

Democracy in Theory and Practice

1- Introduction:

The ideals of democracy emphasize on freedom of speech, decentralization of power and political participation. However, in practice, sometimes it gives birth to populist leaders, discourages the political participation of public, and elevates the culture of corruption.

2- Fundamentals of Democracy in Theory:

(i) promote the culture of accountability and transparency;

Case in point:

Bangladesh case: Sheikh Hossain

(ii) Encourage the participation of public in governmental policies;

Case in point:

Indian government

2015 initiative - Right

to information Act (RTI)

(iii) Believe in decentralization of power;

Case in point:

Pakistan example: 18 Amendment

(iv) Elevate the culture of equality;

Case in point:
India Example: India Self-Help Groups, empowers rural women through microfinance.

(v) Appreciate the values of Freedom of expression;

Case in point:
Maldives Example: 2018 Environmental protest against state policies.

3- Fundamentals of democracy in practice:

(i) Give rise to populist leaders;

Case in point:
Pakistan's example: Imran Khan rhetorical speeches in 2018 election.

(ii) Encourage the values of Freedom of expression.

Case in point:
Pakistan's example: Great Wall of China

(iii) give rise to dynastic politics;

Case in Point:
Pakistan's example:
PML-N - PPP

(iv) promote the environment of corruption;

Case in Point:
Sri Lanka's example: Gotabaya Rajapaksa

(v) give birth to inequalities.

Case in Point:
India's example: Hindutva ideology

4- Conclusion:

"To cure the ills of democracy, more democracy is required."

(H. L. Mencken)

As Aristotle said, "Democracy is about equity, fairness and every one having say". His words resonate perfectly, while discussing the basic fundamentals of democracy. As democracy emphasizes on equity, freedom of expression, and political participation. Therefore, his words are completely aligned with the basic norms and principles of democracy.

However, the question arises: whether the fundamentals of democracy are efficient and effective in theory or if ~~serve~~ serve humanity in practice too. Because the increasing trend in populism, corruption and dynastic politics have raised a number of concerns over the norms and principles of democracy. Additionally, this essay will examine the case studies where democracy fulfilled its core values. Meantime, this essay will elucidate the key events, where democracy's fundamentals are failed to response,

Firstly, the basic principle of democracy emphasizes on the norms and principles of accountability and transparency. As the fundamentals of democracy

allow public to ask, criticize the governments current and future vision. This check and balance

fosters the environment of accountability and transparency. In such environment, the leader feels himself accountable in the front of public. Therefore, its core objective becomes to serve its public in the best way.

Right to Information Act by Indian government is the prominent case in this regard.

Additionally, the case of Sheikh Hossain is also a prominent

case where the public made him accountable for his corruption.

both studies illustrates that accountability is the core value of democracy. Additionally, it emphasizes to make any leader accountable without its status.

As John Locke said, "In democracy the people have choice to choose their leaders, without their status."

The words of John Locke emphasizes on the values of equality. In equality all the marginalized and elite are equal without their caste, identity or power.

The case of **Indain parliament - Lokha Subah** is prominent in this regard. Where the number of **reserved seats for women** are increased. This case study exemplify that in democratic process all are equal without their identity and strength. Apart from the equal representation of marginalized groups in political process. The values of democracy also emphasize to work for the well being of oppressed classes. For instance, **Indain government launched a project in 1989, India-Self Help Groups**. This group empowered rural women through microfinance. With the help of this initiative the rural women felt a great breathing space, and they became self independent. Hence, the values of democracy emphasize in the culture of equality without social status, and the case of reserved seats and self help group initiative are prominent in this regard.

Beside this, the values of democracy encourage

the participation of public in governmental policies. The words of **Thomas Jefferson** affirm here perfectly. As he said,

"Democracy needs people to stay involved, not just vote"

According to him, democracy requires the active participation of public in governmental future and current vision policies. Because democracy

is not about participation, in electoral process; rather than, it is a process where all should be involved actively. The initiative by

Indian government **Right to Information Act 2015** was

a legendary step to encourage the participation of common public in governmental policies. Thus, the

core values of democracy encourage the involvement of common public in governmental process. As it fosters

the environment of trust, and participation.

Apart from this,

the process of democracy believe in decentralization of power. As

Anna Hazare said, **"Democracy means giving everyone the same opportunity to succeed"**. The

case study of Pakistan is indeed

the best example. In 2008, a

Paradigm shift observed in Pakistan democratic process in the shape of **18 Amendment**. This amendment divided the powers between Federal and provinces. Additionally this amendment shifted **46 subjects, 17 Ministry** from Federal to province. This amendment doesn't only empowered provinces, but also it decentralizes the power between Federal and provinces. As it is one of the core value of democracy to divide power between all. Additionally, the words of Anna Hazare fits here perfectly, giving opportunity to everyone. Thus, democracy emphasizes in power divide between all groups.

Over and above, democracy appreciate the values of Freedom of speech. In **2018**, the public in **Maldives** sat a protest against government's environmental policies. They pressurized the government to take prudent steps against the ongoing climatic change activities. This case study showcase that democracy encourages the value of expression. Another case study manifested in **Pakistan**, where the people of

Kashmir and Gilgit put protest against the government policies. These both cases showcase that democracy succeed and appreciate the core values of expression. Hence, democracy believe in freedom of speech.