



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Theoretical Basis of Democratization and Issues towards  
Consolidated Democracy**

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this research is to probe democratization and democratic consolidation and this study is importance for the states, which are working to strengthen and modernize their feeble democratic setups. The democracy is a system while democratization is a process and consolidated democracy is an outcome. Democratization refers to the process of building a democracy following the collapse of a non-democratic regime. The democratization and democratic consolidation signifies the self-governing structure following the collapse of a non-democratic regime. Democracy and democratization can be instituted in implausible settings, because usually it tends to survive. There are many factors that are tangled in democratization in a unique manner. Democratization is not about a particular segment of the state as this process inculcates in all the segments. The methodology of this research grounded on desk review which using the qualitative method and primarily contemplates the theoretical basis of democratization. The research finds out that the developing countries do not have consolidated democracy because their practices are incomparable to the standards and factors of democratization. To strengthen the democracy, strong institutional building, civic education, economic advancement, free and fair elections, and inclusive politics are deemed necessary to be inculcated in the system. This research recommends to struggling democracies to consider ten factors of Michael J. Sodaro for democratization.

**Keywords:** Consolidated Democracy, Democratization, Economic Prosperity, Institutions, Public Perception, State

**Introduction**

Democracy and democratization can be instituted in implausible settings, because usually it tends to survive. There are many factors that are tangled in democratization and each is unique in its own quality. Democratization is not about a particular segment of the state as this process inculcates in all the segments. The transition is either democratic or authoritarian; it directly or indirectly reaches the people and affects them in a way that leads to certain major modifications. This is considered as a dynamic phenomenon that is experienced in many developing democracies while all are sharing different scales of it. The ultimate aim of democratization is to avoid any authoritative intervention and to make it consolidated. This whole process is going on around the world and almost all the involved countries are facing numerous obstacles because this progression is associated with too many factors that support or oppose democracy in general. The process of democratic consolidation aims to handle any future democratic hard time and pursue for long lasting democracy. Even the world scenarios have changed a lot, still there are countries in 21<sup>st</sup> century with fragile democracies and are looking for consolidation of democracy. The study aims to lay down the theoretical basis of democratization and deliberates major factors that contribute to democratization and its consolidation. Democratization refers to the process of building a democracy following the collapse of a non-democratic regime (Sodaro, 2001). Fundamentally, it is a procedure of conversion of one nature of government to another and any democracy can convert to consolidated democracy following three steps; free & fair

elections, no monopoly and protected rights of citizens. Theoretical basis of democratization are adumbrated below:

Samuel P Huntington's theory of democratization is comprehensive in its nature, he clinches that democratization occurs in a series of waves, which broadly means that the shift from authoritarian regimes to democratic one is not a sudden shift but is a group of transitions i.e., the waves of democratization. According to Huntington (1991), there are three waves of democratization. The first wave of democracy began in early 19<sup>th</sup> century and lasted from 1826 to 1926. The distinguishable factors of the first wave of democratization were economic and social. The aftermath of World War I's tragedies and the breakdown of European democracies the reversal of first wave befell, which ran from 1922 to 1942. The second wave of democratization covered the period from 1943 to 1962, in this period, Allied powers took control over the Axis and worked for the spread of democratization in Latin America. The political and military factors were responsible for the second wave of democratization. There was once again the reversal of democratization that lasted from 1958 to 1975 and is characterized by the return of military rule in Latin America and collapse of newly formed democracies that were weaker in Asia and Africa. The third wave of democratization began with the downfall and disintegration of military regimes in countries such as Portugal. Many scholars argue that the third wave of democratization resulted in the formation of states that were hybrid or mixed regimes as the states adopted features of both the authoritarian and democratic regimes (Kauffman, 2018). This wave was the result of the process of colonization. The third wave is characterized by amalgamation of different factors such as civil movements against non-democratic regimes, creation of effective political society and complete immunization from the foreign influence. All these served the road to democratization.

According to this theory, economic development is the most important factor that contributes to the consolidation of democracies. The introduction of democratic principles is essentially connected with the level of economic development of a state. Modernization theory suggests that the richest states had been the most successful democracies and it was seen that the poor countries had encountered difficulties in achieving democratization. The basic idea of economy is that it produces more of an educated class that can exercise an influence on governance and even the toughest regime had to bow down to this class. In other way, one can say that for the long term survival of democracies, the economy needs to be in a more stable position (Lipset, 1959).

It has been recognized in various scholarly literatures that modernization and liberalism are every so often related to explain the ways in which the triumph or collapse of consolidating democracies can be understood. The German Weimar republic presents itself as a case which requires separating modernism and liberalism. However, his republic failed primarily, in order to describe the failure of his republic an approach is required which recognizes that economy is an essential variable but not the dominant or key concept.

This theory of democratization adopts different shifts and directions to modernity and explains that it is not essential that all the wealthy states can sustain consolidated democracies. He follows the Marxist theory of class struggle. Hence, his shift to modernization is a result of interaction between the three classes that exist in a state. Barrington Moore's says: "there is no democracy without bourgeois". The middle class is strong and has a higher level of education. The result of which is known as the Bourgeoisie revolution. To conclude, it can be said that not a single theory of democratization can illuminate in detail the essential features of success and failure of consolidated democracies (Gebaur, 2017)

## Literature Review

What is democracy? A reconceptualization of the quality of democracy by Gerardo L. Munck, arrests a different understanding uttering "Democracy is about more than elections". Munck address two main spheres; one is government decision making in democratic setup and Societal environment of politics. Democratization requires some prerequisites especially a suitable political environment (Munck, 2014).

Mark Richard Thompson in his article "Asia's Hybrid Dynasties" mentions that Inherited Charisma which states that leadership qualities travel from one generation to another and this contributes to Political Dynasties that follows their role in parliaments. The said study covers countries in Asia such as India, Philippines and Thailand etc. leaving the case of Pakistan to be studied under the concept of legitimization through "Inherited Charisma" (Thompson, 2012).

Military, Civil Society and Democratization in Pakistan by S Akbar Zaidi is a work using the framework of political economy. He argued that many newly established institutions became a problem for old institutions as Karl Marx stated that institutions form its own replacements and then compromised with them. The author holds a long discussion on prolonged military rule and why democracy finds it tough footing in Pakistan? (Zaidi, 2011)

A Centripetal Theory of Democratic Governance is a work of John Gerring and Strom Cronan Thacker on importance of political in institution in a democratic polity. He focused on centripetal (central institutions) theory by which maximizing both representation and authority by taking governmental energy and players to the Centre of a state, the authors suggested a comparatively different theory of democratic governance, appropriate to all political settings in which multi-party competition finds. He further claim that there are three types of political institutions that are required for centripetal theory of democratic governance; Unitary, parliamentary & closed list PR electoral system (Thacker, 2008).

The role of Ordinary People in democratization by Christian Welzel and Ronald Inglehart; is a research paper considering the role of ordinary people in democratization. Among many tools of democratization, human empowerment is a most driving tool for democratization. This role is most significant particularly in the third wave of democratization but how this empowerment constituted especially in case of Pakistan (Inglehart, 2008). Is there any role of institutions in empowerment? And if yes how this role needs to indulge in democratization?

Ian Saipairo in The State of Democratic Theory describes democracy might be as what are the circumstances under which it is achievable and sustainable? (Saipairo, 2003) The world has not been democratic for most of the time even when Francis Fukayama and Alexis de Tocqueville predicts the flat end of world towards democracy, the original story is quite different because in 21st century democracy & democratization is facing a lots of problems. Democracy is negotiable, even in the undemocratic countries to better their conditions and their hope that democratization will help. Democracy as framework for institutionalizing the general will (concept of Rousseau) is threatening because how do you know the will of the people when you trip over it. The democratization can help to draw people to more utility because it is much likely to reduce domination. In 2002, a study of United Nation discovered, corruption, ailments and dogged poverty were upbringing political disappointments in many of the new democracies. (The State of Democracy Theory, 2003, p. 14) Pakistan in 1999 is one of the best examples of this case.

Gideon Baker in Civil Society and Democratic Theory (Baker, 2002) describes civil society as support system for democracy, at the level of parliament by articulating public opinion, providing brief awareness & consciousness to public and usually act as ombudsman

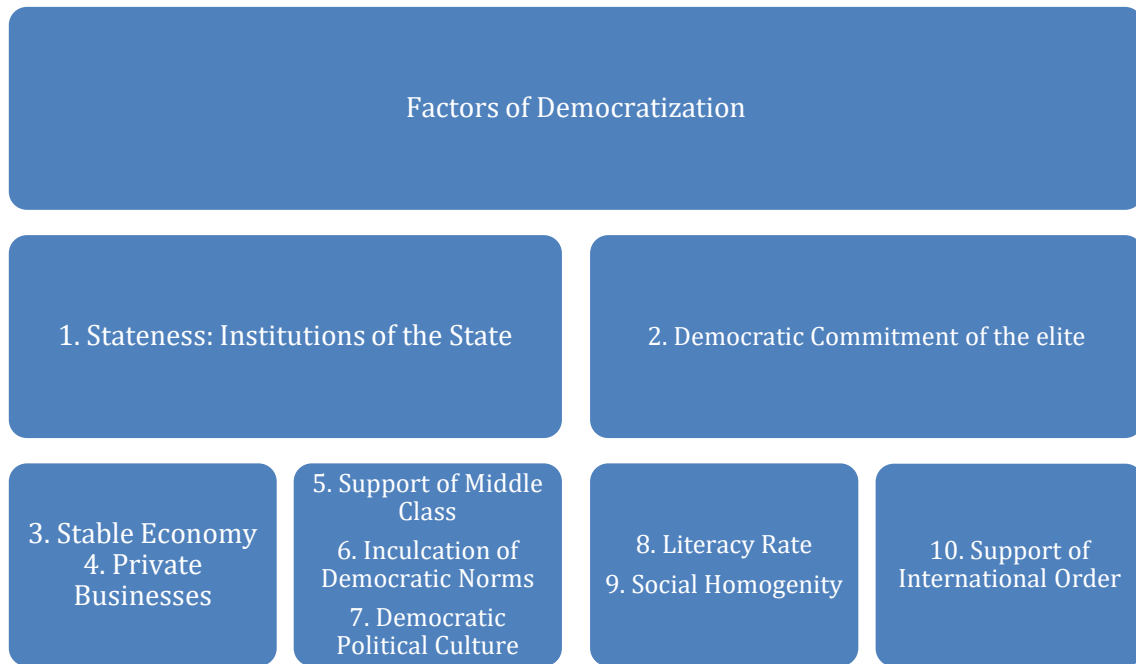
over government. But what if this role of ombudsman is just a utopian concept and nothing else? In developing countries like Pakistan the role of civil society in democratization is uncertain in many ways.

Michael J. Sodaro in *Comparative Politics* explains systematically democracy and democratization. While explaining the several core notions he emphasized that democracy can take a variety of forms, it actually means different things to different people. (Sodaro, 2000) He proposed ten conditions for democracy and democratization, state institutions is the first one among ten conditions. For any democracy; the healthier and enhanced functioning of state institutions must be granted. The institutions must be efficient particularly in law making measures while addressing the real problems of the country because "stateness" is a fundamental precondition to democracy and democratization.

*Globalization and the Future of Democracy* by John Markoff analyze the Rousseau's concept of representative's democracies and limitations of elected institutions. In 1762, He detected that: "The people of England regard itself as free, but it is gravely mistaken. It is free only during the election of Parliament. As soon as they are elected, slavery overtakes it, and it is nothing. The use it makes of the short moments of liberty it enjoys merits losing them." This statement of Rousseau has deep connotations for democratization. (Markoff, 1999) When parliament is not paying attention to the wishes of public and just paying attention to their own particular agendas. Like in Pakistan, the role parliament is different to correct the measures against democratization.

There are a number of models portraying democratization in different countries of the world. In Latin America, Africa, Central Europe, Soviet Union and many other parts have been going through a period of democratization. Among these many countries were not democracies in past, but now they are creating vigorous democratic government's i.e. Russia is the main example as Russia is not sharing any democratic history (Sodaro, 2001). Sodaro presented ten dynamics that contributes in the triumph of democratization, although these ten factors are not a solid formula that comes with hundred percent results, but ultimately helps in the renovation of democratic norms. The occurrence of consolidated democracy is a long term outcome of democratization that depends on many variables. According to Sodaro (2001), following are the ten independent variables that increase the probabilities of democratization and that leads to consolidated democracy.

1. "Stateness": Institutions of State
2. Democratic Commitment of Elite Class
3. Stable Economy
4. Private Business
5. Support of Middle Class
6. Acceptance and inculcation of Democratic Norms and Values
7. Democratic Political Culture
8. Literacy Rate
9. Societal Homogeneity
10. Supportive International Order



Source: Designed by Researcher

The very first factor that leads to democratization is the effectiveness of state institutions showing legitimacy over defined areas. Linz and Stepan (1996) also revealed “Stateness” as an imperative prerequisite of democracy. The operation of democracy is directly linked to the state institutions as these institutions are responsible for the whole democratic functioning. There are many states that go through the process of democratization by adopting the policy of “Stateness” i.e. Yugoslavia and Russia are the prime examples (Sodaro, 2001). The legitimacy of the institutions, sovereignty, liberties, equality, fundamental rights and opportunities, all this concludes the whole idea of democracy to some extent. All these ideas are not possible without the application of strong state institutions. The significant state institutions are legislature, executive, judiciary, military and bureaucracy. All these institutions are needed to maintain their strength in a way that they protect any harm against democracy and also against each other. . The military must act like a subordinate of the government, the judiciary must be free from any pressure, and the bureaucracy must support the process of democracy and assist the civilian government in the progression of policy making. The effectiveness of a single department is not enough; democratization requires the effectiveness of all these leading institutions. When state institutions are structured in a way that follows the core values of democracy, then the process moves towards victory. The nature of state institutions directly hit the pitch of democracy. Commitment of state institutions towards democracy is sine qua non for the furtherance of democratization. Some institutions try to derail democracy for instance, in some countries military desires for the authority and power and this results in letdown of democracy. In many developing democratic counties, chances of military intervention are high as their militaries are stronger than civilian governments.

Although democracy is the government of the people, but practically all modern liberal democracies are presenting a government of a specific class defined as the elite class. The elite class is obviously accountable to the masses, but this class is so powerful that if not committed to democracy then democracy is not worth considering. Apparently, politicians (including elite class) are undoubtedly leading the whole system and there are chances that these foremost actors always lead the whole process. The democratic commitment of the elite class is required for the process of democratization as this class is the only one that actually leads this righteous process of democracy. For the sake of democratization, one of the prerequisites is operative and efficient leadership that appeals to the public and also

supports democratization in an extraordinary manner. The whole episode of democratization and consolidation depends upon the traits of leaders who are indulged in the process. Whenever a state faces the problem of lack of leadership, the chances are high for derailment of democracy.

The economy is another significant factor which tends to create stability and that is what obligatory for the pacific process of democracy. The drive behind this crucial relationship of democracy with economy is of utmost importance because ultimately it deals with higher wealth accumulation, less poverty or total eradication, political stability with economic stability and minor inflation while economic prosperity will incite democratic growth and vice versa. There is never an only formula to success and the same is happening with democracy and economy, as one factor can never lead to success for both (James, 2015). The expansion of the economy leads to growth, growth leads to democratic prosperity and this is essential for ultimate success of democracy. Thus, in democratization, monetary access is an essential prerequisite as it provides smoothness to the whole process. In modern liberal democracies, the freedom for private businesses is essential as many scholars believe that economic freedom leads to political freedom. In the same order many believe that lack of economic liberty leads to non-democratic regimes (Sodaro, 2001). Moore argued that capitalist class was responsible for the success of ancient liberal democracies such as, United Kingdom and United States of America. When societies turn their ways toward growth of industries, agricultural growth or growth of private enterprises, there are high likelihoods for success of democracy and democratization. It is assumed that without the capital class, there is no future of democracies. As it happened before WWII, when Germany, Russia and Japan did not allow flourishing of the capital class, they turned fascist, communist and military elites respectively. (Moore, 1966).

Furthermore, the role of the middle class is also critical in establishing democracies, as only one percent of society is elite and the enduring society is either below the poverty line or included in the middle class. This middle class is an ongoing and physical force behind sustaining democracies. Many experts of democracies consider that societies with no middle class are less likely to create democratic norms. This substantial middle class is concerned with retrieving the elite class. The clash between elite class and middle will presumably not allow anyone to harm democratic norms. The middle class creates a favorable democratic atmosphere by generating small business for their own living (Almond & Powell, 2008).

Moreover, conformity of public perception and support is also needed. Ultimately, if public is not compassionate in democratization then nothing tips down to success. Although this nurturing process also entails many other dynamics, but the democratization of public is much needed as masses are sole unit to nurture democracy. The inclusion of masses is much needed in democracy. For example, when the public see development in a system or even hopes for an optimistic future under a specific system, then they purposefully support that specific system. In the early 1920s, Germans sensed the failure of democracy and they gradually dispartate democracy. This opposition provides room to flourish non-democratic actors. The reverse happened in British, where they opposed non-democratic regimes and braced democracy as they hoped for development under democracy. The illusion of development or no development can contribute to the support or opposition of any system.

The next prerequisite factor that is required for democracy is the efficiency of civil society. The organized groups and associations of people can provide a platform that handles democratic problems by facilitating between different sections of the society. Democracy is always in need of consciousness and this consciousness and awareness can be created by numerous means. The social movements can shape public opinion and encourage public to participate in more democratic spirit. The social movements are promoted by democracies and the same is true in the other way around; democracies are promoted by social movements (Porta, 2009). The movements and the media have a similar impact since without the media, these movements would be meaningless. As an instrument for political

knowledge and general consciousness, social media is achieving a lot. Social media is also useful in the accountability process in democracies (Arif, 2020). The ultimate aim of social movements is to mobilize the masses, and mobilization of people is required in democracies (Mikashavidze, 2015). At certain stages, mobilization wants to generate transparency in general and construct certain perception in specific. These breeds of civil movements need high media coverage for spreading their specific narratives. In democracies, the media is a voice that can certainly call for democratic outcomes because the media can shape public opinion which is an essential requisite for a democratic setup.

As political cultures of developed and developing states are different, the pattern and role of civil societies are also different. A political culture that is acting democratically is obviously a help in creating democratic success, but if the political culture is against democratic norms then the reverse will happen. In the formation of democratic political culture what contributes the most is education and predominantly political education. Normally, states with more education are more likely to thrive in democracy. Because one of the prerequisites of democracies is education itself, in case the masses are not educated then the process will take years to evolve.

Another factor that helps to maintain democratization is homogenous state, but many modern liberal democracies are not homogeneous but democratically they are strong. Today, democracy in multicultural states, polarized states, and fragmented states proved that heterogeneous societies can correspondingly sustain democracy. Lastly, democratization also needs an appropriate international order because if international order is not supportive then democracy may face external problems. For example, many non-democratic interventions were supported by external power especially in developing states.

The democratic durability is not dependable on one factor but it also contains a mixture of many dynamics. Many scholars ascertain that democracy is ambivalent in nature, if it is harmonized with societal setup, it will be efficacious, and if it is not set up with society then failed. As each democracy is different, so it's not that all are employing the same factors and even if they are doing so they will ultimately receive different outcomes. For example, education is a key to the success of democracy, but it's not the only key and not all democracies are rich in education. Every state discovers its own road to democracy that is based on particular eccentricities. The democratization process embraces in two steps, first is shifting from an authoritarian regime to an electoral democracy which is followed by consolidation of democracy. Both have distinct features from each other as they both are facilitated by different actors and conditions. The transition period deals with the undermining of the authoritarian regimes and the development of democratic institutes whereas, democratic consolidation is a much broader concept. It deliberates the institutionalization of democratic rules. Transition does not always central towards consolidation (Kauffman, 2018).

The democratic consolidation is a legitimate acceptance of democratic norms by all the state actors, when there is zero effort to convert democratic regime into a non-democratic one. For some scholars like Yana Gorokhovskaia, democratic consolidation prevails when 'Democracy is the only game in the town'. He also states that, consolidation happens when democracy is more routinized with institutionalized (Gorokhovskaia, 2019). This idea has much conformity with the Sodaro's view of "Stateness", which means the effectiveness of state institutions in a democratic way which is required for a health of democracy.

The foremost theoretical basis of democratic system are popular sovereignty, equality and inculcation of democratic values (Steinmetz, 2019). The drive behind democracies is always the will of the people as these people are the basic unit in democracies. The practice of power in democracies is in the name of masses and public

linkages are so central that without citizens there is no democracy (Almond & Powell, 2008). The tough thing is to instruct and sustain the democratic customs that will support the establishment of democracy in the long term. Obviously, this is not an easy and soothing task, but takes ages to drill these norms. For example, the history of Britain concealed years in which democratic norms evolved and brought democracy in line with functioning. Because democratic governments can be installed in a short time, but democratic societies take ages to evolve.

Democratic consolidation is basically a lengthy and fragmentary process. Feijo (2015) adumbrates four fundamental foundations as well as tools for democratic consolidation. First one is election turnout. The parameter of the electoral system is necessary in democratization and also in consolidation. Democracy is always in need of institutional support and smooth elections within given intervals. Maximum voting turnout vindicates the consolidation of democracy. Turnover is actually the scale for legitimacy of existing system, the more the turnout is, the more legitimacy will get attached to the system. Secondly, consolidation of democracy is contingent on healthy civil-military relations of a democratic state. When there is stability in democratization and the civilian system is mature enough to deter military intervention, chances of consolidation are much high. Thirdly, prosperity drives democratic consolidation. When democratic states work to alleviate poverty and discrimination, the system will enjoy the support of masses, resultantly foothold of democracy will be strengthened. Weber (1947) also considers the level of economic prosperity as a major paradigm of democratic countries. The fourth most important tool of consolidated democracy is the building of decentralized state so that power can be transferred to the masses, which are the essence of democracy. Democracy works for the welfare of people thus, creation of local governments will consolidate its roots. The greater outcome of democratization needs collective action of all the involved factors. Sometimes, even a small fringe in any of the above factors can result in absolute democratic damage.

## Results

This research finds out that the ultimate intention of democratization is to prevent itself from any authoritative intervention and to make it strengthened. Even after the successful transition of a non-democratic regime to a democratic one, the involved countries face many obstacles to make it consolidated democracy because this progression is associated with multiple factors that support or oppose democracy. Every system comes with precise pros and cons and the acceptance of the public is much needed. When the society is committed to democracy and involved in democratization in a way that nobody feels left out then the outcomes are more pacifying. But, on the contrary when a specific segment of the society feels only the shortcomings and face interruptions in every single matter then obviously it produces obstacles in the long term. Every class wants to endure and the real problem occurs when its survival is tough to conserve its roots in society. For example, the poor class in every state wants the alleviation of poverty and government is supposed to sustain hope for this cause. If a democratic government fails to maintain this hope, then masses will turn their back to democracy and they will start to support different additional fundamentals.

The elections and electoral process is center of attention in all democracies because it leads the whole democratization process (O'donnell, 1996). There are specific functions of elections in democracies such as, supply of legitimacy, ensure executive responsiveness, promotion of accountability, protection of masses and fortification of society. In many developing states, the public has no faith in the government and this causes more problems to democratic process. For the democratic governments, it is highly required and essential to respect the public's choice which they show in election turnovers. In many developing democracies, voting turnover is below 50%, and that is highly alarming for these developing countries (Haar, 2018).



Whereas in theory, democracy is giving the topmost importance to masses, but in practice it's the elite class which is playing an important role. The politicians (including elite class) are the foremost actors and always lead the whole process. This dominance increases the chances for corruption because this class tries hard to attain its personal interests. The ratio of corruption is there in all democracies, but corruption is on peak in developing states where this elite class is stronger than developed states (Sodaro, 2001). Generally, the political elites go away with the existing undemocratic regimes and try their best to instill democratic norms in the state, however, it comes under their ulterior motives to do this, political elites act to achieve their own goals, interests, and values.

Whenever and wherever a democracy collapses one factor that always presents is economic instability. When people confront economic insecurity in their countries they tend to move to migrate in foreign countries as it is happening in many developing democracies i.e. in Pakistan and Philippines. Economic precariousness will never lead the strong institutional building; resultantly the process of democratic consolidation will be halted. In many cases, democracies complete their task of consecutive democratic transitions, but still fraught for other factors i.e. intervention of military in politics. It's hard to maintain the foothold of democracy in the transition phase because of non-democratic factors. In republics like Pakistan where the military is strong, the threat of intrusion is there even after transitions.

## **Conclusion**

The democracy is a system while democratization is a process and consolidated democracy is an outcome and the dogma of democratization is about generating an enhanced collaboration between working of institutions, building process, societal acceptance and economic stability. Democratization with an insecure pattern is a political question that entails a political answer. The necessary conditions for democratic consolidation are broader than the procedural explanations of democracy. Democracy is ambivalent in nature, if it is harmonized with the societal setup. The democratic durability is not dependable on one factor but it contains a mixture of many dynamics. The acceptance of the public is much needed in this process and from democratization to consolidation the imperative targets are to eradicate the chance of any intervention. The perception of public, military and elite class matters in the process of consolidation, when they utterly consider democracy as the only option, then they will strive to make it strengthened. The democratization of institutions is also a top priority as it designates the acceptability of institutions for democracy. Consolidated democracies are less likely to return to non-democratic regimes. These countries are practicing institutionalization, equality, rule of law, frequent elections, efficient civil societies and balanced civil-military relationships. For consolidation of democracies, these states are relying on democratic governance, and no hurdles in the electoral system. But in developing countries democracy is still facing hurdles. The developing states must consider the factors that are promoting democratization and its consolidation, in order to sort out the democratic challenges being faced by them.

## **Recommendations**

Democracy is considered to be the government of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as for now the ballots have taken the place of bullets and the will of ruled is prior than the will of rulers. Democratization entails freedom, equality, inclusion, protection and popular sovereignty. Here are some key recommendations to inculcate these features in the democratic countries, where there is lack of democratization and its consolidation:

- The developing states with weak democracies need to consider ten factors of Michael J. Sodaro for democratization.

- Institutions are the apparatus through which democracy is practiced and for the consolidation of democracy, the institutions of state i.e. legislature, executive judiciary, military, media etc. must be free from elitist control and redundant interferences.
- Electoral system must provide a fair chance to masses to express their will. There should be transparent and fair system of elections for the consolidation of democracy. As people will support the system as long as the latter will consider their perceptions.
- The people of developing countries must be given civic education and training, so that they could know about the importance of public participation in democratic processes and its consolidation. Vigilant civil society will keep a strong check and balance on the government activities.
- Economic advancement is sine qua non for the consolidation of democracy. Inculcating economic policies, which will open doors for inclusive growth, fair distribution of resources, jobs creation, and reduction of poverty. Ultimately, it would result in consolidation of democracy.

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