CHAPTER – III

POLITICAL DIMENSIONS

The theory and practice of democratic politics entirely rests on active people’s participation in the administrative process of government and public office. It is well known factor that a democratic government is based on the ‘doctrine of popular sovereignty’ which means that the people are supreme in democracy. Therefore, administration in democracy is or should finally be responsible to the people. It is in this context that the people’s participation in administration assumes importance. It transform the representative democracy into a participatory democracy.

People’s political participation means the direct involvement of citizen’s in the process of administrative decision making, formation and implementation. It implies people’s control over administration or public influence on administration. It is essential for the smooth and effective performance of the administrative machinery. It makes the administration more responsive and accountable to the needs of the people. In the words of R.K. Sapru “It represents a revived interest in the philosophy of participatory democracy promoted by the French Political Philosopher Alexis Tocqueville who propounded that individual citizen participation is essential to the several of a democracy and that democracy is under mined when citizens are incapable of influencing government decisions. This is known as bottom-up-rule.

Political participation of people is a necessary ingredient of a democratic
system of government. Although political power in every society or organization is ultimately monopolized by just a few so called elites or political leaders, the incumbent of political authority in every system is found to be quite keen on ensuring some amount of political participation by the people. By involving the many in the matters of governance, political participation fosters stability and order by reinforcing the legitimacy of political authority. A society in which a substantial part of the population is derived any political participations in likely to be highly explosive. A modern fascist or a dictator, not with standing whatever power he is free to exercise, certainly not try to follow an individualistic policy; instead he will invariably try to cloak his arbitrary political decision under the veil of mass approval secured through some form of political participation by the people such as referendum. We are witnessing such happening in some of our neighbouring states. This type of people's participation in public affairs and decision making, process is the principal means by which people's mandate is secured or withdrawn in a democracy and rulers and ultimately made accountable to the ruled or to the people who are politically sovereign in a democratic polity.

People's participation in public affairs denotes a series of voluntary activities which have a bearing on the democratic process that involves multifarious issues like the selection of rulers and the various aspects of the formation of public policy. These activities include privilege of franchise, that is, right to participate in election, right to contest elections to public bodies like the legislatures, right to form or become members of political parties of one's own choice, right to support or oppose candidates contesting elections and thus
acquiring claim on winning candidates or legislators and right to support various
groups and thus exert political pressure on members of Parliament or on other
public agencies. Lester Milbrath explains these activities under three
categories, namely, “gladiatorial activities,” “transitional activities” and
“spectator activities”.\(^1\) Gladiators represents that small number of party activist
whose active association with political parties keeps them engaged in a series
of direct party activities like holding party offices, fighting the elections as party
candidates, raising party funds, attending party meeting and joining the party
campaigns. Transitional activities include attending party meetings as party
supporters or party sympathizers or just as neutral but attentive listeners,
making contributions to the party funds and coming in contact of public officials
or party personnel. Spectator activities, on the other hand, include voting,
influencing others to vote in a particular way, making and joining a political
discussion, exposing oneself to political stimuli and wearing a button or
showing a sticker. The proportion of the adult population as gladiators or those
playing the role of spectators or eventually engaged in transitional activities
may differ according to the political system in a country.

**POLITICAL FORCES AND THEIR DYNAMICS:**

Further, political participation in public affairs in a democratic polity is
active as well as passive. This distinction is a necessary outcome of the most
common fact that political participation in the activities of the State involves
citizens time, energy and resources. In the society due to personal factors and
temperament, all people are not equally able or even willing to spare their
valuable time and be active participants in the affairs of the State. Many people
participate actively on political activities to achieve some definite political gain like securing party victory or making common efforts to seek favourable legislation. Most of the participants usually take their participation in the light of the outcome to follow from it as well as in terms of its contribution towards the fulfillment of some of their personal feelings. Thus there may be many personal explanation and factors of political participation. Also, there may be many reasons why an individual avoids political involvement. In a non-democratic system, political rulers or dictators monopolies political power and public support is not sought. It may be a type of military regime on a democracy however, the position is altogether different. There are people who are indifferent towards politics because of a lack of information about and interest in the political affairs which results from their political indifference and also from a lack of the proper opportunity to participate. This kind of political apathy is usually found mostly among the illiterates, the inarticulate, the parochial and the isolated individuals sometimes, political apathy is deliberate and is to be found among those who decide not to participate politically. Voters sometimes neglect to exercise their right of franchise because they feel that one vote want change the final results.

In a democratic system people’s participation in state affairs conditioned level of education, occupation, income, sex, age, residence, mobility, religion, parental culture race and influence of pressure groups. The numerous research finding has been that political participation is generally relatively high in case of the better educated, members of the higher occupation and income groups, male members of the society, urban society, urban residents and members of
active association. The relevance of education to political participation obvious education imparts one greater civic education and expands the horizon of one's interest. Since education, occupation and income together constitute a person's status it is quite appropriate to say that socially and economically high status persons are likely to participate more actively in politics than low status people.

In a today's civilized society political participation manifests through democratic institutions which respond to the will of the people. In the words of professor Carl J. Friedrich, "Democracy means constitutional government. It means divided power. It means civil liberties. It means concern for minorities as we as decision by majority".

People's participation in public affairs in a democratic system is conditioned by many socio-economic and political factors, such as level of education, occupation, income, sex, age, residence, mobility, religion, parental culture, race and so called group influence. The recent times, numerous researches have been undertaken in different countries on the potentiality of these social variables in encouraging political participation and the general finding has been that political participation is generally relatively high in case of the better educated, members of the higher occupation and income groups, male members of the society, urban residents and members of active associations. Of all these factors, the relevance of education to political participation is obvious. Education imparts one greater civic education and expands the horizon of one's interest. The higher is the education, the greater are one's sense of civic duty, political competence, public interest and responsibility. Since education, occupation and income together constitute a
persons status, it is quite appropriate to say that socially and economically high status persons are likely to participate more actively in politics than the low status people.

Political participation in a civilized society of today manifests through democratic institutions which respond to the will of the people. In the words of Professor Carl J. Friedrich, “Democracy means constitutional government. It means divided power. It means civil liberties. It means concern for minorities as well as decision by majority”. Democracy, by common consent, is the people’s government. However, its meanings are very wide. From one point of view it means a form of government in which the community as a whole, directly or indirectly performs the functions of sovereignty. Democracy sometimes is also taken to mean a form of state. To quote Hearnshaw, a democratic state is one “in which the community as a whole possesses sovereign authority, maintains ultimate control over affairs, and determines what sort of governmental machinery shall be set up.”\(^2\) Democracy also a certain attitude to wards life of a democratic temper rather than merely a form of government. A democracy is not a democracy unless harmonize the values of equality and liberty. Democracy is also a form of society based on social equality. Thus as a form of society, democracy will seek to eliminate all socio-economic disparities and exploitation. It is from this point of view that communist countries may be said to be democratic. Though the Soviet Russian and People’s Republic of China are totalitarian and are one party states, yet the Russian and Chinese societies are democratic in as much as economic exploitation has been eliminated. On the other hand, Britain, America and India are democratic states and have
elected democratic agencies such as the Parliament and the Chief Executive, yet the society is not democratic due to wide social and economic distinctions. Thus we make a distinction between political and social democracies. Though the governments of U.S.S.R. and China are totalitarian and are one-party states. In these countries the party controls the state by fixing its policy and controls the people by securing their loyalty to the state. The party in communist Russia is the “the fountain head of power” and is the leading core of all organizations of the working people, both public and state. In relation to the working people, it holds complete tutelage and is the vanguard of the proletariat. The new Soviet State ceased to be “an organ of class rule, an organ for oppression of one class by another”. It ended once and for all exploitation of man by man. The Socialist Revolution ushered in a new kind of socio-economic system where the real procedures of the wealth of the country were to be its masters. Socio-political society, in which the working class is the leading force has been ensured. According to Soviet leaders it is a society of true democracy, the political system of which ensures effective management of all public affairs, active participation of the working people in running the state and the combining of citizens rights and freedoms with their obligations and responsibility to society. Thus a socialist society and a socialist democratic system is created.

PRESSURE GROUPS AND DEMOCRACY:

Democracy is not merely a form of government, it is also a certain attitude towards life—a democratic temper. As Laski said, “to some democracy is a form of Government; to others, it is a way of social life’.³ It implies mutual
adjustment, accommodation, toleration, respect for the opponent’s view point, respect for human personality and individuality. It is the attainment of a social order in which each person shall be able to obtain the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be reorganized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position. If democratic institutions are to have any appeal for the people at large they must ensure them not only equality of status and of opportunity, but also justice, social, economic and political. Thus democracy emphasizes the importance and dignity of the individual. A democratic state exists to serve the individual, whereas totalitarianism subordinates the importance of the individual and glorifies that state. In short, democracy implies equality of opportunity, freedom of expression, free and periodic elections and participation of all in the affairs of the government. The public officials are expected to translate the wishes of the people into public policy. Thus, a democratic system is not merely a set of constitutional provisions by which the people are governed, it is also a device by which the people govern their rulers, by which they ensure that the state remains an instrument for furthering genuine common interests. A democracy is not a democracy unless it responds to the will of people. Consequently, in democracy there is an inherent conflict of the twin principles of equality and liberty. The first develops authoritarian conception of social, political and economic life—one party and one class. The other develops liberal conception of social, political and economic life, a pluralistic and federal society, where individuals and groups have rights of choice in thought and speech, assembly and association. Therefore, if our political institutions and organizations emphasize the first at the cost of the other, there can hardly develop a rule of
law which is the ultimate aim of a real democracy and which properly harmonizes the values of equality and liberty.

The task of democracy as form of government is not to express an imaginary popular will, but to effect adjustments among the various special wills and purposes which at any given time are pressing for realization. Indeed, the theory of democracy inverts the ancient relationships of authority and advocates that political power rests in the people who govern themselves. The belief in government of the people, by the people and for the people is realized in a democratic system alone where in the rulers become identical with the ruled. The very essence of democracy is free discussion and mutual tolerance of divergent viewpoints. Violence and force has no place in democracy. Compromise plays an important role in democracy, and is an essential method in the resolving of differences. In elections, in the settlement of various kinds of disputes between the government and the representatives of various interests, in the resolving of differences between the various political parties, compromise plays an important role. It is a technique aimed at the achievement of adjustment of conflicting interests. The relations involved in consultation and obtaining consent became by historical transformation also means for holding governments accountable for their actions. In a way democratic doctrine prescribes what the people ought to get what they want. Those charged with governance may educate and persuade those who oppose their to views and try to win them over to their views. Deference to the wishes of the rules does not mean deference to the will of each individual. Most commonly democratic doctrines accord authority to popular majorities. Exercise of authority in
democratic polity is characterized by a deference to the ruled, which is associated with techniques for mutual consultation and discussion with the people or their representatives and with means for the expression of general will and popular consent to governmental action.

The institutional apparatus requisite to a democratic order includes some common institutions such as elected representative bodies, popularly and related popular agencies. Each of these institutions differ from country to country. In any case, democratic theory is based on the principles of liberty and equality. It stands for political freedom, equality before law, freedom of association and free elections. This means right for all with a maximum respect for the dignity of human person. The opposite is the authoritarian and totalitarian tendency where there is “everything for the state nothing against the state, nothing outside the state”. In it no social, moral or religious law can exist if the constitutional law is against it. In it the whole life of the society is merged in or subordinated to and controlled by the state. This authoritarianism makes the state an end in itself and citizens as their means to that end, absorbing and monopolizing everything. The authoritarians accept the Austinian theory of monistic sovereignty namely what the state permits is tolerated. We are however living in a pluralistic society where the state though important cannot absorb all functions or dictate all laws values and virtues of life. To make the state a promoter or coercer of a uniform pattern of social life is the greatest danger to the development, of individual personality according to individual’s potential ability and social freedom. An individual cannot obtain to the highest in him unless he possesses certain essential liberties. It is the function and end of
the state of provide conditions for promoting good life of the individual, that is, to provide full scope for his growth and perfection. The fathers of the American Constitution, for example, embodies in their constitution of Bill of human rights and placed them beyond the reach of legislative majorities and executive bureaucracies. They thus limited the power of the government to interfere in or to encroach upon human liberties. On similar linens Indian’s Constitution has also incorporated a group of fundamental rights, as safeguards against governmental interference in the freedom of the individual has the opportunity to develop his personality. Democracy is supposed to be a splendid device which ensures that an elected government enjoys political legitimacy and moral authority.

Due to rapid increase in the range of governmental functions of modern welfare states, the power of the state and of the party in power as well as the power of the multifarious association, especially the organized and potential interest groups has enormously increased. No fixed discipline can suit the developing possibilities of new human manifestations in the socio-economic, political or ethical fields. No system can satisfy the growing needs of a dynamic society. The democratic experiment has not succeeded everywhere. The democratic process and ethics, the political parties, the pressure groups often get submerged in the rule of the majority and lose sight of the conception of the worth and dignity of the individual. The moral basis of the democratic state lies in the importance of the individual and his fundamental rights. Real democratic theory should value the individual with definite dignities and devotions, qualities and potentialities. He must be regarded as responsible and creative factor and
not merely as a behaviour pattern or socio economic functionary. Degeneration of majority rule into majority will destroy the dignity and moral value of an individual. Mere objectives and social directives or constitutional devices will not be fruitful, unless they are supported by a genuine belief in the sacredness of an individual and the sanctity of his freedom. Therefore only exalting the rights of man as man would not do in a real democracy. It must inspire confidence in man as individual and trust and respect him profoundly. State functions and powers should be limited in a democracy, and citizens should retain their powers and rights and responsibilities as individuals and exercise them according to their own judgment. Of course, there must be limits to the manner in which their discretion or judgment should be used in the interest of common good or “greatest good of the greatest number”. Hence it is necessary that there should be limitations on the omnipotent authority of the state embodied in the constitution itself.

In a democracy interpenetrations of thought takes place in the process of harmonization of differences. The individual is not an isolated unit; he is a member of a group or groups and within each of these groups the individuals have feelings and sentiments towards each other collaborative efforts. Differences are unified in a larger whole. (Here the democratic process of attaining unity but attaining it by variety). We cannot be a crowd seeks unionism, groups seek harmony. The crowd does not allow choice, groups allow it, for choice is necessary for vital progress. The crowd submerges and smothers the individual. Groups release and enrich his personality. So democracy would attain its true end if men willed and acted in groups. The
crowd is not a community conception. It is a vital consideration in a democracy that individual should participate in the working of the group or groups, for in this participation he finds his true self and loses his apathy, narrowness and isolation in society. In the absence of group conception he and his co-fellows are not likely to resist or revolt against despotism. The maintenance of this vigilance for liberty is the greatest responsibility of the citizen. We must remember that not a little part of the life of the individual must necessarily remain outside the province of the state and unregulated by its law. It is organized by individuals in groups or associations in activities and relations outside the state.

PRESSURE GROUPS AND SOCIETY:

The modern society have been exhibiting a tendency which comes under the influence of organized private interests. The pressure groups are most prominent in a democracy. They found even in iron curtain, sometimes, what a political figure is not able to do personally is not done through pressure groups.

Modern society is essentially plural in its nature and federal in its composition. It performs certain activities, the nature of which interests or affects every all but only certain aspects of life General activities which affect the community generally are performed by the state. The family, the most primitive social unit exists in part to provide protection and training for the offspring during their long period of helplessness. Since man is a social being, he is always found in one or other association with other persons. Men must live in society in order to manifest those capacities and accomplishments that
distinguish them from other animals. Further, in all human societies the individual is less affected directly by the society as a whole than differentially through varieties of its subdivisions, or groups. Even in the simplest type of society, it is impossible for any one individual to participate in all the groups of which the society is made. To meet his individual needs, he can participate in only a limited number of groups.

The more groups to which the individual belongs, the more aspects of life he develops, the better; for they develop the multiple side of his social as well his individual personality and give proper scope to his general and specific activities and natural inclinations. No one particular groups can suffice and develop all aspects of his life because human needs are manifold.

The roots of the group theory lie in the doctrine of pluralism as developed by a number of twentieth century English writers particularly by John Figgis, F.W. Maitland, G.D.H. Cole and H.J.Laski. According to pluralist political scientists, power, instead of being concentrated in the individual is diffused among many groups competing against each other for power. “A groups” according to David B. Truman, “is a collection of individuals which on the basis of one or more shared attitudes, makes certain claims upon other groups in the society for the establishment, maintenance or enhancement of forms of behaviour that are implied in the shared attitudes”. In recent years, the social psychologists and cultural anthropologists have done much to explain the nature, manner and extent of groups influences upon human behaviour and political institutions. Significant power is wielded by those multifarious ‘groups’ in the political process. So called groups basis of politics. The common
interests shared attitudes constitute the common interests. Interest is a shared attitudes concerning a claim or claims to be made by one groups upon certain other groups in a social system. Group thus, is a mass of activity directed by interest, and the social system which consists of a large number of groups. A categoric group is a class of individuals who do not necessarily interact but who share some common features. It is the interest which leads to the organization of groups. The group concept therefore, implies that the members have something in common, they share, perhaps a set of values or they have some identifiable common interests of characteristics which distinguish them from the rest of the population of a social system.

Groups can be formal and organized, or informal, primary and secondary, interest groups or pressure groups, associational and institutional or non-associational and economic. One of the most common approaches classifies groups according to their proximity to the individual member. The primary groups is the group with which an individual has the most frequent personal contact. Included in such group are one’s family, neighbors, associates and friends. A member of a primary group interests regularly with other members of the group on a personal basis. Primary pressure groups are organizations which involve themselves in political activities designed to influence public policy. Secondary groups are affinitive groups in which the relationship is usually of a less personal nature, with less personal interaction and contact. Secondary pressure groups engage mainly in non-political activity and involve themselves in actual political process only rarely. The Indian Medical. Association, and the Indian Political Science Association, for example,
serve as secondary groups for doctors and teachers of political science. Categoric or tertiary groups such as race, sex, age or ethnic groups, generally have no organization but are merely classifications. By this definition, everyone belongs to several categoric groups. Certain secondary organize along categoric lines such as the World Congress for Racial Equality, the National Organization of Women, Association of ex-Army Personnel etc. All three of these group classifications can be subsumed by so called reference groups, a group to which people refer and consult in developing their opinions, attitudes and beliefs. This is usually a group from which one seeks approval, in which case we refer to it as a positive reference group. For example, if one seeks the approval of one’s family, the family acts as a primary positive reference group. If one is rebellious toward one’s family, than the family acts as a primary negative reference group, providing cues as to how not to act. A reference group can be of a categoric or tertiary nature as well. Ethnic groups are prominent examples of positive and negative reference groups.

GROUP LEVEL ANALYSIS:

The group-level approach to political analysis leads logically to a particular concept of the social system and of political behaviour. The society itself, as Bentley says is “nothing other than the complex of groups that compose it”\(^5\). It is, therefore, through the social system that the various groups seek to realize or maximize their interests, the society being, in the words of another group theorist, Earl Latham, “a single universe of groups which combine, break, deferate and form coalitions and constellations of power in a flux of restless alteration”, and is kept going by the push and resistance
between groups”⁶. The government is represented by group theorists as playing the role of a moderator in the struggle among groups. Government writes David Truman, “functions to establish and maintain a measure of order in the relationships among groups”.⁷ According to group theorist, governments itself comprises of groups, representing within its frame work broader socio-economic interests and claims, thus making available to outside groups a number of point of access, at which it is open to influence. Government plays its role as an adjustor of group conflicts. Groups are highly effective in obtaining certain ends and benefits from government, although there are variables that they may be unable to control. Before intensity of conviction and action can be brought to bear upon the government, a group must have access to those in power. Formal and informal means of gaining access to a legislature which frames and national policy and enacts legislation, are used. Writes David B. Truman, “the degree of access to the legislature that a particular group enjoys at a given moment is the result of a composite of influences. Depending on the circumstances and the relative importance of these factors in a given situation, some groups will enjoy comparatively effective access, and others will find difficulty in securing even perfunctory treatment”.⁸

Group theorists advocate the superiority of groups in accomplishing their objectives with much less difficulty and hindrances than individuals. People come together in groups to socialize and get things done in the common interest. In group context, social approach as far as the individual is concerned is expressed in terms of his being accepted by other members. As far as the group is concerned, it is expressed in terms of the individuals conformity to its
norms. The group's willingness to accept is thus exchanged for the members' willingness to conform. This type of exchange is so fundamental in group life that it is difficult to imagine ourselves participating in any other way. Groups are obviously better equipped to accomplish things, particularly those that require teamwork and cooperation and benefit the society as a whole. Once individuals are constrained to come together by external or internal forces and find themselves in association with one another as a result of the communication channels established between them, they are likely to be attracted towards one another and the group in varying degrees. The attraction of individual members to satisfy common needs or common interest creates group cohesiveness or group solidarity and is the strength of the group. Conflict within a group can also take place despite a common basis of shared attitudes or interests safeguards against the type of conflict thereby minimize the danger of divergences touching core values.⁹

The degree of group cohesiveness always depends on the extent to which a group satisfies the various needs and goals of its individual members. Group cohesiveness binds members internally by the satisfactions it provides for them in being together and reaping common gains. Often, however, a group may maintain itself together in obedience to the pressure of some external circumstances and show a lesser degree of cohesiveness. Such a group may fail apart when these external pressures are removed or disappear. Sometimes groups are formed under the pressure of a higher authority in places like educational institutions, industries, etc. They break as soon as the authority bringing them together with draws its backing or pressure. Similarly accidentally
formed groups last as long they serve some purpose and then disintegrate because they have low cohesiveness. Such groups are often formed because of some similarities among their members, similarities in interest and attitudes which make it easier for them to communicate with each other and develop some group ideology which may bind them together for sometime. In short, the cohesiveness and strength of a group is enhanced when there is a greater similarity among its members in regard to their beliefs, attitudes and values.

Political scientists have expended considerable effort analyzing group influences, particularly upon individual members, non-members and upon the political system itself. Many people tend to join organizations that express attitudes and values consistent with their own. By joining such an organization, members receive a reinforcement of their values and opinions, and also have talent beliefs awakened, as new information and opinions are brought out by members of the group. The interaction of group members is likely to lead to the expression of values and opinions of which the new or old member might have been only aware. Discussion of new issues and events may be based upon previously opinions or upon beliefs that are fundamental to the groups purpose or membership. People tend to seek out homogeneous group memberships. An individual rarely consciously affiliates with a group because of fundamental diversity of views. Most of us prefer receiving reinforcement of our positions, political and otherwise and group memberships tend to reflect this. Factors operating to increase conformity to group standards and norms are smallness of size, frequency of contact, homogeneity of opinion and internal cohesion. If a particular group is small, meets frequently, is comprised of individuals who
generally hold the same beliefs, and has a great deal of solidarity, it can be expected that pressures to conform will be present to a high degree. Another factor affecting conformity relates to democratic decision making. If an individual feels that he has participated in making some decision, he is likely to be more committed to the group’s opinion, even if his personal opinion is ignored. Similarly, if an issue is ambiguous and the results are difficult to predict, the group supplies cues to form opinions and take action. For example, in parliamentary elections, a voter generally relies upon the political party of the candidate and the party’s programme as a source of positive or negative reference cues before he casts his vote.

Group-level analysis has provided some important clues to the study of political behaviour. For example, the family, as a primary group, can have meaningful influence upon the political behaviour of its behaviour of its members. Political activity often finds expression through group activity, as individuals coalesce with others to achieve political and social ends. A political scientist frequently depends on group analysis for his political predictions. When we discuss role of political parties, legislatures and other political activities of citizens in democratic state, we are discussing groups not isolated individuals. Any discussion of political conflict involves the group concept, because conflict of ten finds its expression through groups. To quote Harry Eckstein, “Politics is the process by which social values are authoritatively allocated this is done by decisions, the decisions are produced by activities; each activity is not something separate from every other, but masses of activity have common tendencies in regard to decisions; these masses of activity are
groups; so the struggle between groups (or interests) determines what decisions are taken”\textsuperscript{10}

The group theory which gives birth and constantly nurtures a variety of interests groups and pressure groups in our socio-political system is subjected to harsh criticism by political theorists. It is argued that there is no unanimity among the group theorists on the proper significance of a group as a collectivity of interests and action. A common error has been to assume that group theory must concern itself with pressure groups which operates to influence politics. If we define groups in terms of sociological characteristics, such as primary, secondary and tertiary groups we are assuming that some form of activity or shared interests and attitudes defines a group. The shared activity may be nothing more than overt hostility toward another group. Some critics think that group theory cannot be empirically tested because “it does not relate any variables to one another, nor specify any relations between variables.”\textsuperscript{11} Group theory cannot both explain and predict. If we cannot precisely define the nature of an activity characterizes a group we cannot assume that such activity that characterizes a group we cannot assume that such activity is common to other groups. If a group activity cannot be properly defined we can never be certain that similar patterns of political behaviour and action exist in other groups. Lastly, it is pointed out that the group level approach is mainly applied to problems involving American politics, As Young puts it “This problem seems to be a natural out growth of the over-riding interests of many of the leading group theorists in American political processes. The principal conceptions of group theory seem to be peculiarly relevant to a highly differentiated economically...
modernized and largely capitalistic social system such as the United States.”

In fact in a democracy, interest groups and pressure groups are powerful media of public control over governmental policy. Intensity of opinion articulated through groups affects political participation. Perhaps the best way by which democracy can satisfactorily be distinguished from other forms of government is that it rests on the rule of public opinion expressed through groups. This is done by permitting the free expression of opinion on the policies of government, followed by acceptance of the peoples verdict at the polls. Politics and administration are the products of group conflict. The most successful method to build up political influence, under a democratic system of government is through propaganda by making use of various modern media of communication or direct appeal to the electorate. The political leaders often patronize influential groups to win public support. Common shared attitudes constitute the common interest. Every group is thus basically an interest group. Modern legislation is greatly influenced, and often determined by the push and pull of interest groups. Democracy no longer exists when a single creed or dogma crushes with violence other faiths. Democracy is always concerned with the free discussion of political issues and ideas, with the freedom to resort to constitutional means for expressing the opinion or redressing the grievances either individually or through a group. Says Robert A. Dahl, “all other things being equal, the outcome of a policy decision will be determined by relative intensity of preference among the members of group”. If a particular group engaged in pressing the government feels and acts intensely about its position, the intensity is a valuable resource to use to impress legislators and
administrators. An individual approach, however, correct it may be, cannot be expected to impress government decision makers with the urgency or necessity of solving a problem. Hence, pressure groups that operate on the basis of ideology may have a distinct advantage, if they are competing with other groups that are not impelled to action with intensity. To quote Dahi, “the making of governmental decision is not a majestic march of great majorities united upon certain matters of public policy. It is the steady appeasement of relatively small groups”\textsuperscript{14}. Such groups, undoubtedly, are very vocal and consequently express intensity of opinion. Truman writes, the government in general or a legislature in particular is “just a sounding board or passive registering device for the demands of organized political interest groups”\textsuperscript{15}.

It is very evident that in democracy, pressure groups have a significant influence on the action of both executive and legislative wings of the government. They supplement the activities of political parties in moulding the exercise of both legislative and executive power. Democracy is essentially a people’s government, representing the mass interest and honouring the equality and freedom of all. It is a government based primarily on the principle of rule at law. “In every society, pressure groups seek to influence public policy in a desired direction without being ready to accept the responsibility for ruling the country”\textsuperscript{16}. Such pressure groups which are amalgamation of common interests and common motives have no political programme to form the government in a democratic society. They do not appeal to the electorate on the basis of any programme but who are solely concerned with specific issues such as business community’s’ common demand for reduction in turn over
taxes, civil servants association demand for better service conditions etc. It is true that the interest and the pressure groups dominate the contemporary political parties. The pluralistic character of society divides it into a very large number of interests, thus making possible a social organization made up of groups. The welfare state of today itself seeks the aid and advise of such multivariable groups. Pressure groups thus attempt to influence some phase of public policy though they do not themselves draft party programmers or nominate candidates for seeking election to public offices. Further, as J.B.B. Miller holds, a particular organized groups, “claims to represent not only those who are actually member of it, but also all those who are potentially members of it, by virtue of some common characteristic which they share with the groups”\(^{17}\). It is of course, true that the power of the groups in democratic politics depends on the degree of various and single-mindedness a particular group will exhibit and also on the quantum of members it ultimately attracts. Prof. H. Finer says, “where political parties are weak in principle and organization, the pressure groups will flourish; where pressure groups are strong political parties will be feeble and where political parties are strong pressure groups will be curbed”\(^{18}\). Groups may not directly or consciously exercise any political pressure to gain political benefits in their favour, but they have become such powerful factors in the democratic life of the community that they cannot help influencing political developments in their favour. Some groups attain so much popularity and strength on account of their services to the community that they cannot be ignored by political parties which constantly seek people mandate to gain or retain political power in a democratic system of government. As miller observes: “Broadly speaking, political decision will follow the course along
which it is led by the relative strength of interests”\(^\text{19}\). Hence, groups inspite of their short comings and abuses are inevitable. Today they are regarded not only as a necessary evil but as a healthy factor in democratic polity.

**DECISION-MAKING AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION:**

Political participation by the people in a democratic system assume still greater and growing importance in a welfare state due to gigantic socio-economic programmers which the governments undertake. Political participation is an important ingredient of decision-making process. Decision making and political participation is used as the basis for analysis by some political scientists who attempt to deal with political problems on a broad level. The rational decision making approach is a deductive form of analysis, which tests very specific consequences of a broad and axiomatic theory of human behaviour. This approach is receiving serious attention in the study of problems like voting behaviour, group behaviour towards important political issues, analysis of foreign policy etc., Through such behavioural studies, one may arrives at some family reliable general propositions and it is in the perspective of these propositions that one can make an attempt to make a theoretical analysis of the phenomenon of political participation in decision making process. This approach considers a decision and the events surrounding it as the basic unit of analysis and as the act that a fundamental to political events. As one advocate of this approach says, “decision making is not a question of dealing with some special aspects of the political process, but with it central care. Voting, legislating, adjudicating, and administering have always been conceived of as decision making processes”\(^\text{20}\). Almost all the different wings of
a democratic government whether parliamentary or presidential are subject to direct as well as indirect influence of present day pressure groups which try to influence government policies and administration at all conceivable levels. Such groups perform a representative function by communicating the wishes of their members to public authorities or if necessary to achieve their objectives, they may exert all coercive but constitutional types of pressure to bear upon the government. These groups are consulted by the governmental agencies or commission before enacting important public policy. Such political participation by pressure groups in the decision making process is gaining ground in modern democratic government. The large occupation, professional and other type of associations are growing in importance as influential institutions or pressure groups for moulding and expressing public opinion. They are primarily concerned with the specific policies affecting their group. Pressure groups seek favour with all branches of the government and at all levels of the government. We may call group opinions as the barometer of assessing group interests for guidance in the formulation of public policy. In a pluralistic society, the pressure groups provide a channel of communication through which citizens with varied interests can influence the course of public policy as well as trend of voting in times of elections to legislative bodies, because groups policy, image and group-interest are mirrored in the electorates perceptions. So far as government is expected to carry on its present wide range of socio-economic functions affecting the welfare of numerous pressure groups close contact between the group-interests and the government is necessary. That does not, however, mean that all the cursive and sometimes corrupt methods used by pressure groups to influence government policies and administration should be approved
IDEOLOGY AND POLICIES:

Pressure groups, thus, are found in all democratic states where the right of voluntary associations is recognized. 19(c) article of Indian constitution provide the right to the citizens to form association or unions. They have existed since the establishment of republican governments. However, the great proliferation of organized groups influencing public policy has come with the growing industrialization the ever-widening activities of the government and change in the socio-economic order that created political needs to be met only by organized groups sharing common interest. Participation in the activities of these groups offers citizens an opportunity to participate in governmental affairs. These groups include agrarian groups, worker's groups, business groups, women groups, veterans groups and other interest groups. These groups participate in the struggle for political power. Means of Modern media of public communication press, radio, television etc., are utilized to remain in close contact with agencies of the government and bring the group influence to bear on legislation and administration and to propagating group ideology and influencing public attitudes and policy in groups interest. They keep in close contact with agencies of the government and bring the group influence to bear on legislation and administration. Modern media of public communication press, radio, television etc., are utilized for propagating group ideology and influencing public attitudes and policy in groups interest. In our representative democracy, there seems to be no escape from the pressure of organized groups. As Truman observes, the institutions of government have no alternative but passive submission to specialized groups demands; and an
admonition that the stability or continuance of democracy depends upon a spontaneous, self imposed restrain in advancing groups demands^21.

Pressure groups fundamentally differ from political parties in their aims, organizations and scope of acclivities. No doubt, pressure groups and political parties have some common features. Both attempt in various ways to influence the decisions and action of public officials. Indeed, minor political parties resemble pressure groups. But, the difference can most readily be seem by contrasting certain of their features. A major distinction between political parties and pressure groups is that the latter do not ordinarily nominate candidates and are more likely to be concerned with the specific policies affecting their group. Membership in the interest group is more clearly defined and the program of the groups is narrower. In other words, political parties encompass the interests of pressure groups, but have to accommodate these groups interests and certain other larger party interests as well. Pressure groups seek favour with all branches of the government and at all levels of the administrative machinery. It is also the function of a group to stabilize the relations among their members and to order their relations as a group with other groups. Both pressure groups and political parties are informal and extra-constitutional agencies that provide a good deal of the propulsion for the formal constitutional system. An organized pressure group pursues its objective in dealing with legislative and administrative agencies more and less independently of political parties. However, at times to achieve their objective and safeguard their group interests, pressure groups tend to operate in the closest communication with one or the other of the political parties.
The phenomenon of pressure groups and apolitical parties also differ and may be accounted for mainly by the degree of political motive and interest served by these two important agencies of political participation. Certainly of all the political influences in our representative democracy, the party is the most important since it is a very significant media for conveying people’s wishes to the government. The parties perform a number of functions that help people in participating politically in the affairs of the government. People are instructed through a party the public policy and important national and international issues facing the country and suggest to the government how best the governmental problem should be tackled. A party is a powerful medium of public opinion and participates directly in elections. The primary goal of a political party is to capture political power and to hold it singly or in coalition with other political parties. It is this goal of attaining political power and forming the party’s government provided it secures majority, in legislatures that distinguishes a political party from a pressure group. A pressure group draws to its membership only those who share a common attitude or a champion a common interest and its main function is to canalize this attitude or interest to the political decision makers with the sole aim of influencing the letter’s policies in the perspective of this attitude of interest.

The political party being an organization of largest number of persons sharing socio-economic and political programme accommodates heterogeneous interests. Greatest possible compromise is made to bring various interest groups within the party fold which gives greater political strength and influence to a party. A political party often becomes a multi-
interest group that represent diverse interests of the society. The political party thus is not merely satisfied with formulating policies on various issues facing the country, but for the sake of implementing these politics, the party is prepared to form the government and with this ultimate aim in view makes efforts to achieve it by nominating candidates for political offices and contesting elections. The life of the democratic state is built upon the party system. Political parties have a necessary and legitimate role to play in it. It is inconceivable that the machinery and of the modern democratic state should work in the absence of political parties. Joseph La Palombara and Myron Weiner mention some common functions of a political party in all types of political society.

1) It is expected to organize public opinion and to communicate demands to the centre of governmental power and decision.

2) It must articulate to its followers the concept and meaning of the broader community.

3) The party is likely to be intimately involved in political recruitment the selection of the political leadership in whose hands power and decision will in large measure reside.

They are a necessary corollary of representative democracy and are particularly indispensable for parliamentary or cabinet system of government as prevalent in Britain, India and many other European countries. Moreover, parties are an effective obstacles to despotism. They are a safeguard against totalitarianism or absolutism in government. If the party that commands the parliamentary majority shoulders responsibility for government, the party that
finds itself in the minority ranges itself in opposition ever vigilant and jealous ready to seize power at the first favourite turn of the tide. It is this knowledge that there is always an alternative government forth coming that keeps the government restrained and under constant check government to be responsible must live under the shadow of coming defeat. If democracy should succeed, there must therefore be a strong government, stable, efficient and politically responsible, itself held in check by a strong opposition, also equally efficient and responsible.

In sharp contract to political parties, interest groups, political elites and such other groups are sort of private associations formed to influence public policy. To quote V.O. Key, Jr., these organizations, commonly called pressure groups, promote their interest by attempting to influence government rather than nominating candidates and seeking responsibility for the management of government. Pressure groups may campaign for party candidates and may even become, in fact if not in form, allied with one or the other of the parties. Yet by and large, pressure groups, as they seek to influence the exercise of the public power, play a distinctive role: they supplement the party system and the formal instruments of government by serving as spokesmen for the special interest within society”22. Every individual is the unit of society and he expressed himself within the social, cultural and present political metrics. He exhibits multi-dimensional activities. He has many socio-economic and political interests which he tries to protect along with other persons having similar interests. A specific interest shared by several persons which forces them to actively resort to all sorts of coercive methods to persuade and force the
governmental agencies to accept their group demands and protect their specific interests constitutes a pressure group. A political party, on the other hand, is essentially a group of persons that represents diverse interests of the modern pluralistic society and primarily aims at achieving political power. It harmonizes these varying interests with each other, links the antagonisms between the different groups of society. Political parties thus canalize diverse group interests and try to bring as much unity as possible among the various groups within a party. The party too on its part represents and strives to protect the group interests along with larger and common interest of the society as a whole. Though democratic government are responsive to the demands of influential pressure groups, yet it is mainly through the political parties that the government is constantly keep informed about the genuine demands of the society and the attitudes of the people in relation to governing process. A political party's main interest is to capture political power. It is, this goal of attaining power and capturing the democratic agencies of the government that mainly distinguishes political parties from present groups. A pressure group is mainly concerned with promoting, safeguarding and reaping political rewards by pursuing the particular interest or common attitude of a particular group. The structure of political party is, however, conditioned by a number of variables such as party ideology, type of government, that a, unitary or federal; parliamentary or presidential and the level of economic development prevailing in the country. If the political culture of a society is imbued with liberal democratic values a party will adhere to democratic structure. Political parties may also be classified in terms of one party system as in Soviet Union or Communist China, two party system in U.S.A and Britain and the multi-party
system as in France and also in present day India.

Political parties are thus in dispensable for a democratic government because people holding divergent views and yet remaining independent of each other cannot run the administration of a country. Party Government is the vital and essential ingredient of representative government. “The alternative to party government is dictatorship. Government requires leaders, leader requires not an incoherent mob behind them, but an organized following to canalized the issues for an electorate with a free choice.” Political parties synthesize opinions and diverse interests. They provide a link between the governmental elective agencies and the people. They present major issues in their election manifestoes. In this process parties provide as opportunity for educating the people politically and thus work for a common cause and effecting and political change by persuasion and discussion. Pressure groups are not interested directly in elections to legislative bodies. As has been said, their main objective is to promote their section or groups interests by attempting to influence public policy than by participating in country’s elections and seeking responsibility for the management of governmental affairs. Of course, to seek fulfillment of their interests, pressure groups may campaign for party candidates of the choice or they may support a particular party through lobbying monetary assistance and other propaganda activities.

The basic aim of political parties is to participate directly in gaining political control of democratic institutions by capturing majority in legislative bodies and thus forming the government and manage public affairs as per party programme. If a apolitical party is unable to secure majority and exercises
democratic checks on the dictatorial acts of the party in power. Pressure
groups attempt in various ways to influence the decisions and actions of public
agencies without participating directly in country’s democratic selection of party
candidates to contest elections. They strive through the modern media of
communication the press, radio, television etc., to get their candidates elected
to office. While policies of the government, they are reluctant to assume the
responsibility of the government. A pressure group’s main concern is to
concentrate on the fulfillment of group’s specific interests and with this main
objective in view to influence governmental policy to its advantage. As Turner
says: “Major party politics is primarily is concerned mainly with what policies
shall prevail”24.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


