

## FOSTERING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING THROUGH EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT

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**Abstract-** Even though authority is derived from citizens, greater public involvement in governing processes is still required. Various contemporary instances across the world demonstrate how administrative strategies and policy frameworks can be redesigned to promote stronger community participation in governmental affairs. Laws passed with popular support will prove to be more beneficial. The goal of this project is to increase citizen participation in Governance. This paper relied on additional sources such as books, academic papers, governmental publications, and newspapers. This study's findings revealed that constituencies with female MPs developed faster, while corruption in such places decreased comparably. Local democracy progresses when residents have institutional assistance. A 'Panchayati Raj consolidated Fund' can be established in India to support policy efforts for local self-government, eliminating the need for Panchayats to rely on central or state governments for funding. They are increasing the power of administrative authorities to improve educational Governance. These authorities' operations and evaluation processes must be transparent to the public.

**Keywords-** people, Education, Public participation, Democracy, panchayat

### 1. Introduction

A state derives its validity from the involvement of its citizens. This public engagement grants the administration the power to carry out its decisions. As community participation increases, the execution of initiatives becomes significantly smoother.. Collaboration with individuals or civil society has resulted in the achievement of welfare aims. Because these aims, after all, are intended for the people. This stakeholder helps the government use resources more effectively (Mathur, 2008). The notion of collective responsibility in parliament and Governance in India can only be fully realized through public participation. People have

indirect representation in parliament (Jain, 1983). Why is there insufficient engagement in Governance when the government is comprised of the people?

India holds a long history of initiatives aimed at offering learning opportunities to disadvantaged groups. Savitribai Phule, Jyotiba Phule, and Fatima Begam founded the nation's earliest formal institution dedicated to educating girls. We remember 'Anandibai Joshi,' the first woman to get a doctorate from abroad. Asima Chatterjee was the first woman to earn a Doctor of Science honor. The missile woman of India is Tessy Thomas. Gunjan Saxena is the first woman Air Force officer who fought in the Kargil war. The life of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam taught us the importance of education. There are five foundational pillars of National Education Policy 2020: Equity, Quality, Affordability, Accessibility, and Accountability. The policy aligned with the sustainable development goals. The policy aims to transform India into a knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making our education system more holistic and multidisciplinary.

The nation continues to encounter difficulties in ensuring active citizen involvement essential for reinforcing democratic foundations. How can we make the most of the 60% youth population by 2027 to create a skilled India? In a parliamentary democracy, the future of democracy is determined by the function of the parliament. How will policy solutions motivate people to make Governance accessible to everyone? Are people prepared for this, notwithstanding disparities in development?

This study aims to increase citizen participation in Governance and education, the most essential tools for spreading awareness. People must be aware of their primary, legitimate, and essential tasks. People benefit the most from programs when they are concerned about compliance. Furthermore, our democracy is being strengthened. People's participation in Governance is vital for fulfilling human potential and building a just and equitable society. Providing universal access to services Governance is critical to India's climb to global leadership in economic growth, social justice and equality, advancements in science, national integration, and safeguarding culture. Over the coming years, India will have the world's most prominent young population, and our nation's destiny will be determined by our ability to deliver outstanding public services.

## **2. Review of literature**

### **2.1 Governance and Public Participation**

"India holds a long history of initiatives aimed at educating disadvantaged communities. On 1 January 1848, Savitribai Phule, Jyotiba Phule, and Fatima Begam founded the country's earliest formal learning institution for girls." In this sense, the government can establish accountability systems for assuring quality services. Any compliance is always contingent on the agreement of other actors, such as civil society and the market (other commercial service providers). Quality service delivery requires genuine participation from all parties (government, civil Society, NGOs, and corporate sector). We can form alliances with organizations, industries, and markets for quality services. Decision-making should be distributed, services should be delivered quickly and efficiently, recruitment should be open and merit-based, and administrative staff should be capable of delivering.

Regarding Neoliberalism, democracy is the most natural political system for preserving individual rights. The Indian constitution provides fundamental rights (Article 19, 21) to safeguard the dignity of life regarding equality, respect, and independence of the individual body. As a result, citizens obtain these essential rights through the judicial system. In an era of interdependence and globalization, India aspires to be among the top emerging countries, and India has the potential to emerge as a global development hub.

The right to education is one of the best examples of e-governance. There is a provision for 25% reservation in private schools for a marginal section of Society. We can also file online complaints at the RTE portal. The National Youth Parliament Festival' is an example of public participation in Governance; this initiative allows youth to become the voice of new India, find solutions, and contribute to policy analysis and policymaking. This is an initiative in which youth can participate in social activities. Further, the youth contribute to eradicating discrimination in learning to the backward and economically weaker sections of our Society.

### **2.2 Decentralize power for public participation in service delivery**

India has a long history of initiatives aimed at educating disadvantaged groups. On 1 January 1848, Savitribai Phule, Jyotiba Phule, and Fatima Begum opened the country's earliest formal institution for girls. The right to education included serving on school and community

management committees. They can actively engage in both the school and community management committees. The panchayats might establish plans based on their needs. Participation legitimizes the activity; this is the true sense of the development process that adheres to democratic principles. Thus, quality education is critical to socioeconomic and political progress (Tyagi, 2016).

Good Governance occurs when an individual empowers the transfer of central power to smaller localized units. If local governments have the authority to monitor or oversee administration, it will improve service quality in schools and encourage public participation in transparent service delivery through service provider accountability.

### **2.3 Rajasthan State initiation for quality education**

Here is a comprehensive example of capitalizing on opportunities through public involvement and excellent Governance in Rajasthan's public educational system. This is a collaborative and stakeholder-driven endeavor. Rajasthan is the fifth most populous state; however, it performs poorly in public education. According to the national achievement survey, children at government schools in Rajasthan regularly performed below the national average. Rajasthan placed 24th out of 29 states in 2012-13 for reading comprehension, mathematics, language, and other disciplines across all topics and grades (Transforming Government School Education in Rajasthan: Rajasthan Adarsh Yojana, 2018).

Rajasthan's 80,000 government schools required better equipment and staffing. According to the chief minister's advisor, 50% of teaching and more than 60% of principal positions are vacant. As per the "Annual Status of Education Report" (ASER, 2014), 37% of rural schools needed playgrounds, 26% lacked drinking water, 23% had separate female bathrooms, and 35% of secondary students dropped out before graduating.

In 2014, the Rajasthan government started the Rajasthan Adarsh Yojana (RAY); it sought to establish one Adarsh (ideal) school in each of the state's 9895-gram panchayats. Adarsh School is a large, child-friendly, fully staffed integrated primary and secondary school that prioritizes providing high-quality education. It ensures that all neighborhood students access at least one well-equipped integrated School (Transforming Government School Education in Rajasthan: Rajasthan Adarsh Yojana, 2018).

Yojana attempts to set an acceptable standard for all state schools. RAY expects that by the finish of 2018, every Rajasthan gram panchayat will have one fully operational Adarsh school. Each School would have higher learning outcomes for grades 1-12. The initiative has a robust network that includes the state government (the Department of Education, Government of Rajasthan), two philanthropic foundations, a Boston consultancy business, and local community organizations.

Key outcomes in Rajasthan Adarsh Yojana:-

1. We are integrating small primary and secondary schools and infrastructure and entirely staffing the Adarsh through defined protocols for shifting teachers and other assisting staff from overstaffed to understaffed locations.
2. We are implementing an online, real-time information system for management to track information and enhance student, teacher, School, block, district, and state accountability.
3. Teachers assess each student's performance and offer feedback on their needs and learning styles. Data from the management information system is applied to generate reports that rank districts and schools based on their progress towards Adarsh status. (Transforming Government School Education in Rajasthan: Rajasthan Adarsh Yojana, 2018).

The initiative is also implemented locally, with parents and other community members participating on "school management committees" to oversee school operations and hold administrators accountable for meeting targets. Progress and Results for the Rajasthan Adarsh Yojana: Rajasthan's overall number of schools has decreased from 80,000 to 65,500 due to the merger of smaller schools into larger Adarsh schools. Teacher shortages in some schools have dropped from 50% (2014) to 20%. In 2014-15, there were 7914 secondary schools (5588 higher schools), but by 2018-19, the number of secondary schools had decreased to 4057, while higher secondary schools had expanded to 10,090.

Enrolment in all government schools has risen to about seven lakhs throughout Adarsh schools, with many pupils returning from private schools. (According to The Boston Consulting Group). The gross enrolment ratio in secondary schools rose from 76.06% in 2015 to 78.45% in 2016. Implementing a management information system allowed government officials to make decisions in real-time. Officials may determine which schools in his diverse geographical

authority require his support in meeting their adarsh targets, or they may inspect to guarantee teacher and principal attendance. The RAY has assisted in reducing teacher and principal shortages while developing crucial government processes for Adarsh schools. The initiative provides an ideal chance to focus on raising learning standards through more effective classroom education. It aids in transferring some of the practical quality enhancements implemented in Adarsh schools to non-Adarsh institutions. A "management information system" is presently used to monitor non-Adarsh schools.

Rajasthan Adarsh Yojana leverages data to assist behavioral change at several levels, including a management information system in each School to provide a clear picture of how the endeavor functions. The partners might use this data to develop scores and incentives for schools and districts and pressure authorities to adjust their behavior. The data also demonstrated a mechanism for top-down surveillance.

Adarsh schools make up just over one-sixth of the entire state's schools. Ensuring that all government schools provide quality education is essential to Rajasthan's goal of increasing learning outcomes for every student. Yojana promotes effective engagement with key government stakeholders to achieve systemic change. Effective coordination among government leaders, public Society, and private sector stakeholders, including strategic consultants. Its primary goal is to build administrative infrastructure to serve as the platform for subsequent reforms. Another purpose of this yojana is to shorten teachers' teaching hours, create an innovative atmosphere to improve teaching performance and modernize teaching methods. Improve the system's ability to maintain change, with a focus on the district-level stakeholders. To improve teaching quality, there are teacher training institutions in Jaipur, Dungarpur, and Jaisalmer, with 147, 4, and 4 training colleges, respectively.

Philanthropists (Boston Consulting Group) are collaborating with the government to enhance Rajasthan's education system. They concentrated their efforts on enhancing the government's essential competencies, which should have long-term implications. This effort yielded significant results, including outstanding collaboration among essential government stakeholders. Increase the system's ability to withstand change—emphasis on upgrading administrative infrastructure, which will serve as the foundation for future reforms. Use data to support behavior. This is an example of corporate participation in educational Governance.



In India, there are other examples of citizen participation in Governance, such as the Delhi government's "Bhagidari scheme," which addresses civic issues such as education, health, clean water, and environmental conservation (Chakrabarty, 2012). Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Samiti (2004) demanded that the electoral commission re-verify voter lists in several Rajasthan ward assemblies. Mistakes occur in 7,00,000 names. In Orissa (2003), the 'Centre for Youth and Social Development' represented six tribal district voices to the government. Following that, needs were factored into the budget. In Karnataka (Bengaluru, 2002), a pilot initiative called "janagriha" was launched. People's participation in obtaining world-class finances was also highlighted. Governance is the ability of a government to maintain order and improve its compliance mechanisms. In this regard, the government can establish accountability mechanisms to ensure improved service delivery. It determined that local democracy advances when individuals have institutional assistance.

#### **2.4 Peoples participation initiative for skill development- Informal education: Tilonia Barefoot College**

If someone cannot get a formal academic education in time, many examples like Tilonia Barefoot College for fulfilling their dream and conserving human capabilities by enhancing peoples' skills. The college promotes adult education through skill education for the marginal section of Society. College is trying to give dignified life opportunities for villagers like a five standard pass woman called her 'solar engineer.' The college also promotes philanthropic activities like distributing solar lamps in non-electrify remote areas, and college women workers make sanitary pads and distribute them to those in need. In the college, women are also skilled in handicraft weaving. These practices gave village women respect and inspired them to learn new knowledge (Barefoot College impact). The institution also operates residential schools, where children from marginal sections of our Society of Remote Areas study. The National Education Policy of 2020 also recognizes the importance of vocational education and aims to integrate it with mainstream education.

### **3. Methodology**

This topic is selected based on interest in the study of issues related to strengthening Governance through the participation of people with the tool of government schools' education throughout India. The present article adopted a qualitative nature with an exploratory research

design. This research explores the significant examples of people's participation in Governance to empower democracy.

#### **4. Data Collection**

The data was collected from secondary sources: Books, newspaper articles, journals, magazines, government reports, research articles, policy documents, and online databases. The qualitative study was conducted to ensure that education can spread awareness and create a participative system, strengthening democracy.

#### **5. Findings and Results**

Effective administration reflects the state's ability to provide reliable public services and establish stronger systems for adherence and accountability. Can only vote-based democracy ensure good Governance? The study concluded that accountability is required to ensure quality service delivery. People will lose faith in the government if the quality of service delivery does not improve. Quality encompasses values, qualities, and ability. Everyone must be accountable to one another and Society to improve service delivery. Total quality management based on available resources is required. Quality management is implemented throughout the quality assurance system.

In the context of Governance and public participation outcomes, According to the IMF, if women are given adequate opportunity in the economic sector in India (by eradicating issues such as the glass ceiling attitude), Indian GDP can rise by up to 27% ("Children Can Be Given Oral Solid Dose Antibiotics Amid Supply Problems, NHS Guidance Says," 2022). Amartya Sen says (Development as Freedom), 'equal opportunity is only effective when the ability is developed' (Corbridge, 2002). This suggests that a better welfare task than supplying scooters would be to train people to drive or provide industrial training in scooter manufacturing work. Capable youngsters will be able to take an active role in Governance.

Through institutional reforms, as a parliamentary democracy, our democracy's future is dependent on how well the parliament functions. To put the notion of collective responsibility of the parliament system into practice, critical bills from the house must be forwarded to parliamentary committees (to give a platform for investigation, analysis, and discussion with the people) (Kalitowski, 2009). The committees solicit public feedback on the bill (these



committees receive just 7% of the bill). This will improve the quality of public debate. People will also believe that they are partners in the legislative process. This will help implement the act and improve public participation in Governance.

Similarly, there are additional procedural regulatory shortcomings in the Indian parliamentary system, such as the need for a timetable for bill presentation in parliament so that members of parliament can prepare for the discussion on the connected subject. People will realize the relevance of the bill and will cooperate by having complete faith in its implementation. Before enacting any law or plan, states should address regional and local demands. Even before the working plans are implemented, the public should know the plan's elements. Awareness should be raised so that individuals understand how to take advantage of the system.

Numerous recent examples worldwide demonstrate the concord between public policy and Governance (Gupta, 2021). In Australia, workshops are held prior to the introduction of the bill. In the United States, the Senate has the authority to require that laws be filed only with the written agreement of the people.

Democracy and Governance are intertwined. There is a need to enhance democratic institutions further. One approach is to give backward-class commissioners more power. These commissions' working and evaluation processes should be more open to public scrutiny (Hysing & Lundberg, 2015). Some of the faults of the Corruption Acts have yet to be addressed. An employee of integrity is still waiting for the protection provisions of the Whistleblower Act. Courts can render clear decisions if laws are enacted after substantial debate and examination. There will be no conflict inside the government machinery. People will also understand the subtleties of the laws. Laws with popular support have become more valuable.

Under the Governance reforms, the government has taken several 'initiatives' to solve the problems of discretionary power of civil servants, misuse of office (corruption), delay in execution of work, etc., using ICT tools and innovation such as 'My Government' (my gov.), Pragati portal, Kisan app,' Right to Information (RTI), etc., to establish a people-centric government. Here we can mention 'Sevottam Model' which aims to improve the quality of public service delivery. The Citizen's Charter (Sevottam Model) is an effort by the Department of Personnel, Training, and Grievances to encourage involvement. This fosters a strong public

interest in Governance. The model rectifies critical drawbacks of the citizens' charter by actively involving citizens, training employees, and addressing feedback from grievances.

We can also initiate citizen charters in government schools. People can learn about the service delivery given by the School, such as what kind of quality education the School is bound to give and how the people can give feedback and get grievance redressal. This can increase people's participation in school operations through school management committees.

Technical, structural, and human shortcomings in policymaking and Governance create a disconnect between Governance and public engagement. Alternatively, individuals begin to withdraw from their involvement in democracy. It is also common for people to engage merely nominally (for example, voting). To become a "knowledge superpower", we must give marginal groups their rightful place in Society. Women's dignity and respect still require social recognition. Another family member should assist with household chores so women can take a 'holiday' for political activity (Meyer, 1981). A daughter's birth, for example, is celebrated as a village festival in Piplatri village, Rajsamand district, Rajasthan. One hundred eleven saplings are planted in the village, and 21,000 rupees are collected and deposited in the daughter's bank account.

Participation by people through decentralizing power to local government is another aspect of educational reforms. Elections with female representatives progressed swiftly, while corruption in those places decreased. Millions of women serve as panchayat delegates, leading the panchayats. The next stage is for legislatures (both national and state) to make appropriate reservations.

On the outcomes of the Rajasthan Adarsh Yojana, according to independent research commissioned by UNICEF, performance in core themes improved from 8% to 20% between 2014 and 2016 among third and fifth-grade students at selected Adarsh schools. Notably, girls outperformed boys in language in third, fifth, and seventh grades. Rajasthan's education system was ranked fifth in the 2018 National Achievement Survey, up from 24th in 2014. The initiative's accomplishments have established an ecosystem enabling others to conduct more targeted learning interventions.

Rajasthan Adarsh Yojana additionally recognizes the importance of transparency and good Governance in improving school-level outcomes, advancing student learning, and creating mechanisms to keep teachers, school administrators, and government officials accountable for their goals. 'Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, Mewat Balika Awasiy Vidhalaya, is another Rajasthan Government scheme to promote girls' education in remote areas of villages in Rajasthan.

Village and School-level initiatives for better learning outcomes - Why do we only put the quality burden on the teachers? The Community also contributes to easy accessibility of knowledge to school children. They can build a 'Book Bank' at the village or block level where people can donate books. They also create a library at the regional level. Like a model school at every panchayat or block level, every School should have a robust class monitoring system. Tilonia Barefoot College is the best example of people's participation at the community level. That skill development initiative promotes adult education and gives vocational skills to villagers.

At the school level, the monitor system should be a role model for the entire class to motivate students. We can inculcate leadership quality among students. There should be an occasional reward or prize ceremony to spread awareness or quality learning tools to all schools. Like youth clubs and eco clubs for school students, there should be an 'Education club' to better work on equality of quality education delivery among all children. (Department of School Education, 2020)

Another discovery in government engagement is that the 'India against corruption' movement began in 2011 to free India of corruption. The 'kudumbashree' (Kerala) program perfectly illustrates a cooperative attitude. Self-help groups such as 'SEWA' (self-employment women's association) and 'The Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation' are also active. These are examples of People-Initiated Governance. There is also a paradox: most self-help groups operate in cities even though 68% of Indians live in villages.

Many examples of social attitudes teach us the value of collectivism. The "All India Anjana Patel Patel Youth Federation" of Rajasthan handed up a list of 5,000 youth to the Jodhpur Divisional Commissioner so that they might make meaningful contributions to social and national causes. The National Cadet Corps (NCC, 1948) began as a youth development

initiative. The motto of the National Service Scheme (1969) is 'Not me, but you'. Collaboration among various problem-solving methodologies is essential to achieve active engagement in Governance and education, giving them an attitude to participate (Hong & Lee, 2023).

## **6. Conclusion**

Can the government's discretionary power be used to inspire the people's conscience to practice good Governance? How the clarity of the laws encourages courts to render swift and precise decisions. We can engage locals, mobilize resources, and include people in decentralized administration. We increase service delivery quality by implementing the local framework, providing input on the program, receiving peer feedback, and interacting with Society and stakeholders through the quality assurance process. Integrating accountability into the service delivery process improves service delivery control discipline in the organization and enhances efficiency.

We must adopt and implement the new National Education Policy 2020 with integrity. There is a need to make laws on the National Education Policy 2020 to get a time-bound outcome; Laws have the power to fix the accountability of government education institutions and government officials. Like food security, there is a need for education security. This is the best way to implement Article 21A (Right to Education). We also have to adopt new methods of learning; with the help of new techniques, students of government schools will be able to visualize their knowledge to develop critical thinking.

There are policy efforts that encourage grassroots participation in government. A 'Panchayati Raj Consolidated Fund' for policy initiatives for local self-governance in India can be established so that panchayats are not overly reliant on national or state governments for funding.

Barriers to participation include social problems such as child marriage, dowry malpractice, slavery, witch-hunting, casteism, gender discrimination, and so on, all of which degrade human resources, health, education, economic standing, and physical abilities. However, psychologically progressive views raise awareness of societal good (revolutions). Then, people actively participate in Governance for the benefit of Society. We must recognize that weak

human resources cannot actively participate in Governance. Sound practice transmission should be widely highlighted (such as through street performances).

Mindfulness and awareness always encourage us to work for the greater good. Others' attitudes are likewise changing. Community leadership (or any critical leadership in Society) has the potential to raise public awareness. Civil Society can play an essential part in this. It is vital to consider the limits of Governance holistically. It is time to investigate all social, economic, and political issues independently and comprehend their interrelationship. Furthermore, how do they affect one another?

Ethical ideals also motivate people to be more involved in Governance. Modern technology, such as artificial intelligence and ICT, can help in this area. App-based service delivery is used to promote public participation in Governance.

Governance's vitality is critical to advancing the world's largest democracy. Public participation is what gives Governance its democratic vigor. Only with the person's participation at the end of the queue will our constitution's principles of socialism, secularism, equality, and republic become a reality. Furthermore, our governing system will be capable of becoming an ideal in the eyes of the entire world. Governance must be people-centered to achieve the aim of 'Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas' and instill trust in Governance. People are regarded as the most critical stakeholders in Governance. They are not merely becoming players; they should be driving our progress (Levin, 2018). Equality and quality in education promote active participation by people in Governance to empower our democracy.

Politically and socially active people continue to be alert to new social movements. The media should have also played an important part; it has been seen in these locations that it focuses on public concerns rather than famines or disasters. This will improve education, health, poverty reduction, sanitation, access to inexpensive energy, and environmental protection. We have met the Sustainable Development Goals and will move forward quickly. As a result, policy and Governance barriers must be eliminated to increase chances for public participation in government. In addition, by raising public participation in Governance, we will ensure the continuity of 'Good governance.' Only then can the advantages of Governance be accessible to all stakeholders. A decentralized style of educational Governance is required, which can ensure quality education for today's "India with new aspirations (Bice & Sullivan, 2014)."

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