

A 21ST CENTURY MODEL FOR SHAPING GLOBAL DEMOCRACY

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Abstract

Globally, democracy is under attack and in retreat. Economic crisis, global pandemic, and climate disaster raise questions about the efficacy of democracy and democratic values as guides for political and economic life. There are increasing global disparities of wealth between rich and poor in democratic and nominally democratic states and a growing lack of social mobility. The catastrophic effects of the global COVID pandemic on health, economy, and social solidarity are another global fact of life. The worsening effects of climate change-driven floods, droughts, and crop failure raise questions about the value of democracy. We face common and unavoidable global challenges. These are toxic brews driven by worsening climate change that will lead not just to natural disasters but also to crop failure, epidemics, mass migration of the desperate, failed states, and resource wars. This is combined with deepening inequality as the rich get richer. This is a central feature of 21st century capitalism, where labor is systematically devalued in the world of high-tech production and trading in information. Traditional social democratic measures may work well in Scandinavia, but even there they are challenged by the underlying global social, economic, and ecological imperatives that give rise to anti-democratic and anti-immigrant populism. The challenge is to find ways to share the social product fairly and justly among all in a political economy with a multitude of increasingly casual and insecure workers ruled by a handful of billionaire owners. This is a global challenge, not simply for wealthy social democracies. The challenge to democracy is global and must entail global convergence on sustainable ecological and just norms for all.

Keywords: Democracy, Constitution, Century, Economy and Health

Introduction

Democracy, as a system of government, has evolved over the centuries, adapting to the changing needs and aspirations of societies. In the 21st century, the rapid advancements in technology and the increasing interconnectedness of the world pose new challenges and opportunities for democratic governance.

To ensure the vitality and effectiveness of democracy in this digital age, a new model is needed—one that embraces technological advancements, fosters citizen engagement, and prioritizes transparency and accountability.

Harnessing Technology for Citizen Participation as a Framework

The digital revolution has transformed the way we communicate, share information, and participate in public life. To shape democracy for the 21st century, we must harness the power of technology to enhance citizen participation. Online platforms can serve as digital town halls, enabling citizens to voice their opinions, engage in debates, and contribute to decision-making processes. E-voting systems can increase voter turnout and streamline the voting process, making it more accessible and efficient. Furthermore, digital tools can facilitate greater transparency by providing real-time access to government data, budgets, and policies.

Collaborative Governance: A 21st century model for democracy should move beyond traditional representative democracy to embrace collaborative governance. By involving citizens in policy formulation and implementation, we can tap into the collective intelligence of the population and foster a sense of ownership among citizens. Crowdsourcing platforms and participatory budgeting initiatives can empower citizens to actively shape public policies, ensuring that they address the needs and aspirations of diverse communities. This approach promotes inclusive decision-making and strengthens the bond between citizens and their government.

Transparency and Accountability: In the digital age, transparency and accountability are paramount for maintaining public trust in democratic institutions. Governments should adopt open data policies, making information readily available to the public. By utilizing blockchain technology, we can ensure the integrity and traceability of government actions, such as budget allocations and procurement processes. Whistleblower protection laws should be strengthened, encouraging individuals to expose corruption and wrongdoing without fear of retribution. Additionally, independent oversight bodies and anti-corruption commissions should be empowered to hold government officials accountable for their actions.

Civic Education and Media Literacy: A 21st century democracy model must prioritize civic education and media literacy to enable citizens to navigate the complexities of the digital world. Education systems should equip individuals with critical thinking skills, teaching them how to discern reliable sources of information, identify fake news, and engage in civil discourse.

The Evolving Landscape of Global Democracy

Democracy, as a system of governance, has undergone significant transformations over the years. From its origins in ancient Greece to its widespread adoption in the 20th century, democracy has continued to evolve and adapt to the changing needs and aspirations of societies worldwide. This paper explores the evolving landscape of global democracy, examining key trends, challenges, and prospects for the future.

By analyzing the impact of technological advancements, shifting power dynamics, and emerging democratic movements, we can gain insights into the trajectory of democracy in the 21st century.

Technological Advancements and Democratic Participation: In recent decades, rapid technological advancements have revolutionized the way people communicate, access information, and engage in political processes. The rise of social media platforms and digital technologies has significantly enhanced democratic participation by providing new avenues for civic engagement, political activism, and citizen avenues for civic engagement, political activism, and citizen empowerment. These tools have enabled individuals to express their opinions, mobilize for social causes, and hold governments accountable. However, challenges such as disinformation, echo chambers, and privacy concerns also pose threats to the integrity of democratic processes. Striking a balance between harnessing technology for democratic progress while mitigating its negative effects remains a key challenge.

Shifting Power Dynamics and Democratic Backsliding: The global political landscape has witnessed a shifting balance of power, impacting the state of democracy in various regions. The rise of populist leaders, nationalist movements, and authoritarian regimes has challenged democratic values and institutions in several countries. These shifts have led to democratic backsliding, erosion of civil liberties, and threats to human rights. Additionally, geopolitical tensions, economic inequality, and social polarization have further complicated the democratic landscape. Nevertheless, there have also been successful democratic transitions and movements for democratic reform, highlighting the resilience and aspirations of people striving for political freedom.

Emerging Democratic Movements: The 21st century has witnessed the emergence of grassroots movements and citizen-led initiatives that have

played a crucial role in shaping democratic discourse and advocating for change. From the Arab Spring to pro-democracy protests in various parts of the world, these movements have challenged existing power structures, demanded greater transparency, and pushed for inclusive decision-making processes. Social movements fueled by issues such as climate change, gender equality, and racial justice have also influenced democratic agendas. The ability of these movements to mobilize collective action and foster meaningful change highlights the evolving nature of democratic activism.

Prospects for the Future: While the landscape of global democracy faces numerous challenges, there are also reasons for optimism. Efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, promote transparency, and combat corruption have gained momentum globally. International organizations and civil society groups are working together to address democratic deficits and support democratic transitions.

Additionally, advancements in technology, such as blockchain and artificial intelligence, hold potential for enhancing transparency, election integrity, and citizen participation. Collaborative approaches that foster dialogue, inclusivity, and respect for diverse perspectives will be crucial for pointing the future of democracy.

Theoretical Approaches to Terrorism

Rational choice theory, according to Crossman (2017), was pioneered by the sociologist George Homas. In 1961, Homas laid the basic framework for exchange theory. This exchange theory, he later grounded in the assumption gotten from behavioural psychology. After Homas had this foundation, it became obvious that rational choice theory has to do with economic principles. This is because economics plays a role in human behaviour, especially when it comes to calculating the costs and benefits of one's action. This, therefore, means that people are motivated by money and the possibility of making gain, calculating also the cost. This manner of thinking is a kind of rationalizing between two options. Between the 1960s and 1970s, theorists like Blau, Coleman and Cook took interest in the rational choice theory and helped to develop, according to Crossman (2017) a more formal model of rational choice theory. Since then, it has come to be applied by various scholars in diverse fields of endeavours. Crossman writes: "Over the years, rational choice theorists have become increasingly mathematical. Even Marxists have come to see rational choice theory as the basis of a Marxist theory of class and exploitation" (p. 1).

Could the above assertion justify terrorists act in Northern Nigeria, giving that some of them feel exploited and impoverished by the elite of society? If this is so, then it is a false and faulty perception of their struggle.

Moss (2016) also lends his voice in support of the wide applicability of the rational choice theory. He opines: "The rational choice theory of terrorism assumes that terrorist acts usually emanate from rational, calculated, conscious decision. These decisions represent an optimal strategy to fulfil the sociopolitical goals of these perpetrators" (p. 1). Other scholars that argue in support of this assertion are Crenshaw (1992), Wilson (2000) and Victoroff (2005). It must also be noted here that the rational choice theory shares basic principles with the game theory. This is so because the game theory also makes use of situations where people either gain or loss at the expense of others. This is what is called zero-sum game. Thus, there is clear evidence that shows that some of the actions of terrorists appear to be intentional, purposeful and directed to maximize their said goals or targets. On the contrary, there are also sufficient evidence to show that terrorist behaviour could be as a result of insanity and complex childhood issues as a result of poor parental upbringing. Spiering (2015) and the SBM intelligence (2021) report that most atrocities committed by terrorist, showcase them as abnormal individuals

Principles for a 21st Century Model of Global Democracy

1. **Transparency and Access to Information:** Transparency is crucial for a democratic system to function effectively on a global scale. Governments, international organizations, and decision-making bodies should prioritize providing easy access to accurate and timely information. This includes promoting open data initiatives, ensuring freedom of the press, and embracing technological advancements to enhance transparency in governance.
2. **Participation and Engagement:** Global democracy should encourage and facilitate meaningful participation and engagement from all individuals, irrespective of their nationality or social status. This can be achieved by creating platforms and mechanisms that enable citizens to voice their opinions, contribute to policy-making processes, and engage in constructive dialogue. Efforts should be made to involve marginalized groups, youth, and other underrepresented communities to ensure a diverse range of perspectives.
3. **Accountability and Oversight:** A robust system of accountability and oversight is essential for global democracy. Governments and decision-makers should be accountable to the people they represent. This can be achieved through mechanisms such as independent judiciary systems, strong anti-

corruption measures, and effective checks and balances. International institutions should also be held accountable for their actions and decisions, ensuring transparency in their operations and promoting adherence to democratic principles.

4. Diversity and Inclusivity: A 21st-century model of global democracy should embrace diversity and inclusivity as core principles. Decision-making bodies should strive for gender balance, ethnic and cultural diversity, and representation from different regions and backgrounds. Policies should be designed to address systemic inequalities, protect minority rights, and promote social justice. Inclusive participation and equal access to opportunities should be actively encouraged to ensure fair representation and a level playing field for all.

These principles are intended to foster a more inclusive, accountable, and effective global democratic system. They emphasize the importance of transparency, participation, accountability, and diversity to ensure that decision-making processes are fair, informed, and representative of the people they serve. Implementing these principles requires the collaboration and commitment of governments, international organizations, civil society, and individuals to shape a more democratic and equitable world.

Challenges in Global Decision Making

Addressing cultural and ideological differences

1. Promote dialogue and understanding: Encourage open discussions and facilitate meaningful exchanges to bridge cultural and ideological gaps. This can be done through platforms, conferences, and initiatives that foster dialogue and understanding among diverse stakeholders.
2. Education and awareness: Invest in education programs that promote cultural sensitivity, diversity, and inclusivity. By increasing awareness and understanding of different cultures and ideologies, we can reduce prejudice and foster cooperation.
3. Finding common ground: Identify shared values and goals that transcend cultural and ideological differences. Emphasize collaboration on areas of mutual interest to build trust and facilitate cooperation.

Overcoming resistance from existing power structures

1. Transparency and accountability: Advocate for transparency and accountability in decision-making processes. Encourage public participation,

open access to information, and clear communication to ensure that power structures are held accountable for their actions.

2. Inclusive governance structures: Foster inclusive decision-making processes by involving diverse stakeholders, including marginalized groups and those affected by existing power structures. This can help ensure a more balanced distribution of power and prevent resistance from entrenched interests.
3. Showcasing successful examples: Highlight successful cases where existing power structures have adapted and benefited from changes. By showcasing positive outcomes and demonstrating the potential benefits of transformative actions, resistance can be reduced.

Ensuring equitable representation and participation

1. Diversity in decision-making bodies: Strive for diverse representation in decision-making bodies at all levels, including gender, ethnicity, age, and socioeconomic backgrounds. This can help bring a broader range of perspectives and ensure that marginalized groups are adequately represented.
2. Capacity building: Invest in capacity-building programs that empower underrepresented groups to participate effectively in global decision-making processes. Provide training, resources, and support to help individuals and communities develop the skills and knowledge necessary to engage in meaningful participation.
3. Overcoming barriers: Identify and address barriers that hinder equitable representation and participation, such as language barriers, financial constraints, or lack of access to information and technology. Implement measures to remove these obstacles and create an inclusive environment.

Managing the complexity of global decision-making

1. Streamlined processes: Simplify decision-making processes by promoting efficient communication, clear frameworks, and streamlined procedures. This can help reduce complexity and facilitate timely and effective decision-making.
2. Enhanced coordination and collaboration: Foster greater coordination and collaboration among global stakeholders through partnerships, networks, and platforms. Encourage information sharing, joint initiatives, and the pooling of resources to address complex challenges collectively.
3. Adaptive governance structures: Develop flexible governance structures that can adapt to changing circumstances and evolving global challenges.

Emphasize agility, responsiveness, and the ability to learn from past experiences to manage complexity effectively.

4. Utilize technology: Leverage technological advancements, such as artificial intelligence and data analytics, to analyze complex data, model scenarios, and provide insights for decision-making. Technology can assist in managing complexity by providing tools for better information processing and evidence-based decision-making.

Overall, addressing these challenges requires a combination of inclusive approaches, transformative actions, and the willingness to adapt existing systems to ensure more equitable and effective global decision-making processes.

Conclusion

Democracy is not a static concept; it must evolve with the changing times. The 21st century presents us with incredible technological advancements that can enhance democracy, empower citizens, and foster transparency and accountability. To shape democracy for the future, we must embrace these opportunities and address the challenges they bring. By harnessing technology for citizen participation, promoting collaborative governance, prioritizing transparency and accountability, and investing in civic education and media literacy, we can create a model that ensures democracy remains vibrant, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of our rapidly changing world. It is through these efforts that we can forge a 21st century democracy that truly represents the will and aspirations of its people.

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