



REVIEW PAPER

Engaging Stakeholders and Public Participation: Connective Leadership Tool for Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Public Sector Governance of Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This review paper aim to examine the literature on concepts of stakeholder, civic engagement, social capital and relevance with connective leadership that fortifies the relationship/communication among stakeholders. Using thematic research, and analysis technique, the review selected literature from databases like (Cardiff Met Search, Ebsco, Elsevier, Google Scholar, ProQuest, Springer). This review highlights benefits of these procedures including, increased political legitimacy, citizen empowerment and more inclusive governance, however, still pose challenges, such as confusion or misconceptions about stakeholder engagement and overlap with public participation. Research emphasizes use of clear strategies and definitions to deal with challenges. The review article also explores the evolving role of connective civil leaders of public sector organization, i.e. public administrators in shared governance that facilitates partnerships and leverage social capital to strengthen civic relationships and connections. It also admits the potential of digital platforms to expand the engagement. Thus, recognize obstacles of political dynamics; struggle for power and socio-economic disparity. This review identified and presents number of knowledge gaps in literature.

KEYWORDS Citizen Participation, Leadership, Connective Leadership, Pakistan, Public Sector Governance, Social Capital, Stakeholders, Public Administrator, Local Government

Introduction

Stakeholder concept faces criticism for its ambiguity (Lee, 2023; Stoney & Winstanley, 2001), Miles (2012) identified term “essentially contested” reflecting inherent definitional debates. Friedman and Miles (2006) critiqued its theoretical inconsistencies while Barry (2022) exposed logical flaws often leading to decision making inefficiencies. Moreover, Giray (2022) highlighted the misuse of concept by organizational leaders resulting in effective management Eskerod et al, (2013; 2018) pointed towards the conflicts of interest/s within and among the groups of stakeholders themselves making definition and roles even more blurry. These critiques underscore persistent challenge in aligning theory with practice. However,

The Stakeholder participation and citizen engagement are basic principles in the success of development projects especially those targeting marginalized communities. These processes help guarantee development initiatives are responsive to community needs they aim to serve by promoting not only relevance but also sustainability. With active participation of disadvantaged groups; such as the poor in decision-making development projects gain legitimacy and effectiveness. This integration empowers these communities by giving them a voice in policies that directly can have effect on their lives. This type of participation also strengthens local ownership hence, ensure that the solutions developed are appropriate and meaningful for those affected. This literature review explores development frameworks and concepts regarding stakeholder engagement, civic participation and social capital. It provides information on how these elements are integrated into community-based development practices. The importance of involving marginalized populations in planning, implementation of development initiatives cannot be overstated. Their participation ensures that the initiative not only

addresses their specific needs but also promotes long-term commitment to the projects. A growing research emphasizes on the importance of stakeholder engagement in ensuring inclusive and sustainable development. It reflects the needs and interests of most affected by popular decision or policy (Hutchins & Tindall, 2016; Johnston, 2014; Jelen-Sanchez, 2017).

Stakeholder Engagement and Its Significance

Stakeholder participation has become a key issue in academic and practical discourse on governance, public relations and development studies. Scholars such as (Naeem, 2024; Jelen-Sanchez 2017; Hutchins and Tindall, 2016; Johnston, 2014,) emphasize the importance of including diverse stakeholders in development processes. This is to ensure that the results are not only comprehensive but sustained instead of simply informing or consulting with stakeholders. Effective participation allows them to influence judgements that have effects on their lives (Fox et al., 2002).

This participatory approach promotes communication, mutual understanding and collaboration. This is an important factor for the lasting success of development projects (Jordan et al., 2016; Kadlec et al., 2015). Stakeholder participation has evolved into the transformative process redefining traditional PR practices and improve dialogue between groups within the communities. This reimagining of public relations helps stabilize often conflicting interests and issues of various stakeholders (Naeem, 2024) resulting in more inclusive, equitable, and successful outcomes (Kadlec et al., 2015; Jordan et al., 2016). In particular, involvement of marginalized groups has the potential to increase inclusion, community ownership, trust, and ultimately the sustainability of development initiatives. In this context, this study examines the civic involvement and how to strengthen relationships and communication between stakeholders in Pakistan. Therefore, the aim is to understand the core concept of civic engagement among stakeholders in public sector organizations.

However, the stakeholder engagement concept is often confused with concept of "Stakeholder Management". This is because these two words are often used interchangeably. It thus reflects different aspects of the interaction between the two parties involved. Freeman's (1985) foundational work positions stakeholder participation in the broader picture of stakeholder management. Moreover, recent scholarship has also pointed out the ambiguity in the definition and application of these concepts. (Naeem, 2024; Jelen-Sanchez, 2017; Devin et al., 2014) and such confusion can add to challenges in effective implementation of engagement strategies focusing on public sector organisations, especially because the use of word "Stakeholders" can cover a wide range of individuals or groups and it depends on the context whether it is development, business, policy, or law (Kahane et al., 2013; Shackley et al, 2002).

The Ambiguity of Stakeholder Engagement and Public Participation

Stakeholder engagement and public participation are important to academic discourse on topics of public governance. Both concepts are built upon on each other and are fundamental to the success of the community development projects similarly often used interchangeably. Although they have different scopes and uses public participation is, in essence, refers to the active involvement of citizens in the decision-making processes which is the basis of democratic governance.

Academics emphasize that public participation is essential to establish transparency, responsibility and a sense of ownership of policies and programs (Naeem, 2024; World Bank, 2019; Blair, 2018). This type of participation is critical in ensuring the voices of marginalized people who are often excluded due to poverty or lack of political influence will be heard in policy making (Naeem, 2024; Reed et al., 2009).

Although theoretical overlap between these concepts is recognised, the literature states that the terms Public engagement, civic involvement, and stakeholder engagement are often used in differently and based on contexts (Naeem, 2024). The World Bank (1996, 2009) emphasizes that stakeholder participation in development projects does not only involve direct beneficiaries; but also includes individuals and groups that are indirectly impacted by the project implementation and this broad definition is consistent with the UK (DFID, 2003), which recognizes a broad range of participants from local groups to international groups. These stakeholders can support or hinder the accomplishment of the project/s hence, relies on the interests and power dynamics at the time.

Community as Stakeholders and Their Role in Development

In the context of development such stakeholders are usually defined as people or groups directly or indirectly affected by the projects or those with the capacity to influence project outcomes or by organisations (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017; Wheeler et al., 2002; World Bank, 1996). These stakeholders include not only those who directly benefit from project outcomes. But it also includes those who have the authority to set the direction of the project. This definition encapsulate variety of stakeholders and comprises citizens with diverse backgrounds, local communities, government establishments, non-governmental groups (NGOs), and the private organisation.

Naeem (2024) and DFID (2003) also categorizes stakeholders into groups of primary, secondary and according to the interactive contexts with each sector and group having different levels of involvement and influence in the development process as well as in the work of government. Key stakeholders are those directly getting affects by the project, such as local communities. While secondary stakeholders include organizations that are not directly affected, influenced, or influenced by project outcomes (Miles, 2017), these distinctions are important for understanding the complex dynamics of participation, hence, ensuring the in the process of participation all relevant voices are considered throughout the development and implementation process.

The community's role as a stakeholder is critical to civic engagement. This is particularly correct in local government operations. The government is being asked more and more to develop mechanisms that facilitate the integration of marginalized groups especially poor people in decision-making processes (UNDP, 2019, 2016, 2009) as communities are not only the recipients of services. But they are also participants who are interested in the policies and services provided by public institutions. Participation in development projects covers many dimensions from consumers and participants to users and participants to public funding (Parker et al., 1999; Mulgan, 2000a).

Community participation, though, is extremely important. However, various obstacles such as low education levels, lack of access to resources, and due to limited or no political power marginalized groups are prevented from fully participating in the participatory or decision-making process of public sector organisation. However, when these communities are able to participate this not only increases the legitimacy of decision-making process also contribute to better governance and more responsive policies (Horisch et al., 2014; Mansuri & Rao, 2013). Therefore, local government organizations must be aware of their various evolving roles where community members act as stakeholders and their participation is not just a symbolic gesture but also an important component of the development process.

Social Capital and Community Engagement

Social capital is referred to the network of relationships, trust, shared norms that facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit. It is a core concept in civic engagement and play an instrumental role in success of community development projects. Promote cooperation

joint action and resource mobilization (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009; Narayan-Parker, 2005). Strong social capital enables communities to support their needs work effectively and achieve mutual goals (Blakeley, 2010; Casey et al., 2012).

Researchers emphasize that social capital is especially important in marginalized communities. Other forms of capital, such as economic or political power, may be limited in these contexts. Social capital as an important resource ensure that public's concerns are heard in the process of decisions. (Narayan-Parker, 2005). However the paper argue that for social capital to be effective civic participation must be structured in a way that helps more vulnerable groups without any direct or indirect fear instead leading to excluding the marginalized groups of people. Engaging these community stakeholders in the work of government or development projects provides several benefits including enhanced decision making, quicker and improved service delivery, better decisions, better local knowledge and a greater diversity of perspectives (Twigg, 1999; Bell et al, 2012), this approach leads to more sustainable and effective outcomes this approach encapsulate all relevant members of communities. In addition to this, the community engagement helps develop local capacity and enhance participants understanding about the matter related to their daily lives and how participation influences the outcome. This feeling of empowerment promotes greater participation, trust on government institutions and collaboration.

Therefore, ultimately leads to more efficient and equitable development approaches (Horney et al., 2016; Richards et al., 2004).

Effective Engagement

Effective stakeholder engagement requires specific strategies and characteristics that ensure success. Research emphasizes that participation should be inclusive, transparent and iterative, with clear channels for feedback and active participation from all stakeholders (Le Feuvre et al., 2017). Successful participatory partnerships are characterized by the ability to build trust, facilitate open dialogue and ensuring that all participants feel their opinions are valued. By integrating these principles into engagement strategies development projects can increase chances of their success, promoting not only better decision making but also foster greater community ownership and long term sustainability.

Many studies highlight the importance of specific characteristics that contribute to successful stakeholder engagement processes. Le Fevre et al. (2015) emphasize that participatory processes should not only include wide range of stakeholders but it also needs to be structured to ensure effective participation and influence. These processes are fundamental to promoting mutual understanding and cooperation among stakeholders. This leads to more sustainable and comprehensive results.

The success of stakeholder engagement is often determined by specific evaluation criteria that assess its effectiveness in achieving these objectives. To assess citizen participation in public service organizations. Consider the criteria presented by Neligan (2003) which evaluate representativeness, responsiveness, stakeholder satisfaction, and aligning stakeholder expectations with organizational objectives. **Representation;** is essential to participatory processes as it includes and reflect the interests of all stakeholders and this aspect is consistent with Bendell's (2003) emphasis on inclusion when organizations decide who should be involved in the process and ensure that diverse voices are heard.

Responsiveness; refers to how well an organization handles stakeholder concerns and suggestions. This is important to ensure that participants feel valued and that their participation influences the decision-making process. **Stakeholder satisfaction;** helps

ensure that participants consider the participatory process meaningful and are satisfied with how their input is utilized. Finally, it aligns stakeholder expectations with objectives. The organization ensures that engagement processes are not only participatory but it is also effective in achieving the desired results (Zadek et al., 2002).

This holistic approach to evaluating engagement emphasizes the importance of integrating process and outcome-based indicators. To ensure that stakeholder participation contributes to comprehensive project development as well as service delivery of public sector organisation. Effective and more sustainable stakeholder participation especially marginalized communities increases both the legitimacy and quality of decisions when their views are actively considered and revised.

Understanding the Processes of Participation

Public administration literature on citizen participation has made great strides since its inception. Emphasizing the role of citizen participation in strengthening the connection between government and citizens, studies such as (Naeem, 2024; Gaventa et al. 2012; and Reddick, 2011; Cooper et al. 2006), emphasize that citizen participation in public administration serve as the foundation for mutual cooperation that supports democratic norms and values equality and accountability (Baum, 2015) and can empower marginalised groups of citizens (Naeem, 2024). Participation is seen as a means to managing collective interests (Naeem, 2024; Huang and Feeney, 2015). Improve decision making incorporates diverse perspectives and promotes innovation (Beierle et al., 1999; Irvin & Stansbury, 2004). This greater participation also promotes trust between citizens and officials. Corbett and Le Dantec (2018) show how active participation leads to greater accountability and transparency. It builds trust in the honesty and effectiveness of government institutions.

Trust is a key component of a successful engagement process. Public participation can build trust ensuring that stakeholders. Especially marginalized groups feel heard and involved in the process. According to scholars such as Yang & Pandey (2011), increasing transparency in government operations and responsiveness to citizen feedback promotes a sense of belonging and participation. This, in turn, strengthens trust. Confidence-building activities, such as shared decision-making processes and providing clear and accessible information about government actions. It can reduce cynicism and improve the legitimacy of public institutions. Trust is extremely important in diverse communities. There may have been historical mistrust between citizens and government agencies. Establishing reliable communication channels and consistently delivering on promises made during the engagement process will help build a more sustainable, long-lasting relationship.

Civic participation also builds social capital by promoting a sense of collective responsibility and ownership. When communities are actively involved in shaping their future. They will have a greater sense of belonging and commitment to the welfare of their shared space. In the end, to help communities drive sustainable development citizen participation ensures that projects and policies are not only environmentally friendly but also sensitive to social and cultural justice. This approach recognizes that local communities have the unique knowledge and perspectives needed to create solutions that are truly tailored to their unique needs and aspirations hence, evolve to active partners in creating equitable, sustainable and prosperous future for all.

At the same time, experts (World Bank, 2017) emphasize the importance of a well-organized participatory process. This can bridge the information gap between citizens and governments by promoting better communication between local communities and ultimately administrations (Naeem, 2024; World Bank, 2017; Hambleton et al., 2007). Effective communication in these processes is essential to ensure that community members even at local grass root level get well-informed and participate in decision-

making at the local district level (Naeem, 2024). Scholars criticize the focus on external, specialized knowledge in contemporary public engagement. They argue that real-life local knowledge is undervalued (Fitton et al., 2019; Patrona, 2016) in community contexts. Participation and culture are deeply connected. It is with formal and well-informed organizations that determine the means and to what level the citizen can participate (Sagie & Aycan, 2003). The definition of meaningful participation is still evolving. The researchers support clear principles to guide action. These principles must be adapted to local needs and enable citizens to effectively shape their communities (Naeem, 2024; De Caro et al., 2017; Abelson et al., 2003; Webler et al., 2001).

Participation in the;

Political context

Engagement is considered a tool for influencing public policy. Promote policy change and facilitating social participation (Krauss et al, 2015; Oser, 2017), citizen participation through voting, protest, and other voluntary activities helps national policy decision makers know community needs. This affects large-scale development projects (Pathanakun et al., 2016). Citizen participation in politics and decision-making. Given its profound benefits both for the government and for the legitimacy of democratic governance (Yang and Pandey, 2011; Michels and De Graaf, 2011; Fang, 1999. 2003), citizen participation improves decision-making. Increase the knowledge, abilities, and diverse experiences of the people.

This results in a more informed and holistic regulatory approach. This greater participation promotes accountability, trust, and general legitimacy in the democratic process (Yang & Pandey, 2011), helps resolve political conflicts (Nabatchi, 2012), and ensures better public policy outcomes (King et al., 1998) Moreover, participatory approaches can effectively deal with social challenges and make decisions in line with people's needs (Wang & Van Wart, 2007).

Furthermore

Participation in good governance is also a highly political process. Cornwall, (2008), Cornwall and Coelho (2007) and Gaventa (2005) argue that involvement often becomes a struggle for power with multiple groups competing for control of both resources, Bardhan (2002) also argues that public sector organizations in challenging economic and social environments are more vulnerable to the influence of local power holders. This can undermine the integrity of the participatory process. Voting and referendum are often considered essential for civic participation. It can be fraught with issues such as voter distortion. Election Fraud and by neglecting the voices of minorities (Arrow, 1995; Brennan, 2009), critics argue that majority systems can promote the oppression of the majority reduce the benefits of minorities and may undermine the legitimacy of the decision-making process (Perry, 2005; Peter, 2001). Moreover, some parts of society especially poor or economically disadvantaged people. It may be related to day-to-day survival. Therefore showing little interest in formal participatory processes (Cornwall, 2008), these groups may be excluded or underrepresented in decision-making. This complicates efforts to achieve inclusive governance.

Whereas; direct community participation is viewed as a way to enhance political, economic as well as social development. This is to ensure that local stakeholders better understand, support development initiatives. It is important to empower communities to adopt or control their own development. Because they are better aware and can identify needs and set goals to achieve them (Mansuri & Rao, 2013), beneficiary participation promotes collective action and strengthens social networks. This promotes sustainable development (Avdeenko & Gilligan, 2015) hence, community-focused approach increases

awareness develop the capabilities of citizens and improve social, economic, political, and human capabilities (Blakeley, 2010; Cassey et al., 2012; Shulla et al., 2020; Naeem, 2024). As Narayan-Parker (2005) and Huque et al. (2005) argue, increasing Social capital through trust, leadership and community identity is necessary to empower the community. Therefore, process is participatory when carried out properly. It will promote better communication and stronger relationships between stakeholders, strengthen citizen engagement and contribute to sustainable community development by integrating local knowledge thus, leading to improving political capacity and promoting a culture of inclusion.

Role of Public Administrators & Modern Governance

Public management has shifted towards a more collaborative and networked governance model. Modern governance is developing rapidly as it shifts from top-down control to a more collaborative model in which the people play an important role. This change is being driven by increased access to information. Increased civic participation and the rise of digital platforms.

Governments are increasingly relying on citizens to manage complex challenges. By requiring them to build trust on major and complicated issues leverage the citizen experience and end conflicts. The future of governance lies in embracing collaboration, connectivity, dependence, and empowerment. Connecting and empower citizens to participate in co-create solutions. This shift requires a fundamental change in approach and as well as in the governance mind-set and willingness to relinquish some control and a commitment to building a more inclusive and responsive governance system.

This form of governance promote connectivity and collaboration among public administrators, local government organization and people solving social problems. And according to (Bingham et al., 2005; Salamon, 2002) this will requires dialogue, collaboration, dependence, and a focus on community values and social justice. Public administrators act as administrators of public policy promoting vision, connect and collaborate between private and civic sectors to provide services efficiently. Stakeholder participation and engagement are critical to inclusive governance. This ensures that diverse perspectives, experiences, and knowledge is used in decision making (Naeem, 2024; 2022; Meier & O'Toole, 2006; Yang & Callahan, 2007). Waldo (2007) argued that government organisations exists not only to provide services but to protect democratic principles such as representation, decentralization, responsibility, and openness. These principles cannot be entrusted to private sector interveners. When government work is governed by constitutional necessity and it is incidentally more complex than private commercial operations.

The argument is critical to understanding the ongoing changes in governance culture, where the role of government becomes more participatory and democratic in its relationship with citizens. Instead of being just a service provider or a bureaucratic or powerful agency exercising power over citizens.

Meanwhile, the increasing use of new media and the decline of traditional forms of interaction. This poses significant challenges for public administrators which now requires navigating the increasingly complex communication situations. As social networks amplify voices outside of the two forms of government. Public administrators must balance responsiveness and openness with the need for transparency and control.

Citizens, in turn, are once again called upon to participate in governance processes. Shifting from passive consumption of public services to active participation in sharing of governance ideas, visions and practice of power over decision-making. Therefore, this change requires a commitment from both administrators and citizens to respect each

other's rights. As according to (Levine, 2013) engage in constructive dialogue and demonstrates tolerance for diverse political, religious, and social beliefs.

However, this paper argue that public administrator such as in the local government (local bureaucrats) are custodians of government organisations at local level and act as connective civil leaders, nurturing citizen participation and building social capital in context of Pakistan. Their interdependence and interconnectedness makes their role even more dynamic and multi-faceted in shaping a transparent and accountable governance framework in public sector organisation.

By empowering communities and ensuring inclusivity, public administrators contribute to building trust and legitimacy in government and each element i.e. citizen engagement, social capital, connective leadership and multi-faceted role of public administrator is critical in bridging engagement and facilitate cooperation and coordination. Connective leadership serves as the vital bridge that seems to unite diverse groups and sectors within a community, allowing them to work collaboratively toward shared goals by linking different sectors.

Public administrator plays a central role in facilitating and coordinating this entire process. As a key figure in governance, the public administrator ensures that citizen participation is not only encouraged but also institutionalized. They create the mechanisms and frameworks that enable citizens to engage meaningfully in governance, whether through public forums, consultations, or collaborative decision-making processes. The public administrator also helps to build social capital within communities by fostering trust, ensuring that citizens are treated with respect, and ensuring that their voices are considered in the policymaking process. Additionally, the public administrator must leverage connective leadership skills to navigate the complexities of governance, bringing together various stakeholders to work toward common goals and ensuring that marginalized groups are not left behind. Through their role as facilitators, negotiators, and managers, public administrators ensure that governance is both responsive and inclusive.

This is why, Lipman-Blumen, (1996; 2017) connective leadership model is becoming more and more relatable as through cooperation and a comprehensive decision-making processes where the governments are collaborating with various stakeholders from various sectors to solve complex problems. This why both civic engagement and connective leadership are important concepts in community governance and development. Analysis of available research reveals a lack of established research on direct relationship between these civic engagement and connective leadership concepts. This suggests that further in-depth exploration is required and how those concepts may influence each other (Naeem Mirza, 2022)

Leadership strategy for Stakeholder Engagement in Public Sector Organisation

Connective Leadership

In order to reach a wider audience and ensuring that the community's diverse, excluded, and marginalised voices are involved in making participatory process iterative and dynamic by adapting to the changing needs and concerns of citizens a right leadership approach is basic necessity especially in public sector environment where interaction is diverse and multi-fold. Connective leadership is particularly significant in public sector organizations, such as local government entities, as it functions across various cultural, functional, and geographical boundaries. This approach combines emotional intelligence, personal competence, and systems thinking to effectively align organizational goals. It is designed to tackle the growing interdependence and complexities that modern organizations face, emphasizing the importance of relationship-building, inclusivity, and adaptability to diverse and ever-changing environments. Unlike traditional hierarchical

leadership models, connective leadership prioritizes the development of collaborative networks and encourages participatory decision-making, fostering a democratic spirit that enhances citizens' sense of belonging. This approach ultimately reflects the shared interests of the community and strengthens trust between the government and its service users.

Connective leadership styles and relevance to public administration

Connective leadership is a model that emphasizes on collaboration, relationship building and inclusive decision-making. Unlike traditional leadership models that rely on hierarchical structures i.e., top-down authority whereas, connective leadership fosters an environment where leaders work to empower communities, build networks, and facilitate shared decision-making processes. This model is particularly relevant in settings that require the coordination as well as collaboration among diverse stakeholders such as in local government e.g., bureaucrats (leaders) engage with citizens, government officials, and other community actors in collaborative efforts.

This approach thrives in settings where bureaucrats (leaders) interact with citizens, government officials, and other community actors and aim to build trust, facilitate open dialogue, and foster collaborative problem-solving for common good. This approach enables leaders to navigate complex relationships, harness the collective wisdom of stakeholders, and ultimately achieve common goals that benefit the entire community.

As Lipman-Blumen (1996; 2017) posits that leaders in modern complex societies must be able to build a seamless web of people, organizations, resources, and information to solve shared problems effectively. Thus, this makes connective leadership model well-suited for addressing the challenges of local governance particularly in contexts like Pakistan, where social cohesion and community involvement are essential for effective governance and can help address unique challenges such as, limited resources, diverse cultural background, and history of political instability. Hence, can contribute to build a more resilient and responsive local government system that truly is citizen focused and serves the needs of local citizens.

Connective leadership styles

Lipman-Blumen (1996; 2017) identified three key categories of leadership styles within the connective leadership framework, each reflecting different aspects of leadership behaviors. These categories include:

Direct Leadership Styles

Direct Achieving Set: According to (Lipman-Blumen, 2000; 2017) Individuals who focus on direct mastery employ three distinct behavioural styles.

Intrinsic: These individuals find satisfaction in personally mastering tasks and achieve perfection. They set internal standards of excellence, striving to surpass their previous best performance. They thrive on challenging themselves and maintaining control over both the goals and the methods used to achieve them.

Competitive: Individuals driven by competition seek to outperform others. Their focus is on external standards of excellence, aiming to be the best, even if it doesn't surpass their personal best. They typically maintain authority over objectives and the methods used to achieve those goals.

Power: Those exhibiting power-oriented behaviour thrive on having complete control over situations in hand and people. They create structure/s, order out of chaos and assign tasks to others resultantly maintaining control over outcomes.

The Instrumental Achieving Set

The instrumental set encompasses behaviours employed by individuals who cultivate and optimize their interactions with others to achieve shared objectives. This set comprises three behavioural categories: personal, social, and entrusting.

Personal. Individuals who prefer personal behaviour heavily relies on persuasive skills, charisma, and past accomplishments this includes, their personal achievements and family status to gain support to their goals they also seek to control both the desired outcomes and methods used to achieve it.

Social: those who favour social behaviour achieve their objectives by building networks of associates, then they strategically select individuals with specific skills, experience, or connections. This approach like others also retains control over both the means and the ends.

Entrusting: on the other hand; assumes that everyone within the group is capable of accomplishing the necessary tasks. After establishing the shared goal, those who practice this behaviour readily delegate the means of achieving it to subordinates confident in their ability to complete the task often promote talents and foster innovation and creativity.

Relational Achieving Leadership Styles

Individuals who exhibit relational behaviour focus on enabling others to achieve their goals, either directly or indirectly, simply celebrating their success. They accept predetermined goals and the methods used to achieve them. The set of behaviours encompasses three categories; collaborative, contributory, and vicarious.

Collaborative: Individuals who favour collaborative behaviour appreciates the sense of camaraderie that comes from working alongside others. They embrace goals and methods established by the group. They are willing to share both the recognition and responsibility for the outcomes of their collective efforts, whether successful or not.

Contributory: Those who prefer contributory behaviour find satisfaction in supporting others success from behind the scenes. They generally accept pre-established goals and contribute according to predetermined methods. They don't seek public recognition, finding fulfilment simply in knowing they played a part in someone's achievement.

Vicarious: Individuals who favour vicarious behaviour choose not to actively participate in achieving goal. Instead they experience a strong sense of personal accomplishment or failure based on their identification with an achiever, whether it's family or complete strangers. They do not retain control over either the methods or the final outcome.

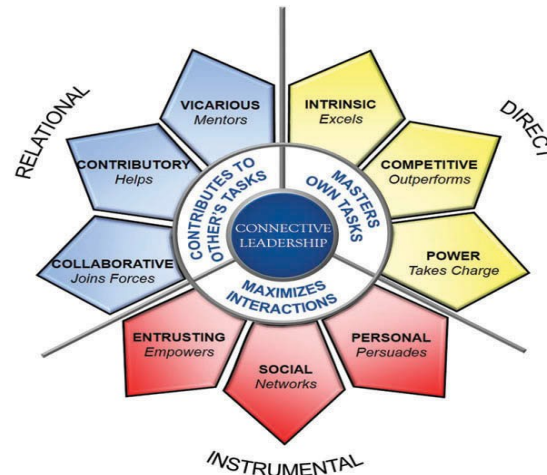


Figure 1: Connective Leadership Model, Ref: (Lipman-Blumen, 1996)

Leadership Challenges in Civic Participation

Although there are many advantages but citizen participation is not without its challenges. Hayward (2010) acknowledges that although participation may improve governance in a democracy, but it does not fix all the shortcomings of democracy and is not effective in all contexts. Irvin and Stansbury (2004) argue that involving citizens in policymaking can be slow and expensive. Reaching agreement or consensus often calls for a difficult compromise in harmonizing diverse perspectives. In addition, regulatory constraints and the increasing adoption of participatory methods have made the participatory process even more complex (Hartley & Wood, 2005). Unerman and Bennett (2004) raised concerns about the voices of marginalized stakeholders. Especially those who cannot directly participate in the participatory process, such as future generations, these groups often depend on agents whose interests may not be fully aligned with their own (Unerman & O'Dwyer, 2006)

Case Studies of Effective Engagement

Analysing real examples of successful civic engagement can provide valuable information about best practices and lessons learned. Case studies from different regions or sectors, e.g. participatory planning in Brazil or local development projects in the form of community governance. Study of (Naeem, 2024; Naeem Mirza, 2022; 2024) in Gujrat (Pakistan) highlighting the complex governing structures and the importance of citizen participation in public policy development and service delivery (Mirza & Iqbal, 2025; Yang & Pandey, 2011; Fung, 2003) these case studies demonstrate that strong stakeholder participation can lead to better outcomes, enhanced service delivery, make better decisions and providing equitable access and nurture the engagement process and sustainable.

Material and Methods

By following noor et al, (2023), Rouhani et al, (2024) and Briet and Volkmann (2023), the current review study adopted thematic research approach (Keywords) to review the literature on the concepts of stakeholder theory, civic engagement, social capital, and their relevance to connective leadership. Data was collected through various forms of scholarly written existing literature, case studies, and articles. Hence, analysed in light of objective of the study.

This review article addresses important gaps in the literature on civic participation. This is especially true in the context of Pakistan. Existing research on civic

participation focuses mostly on Western models. It often ignores the specific socio-political, cultural and economic realities of Pakistan. Complexity of Pakistan's social and political environment along with diverse social structures are relevant to appropriate civic engagement framework thus is needed.

Most studies also focus on urban areas. This leaves rural areas and marginalized communities unexplored. This limits our understanding of civic engagement across the country. In addition, important work has been done on the “what” or “how” of civic engagement, especially with regard to building relationships and communication between stakeholders however, there is a noteworthy gap in literature on the relationship of connective leadership and civic engagement. And this is especially relevant in Pakistan.

Moreover, effective governance and stakeholder engagement is essential to building trust between citizens, governments and civil society organizations. Moreover, the literature lacks empirical research on having definitive salience approach to participation. There is lack of descriptive data on how civic engagement works in Pakistan. This is particularly factual in the context of Pakistan. The role of digital media in facilitating civic participation is little researched. This is despite the increase in internet access and use of social networks in the country. This reveals another important gap.

To respond to these gaps; this review article synthesizes the existing literature to provide a broader understanding of civic participation. This review aims to offer a more detailed understanding of how civic participation functions in different contexts and in a fragile political environment. The key contribution of this review is to offer a culturally relevant framework for civic engagement. It addresses the unique needs and challenges of Pakistan. The review emphasizes the importance of adapting global governing models to local contexts and provide additional engagement strategies to strengthen relationships among stakeholders.

The analysis also highlights the role of marginalized groups, such as the poor and uneducated youth and women and emphasize the importance of inclusion in promoting civic participation. This review also contributes to providing empirical insights through case studies and regional examples. It provides practical insights into the challenges and successes of global civic engagement. Finally, this article proposes a research agenda for future studies.

Promote more empirical studies and develop new models of civic engagement that better reflect Pakistan's unique challenges. In doing so the review not only addresses existing gaps; but it also lays the foundation for future research and policy interventions aimed at improving citizen participation in Pakistan.

In summary, this review article makes an important contribution in addressing an important gap in the literature. By presenting the structure according to the cultural context. Provide empirical insights and propose practical strategies to strengthen citizen participation, communication and collaboration among community stakeholders in Pakistan.

Conclusion

In summary, the two concepts of stakeholder engagement and public participation are built and supplement each other however, the overlap between these is needed to be addressed through a clearer definition and strategy. Thus, critical to the effectiveness and sustainability of development projects especially in marginalized communities. These processes not only increase the legitimacy of policies; but also increases the potential of citizens, promote more inclusive and transparent governance.

Public administrators being connective civil leaders are playing an evolving role in navigating these complexities. Promote shared governance, ensuring cooperation amongst the civic and private sectors and promote the effective integration of social capital to strengthen community ties. The increased use of social networks and other digital platforms also presents opportunities for more dynamic and inclusive engagement. Meanwhile obstacles to political dynamics power struggle and significant economic and social inequality remains.

This often causes marginalized groups to be neglected and promote barriers to true participation. The need for a clear and transparent structural strategy is critical to overcoming these barriers. This is especially true in terms of managing linguistic, cultural and socio-economic as well as socio-political differences.

Participation from vulnerable communities will be is highly emphasized into policy-making not only enhance legitimacy of democratic norms and helps to ensure that policies respond to real needs of communities.

In the final analysis challenges to public governance, citizen participation and stakeholder engagement are complex and multifaceted. By promoting continuous, transparent and inclusive participation, promoting trust and usage of social capital governments can improve the legitimacy as well as effectiveness of their decision-making processes leading to agile, equitable and sustainable governance. It is beneficial to society as a whole.

Recommendations

- Empirical research is needed to explore the relationship between civic engagement and connective leadership.
- Empirical research is missing in rural Pakistan and marginalized regions (such as tribal areas economically disadvantaged communities)
- Future studies may focus on developing, testing, and improving a citizen participation framework tailored specifically to Pakistan.
- Future studies could focus on developing, testing, and improving a citizen participation framework tailored specifically to Pakistan or other Arabian or South-Asian (SAARC) regions.
- Research can explore how digital platforms are used for civic engagement in Pakistan and what are their implications.
- Research can examine how civic engagement strategies can be more inclusive. It specifically focuses on the empowerment of marginalised youth and the poor.
- Investigate how civic engagement occurs in politically fragile or conflict-ridden regions of Pakistan.
- Research could also explore the role of peace-building initiatives and how civic engagement can contribute to conflict resolution and strengthening democratic processes in fragile areas.
- Research could focus on evaluating the effectiveness of collaborations between government agencies and CSOs in promoting civic engagement in Pakistan.
- Comparative studies between Pakistan and other South Asian or Arabian nation's e.g, Middle Eastern countries could provide a broader understanding of civic engagement in the region.

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