Quantitative Models for Participation Evaluation in Community Development: A Theoretical Review

Amir Hossein Zomorrodian, Sarjit S. Gill,
Asnarulkhadi Abu Samaha and Nobaya Ahmad

Department of Social & Development Science, Faculty of Human Ecology, University Putra, Malaysia

Abstract: This article is an interdisciplinary review of the issue of participation evaluation. It is our contention that each and every scale and model developed to measure participation in community development approach falls under either the theory of empowerment or the theory of participatory democracy. The article also provides a detailed summary of prominent models for participation evaluation in community development practices with regard to socio-political theories supporting these models. In addition, both the weak and strong points of each model are discussed and a number of suggestions and implications for providing a comprehensive understanding of the participation issue are provided.

Key words: Community Development · Participation Evaluation · Empowerment · Participatory Democracy

INTRODUCTION

According to the World Bank's Learning Group on Participatory Development [1], participation is a process through which the stakeholders influence and share control over development programs and the decisions and resources that affect them. Oakley and Marsden [2] defined community participation as the process by which individuals, families, or communities assume responsibility for their own welfare and develop a capacity to contribute to their own and the community's development. In the context of development, community participation refers to an active process whereby beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of development projects rather than merely receiving a share of project benefits [3].

There has been much debate about emerging community development practices. Batten [4] and Scott [5] indicated that this discipline began with the African colonial domination during the twentieth-century. Murthy and Chowdhury [6] specified that in their modern form, the concepts of community development and community participation took shape in the 1950s.

Whatever the understanding of community development is and whenever the period it was actually launched, there is no doubt that participation of

community members is the main pillar in any modern community development program. In fact, after the failure of almost all development programs in colonies in the early twentieth-century, considerable attention shifted to the human aspect and the participation of stakeholders [7]. As a result, these days it is almost impossible to find a community development practice that disregards the role and significance of community members' participation. In fact, the level of the community members' participation can be considered as a significant factor to understanding the success of a community development program [8]. This growing emphasis on the participation of community members and citizens in public affairs is rooted in two sociological theories: the Theory of Participatory Democracy and the Theory of Empowerment.

Participation in the Context of Theory of Participatory Democracy: The theory of participatory democracy is rooted in the thought of philosophers, such as J.S. Mill, Rousseau and G.D.H. Cole. Pursuing their ideas, Carole Pateman [9] put the focus of participatory democracy on participation, control and education. Although almost all definitions of democracy comprise references to participation, there is no agreement on how much participation is necessary and how this citizen

Correspondent Author: Sarjit S. Gill, Department of Social and Development Science,
Faculty of Human Ecology, University Putra Malaysia.

involvement should take place. The debate has traditionally opposed those who assert that participation should be limited to the representative channels of democracy as well as those who argue that evocative participation should be continuous and intense [10].

In the representative democracy theory, in which political matters are resolved by a particular group of representatives, participation is considered as the way in which people can affect decisions made by governing officials. In participatory democracy, however, participation is considered as individuals themselves having a direct say in government and decision making rather than influencing and informing government officials [11]. Barber [12] indicated that representation destroys participation and, thus, the foundation of democracy itself. She added that, therefore, democracy of a high quality necessarily builds on direct citizen participation. Participatory democracy can thus be seen as delegation of political powers to the citizen [13] and involves collective action designed to resolve common problems on the part of groups and individuals through formally representative institutions [14]. Three main models have been presented in this article for evaluating participation of people in the context of participatory democracy; the classic Arnstein's ladder of participation, Pretty's Spectrum of participation and Hollnsteiner's modes to participation.

Arnstein presented her model for evaluating participation according to her understanding and experiences in urban areas of the United States in the 1960s. The core of her discussions focused on neighbourhood councils, NGOs and municipality organizations. Arnstein suggested that although her model used illustrations of federal programs, such as urban renewal, anti-poverty programs and model cities, it could be employed in churches, colleges and universities, public schools, city halls and police departments. She indicated that her eight-rung ladder is a simplification of the reality, but it can illustrate some essential element of participation and non-participation among citizens. According to her model, the eight types of participation and non-participation are: manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power and citizen control.

The lowest rungs of the ladder are Manipulation and Therapy, which describe the levels of non-participation. The real objective of these two stages is not to enable people to participate in planning or fulfilling a program, but to allow power-holders to educate or rehabilitate participants.
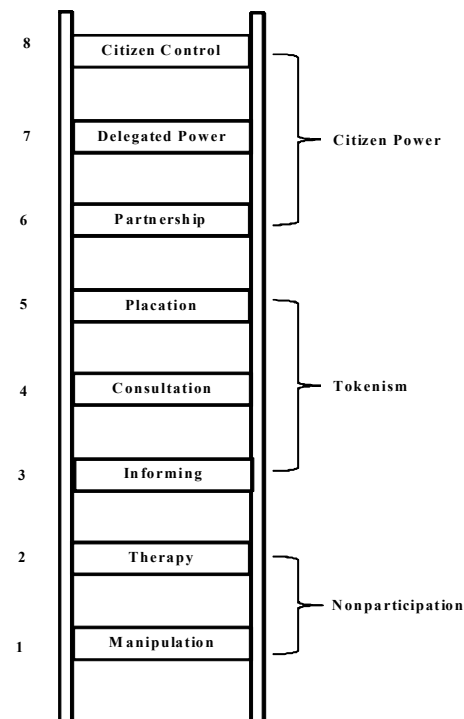

Fig. 1: Eight Rungs on theLadder of Citizen Participation Source: [15]

Arnestein continues that rungs Three and Four, i.e., Informing and Consultation, enhance participation to levels of Tokenism and allow people to hear and to have a voice. When people are proffered by power-holders as the total extent of participation, citizens may indeed hear and be heard. However, in this condition, people lack the power to ensure which of their voices will be heeded by the power-holders. Rung Five, Placation, is simply a better style of Tokenism because people are allowed to play advisory roles, albeit power-holders still retain control of decision-making.

The higher rungs of the ladder signify that citizen power, particularly decision-making power, has dramatically increased. In the Partnership stage, people are enabled to debate and involve themselves in negotiations with power-holders. On the highest rungs of Delegated Power and Citizen Control, citizens achieve the majority of decision-making seats or attain full managerial power. Thus, it is clear that this model for evaluating participation fits the theory of participatory democracy. On the lower rungs of the ladder, the political and social influence of participants is limited and the level of democracy in these stages has been criticized by the participatory democracy theory. In the middle, it appears that citizens are experiencing a state of representative democracy. This level of participation, as far as
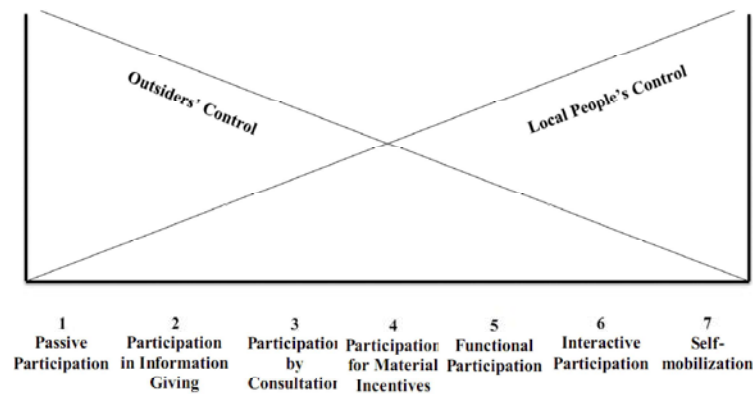
Fig. 2: Spectrum of ParticipationSource: [18]

participatory democracy is concerned, is simply inadequate. Higher levels of participation in Arnestein's model for participation evaluation are almost similar to the definitions and situation of participatory democracy. On these rungs, people are empowered and free to make decisions and to fulfil these decisions unfettered – a complete manifestation of participatory democracy.

Another typology of participation arising from participatory democracy was presented by Jules Pretty in 1995. While Arnstein's ladder looks at participation from the perspective of those on the receiving end, Jules Pretty's typology of participation speaks more to the user of participatory approaches [16]. Moreover, pretty's typology is less bound to only urban areas and has a wider usage. Rudqvist and Woodford-Berger [17] indicated that Pretty's typology starts with inferior types of participation and then proceeds to the better ones.

According to Pretty's model, in Passive Participation people are merely being informed of what has already been decided or has already happened. It involves unilateral announcements by an administration or project management without any form of listening to people's responses. The typology goes on to better forms of participation such as Participation by Consultation, in which people participate by being consulted or by answering questions and also by means of material contribution, in which people participate by contributing resources, for example, labor, in return for food, cash or other material incentives.

The next form is Functional Participation, which demonstrates the type of participation that is in many cases associated with effective debates: Functional Participation is considered by many organizations as a tool for fulfilling project goals and, especially, helping to reduce costs. People may participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to a particular project. This is the most common type of participation in community development.

The last two forms of participation in Pretty's typology are the fair and firm kinds of participation. Interactive participation is defined as a learning process through which local groups take control over decisions, thereby gaining a stake in maintaining structures and resources. Participation is seen as a right and not just the means, to achieve project goals. The process involves interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systemic and structured learning processes. In 'self-mobilization', people take the initiative independently of external organizations, developing contacts for resources and technical assistance, while retaining control over these resources at the same time. Self-mobilization can develop and spread if governments and NGOs provide collaboration for a strong framework of support [16].

Mary R. Hollnsteiner [20] presented another model for participation evaluation rooted in participatory democracy theory. The advantage of Hollnsteiner's model is that it provides detailed and comprehensive information about one significant and popular type of community development program. She distinguished six main types of participation in human settlement development programs. Looking at these different types of participation presented by Hollnsteiner, it becomes clear that they do fit the notions and concepts of participatory democracy.

According to Hollnsteiner, the first mode of community participation in planning of human settlement is Unofficial Representation by a Solid Citizen Group. The group is not elected and does not have formal authority to represent the community members. Their position is more symbolic and the community members simply follow

Table 1: HollnsteinerModelfor Participation

	Identity of Participation	Top-Down
1	"Solid citizen" - educated group appointed by outside authorities	Planners and local elites
2	Appointed local leaders in the government bureaucracy	Planners and local elites
3	Planners consult people's group for final selection from among predetermined choices.	Planners; people to a slight degree
4	Planners in consultation with people's groups from the beginning of plan formulation	Planners and people, but planners have more authority than the people
5	People have one or two minority representatives on decision-making board	Planners-administrators and people, but planners-administrators have major decision-making power as the majority group
6	People have the majority representation on decision-making board	People and planners-administrators, but people have major decision-making power as the majority group

Source: [19, 20]

them, regarding them as upper-class leaders. They cooperate and participate in the meetings and development process as symbols of civic consciousness.

The second mode of participation "embodies appointment of local leaders in the government bureaucracy" as representatives of the people. The main responsibility of these representatives is to transmit and interpret the development program for the community members and get their help and cooperation through their influence on the elites of a community.

The third mode is the "community's choice of final plan from among predetermined options". In this mode of participation several kinds of development plans have been designed in advance but community members have the opportunity to choose from among them. Because of the active involvement of the community members and to have a voice, this mode of participation leaves a better mark, but it is still far from being full-scale participation.

According to Hollnsteiner, the fourth mode of participation "ongoing consultation starting with plan formulation" is a significant breakthrough in community participation. This mode happens when community members are able to explain and discuss their opinions about the development program. They contribute to the process of development and community leaders have more frequent meetings with NGOs or government representatives and have a two-way dialogue through which community leaders fight for community members' interests.

The fifth mode of participation has "people's chosen representatives actually serving on decision-making boards". In this mode, people have a number of representatives on the decision-making board of a project. These representatives, in addition to participating in discussions and expressing their viewpoints, also have the right to vote on different matters.

The sixth mode, "community control over expenditure of funds", puts the real power over the project in the hands of community members and their representatives. Because they have the power to decide on how to spend financial resources, they can make decisions on fundamental aspects of the project such as hiring planners and architects and have complete control on the development process. However, since the money comes from government or international agencies, cooperation with these organizations remains necessary.

The six modes of Hollnsteiner's start from inactive and superficial participation and gradually ascend to direct participation in decision making and implementation, which are the two main goals of the participatory democracy approach theory.

Participation in the Context of Empowerment Theory: The Empowerment theory links individual strengths and competencies, natural helping systems and proactive behaviors to social policy and social change [21, 22]. Empowerment comes about through intertwined changes in behavior, self-concept and actual improvements in the conditions of the individual, the group and the community [23]. Empowerment-oriented interventions enhance wellness while also aiming to ameliorate problems, provide opportunities for participants to develop knowledge and skills and engage professionals as collaborators instead of authoritative experts [21].

Empowerment becomes a process of challenging and changing discourses. It emphasizes people's subjective understanding and the construction of their worldviews and points to the need for the deconstruction of these understandings and the establishment of an alternative vocabulary for empowerment [24]. From a pluralist perspective, empowerment is a process of helping disadvantaged groups and individuals to compete more

effectively with other interests, by helping them to learn and use skills in lobbying, using the media, engaging in political action and understanding how to work effectively to gain maximum benefit from the existing system. Participation and empowerment have complex relations; although many scholars indicated that participation is a means to empowerment, others believed empowerment is participation in its complete manifestation. There have been some approaches presented for the purpose of defining, explaining and evaluating participation in the context of empowerment theory and we will discuss two of the most important of these approaches; namely, Uphoff's typology and White's model of participation.

Norman Uphoff's typology of participation in community development provides a complete and firm understanding of participation in the context of empowerment theory. He asserts that to determine whether there is participation or not, it is very important to understand "who participates" and "how they participate", in addition to "what kind" of participation [25]. "What kind of participation" is the basic question on which researchers usually lay more stress, while, according to Uphoff, "who participates" is the most salient one. The aspect of "how they participate" is the qualitative dimension requiring more consideration and which we are not going to elaborate since the focus of this article is on quantitative dimensions and models.

As illustrated, Uphoff divided "kind of participation" into four sub-dimensions: (1) decision-making; (2) implementation; (3) benefits; and (4) evaluation. According to Uphoff, participation in decision-making centers on the generation of ideas, formulation and assessment of options and making choices about them, as well as the formulation of plans for putting selected options into effect. For this reason, he distinguishes three types of decisions: (1-1) initial decisions; (1-2) ongoing decisions; and (1-3) operational decisions.

When the identification of a need, planning for a solution and approaching a project are initiated inside of the community the kind of participation is termed the initial decision. Sometimes people did not participate in the initial decision, but they were asked to participate in the decision-making process when the project is brought into the community; and this is called participation in ongoing decisions. Operational decisions relate to special local organizations, which have been established by the project or linked to the project in an effort to involve people in the delivery aspects of the enterprise.

Participation in the implementation is also divided into three principal aspects: (2-1) resource contributions; (2-2) administration and coordination efforts; and (2-3) program enlistment activities. Participation (as resource contributions) can happen when community members provide labor, money, material goods and information in order to facilitate the project. Participation in a project administration and coordination take place when community members contribute to a project as the project advisory committee or decision-making board or as hired employees. Finally, perhaps the most common form of participation is through enlistment in programs. Distinguishing between such enlistment and participation in benefits is important because enlistment does not necessarily insure benefits for community members.

The third dimension of "what kind" describes benefit. Contribution in a community development program can provide three kinds of benefit for community members: (3-1) material, (3-2) social and (3-3) personal. Material benefits refer to an increase in consumption, income or assets. Social benefits, however, relate to public good. They can be characterized as collective services and amenities for all community members. Finally, personal benefits is the seeking of more social and political power through the operation of a project.

Participation in evaluation is possible through three major activities. The first one occurs when there is a formal review process. The second usually occurs through political activities, when local candidates explain the projects, listing its advantages and disadvantages and the third activity is by influencing public attitude with the hope that this will affect and enhance the project.

The second basic series of dimensions of participation, according to Uphoff, is "who participates". Uphoff distinguishes four common kinds of participants according to their characteristics: (1) local residents; (2) local leaders; (3) government personnel; and (4) foreign personnel.

Local residents are simply community members including farmers, tenants of landowners, farm laborers, herdsmen, craftsmen and so on. Local leaders fall into three main groups: (1) informal leaders, such as clan chiefs, religious figures, influential professionals and local notables; (2) associational heads elected or appointed from a formal organization or (3) local office holders, such as headmen, elders, mayors or tax collectors. Government personnel are officials assigned to an area for a certain period of time. Foreign personnel include foreign donor employees, heads of private voluntary associations, missionary personnel, expatriates or immigrants who live and work at the local level.
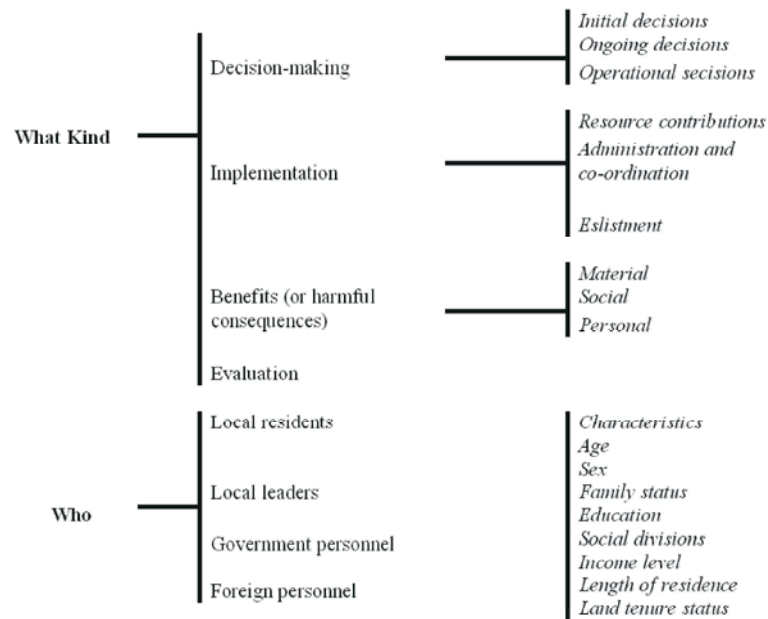
Fig. 3: Basic Framework for Describing and Analyzing Rural Development Participation
Source: [26]

Table 2: White Interests in Participation

Form	Top-Down	Bottom-Up	Function
Nominal	Legitimation	Inclusion	Display
Instrumental	Efficiency	Cost	Means
Representative	Sustainability	Leverage	Voice
Trans formative	Empowerment	Empowerment	Means/End

Source: [19]

Which personal background characteristics are important in a given situation depends on the circumstances and the kinds of participation possible. Some of the most important personal background details include; age and sex, family status, educational level, social division, occupation; level of income and sources, length of residence and land tenure or employment status. All of these background characteristics can be subdivided and amplified in a number of ways.

The last model we present rests on the empowerment theory of Sarah White. White agrees with Uphoff on the issue that for understanding the existence of participation in a program, there are two main considerations: first, who participates and, second, the level of participation. She also declared that involvement of the local people in implementation is not enough. For a full participatory project, they should also contribute in the management and decision-making processes (White, 1996). She provides a model for participation aiming to move beyond earlier levels and drawing out the diversity of form,

function and interests within the catch-all termed participation. The model illustrates the characteristics of the four most important forms of participation.

In the table below, the first column shows the form of participation. The second shows the interests in participation from the 'top down', that is, the interests that the NGO or government have in the participation of others. The third column shows the viewpoint of the 'bottom up': how the participants themselves see their participation and what they expect to get out of it. The final column characterizes the overall function of each type of participation.

In "nominal participation", the community members enroll in a program without any real involvement. The reason for community members to enroll in such a program in this way is simply for legitimation purposes. For example, in cases where financial aid is distributed and the participation of these community members enables claiming for such loans. For the government or agent, this kind of participation provides a list of members that

satisfies the need for inclusion of community members for certain requirements. In most cases, it is apparent that the people's participation is nominal and the groups mostly serve the function of display.

People's participation is essential in "instrumental participation", because they provide the labor for the program. The efficiency interests of outside funders serves in this form of participation. The people's labor is taken as 'local counterpart funds', which guarantees the people's commitment to the project. The funders may only provide raw materials and the program is more 'cost-effective. For the local people, participation is seen as a cost. Participation in this case is instrumental and its function is as a means to achieve cost-effectiveness, on the one hand and a local facility, on the other.

When an NGO or government organization invites local people to form their own groups, develop by-laws and draw up plans for what they would do, "the representative participation" takes shape. "Representative participation" facilitates local people to participate with a voice in the character of the project. From the funders' perspective, this guarantees the success and independence of the project in addition to achieving sustainability. For community members, active involvement in meetings ensures leverage to control the course of the project and its running in the future. Thus, participation takes on a representative form and becomes an effective means for people to express their own interests.

Empowerment always takes place from ground-up in communities. However, if outsiders and developers provide a supportive environment for community members, empowerment can be brought to the community. In this situation empowerment is identified as interest in participation from above as well as from below. Outsiders are working with the poor on a single venture or concern but for the poor themselves, there is a transmission of learning that can alter the whole of their lives. This situation is called "transformative participation" and this type of participation is a means and an end to the empowerment process at the same time.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

The models of participation evaluation explained in this article are among the most important and well-known models in their own categories. Choosing among them to evaluate a development program is dependent on a variety of elements. Hiring a model for the mere reason that it sounds interesting or innovative for the evaluation

may cause indiscretion and mistakes during the research. From our point of view, in addition to the theoretical framework that the researcher chooses for their study, it is very important that the community that an evaluator is going to study has the same characteristics with the community with which that particular model had been developed and applied successfully in the first place.

Arnstein's model, as a case in point, stands for the theory of participatory democracy and was developed in urban communities. Consequently, it is devoid of examples or illustrations that could be used as guidelines in rural districts. Civil participation and political empowerment lie at the core of her understanding of participation. Thus, when evaluation of the participation is for the purpose of agriculture plumbing, for example, using Arnstein's ladder would end in failure of the research.

Although Pretty's model is the same as Arnestein's ladder, having its roots in participatory democracy theory, in contrast to Arnstein's model, Pretty's theory places more stress on the physical and material forms of involvement instead of the non-physical type of participation. This fact gives Pretty's modes of participation a dual-purpose quality and it is useable in both rural and urban areas. However, both Pretty's and Arnstein's models suffer from a major defect. Although they provide a fair and comprehensive understanding of "kinds" of participation, they glaringly ignore one of the most important issues about participation, namely, "who participates". In order to achieve a complete understanding of the notion of participation, it is very important to illustrate the characteristics of the community members who participate for which Uphoff has some advantageous considerations concerning this subject.

In Uphoff's model, in addition to "kind of participation", the understanding of main characteristics of the participant, such as residency, employment, social status, education, income, marital status, gender, age, etc., have found importance. However, Uphoff's model is exclusively for rural areas and full of examples and illustrations about rural development projects. As a result, it is unsuitable for urban areas. Thus, we suggest in order to gain a complete understanding of the participation in urban community development programs, it is worth adding a synchronized version of the second part of Uphoff's model, "who participate", to Arnstein's or Pretty's models for evaluation of participation.

The other presented models in this article are less well-known but each of them is important in their own right. Hollnsteiner illustrates participation in a specific

type of community development program, namely, planning for human settlements. This type of project is usually for squatter settlements on the fringes of the cities. However, settlement planning is also possible in older established areas of the cities and for modernizing rural districts. When a researcher studies this kind of program, using Hollnsteiner's model can make his research simple and straightforward. It is important to note that Hollnsteiner's model also ignores the essential "who participates" dimension.

Ultimately, although White's model of participation does not essentially add anything to our understanding about "what kind" of participation, her keen and innovative ideas shed light on the point that have been left in the dark regarding the participation notion. This important fact is the concept that participation has different meanings and implications for the different parties involved. This means that outsiders and community members have diverse intentions and goals in the same development programs. The importance of White's model is that it offers an opportunity to get a multi-dimensional view of participation in community development.

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