

Introduction 46).
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Introduction

Democracy is probably one of the most complicated concepts to be understood in political science.

On the one hand, it seems to be so easy to comprehend the main idea of democracy as the form of government that is controlled by the citizens. On the other hand, such form of government has a number of components which have their own characteristics and peculiarities which are hard to define. Due to the Hudson's idea that the citizen participation may have two faces, it is not always easy to define the impact of such participation on democracy in the USA. A certain control is required to enhance political participation and define its level by means of which it is possible to consider citizens' opinions and promote the worth of government; in other words, political participation may enhance considerably American democracy in case this participation is properly organized in the forms of votes or Internet activities; however, current conditions undermine democracy a lot.

Summary of the Author's Ideas

Hudson is one of the writers who creates a powerful system by means of which it is possible to evaluate the conditions under which American democracy may be organized. His *American Democracy in Peril: Eight Challenges to America's Future* is a unique collection of professional ideas of what may challenge democracy and how this sphere of life may be improved. He introduces four theories of citizen participation and clearly describes an appropriate model for each. The role of people is huge indeed, and society should realize its impact on the development of the country.

The author defines two sides of citizen participation: on the one hand, “fewer citizens seem interested in showing up to vote representatives into office”, and on the other hand, “elected representatives are beleaguered with citizen activists monitoring every vote and ready with vociferous demands on every conceivable issue” (Hudson 144). The role of citizen participation in the system may be both decreased and increased under different theories given. For example, Hudson uses protective and pluralistic models of democracy under which citizen participation is passive, and society is too weak to protect its diversity, property, and liberty (Engel 46). However, the other two models, participatory and developmental, aim at involving citizens to the political sphere of life in order to prove social as well as economic equalities.

Still, it does not matter for Hudson what model of democracy is used by society because each form is another serious challenge for people and for democracy. People are biased because of the encouraged trivialized elections, spreading radical individualism, and even inequality that is

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increased in the sphere of business. Participation should provide citizens with more opportunities to improve their political rights and ideas; people may become more responsible for their activities. However, the author underlines that unfortunately “ the character of American political participation undermines our democracy focuses not on who participates but on how participation is organized” (Hudson 160). Even citizen participation remains to be a serious challenge for American democracy under the current conditions.

Argument: Does Participation Challenge or Enhance Democracy?

According to Hudson, the relations between participation and democracy play an important role and should be organized properly basing on the theories. In the introductory part of the book, the author defines four main theories according to which citizen participation may be organized. Each theory has its own impact on politics, this is why it is necessary to pay certain attention to every aspect.

Developmental type of democracy “ takes much more positive view of people, especially people in democratic society” (Hudson 10). In other words, the peculiar feature of such model is that democracy here makes sense and has a purpose. Magstadt examines this model as “ a kind of school for civic education and socialization” (103). Pluralistic democracy is one of the most recognizable models as it aims at defining social interests and their competition. There is a certain hierarchical order that is inherent to the economic elite, and such model defines the idea of non-participation as the only positive aspect to satisfy citizens with the offered political process.

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Protective democracy usually aims at protecting popular governmental control as the only reliable method to protect citizens' liberty. The point is that citizens are free to perform passive roles in all political activities, still, they become active on the economic arena. Though this type of democracy is characterized by properly defined political rights as votes or protests, this model fails to focus on inequality that is spread in society. The essence of participatory model lies into the fact that political and social institutions may be improved by means of direct citizen participation. Democratic citizenship should be provided with freedom and opportunities to create a world the living conditions of which may be considered. Unfortunately, government is not able to control such model of democracy all the time, this is why such attitude to citizens' rights is usually neglected or poorly organized. To create a properly working society, citizens should have a certain number of skills and a good level of knowledge.

Political awareness is an important issue to be considered as citizens should understand the messages they send and receive (Kuklinski 278).

Unfortunately, not all American citizens are ready to study the required material to participate in different political activities and introduce new ideas of how the current living conditions may be improved. Of course, people may have their own opinions, still, they are not ready to find practical and legal application to their oral ideas and thoughts. This is why the only rational idea about the level of political participation in the USA should be connected to the protective democracy under which citizens' ideas and rights are taken into consideration still require certain improvements and elaboration from a pure political point of view. It seems to be rational to take some aspects of

the two theories defined by Hudson in his work, protective and participative. In other words, political participation may enhance democracy in case citizens are provided with a number of opportunities and rights, still, their ideas and suggestions in the forms of votes, personal initiatives, and the Internet activities will be controlled by the government to protect human rights and not to create the situations which are legally hard to explain and introduce. Success of political participation is predetermined by the possibility to organize and maintain the control of human activities without neglecting human rights and initiatives.

Conclusion

William Hudson contributed considerably to the sphere of political science, and his idea to define citizen participation as one of the challenges to American democracy deserves recognition.

In fact, political participation may enhance American democracy in a variety of ways in case a proper model is chosen and implemented to society.

People are free to choose what kind of democracy they want to live in, still, they should be also ready to improve personal understanding of the political terms and be promote ideas which have appropriate legal bases. Still, each person should ask one question to him/herself whether he/she is ready to learn more in order to take the step and be able to change the present and improve the future.

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