mary Fainshod conceptualizes political participations as public membership, of citizen 'sharing' justice and orienting their action towards the public or common good. Nie states political participation as "The activities by private citizens that are  

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more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and or the action they take⁹.

Political participation as instrumental action is close to exchange theory. Politics is depicted in the language of bargaining, exchange and efficiency. A rational citizen is considered to be a consumer of private benefits. Participation is thought of as cost incurred in the political market only when one’s vital interests are at stake. The result is a cost benefit account according to which rational citizens minimize costs and maximize benefits. Rayon terms such action as rational. It may be assumed that participation is rational in the sense that it consists of the examination of alternative actions and the selection of that alternative which yields the greatest expected utility¹⁰. Self interest is the main base for choice of one’s action.

Hence political participation is understood as voluntary rather than coercive e.g. Activities of persons in political affairs such as voting, membership and activities connected with political groups like political parties, membership of voluntary organizations,

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⁹ Nie Verba and Kim, Modes of Democratic Participation: Cross National Comparison, Sage, Beverly Hills, 1971, p. 9

participation in agitation activities and voting in elections\textsuperscript{11}. In a
democratic system participation in politics, has to be viewed at the
levels of acquisition, and exercise of power, and exercise of the rights
of a citizen\textsuperscript{12}.

Milbrath maintains "every person participates at least passively
in the political system in which he lives. There is no such thing as not
behaving\textsuperscript{13}. Milbrath holds that political participation differs in
relation to four major factors: (i) the extent to which the individual
receives political stimuli (ii) the individual's personal characteristics
(iii) social characteristics and (iv) the political environment in which
the individual finds himself. Milbrath basing on the intensity of
participation divides input political activity into three categories (i)
active (ii) passive or supportive and (iii) apathetic. Active political
activity is again categorized into conventional and unconventional.
Participation in protest process is regarded by Milbrath as
unconventional\textsuperscript{14}.

Actually participation and its extent is related to various
factors, the psychological make up of the person, his total personality

\textsuperscript{11} Dinesh M. Shukla, 'Polarisation of Women in Gujrat' in Vina Mazumdar (Ed),
Symbols of Power; studies on the political status of women in India, Allied
\textsuperscript{12} 'Towards Equality', Report of the committee on the Status of Women in India,
\textsuperscript{13} Milbrath, Political Participation, Rand Macknell & Co, Chicago 1965, p. 26
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid, p 26.
and external environment the social economic, cultural, individual
response to such stimuli, but his political options reflect the
characteristic modes of his adjustments to life.

Dahl is of the opinion that some people are indifferent to
politics, others are more deeply involved. Even among those who are
deeply involved, only some actually seek power and among the power
seekers, some gain power then the others. Dahl has divided such
people into four categories: apolitical stratum, the political stratum,
the power seekers and the powerful.

He has given several reasons to show why people become
involved in politics. He says:

1. People are less likely to get involved in politics if they place
a low valuation on the rewards to be gained form political
involvement, relative to the rewards, expected from other
kind of human activity, like family, friends, affection,
income, recreation, respect, playing, reading etc.

2. Persons are likely to get involved in politics if they think
that there is no significant difference in the alternatives
before them, and consequently, that what they do would not
matter.

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Corporation, Hyderabad, 1993, pp. 42-43
(3) An individual is less likely to become involved in politics if he thinks that he does not matter because he can not significantly change the outcome any way.

(4) People are less likely to get involved in politics if they believe, that the outcome will be relatively satisfactory to them, without their involvement.

(5) Persons are less likely to get involved in politics if they feel that their knowledge is too limited for them to be effective, if they become involved.

(6) Finally the greater the obstacles placed in one's way the less likely one is to become involved in politics.

All these factors work in reverse also. It means that a person is more likely to become involved in politics

1 The more he values, the rewards to be gained
2 The more important he thinks, the alternatives to be
3 The more confident he is, that he can help change the outcome.
4 The unsatisfactory he believes, the outcome will be, if he does not act.
5 The more knowledge or skill he has or thinks he has, bearing on the question at hand.
6 The lower the barriers he must climb over in order to act.
Because of these, and other factors some people are interested in politics and are concerned and informed about politics and do participate in political life.

Robert Lane\textsuperscript{16} in his study of political involvement argues that political participation fulfils four functions. First as a means of pursuing economic needs, secondly as a means of satisfying a need for social adjustment, thirdly as a means of pursuing particular values; and fourthly as a means of meeting sub conscious and psychological needs. If it is so, naturally then participation is determined by social and political attitudes of the individual as also his personal and social characteristics as well as the social and political environments.

A wide number of studies suggest that the political behaviour of the individual is determined by the interaction of the individual’s basic social and political attitudes and the specific situation, with which he is faced. The association between various personal and social characteristics, and political behaviour, may be the result of conscious or un conscious motivation.

Weber\textsuperscript{17} suggested four types of motives:

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item Robert Lane, \textit{Political Life : Why People get involved in politics}, Glencoe, Illinois, 1959, pp. 102-114
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
1. The values rational based, on the rational acceptance of the values of a group on movement.

2. The emotional – affection, based on resentment of, or enthusiasm for an idea, organization, or individual.

3. The traditional, based on the acceptance of the behavioural norms of a social group to which the individual belongs.

4. The purposive – rational based on personal advantage.

Taking into consideration Weber and Lane we can conclude that political participation is determined by the basic social and political attitudes of the individual which are closely associated with his personal and social characteristics as well as with the social and political environment which forms the context of his political behaviours. Social and political environment varies from one society to another, and hence political participation varies from one political system to another.  

To the Marxists people’s participation is group activity. Thus participation for the proletariat is the activity of this class in accordance with its historical mission. It is only the republican to whom the central act of participation is distinct.

Since participation is mainly seen in terms of receiving benefits people take to institutional forms, to express their dissatisfaction with

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18 Robert Lane, Op. Cit. p. 133
development. The most important difference however exists in their organisational affiliations. Thus the meaning of political participation in its broader sense relates to both the subjective satisfactions, and the objective consequences. Political participation requires two decisions. One must decide to act or not to act and one must also decide the direction of this action.

According to Soysal the term participation is very often used to cover all the forms of actions by which citizens take part in the operation of state machinery. Participation represents the process by which goals are set and means chosen to all sorts of social issues. Participation is an educational device through which civic rules are learned. Lack of ability to participate, can be termed as lack of full membership within the system.

Socio-economic factors such as social class, occupation and sex also influence participation. Studies of voting behaviour have identified a number of social characteristics, that co-relate with the individuals propensity to vote or not to vote. S.M. Lipset in his “Political Man” while summarizing the major social factors

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19 H.R. Chaturbedi, “Citizen Participation in Rural Development”, Research Abstracts Quarterly ICSSR, Vol. XII NO.1, Jan-June 1984, p. 6
20 L. Milbrath, Conceptual Problems of Political Participation, Chicago 1965, p.6
influencing political participation observed that “The co-relation between levels of education and extent of participation is particularly noteworthy. The educated citizen is more likely to engage in political process than the uneducated citizen.\textsuperscript{23}

Political participation denotes a series of voluntary activities\textsuperscript{24} which have a bearing on political process. The activities mainly are

1. Voting at the polls.
2. Supporting possible pressure groups by being a member of them
3. Personally communicating with legislators
4. Participating in political party activities
5. Engaging in habitual dissemination of political opinion through word of mouth communication to other citizens.

Participation includes (1) the activities designed to influence the decisions of government through pressure or persuasion to attain ends, such as retaining, or replacing the existing decision makers, on changing some aspects of the political system as a whole, and the rules of the political game (2) electoral activities such as voting campaigning, lobbying (3) protests, strikes, demonstrations, resort to violence while developing a typology of political participation. Lester

W. Milbrath has ranked these activities in a hierarchical order. At the top, he had given those activities, in which an individual participates most and goes down to lesser degrees of participation until at the bottom where the degree of participation is the least. The hierarchical order is:

**Gladiatorial activities**
- a) Holding public and party office
- b) Being a candidate for office
- c) Soliciting Political funds
- d) Attending a caucus or a strategy meeting
- e) Becoming an active member in a political party
- f) Contributing time in a political campaign

**Transitional Activities**
- g) Attending a political meeting or a rally
- h) Making a monetary contribution to a party candidate
- i) Contacting a public official or a political leader

**Spectator Activities**
- j) Wearing a button or putting a sticker on the car
- k) Attempting to talk to another in voting a certain way
- l) Initiating a political decision
- m) Voting

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n) Exposing oneself to political stimuli

Rush and Althoff\textsuperscript{26} have drawn a hierarchy that covers the whole range of political participation available in all types of political systems. Their model does not, in fact differ much from one drawn by Milbrath except in minor changes made here and there. It is:

1. Holding political or administrative office
2. Seeking political or administrative office
3. Active membership of a political organization’
4. Passive membership of a quasi political organization
5. Participation in public meeting demonstrations etc.
6. Participation in informal political discussion
7. General interest in politics
8. Voting
9. Total Ability

"The Centre for the study of developing Societies"\textsuperscript{27} in their All India Survey of the 1967 Election have grouped the electorate into five broad categories on the basis of their level of involvement in political participation.

\textsuperscript{26} Michael Rush and Phillip Althoff, \textit{An Introduction to political sociology}, The Bobbs – Merral Co, New York, 1972, p. 960.

\textsuperscript{27} M. Ramachander, & K. Lakshmi, \textit{Op Cit.}, p. 28.
Apathetic — Those who are not involved psychologically in political system

Peripherals — Those who only vote, and have some interest or some information

Spectators — Those who only vote, and have some interest and information, along with a few who with moderate levels of motivation, vote and engage in other activities

Auxiliaries — They are active participants. Those who vote and engage in activity with high level of interest and information.

Politists — This is highest level of involvement. Those who vote and engage in activity, with high level of interests and information, and all those who engage in three or more activities, with medium or high level of interest and information.

There are some people who shun all form of political participation or participate only at the lowest level. At the same time people who participate in most forms of political activity, constitute a minority, often very small minority.
The non participants are described as apathetic, cynical, alienated, and anomic. These terms are not synonymous, they may be related to one another and possibly have some characteristics in common. Apathy may be defined simply, as a lack of interest in, or lack of concern for persons, situations or phenomenon, in general, or particular. As far as political participation is concerned, the most important part of the apathetic individual, is his passivity or absenting oneself from political activity. Defined simply apathy, is lack of interest. Morris Rosenberg\textsuperscript{28} has suggested three reasons for political apathy. The first reason is, perceived consequence of political activity; his second reason is that the individual may regard political activity as futile. The third reason being, political stimuli as important factor in encouraging political activity, and the absence of such stimuli may contribute to feelings of apathy.

Alienation suggests actual hostility where cynicism suggests a certain distaste for political activities and politicians Durkheim devised the term ‘Anomic’ in the famous study Suicide\textsuperscript{29} and is described by Lane as “a sense of value loss and lack of direction which the individual experiences, a feeling of ineffectiveness, and that authority does not care, resulting in the loss of urgency to act. It is necessary to make a distinction between Apathy, Cynicism, Alienation and Anomie. Apathy is lack of interest, cynicism is an

\textsuperscript{28} Morris Rosenberg “Some determinants of Political Apathy”, \textit{Public Opinion Quarterly}, No 18, p. 34-36

attitude of distaste and disenchantment, alienation is characterized by hostility and anomie by bewilderment.

Summarizing various electoral studies S.M. Lipset said that a number of environmental factors influence voters turnout; the timings of elections, the politics of government, access for an individual to relevant information, group pressure and others. Political participation is also influenced by age, occupational status, educational levels, interest in politics, exposure to media and other modes of information and the place of residence. People with urban orientations, high social status, high income earnings, high occupational status, and having greater exposure to mass media, and with high degree of political interest and information are likely to be more participative, than those, who have less of the above. Participation does vary in relation to number of important social characteristic features and these variations are not confined to particular countries but are found in different countries, social and political systems. There are differences between various countries but then basic patterns are similar\(^{30}\).

Political will varies from one political system to another because social and political environments differ from one society to another. Participation increases only after basic needs such as food, sex, safety, affection and sleep have been satisfied. All this depends upon the nature of environment and demographic factors.

Today except at value level people should be encouraged to participate. It is difficult to sustain a proposition to the effect than in democracies people actually do display high rates of political participation and interest except in general elections. Men seek to advance their economic or material well being through political mean\textsuperscript{31}. Again it is men who already have economic resources, who are most likely to participate and it is quite likely that although there may be an economic component in their participation there is also a seeking of other gratifications such as the approval of others, feelings of power, symbolic assertions of self worth, and success, and so on. In short Lane reduces the economic imperative, to a cultural and psychological one, in which economic success is invested with other values such as worldly success, pride, and achievement. It is widely felt that the extent and manner of the public’s involvement is a key lest of the democratic theory. Put another way we are interested in the performance of the political system and feel that the extent and pattern of the public’s participation can be related to the systems performance, both in the narrow sense of the decisional outcomes from that system and in the much broader sense of the nature of the political process and the achievement of certain functional goals for the system, such as “integration” “stability” and democracy\textsuperscript{32}.

\textsuperscript{31} F. Lindenfeld “Economic Interest and Political Involvement” Public Opinion Quarterly, No. 28, 1964, pp. 104-111.

The forms of participation studies in India have been largely confined to formal politics. However the term development envisages the importance of participation and thus participation and its level has been tried to put into a hierarchical framework. The riddle as to which comes first; participation or development, is unsolved, and the relationship is a complex one as like development, participation has economic, social and political dimension. It is such a versatile phenomenon that, what constitutes participation at one level, may not do so at another, as such macro and micro dynamics are not the same.

The real distinction between countries lies in the nature than the degree of participation. In liberal democracies, voluntary participation is the norm, but in communist state regimented participation is more common. Its main function is to mobilize the people behind the regime and to strengthen the authority of the government. In the third world, personal manipulation is a characteristic from of participation.

The most striking fact about political participation in liberal democracies is how little of it is there. In most of the countries a majority turn out for election, but throughout the democratic world anything beyond voting is the activity of the minority. There are some, who do not evince any interest in politics, or public affairs.

This we can divide population into three main groups³³.

1. The small members of activities who are mostly foot soldiers in the party battle which ranges around and above them.

2. The voters who are the majority.

3. The inactives who ignore politics.

Political participation is concentrated among well educated, middle class and middle aged.

One of the best postulated generalization, in comparative politics is that the socially advantaged are more likely to participate in politics than the disadvantaged. Pattern of political participation reflects the inequalities in society. Differences in participation, can be explained by differences, in political resources, and interest.

In developing countries political participation is a luxury in the sense that it is not available to individuals who live near the subsistence level and must devote all their time and energy in their struggle to exist. Illiteracy, lack of transport and communication, clan, tribal, religious loyalties, are some of the important obstacles to participate in a culturally plural state, that has yet to achieve national integration.

Too little participation may hamper development, since the energy and talent of the population must be engaged, if a country is to develop and implement economic programme, and social reforms.
Further more the reaction of effective political institutions often depends upon citizen involvement.

Too much participation on the other hand may be destabilizing. The tensions produced by socio economic change and political development may result in protests, demonstrations, riots and other forms of political rises, that are different if not impossible, for fragile new political institutions to control. Even how level of participation may be disruptive if political institutions are not sufficiently developed. The rapid social and economic modernization may result in the collapse of accepted social norms and values. Mass political participation in such atmosphere may result in violence and the destruction of existing political institutes. Political stability and order is enhanced in nations that first seek to develop political institutions and seek to expand participation only when those institutions have become capable of handling new participants. Mass political participation in the third world is typically limited in quality, and manipulative in quality.

Psychological orientations serve as the most important resource for participation. Then different approaches to theories of democratic participation suggest that these orientations as understood in part, are demonstrations of the significance of politics and participation in politics. These orientations shape various cultures in which participation is in part seen as a duty, a source of support, not merely
a sign of acquiescence, a or an attempt by people to use the government as a means to achieve their ends. Orientation may not be explicitly political. These include religious or ethical values which are present in the majority or people where democratic institutions are weak or interpersonal relations predominate over the government institutions. Therefore basing on the psychological orientation towards politics citizens may be broadly categorized as active, supportive and non political. It is not however true, that these orientation are unchangeable or overlapping; people may be active in some sphere of politics. Similarly support and non political orientation may manifest as and when necessary.

Great focus was rapidly made on the analysis of political socialization, in the late 1950's and 1960's. Most of these studies turned the behaviouralists to analyse how political orientations, according to the writers and scholars help determine the political personality of the individual in any given society. And since that period, research output and publications on various aspects of political socialization, have increased at a steady rate throughout the world. Political socialization as a determinant of political attitude and participation, has been studied in the political theory of almost every era from Plato to Rousseau to the present day writers. However its current incarnation has emanated mainly from the American studies

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34 Ibid, p 39
of Civic education in 1920's and 1930's. But it had a somewhat delayed entry into the empirically oriented politic behavioural literature when Lipset and other scholars analysed the concept with regard to the voting behaviour. And since that period, research output and publications on various aspects of political socialization, have increased at a steady rate throughout the world.

Kothari (1970) in his Seminal work 'Politics in India' has discussed the dimensions of political dynamics and institutional and behavioural changes, in the context of developing societies. He refers to the process of internalization of the value system, of the society which in turn leads to the shaping of the personality of the individual and promoting political socialization in him.

Dowse and Hughes (1972) in their book 'Political Sociology' have dealt with the concept of political socialization vis a vis the social psychology of politics. They equate socialization with enculturation, impulse control and role training in the society. They conclude that in most societies, political socializations of the future generation begins early. But at the same time, they also point out that blind assumptions about the relationship between psychological

characteristics and political behaviours need to be treated with extreme caution and skepticism.

Almond and Verba\textsuperscript{40} (1972) in their work "The Civil Culture" have examined the various aspects of the civil society and have established that the civic culture or the political culture comes into effect spontaneously under subtle and imperceptible factors and forces in the political system. Thus in the process, the members of the system inclucate the values and ideas that are relevant to the sustenance of the system.

Weissberg\textsuperscript{41} (1974) in his book 'Political Learning Political Choice and democratic Citizenship' has discussed the link between political learning and political participation. He has stated that political norms and behaviour patterns, are transferred to the succeeding generations. He observes that political socialization leads to toleration for divisive conflict.

Denzin\textsuperscript{42} (1977) in his study 'Childhood Socialization' has analysed the most important primary agent of political socialization, the family. He states that family sets the entire

\textsuperscript{40} Almond and Sydney Verba, \textit{The Civic Culture}, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1972


\textsuperscript{42} Norman K. Denzin, \textit{Childhood Socialization}, San Francisco, Jossey Bass, 1977
socializing process in motion and retains an impact on the child over a long period of time.

Akinchan\textsuperscript{43} (1982) in his study 'Urban Growth and Political Socialization in India' has tried to analyse the relationship between the processes of urbanization and political socialization. He establishes that spread of education, and the mass media in the urban centers, contribute to political socialization immensely.

Singh\textsuperscript{44} (1983) in his book, 'Democratic Orientations of students in India: A study in political socialization' has focused on political socialization of the students vis a vis their involvement in the campus politics and urban elections. He finds that such democratic participation influences the political attitudes and orientations of the students, both inside the campus as well as in the political system.

There have been two types of analysis in current political socialization research, namely systems or macro level effects and individual or micro level concerns\textsuperscript{45}. The macro level theories help in suggesting some common guidelines for research. They provide a broad area and wide dimension to deal with the concept of political socialization. While coming to the macro level approach one finds the

\textsuperscript{43}Sitaram Akinchan, Urban Growth and Political Socialization in India, Janki Prakashan, Patna, 1982

\textsuperscript{44}Haridwar Singh, Democratic Orientations of Students in India: A study in political socialization, Concept, New Delhi, 1983

\textsuperscript{45}Dean Jaros, Socialization of Politics, Praeger, New York, 1973, p. 139
Systems Persistence theory as advocated by Easton and Dennis. This theory maintains that the political systems are confronted with stress. Political socialization functions as an effective mechanism to manage various kinds of stress. It involves a number of processes like investigation, ordering, and management of stress as well as arriving at possible solutions. For instance, it includes the problems of adherence or lack of it; compliance or defiance; and the general level of demand and support mechanism, in the political system.

Under the broad spectrum of the micro level approach, there are the psychoanalytic theory, learning theory and cognitive development theory. Of these, the most important is the 'Psychoanalytic theory' as propounded by Sigmund Freud. This theory says that every child is born with some natural instincts or unconscious needs, which are restrained and restricted, by the outside world. Such restrictions often lead to conflicts. And in the process the child grows, develops and becomes civilized. For instance a child may like the physical appearance of certain political personality. But his parents inform him regarding the negative aspects of that person. Hence there is a conflict in the mind of the child and eventually he reconciles and forms his opinion.

Another micro level theory is the learning theory. An individual acquires characteristic responses to given stimuli through the process of learning.\textsuperscript{48} Thus the learning theory implies that the process of political socialization, may take the form of either direct, or indirect learning. Direct learning involves, the definite communication of information, values or feelings, towards political ideas and objects. One such example is the civic course in high school curriculum\textsuperscript{49}. Indirect political socialization is the outcome of the long process of personality development of an individual, beginning from early childhood. The members of a political system acquire most of their ideas and value orientations through the process of indirect learning.

Finally there is the ‘Cognitive Development Theory’
According to micro level theory what a child acquires is very much dependent upon the cognitive intellectual equipment available to him at various stages in the process of development. These developmental stages in the life of a child normally follow one another in an orderly sequence. These stages describe particular levels of ability of readiness\textsuperscript{50}. This theory also suggests that particular kinds of political learning may occur at each of these stages.

\textsuperscript{49} Herbert Hirsch, \textit{Poverty and Politicization: Political Socialization in an American sub culture}, Free Press, New York, 1971, p. 73  
Further the agents of political socialization namely family, educational institutions, peer group, work places and mass media motivate individuals in various stages towards political objects and politically orienting generations. Considerable knowledge has been accumulated concerning the various social factors associated with participation in politics at various levels, and in various countries but the problem still remains of organizing the information in the context of a general theory of participation, and there are not very satisfactory accounts of political participation. We know that participants differ systematically in their social characteristics from non-participates and we can see, that participants specially at the upper reaches of the spectator hierarchy, and above, possess resources which facilitate their greater involvement. But we do not have a theory capable of explaining why they expend their resources politically rather than in another way. Even Milbrath's suggestive concepts of 'centre' and 'periphery' only go so far. It is the center-periphery distinction and the factors underlying the distinction that explain the finding that 'higher class persons are more likely to participate in politics than lower class persons'. The finding is that high social status—whether measured by education, occupation or prestige is strongly but variably associated with high turnout, high information, conservatism, higher than average rates of political involvement and a high sense of political efficacy, and such high status people are placed in a milieu of extensive political stimulation. They can be envisaged as well

51 L. Milbrath, Political Participation, Rand Mc Nally, Chicago, 1965, p. 116
located and well disposed to receive political communications whilst those of lower status are not so well located nor so highly disposed to receive such communications. They are well disposed because of their education and quite possible because they come from a family with a high level of political awareness; they are well located because their occupation brings them into contact with the politically relevant, and because their occupational skills are themselves politically pertinent. Another locational aspect is that high status individuals are generally able to maintain wide community contacts with people such as officials, teachers, political and economic leaders. Their situational location and personal backgrounds can be summed up by saying that they are at the political center whilst those not so well equipped are further away from the center, nearer the periphery where political communications are sparser, and in any case, such people are less predisposed to receive political communication.

The factors associated with high political participation such as high levels of education, urban location, high social involvement, high socio economic status, and so on, represent advantageous locations within the social system, for receiving political information, having a better leverage on politics, a greater contact with political life, and so on. But such concepts do not explain except in a negative way, the periodic involvement both legitimate and illegitimate of the 'social periphery' in politics.

It is apparent that there is little in the way of coherent and systematic theory relating social psychological and political variable
to the act of participation in politics. What we are left with is a mass of co-related data which is explained by adhoc theorizing. In other words much of the theorizing in this area is post hoc and incremental — a little bit of theory is added to explain each empirical deviation from the pattern originally found.

When we turn to comparative research on turnout, and participation the problems are compounded by the absence of statistics and by the fact that cultural and political differences, make adequate comparisons most difficult to achieve. Given these difficulties, political participation can be understood in two ways. Firstly it has proved possible to demonstrate that political participation has both a social and psychological component. Secondly we have seen that the resources and opportunities for such participation are not equally distributed. Ultimately one can state that there is a linkage between ‘socio economic mobility’ and ‘political participation’. According to Max Weber there is a binary process of interaction between these two components, that is, socio economic mobility contributes to political participation, so does political participation in changing social economic conditions.

Political participation is a much too complex a phenomenon liable to be influenced by a number of factors. It is necessary to scan

52 Dowes and Hughes, Political Sociology, John Weley and Sons, London, 1972, p. 317
53 Syed Qurban ali Naqvi, Social Change and Political Participation, Commonwealth Publishers, New Delhi, 1989, p. 18
the pattern of these variables and their relative impact in the context of political participation as it varies from country to country, from era to era, from one type of people in a society, to another.

**Political Communication: A necessary prerequisite**

Political communication is a vital prerequisite to political participation. Defined generally, it stands for mere transmission of information, to elicit a response. Some define it as an exercise in coordinating the meaning between a person and an audience\(^{54}\). Still others mean by communication, a sharing of information, an idea, or an attitude. It means sometimes, sharing the elements of behaviour, or modes of life through sets of rules\(^{55}\), a meeting of minds, a bringing about of a common set of symbols in the minds of the participants. Communication is not just the passing of information from a source to the public, it is better concerned as a recreation of information and ideas by the public given a hint by way of key symbol slogan or theme\(^{56}\).

All these views imply that through social intercourse people derive and act in a manner that enable them to create and recreate their world. So communication is a process which involves theorizing

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as well as practicing politics\textsuperscript{57}. Mark Roelfs says "politics is talk or to put the matter more exactly, the activity of politics is talking He however notes that politics is not all talk non all talk politics. "But the essence of political experience, and not just its basic condition, is that it is an activity of communication between two persons\textsuperscript{58}.

Communication between the elites and the masses is vital in any society, particularly in a democracy. It is important in many ways as democracy is based on an interaction among the masses and also the masses and elite. It is a basic requisite for the citizen in any democracy to be aware of, understand, and evaluate the varied political problems and articulate their considered opinion. Knowledge and communication of opinion, are the means by which masses can influence and control the rulers or the political elite. Thus there is an interaction between the elites and masses, forged by the material, social and political needs. These needs arise in and through the communication process. This communication creates, enhances or destroys a sense of solidarity among people as also expresses a sense of personal satisfaction in expressing one’s hopes and aspirations, fears and anxieties. A central theme of the discussion of political communication is that people act towards things on the basis of meanings that the objects have for them. But the meaning of an object whether a person place, event or even a word is never fixed and static.

\textsuperscript{57} Vijay Laxmi Pandit, \textit{Elites and Urban Politics}, Inter India Publication, New Delhi, 1984

\textsuperscript{58} Mark Roelfs, \textit{The Language of modern politics}, Homewood, 1967.
People construct meanings of things and behave toward them on the basis of meanings attributed to them.

From the point of views of communication of political participation one can divide people into three sets. The first consists of those persons who pay more attention to politics not only during the election time, but even after the elections. The other set of people consist of those individuals who contact and exchange options with political elites. The third set, consists of those people, who are not interested in any type of political activity on participation, except that of giving vote at the time of the elections.

**Awareness and Participation**

An understanding of politics creates knowledge about the public events which in turn creates interest in politics. Political awareness is internalized during childhood socialization. But in role stereotyped socialization where women are little encouraged to understand politics, the degree of awareness is low. Biological roles, place constraints on political resources and also on political understanding. Empirical studies reveal that where women have to attend to young children, their understanding of politics is less. On the other hand after a particular stage when the children grow up and pursue higher education and the mothers are free, their information of public affairs may increase. A comparative study of women having some college education, working outside and those engaged in home keeping revealed that the awareness of the former is quite high (48%)
compared to women not working outside (29%). Exposure to the world outside plays greater role in raising their level of understanding. Urbanites have more political awareness composed to rural women. Age has an important bearing on women for gaining political knowledge. Young women having high education are more aware than middle-aged and older women having no education. Women engaged in social activity and community services have better political knowledge compared to those in the working category\textsuperscript{59}.

But knowledge of the political events, alone does not lead to involvement. It is the persons subjective political competence, that leads to effective participation. A sense of political efficacy is an important aspect of a persons political personality. People with low levels of efficacy, can not effectively involve themselves in politics\textsuperscript{60}.

Political efficacy refers to the person’s belief that political and social change can be effected or retarded and that his efforts alone, or in concert with others, can produce desired behaviour on the part of political authorities\textsuperscript{61}.

An efficacious person holds a firm view that political authorities care for the citizen and leadership circles can be influenced and penetrated. Campbell defines political efficacy as “the

\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Ibid}, p. 8
\textsuperscript{61} \textit{International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, Vol I, p. 225}
feeling that individual political action does or can have an impact upon the political process that is, that it is worthwhile to perform one's civic duties. The close link between efficacy and participation has been defined by Verba, Borelson, Campbell and Dahl. The antecedents of efficacy as stated by Campbell are mainly three: 1. Education 2. Socio Economic standing 3. Membership of a majority ethnic group.

In countries like India where the level of education is lower compared to that in developed countries, it may be expected that only educated people are active in politics. This is far from true. Indulgence and involvement is high, among the uneducated. But when the quality of involvement and effectiveness of participation, are taken into consideration, it is the educated, who have an edge over the uneducated.

The sense of efficacy develops with the opportunities for participation. Effective participation of the people is an indicator of true democracy. But whatever may be the system, educated persons being more efficacious, feel that they have the capacity to model the environment. Hence irrespective of autocratic or democratic

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socialization experiences, the well educated person feels more politically competent than the less educated individual⁶⁴.

Confidence and control on self are indicators of ego strength; persons having ego strength, are efficacious enough to involve in political activity.

Political efficacy is dependent on external factors like education, participation, communication, political knowledge and understanding. In the case of women certain other factors like marriage, motherhood, privatization, domestic work etc. compose an additional set of deterrent in the development of the political self. These factors reinforced by stereotyped, role socialization create a sense of underestimation of their capability, in the public sphere. Effective participation in politics is determined more by the psychological, than the sociological factors. Thus a person may be fully aware of political events or the political system but may not be properly motivated, or efficacious enough, to be able to involve himself with the political system. However to be politically competent and participate in politics, awareness is not a necessary requirement, as operating under developed democracies, clearly demonstrate.

Politics in the present day society is mainly a skill controlled area. Persons skilled enough to control the environment are definitely active in politics, Therefore political efficacy and personal control,

perceive the political system to have great influence on their socio economic and other personal pursuits. For them the political system is the only source from which they can get certain benefits, hence they have an obligation to be concerned with the political process.  

Political participation of Women: Birds eye view

Politics and state craft are important areas in natural life. Desired development is not possible if women as half of the human resources, reserved labour force, and as citizens, stay away from natural development process. Women participation in the political process of development is of crucial importance from the considerations of both equity and development. Power ceases to have a closed hierarchical character. Modern politics is characterized by the continuous spread of political power, to wider groups in society, ultimately to all adult citizens.

Participation distinguishes modern politics from traditional politics. Traditional society is non participant. Modern society in contrast is participant. Even in non democratic states, political participation in some form is allowed, even stimulated, to lend support and legitimacy to the political system. Political, development

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refers to the process of politicization, increasing participation in state activities, in power calculation and consequences\textsuperscript{66}.

Traditionally politics as a profession or preoccupation is biased towards men. Historically western democracies (which have been followed in developing countries as political ideology and model) were built on the principle of exclusion of women. The separate spheres of women and men perceived as dictated by nature, the concept of public and private spaces, has confined women within the limits of home, and has identified, as falling under the authority and purview of men, the vast, expansive and powerful arena of politics. The Androcentrism of politics and the dominance of men in politics has turned politics into a male profession. It has characteristics, which differentiate it from other professions, and which are vastly different from the qualities attributed to the nature of women and their desired role in society.

The dominant culture of politics recognizes the efficacy of competitiveness, in the nature and approach in politics. But socialization process and social ideals do not see such qualities as attractively suited to women’s nature. Secondly in politics there are no fixed working hours in a day, and the requirements of political involvement blur the distinctions between home and work, night and day. While women engaged in other professions, manage to bear the double burden of workplace and home within the limits of a day, it is

difficult for them to attain such balance when engaged in politics. Thirdly it is necessary for survival and advancement in politics, that bases of support and cooperation are created through unhindered mobility and networking. In our society, mobility and networking on such scale is not generally acceptable as this places women in close proximity to men (or rather men other than the approved by social mores and customs) because it is generally men who inhabit the political arena as active agents. Fourthly women are denied education and work experiences, that could place them in professions that are oriented towards the field of politics, and could see their entry into the political arena. Fifthly women’s personal earnings and sources of wealth are limited in our society. Besides women do not have access to the political interest groups, which could strengthen the financial resources or power of women. All these cause weaken the presence and prospects of women in politics.

Politics is male dominant and androcentric. There is usually slim possibility for the integration and reflection of women’s perceptions and needs, in state policies, that are determined, directed, and controlled by men. As women are not adequately represented in political decision making, issues of public policy relating to women’s

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67 *Ibid*
equality and empowerment, remain under the competence of men, who may not be interested in these issues\textsuperscript{68}.

Mac Cormak said there are three reasons for non participation of women in politics (i) difference in socialization (2) less education (3) low self esteem resulting from traditional thought and superstition. Women generally can not or do not participate in politics because they are family centered, vote as their husbands/relatives desire, are drawn to authoritarian figures, or politically motivated, and therefore their activities are limited only in family matters and child welfare\textsuperscript{69}. A survey conducted on the students of a school in London showed that boys are more likely than girls to pick historic and public figures for their ideas. The seed of politics was sown in their early childhood. Political participation requires knowledge about politics, conscious participation in political activities, interest in politics and competence. Political ideas come through active participation in politics. Politics involves the activity that affects governmental decision making. Efforts to influence governmental decision making, involve persuading or pressurizing existing authorities, to act in certain ways. Political participation also includes protests, riots,

\textsuperscript{68} Women 2000 : Review and Appraisal 1990 , Division of the Advancement of Women, Vienna, 1990. p 21

\textsuperscript{69} Usha Bambewala, Women in Politics : Sociology of non participation, paper presented in a seminar on Impart of Urbanization on Women’s Welfare, Netherlands Association of University Women, 1983
demonstrations and even violence that are intended to influence public authorities.\textsuperscript{70}

In developing countries political participation may be limited by such factors as level of literacy and the general problems of communication.\textsuperscript{71}

The factors of non-participation of women in politics can be discussed under three factors. Socio economic, cultural and political.

1. Political activities and strategy cannot be formulated in a vacuum. They are formulated in existing socio economic conditions. Women's situation in politics is a peculiar kind of isolation. It is observed, that politics means expenditure and because of that reason, only affluent can involve themselves in political activities. The phenomenon of income earning, and saving, in case of women is a recent one. They do not want to expend their earnings or politics. Political involvement necessitates huge financial investments and men from high economic strata are apt to collect money or their political parties.

2. The patriarchal and patrilineal system limit women to become active in politics.

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid
3. The political factors affecting women's participation is also due to the shortage of full time activists. Consequently women's issues have not received adequate public attention.

Higher levels of participation in politics depends on higher level of development. The ideological and political beliefs dominant in the society, stress the value of political participation. The dominant political values, are all due to man in society. For these reasons, women should acquire political maturity, to enable them to intercede in favour of jointly building a society in which men and women are free from rigid attitudes, and can follow there own inclinations. This will enable women to shoulder greater burden, share democratic decision making, and prepare themselves as equals to assume the responsibility of an increasingly complex existence.\(^{72}\)

To ensure full fledged participation of women, some questions need be discussed.

(1) What are the obstacles they face exercising their political rights?
(2) What steps are to be taken in order to change the attitude and motivation in exercising political role in the patriarchal society?
(3) Whether they are informed about their political rights in the family and society?

\(^{72}\) Ibid
(4) Whether mass media help women to exercise their political role?

(5) What efforts are undertaken to organize women at the local level?

(6) What are the attitudes or notions of rural women about politics?

The constitution of India however, maintains an egalitarian stand regarding men and women issues. The constitution does not discriminate between women and men in contesting and voting for public representative offices. It further provides for reserved seats in order to ensure women's representation in parliament, and stipulates the representation of women in the local governmental institutions. The constitution articulates the need for taking steps to facilitate women's participation in all spheres of national life, grants equal rights to men and women, in all fields of national and public life as matters of fundamental rights of citizens and entrusts the state with the authority to adopt special measures in favour of women and children. The constitution provides the basis and grants legitimacy to affirmative action in order to attain gender equality and equity.

SUMMARY

The term 'political participation' is a flexible term, and the definition of the same can be designed to suit the participant, or the circumstance the participant is in. Participation in politics is a voluntary activity, which may be exhibited at different levels of the
system with varying degrees of emotional involvement. According to Aristotle participation is essential to the development and fulfillment of human personality. As roles became specialized and persons became oriented to the inputs and outputs of the government; a participant political culture emanated out of economic and social development. Many reasons are given for such political orientation and involvement; Dahl enumerates six such reasons, few of them being the belief of the individual that participation will bring rewards, it may change the outcome, and that their participation may bring satisfactory outcome. To Weber there are four motives; the national, the emotional, the traditional and the purposive. To the Marxists participation is group activity. To Milbrath participation can be explained in a hierarchical order; as Gladiatorial, Transitional and Spectator activities. People those who shun all forms of political activity are described as apathetic, cynical, alienated and anomic. Participation is linked to development and the term development envisages participation. Too little participation hampers development and too much of it may be destabilizing. Psychological orientation form the base of political participation. Childhood political socialization urbanization, spread of education and mass media stimulates participation. Further environmental factors; the socio cultural climate prevailing, has a nexus with the degree of participation. The role of political communication in propelling participation forward cannot be understated. Awareness precedes political participation and this awareness is created by a tangible and intangible labyrinth of societal factors that envelop its citizens. Hence efficacy develops and subjective political competence leads to
effective participation. People with low levels of efficacy cannot effectively involve themselves in politics.

It is however seen that politics is male dominated and andocentric. The socialization process of women, lack of fixed working hours in politics, lack of social networking, denial of education, and work experience, retards women’s’ orientation to politics. Lastly but not the least, lack of personal earnings, and economic resource weaken the presence and prospects of women in politics. To ensure full fledged participation of women, it is necessary to arrange the deterrents and then on a priority basis work out methods to root out the hindrances which maladjusts women to participation and the process of development.