



Participatory democracy as a framework for upgrading local development management mechanisms With reference to the Algerian experience

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Abstract:

This study aims to introduce the concept of community participation in local development, its importance and characteristics, and highlight the role of the local community through various methods to participate in local development on the basis that local development is participatory development in which all components of the local community contribute, the study also aims to highlight the mechanisms of popular participation in development, in addition to the importance of participatory democracy, that is, citizen's participation in the local decision and the way to develop his community.

Keywords: popular participation, participatory development, local development.

Jel Classification Codes : H1 ;H11,H76.

Résumé:

Cette étude vise à introduire le concept de participation communautaire dans le développement local, son importance et ses caractéristiques, et à mettre en évidence le rôle de la communauté locale à travers diverses méthodes de participation au développement local sur la base du fait que le développement local est un développement participatif dans lequel tous les éléments de la communauté locale contribuent. L'étude vise également à mettre en lumière les mécanismes de la participation populaire au développement, en plus de l'importance de la démocratie participative, c'est-à-dire la participation des citoyens aux décisions locales et la manière de développer leur communauté.

Mots clés : participation populaire, développement participatif, développement local.

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I. Introduction: Today, there is widespread acknowledgment of the significance of community participation in local development. It reflects the extent of the local community's commitment to addressing its challenges and actively engaging in the development and implementation of local programs. This heightened involvement inspires local actors to enthusiastically support the programs they have contributed to developing. Consequently, popular participation stands as the fundamental pillar in the development of local communities. The absence of community engagement and the neglect of citizen involvement in managing local affairs, respecting priorities, and striving for the advancement of communities are incongruent with the essence of local development. The concept of participation is integral to development policies, with participatory development emerging as a cornerstone of grassroots development, challenging the traditional meta-development theory.

Local development serves as a cohesive link between stakeholders in a particular area. It is a process designed to harmonize the endeavors of individuals with those of government authorities, aiming to enhance the economic, social, and cultural conditions of local communities and empower them to actively contribute to national progress. This process comprises two fundamental elements: the active participation of individuals in efforts to enhance their living conditions through their own initiatives, fostering self-reliance, and assistance provided through programs designed to attain specific goals.

In Algeria, interest in local development has been steadily increasing as it has become an integral component of the comprehensive development strategy. It holds significant importance in the transition from a rentier economy to a productive one that relies on locally available resources. It is evident that the involvement of the local community, often referred to as participatory democracy, has become an indispensable element in the development process. Participation has emerged as the focal point of local development and is deemed the most suitable approach to transition towards self-development. This approach begins with addressing the needs and aspirations of the local population and concludes with fulfilling these needs and aspirations.

For this reason, the Algerian authorities, at the state hierarchy level, have embraced the principle of participatory democracy in overseeing local affairs. They encourage all local actors to actively contribute to enhancing local participation by extending the authority of local groups and enacting laws that regulate local development partnerships. These measures aim to capture the genuine concerns of residents, involving them in the implementation of development programs. This strategy fosters a heightened sense of commitment and willingness among the residents to successfully achieve the programs they have actively contributed to.

Based on the above, the research problem can be formulated in the following question: What are the opportunities for embodying the principle of democratic participation in local development management in Algeria? Answering this question requires addressing some complementary questions, including:

- Is the limitation of representative democracy a motivator for local communities to adopt the principle of participatory democracy?
- Does the success of local development depend on the level of local community participation?
- What mechanisms has Algeria adopted in its current experience to activate community participation?

1.1 Research Hypotheses:

The study tests two fundamental hypotheses:

- Community participation has evolved into a strategic option for achieving local development goals.
- The participation of the local community, encompassing all its components, in local development programs in Algeria is not yet fully realized in practice.

1.2 Research Methodology and its Importance:

The study employs the descriptive analytical method to analyze the content of documents, studies, research, and published literature related to the subject, aiming to achieve the study's objectives. The research's significance lies in highlighting the importance of popular participation in local development management, ensuring that citizens actively address their problems.

1.3 Previous Studies:

The research builds upon several previous studies, including:

- ***First Study:*** Milad Yacoub (2008), "Local development associations, studies of social formations: the village of Haute-Egypte," Doctoral Thesis in Sociology, University of Nanterre. This study investigated the role of civil society organizations in local decision-making in some villages of the Egyptian Delta. It concluded that the contribution of these organizations remains limited, lacking regulatory frameworks for participation activation, and overall civil society's contribution to local development in Egypt is below the desired level.
- ***Second Study:*** Helen Abdel Rahim Murad (2012), "The role of community participation in activating local development in Egypt, a case study of Ismailia Governorate," PhD dissertation, Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University. This study explored the extent of the local community's contribution to activating local development in Egypt, focusing on Ismailia Governorate. Despite political reforms, the study found weak participation mechanisms and a limited role for civil society organizations.

- **Third Study:** Jean-Nicolas BIRCK (2010), "New developments in local participatory practices and usages of participation in Nancy and the General Council of the Meurthe-et-Moselle," Doctoral Thesis in Political Science, University of Nancy 2. The researcher concluded that new practices of participatory democracy have clarified many ambiguities surrounding popular participation. The generalization of the participatory system among local politicians is seen as inevitable, marking a shift towards a participatory and collaborative approach.

II. Popular Participation: Concept and Theoretical Background:

The involvement of local residents in the development process has emerged as a crucial focus, not only in theoretical and intellectual discussions about development but also in the formulation and implementation of development policies in practice. It holds a central position as an activity aimed at fostering positive and effective participation of local residents in all stages of the development process.

The roots of the concept of community participation can be traced back to the late nineteenth century when it was incorporated into British law to support the roles of associations and charitable institutions within British society. Subsequently, many countries worldwide embraced the idea of popular participation as an approach to enhance social relations among the population. Various solutions were devised to address societal issues, such as unemployment, poverty, and other challenges.

The concept of participatory democracy began to take shape in the 1960s when social movements intensified their criticism of representative democracies. These movements advocated for decentralization in the management of local affairs, clearly defining powers, and ensuring the transparent participation of citizens. Thus, participatory democracy evolved to signify citizen involvement in managing public affairs (Etienne Gagnon, 2016, pp. 20-25).

II.1 The Theoretical Background of Popular Participation:

The concept of population has occupied a significant position in contemporary social sciences in various forms and degrees. The emergence of the theory of endemism, leading to the development of "regional economics," aimed to explore regional growth and development. In the 1960s, the characteristics of a place began to be emphasized, portraying it as a distinct unit. "The place" was viewed as a domain characterized by diversity in capabilities and relationships, rendering it conducive to self-development.

Economists at the end of the last century introduced key concepts, with "development from the bottom" being among the most crucial. This concept revolves around local self-development, wherein the local community actively

participates, including institutions, professional unions, and other civil society activities.

"The region" was conceptualized with two dimensions. The first involves leveraging innovative capacity and enhancing productivity. The second is institutional and organizational, with regional growth relying on connections between various social actors such as the private sector, civil society, government, bodies representing the local community, and scientific and technological entities. In essence, local development is rooted in mobilizing natural, human, and financial resources to create a clustering effect, forming a group of clusters for development.

Several economists argue that development, whether at the national or local level, functions as a circular system interacting with the surroundings. Some posit that the driving force behind development comes from the edges of the surroundings, while others contend that development derives its impetus from within itself. This perspective contrasts with theories like Solow's (1956), which considered technological progress as not subject to private ownership and operating automatically from the outside.

The 1950s witnessed the emergence of theories focused on regional development, notably the "internal push theory" advocated by "John Friedman" and "Walter Stöhr". This theory posits that development originates from the bottom by exploiting internal resources, such as the traditional local industrial heritage and cultural values. Development is viewed as a system centered on its core or self-driven. "P. Romer" further shaped these views through his research in the late 1980s and early 1990s, introducing the internal push theory of development. This theory highlights key factors like technological and physical capital, human capital, and public capital as the driving forces for development, representing the structural base, transportation, and communications (Mohamed abdel shafie issa, 2008, pp.166-167).

II.2 Democratic Participation Theory:

The participatory approach to local development underscores the significance of involvement and shared responsibility of local residents in all aspects of life. Consequently, the issue of participation in development has become a crucial consideration for officials and decision-makers (Qayati Ashour, 2017, pp.75-90). In the 1960s, participatory development gained utmost importance, receiving widespread adoption by countries and international organizations. It was characterized by slogans emphasizing participation and collaboration. The initial experiences of popular participation witnessed notable advancements, with local actors actively engaging in development efforts. Participation evolved towards exploring suitable mechanisms for intervention and involvement in local planning.



From a legal perspective, the United Nations, in its 1986 report on the right to development, declared that the right to development is an inherent human right. This right asserts that every individual and all peoples possess the right to participate and contribute to achieving economic, social, cultural, and political development and to enjoy the benefits of such development. This underscores the necessity of citizen participation in decisions that affect their livelihoods broadly. The Declaration emphasizes that the right to development is an inherent human right, with humans being the primary element of development. It asserts that all individuals, individually or collectively, bear the responsibility for development, and states carry the primary responsibility for creating conditions conducive to realizing the right to development. States are urged to take steps to eliminate obstacles to economic, social, and cultural development.

In alignment with these principles, the World Bank views participatory development both as a tool and an end. Various experiences demonstrate that participation in development transforms local actors into local decision-makers. This means turning the local community into an active participant and a key element in local development.

II.3 From Popular Participation to Participatory Democracy:

In the preceding sections, we explored the significance of popular participation and its role in elevating individuals to a deeper level of partnership. While participation can take a formal shape, the concept has evolved from a public involvement to democratic partnership, ensuring that it does not lose its developmental dimensions. It has become evident that the development of any society hinges on self-confidence, as the local community is best acquainted with its needs and aspirations. Through its resources, it can effectively address its needs and enhance its social and economic conditions.

Facing numerous challenges in global social and economic development, the imperative of population participation in development initiatives has become more pronounced. Even though it may provide solutions to some problems, genuine understanding of the desires of those involved is crucial. Hence, involvement in decision-making, project adoption, monitoring, and evaluation becomes essential for improving the living and working conditions of local communities from a sustainable development perspective (Hervé Pourtois et John Pitseys, 2017, pp.13-14).

The concept of popular participation in development has evolved into a foundational element. Economic and social development can only be realized by enabling all segments of society, with their diverse orientations and positions, to participate in decision-making about their needs. This approach allows the local community to optimize the use of its capabilities (Lizel Lues, 2014, pp, 837-856). Citizens' participation in shaping public policies is increasingly evident through

participatory democracy, which serves as an intermediate approach between representative democracy and direct democracy.

The present political context aligns, to some extent, with the emergence of new methods of citizen participation. Recent years have witnessed a growing crisis of confidence in politics and the traditional model of representative democracy in societies. The widening gap between citizens and their representatives, coupled with a lack of trust, underscores the need for genuine and effective decentralization, moving beyond the formal decentralization of the past.

II.4 Definition of Participatory Democracy and Its Dimensions:

II.4.1 Definition of Participatory Democracy:

The necessity for participation emerged as a response to the crisis of representative democracy in Western countries. Faced with the complexities of political decision-making, governments shifted towards standing by the people and actively listening to their needs. Citizens ceased to be mere beneficiaries of charitable efforts; instead, they were recognized as agents of change and essential partners in the development of their economic and social environments.

II.4.2 Dimensions of Participatory Democracy:

Participatory democracy, being a relatively modern term, has garnered attention from various thinkers and has been subject to disagreements among researchers regarding its definition, characteristics, and goals. This divergence stems from variations in the political, economic, and social structures of different countries.

Participatory democracy can be defined as a set of procedures, means, and mechanisms that empower citizens to directly engage in the management of public affairs (Democracy Reporting International-DRI, 2012, p.6). It serves as a broad and inclusive concept of popular participation, facilitating the active involvement and influence of all local actors in the development process and enabling them to reap its benefits. Participation, in this context, offers all members of the local community opportunities to express their opinions and play a role in formulating and implementing local social and economic programs, ultimately enhancing the overall framework of their community.

II.4.3 The Importance of Participatory Democracy:

The significance of participatory democracy lies in its focus on the extent to which individuals contribute to managing their local affairs and selecting a development model that aligns with the specific characteristics of their region. The importance of participatory democracy can be highlighted in the following aspects:

. ***Bottom-Up Approach:*** Participatory democracy is crucial as it ensures a bottom-up approach to decision-making. It emphasizes the importance of local

perspectives and considerations, starting from the grassroots level and moving upward.

. **Connecting Population with Surroundings:** Participatory development, a key element of participatory democracy, aims to establish a connection between the population and their surroundings. This approach is considered essential as it is the only way to harness local capabilities and transform them into tangible benefits for the local population (Raphaelle Parizet, 2016, p.61-90). Institutions such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme have embraced participatory development since the 1990s, emphasizing the strengthening and support of actors and civil society in the management of public affairs.

. **Exploiting Local Capabilities:** Participatory democracy is vital in exploiting local capabilities and resources. It ensures that the potential of the local population is actively engaged and utilized for the benefit of the community. This approach facilitates a more sustainable and inclusive development process.

. **International Endorsement:** Participatory democracy has gained international recognition and endorsement from institutions like the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme. These organizations advocate for the active involvement of actors and civil society in the decision-making processes related to public affairs.

. **Citizen's Role in Society:** In its broad sense, democratic participation means the citizen's engagement in political, economic, and social life to set the general goals of society. Through democratic participation, individuals play an active role in shaping the economic and social fabric of their community. This involvement fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among citizens, contributing to a more vibrant and participatory society.

II.4.4 Dimensions of Participatory Development:

The dimensions of participatory development are reflected in the practical application of participatory democracy as a form of decentralization and power-sharing within the framework of representative democracy. Key dimensions include (Jean-Pierre Gaudin, 2010, p. 41/48):

. **Form of Decentralization and Power-Sharing:** Participatory democracy serves as a form of decentralization, distributing decision-making power and involving citizens in political decisions. It emphasizes collaboration with elected representatives rather than excluding them, thereby sharing power between citizens and elected officials.

. **Cooperation with Elected Representatives:** In contrast to direct democracy, where decision-making may occur without elected representatives, participatory democracy emphasizes cooperation with elected representatives.



This collaborative approach recognizes the important role of elected officials in the decision-making process.

. **Deliberative Democracy:** The concept of "Deliberative democracy" underscores various processes that facilitate public participation in decision-making. These processes highlight the importance of informed and thoughtful discussions in reaching decisions that consider diverse perspectives and opinions.

. **Role of Associations:** Associations play a central role as intermediaries between citizens and public authorities in the participatory development process. They act as representatives of the public, facilitating communication and collaboration between citizens and decision-makers.

. **Complementarity to Representation:** Participatory democracy is presented as a complementary form of joint decision-making that does not oppose the foundations of representation. It recognizes the continued importance of elected representatives, especially when cooperation extends to a broader basis of citizens. The ultimate goal is to promote and develop public services through inclusive and collaborative efforts.

II.5 Participatory Democracy and New Transformations in the Role of the State:

The concept of local development has evolved into a critical notion addressing the most significant challenges faced by contemporary societies. In recent years, it has emerged as an alternative to the concept of centralization, emphasizing the exploitation of potentials through collaboration and concerted efforts among individuals, civil society institutions, and all stakeholders. Local development serves as an integration link between various entities related to a specific locality, wherein the efforts of the people unite with those of government authorities to enhance economic, social, and cultural conditions at the local level, allowing for meaningful contributions to national progress.

This process of local development comprises two fundamental elements, as outlined by "Geneviève Simard (208, pp.20-30)":

. **Participation of the People:** Involves individuals actively participating in efforts to improve their living conditions through their own initiatives, emphasizing self-reliance and encouraging initiative.

. **Assistance through Programs:** Utilizes assistance in the form of programs designed to achieve predefined goals, emphasizing the collaboration between the community and government initiatives.

One of the criticisms directed at representative democracy is its perceived neglect of the principle of participation beyond the act of voting. Representative democracy, relying on the principle of delegation through elections, has been criticized for emptying the citizen's contribution of its content and marginalizing the opinions of the minority. In response to these limitations, the necessity for



participatory democracy has emerged as a complement to representative democracy, reforming the relationship between the components of society. This new role for the state envisions citizens actively participating in decision-making processes, fostering a society built on partnership and cooperation (Cédric Polère, 2007, p.1-28).

Historically, democracy at the local level has received less attention, often limited to informing citizens and consultation without challenging the decision-making authority of elected officials. This limited concept of local democracy has sometimes been used to restrict broader participation, but the emergence of participatory democracy seeks to address and rectify these limitations.

II.6 Participatory Democracy as the Basis of Local Development:

Development experiences, with their diverse orientations, have demonstrated that top-down development, also known as meta-development, fails to effectively reach and benefit most segments of society. Recognizing the limitations of the state in addressing all problems and meeting the diverse needs of the people, there is a growing consensus on the importance of integrating various local actors with different perspectives into decision-making processes to achieve local development goals.

II.6.1 Local Development as the Embodiment of Participatory Democracy:

Since the 1990s, development specialists have been discussing local development, yet a universally accepted and precise definition remains elusive. However, local development is commonly understood as an integration link between various entities related to a specific geographical area. It emphasizes the importance of including all relevant parties in the development process, as it is fundamentally a strategy for advancing local communities. The strategy involves setting clear and precise goals determined by those directly affected.

Contrary to the misconception that local development is solely about poverty and unemployment alleviation, it encompasses all social groups and components, irrespective of gender or affiliation with the public or private sector. According to G. Fiévet, local development revolves around "the authority of the local group over its wealth and cooperation between all parties in the form of solidarity." Numerous definitions of local development have been proposed, highlighting its participatory nature. References from World War II onwards emphasize that local development is not confined to a singular aspect; instead, it has evolved into a multidimensional societal process (Abdul Muttalib Abd al-Hamid, 2001, p.17).

In alignment with the perspectives of writers such as "G. Tremblay" and "J. A Fontan", local development is viewed as an integration link connecting various entities within a spatial space. This approach ensures that no party is excluded, emphasizing the authority of the local group over its resources and fostering



cooperation among all stakeholders in a spirit of solidarity. Local development, therefore, becomes a participatory process involving diverse components of the local community with the goal of utilizing local resources to meet the needs of the local population. The World Bank also aligns with this perspective, considering local development as the outcome of collaborative efforts among all local actors, tailored to the unique characteristics of the place, to implement programs that address the needs of the local population and enhance their quality of life.

II.6.2 Participatory Democracy and Mechanisms for Managing Local Development:

Participatory democracy, in its evolving concept, places a strong emphasis on the active involvement of all components of the local community in formulating, monitoring, and overseeing the implementation of the local development model. This approach signifies a shift towards grassroots self-development, where community members are not merely beneficiaries but active contributors to the development process. The integration of community perspectives enriches the content of development plans and enhances their effectiveness, thereby supporting and complementing the role of the central government (Qayati Ashour, 2017, p. 75).

Participation in the management of local development entails significant contributions from the local community in identifying residents' needs and aligning them with available capabilities. This involvement allows for the development of appropriate mechanisms that enable local citizens to actively participate in decision-making processes. As community participation deepens, civil society and various activities assume a more responsible role, transforming into the architects of their own development.

The importance of promoting local development administration through democratic participation is underscored by the citizen's right to freely choose representatives and actively participate in decision-making at the local level. Participatory democracy extends to consultation on matters of highest interest to the local population and represents a foundational pillar of local administration. In contemporary societies, local development has gained paramount importance, playing a fundamental and pioneering role. It stands as one of the key pillars in establishing a vibrant local community that must actively engage in decision-making through diverse communication channels and methods (Raphaelle Parizet, 2016, p.70).

II.6.3 Participatory Democracy as an Embodiment of the Principle of Decentralization:

Over the years, countries worldwide have shown a growing interest in decentralization, emphasizing the importance of empowering local decision-



making. In its 2002 development report titled "Achieving Decentralization and Reflecting on the Shape of the State," the World Bank highlighted the need to bring governance closer to the people. The global shift toward decentralization encompasses various dimensions, such as adopting elections as a method of local governance and granting more powers to local units, enabling them to play a crucial role in local development. This shift has altered the traditional role of local units, leading to a transformation in the role of the state (Deberre, j.2007,pp.45-54).

The relationship between decentralization and participation in local development has become increasingly apparent in many countries, driven by the recognition that centralized development management is ineffective. Central governments have struggled to address the growing demands for services, physical infrastructure, and the challenges posed by population growth. In response, many countries have turned to decentralization as an effective means to meet the needs of the population and alleviate the pressure on central governments. This trend, which gained momentum in the late twentieth century, aligns with the broader adoption of participatory democracy, leading to increased popular participation in decision-making at the local level.

As the state's dominance over the economy diminished, there was a renewed emphasis on involving local actors. This shift resulted in the emergence of new arrangements and active elements at the local level, driven by factors such as global transformations, the shortcomings of centralized local development management, the move toward decentralization, and the embrace of a market economy with greater individual freedom in managing local affairs.

The modern state is characterized as a motivator and guide, rather than an issuer of orders. The transition toward decentralization requires the state to strike a balance between political authority and the interests of both the central and local levels. The involvement of local activities in decision-making processes, along with the activation of popular participation, plays a crucial role in empowering the local community to assume responsibility for its economic and social development (Dubresson, A. et Fauré, Y. 2005, pp. 7-20). Applying decentralization in local development, especially in the context of economic liberalization, necessitates paving the way for civil society institutions. This approach underlines the importance of developing a legal framework that aligns with contemporary developments and strengthening cooperation among various active community forces in the local community, commonly referred to as community participation in development.

III. Algeria and the Experience of Participatory Democracy:

Local development represents a multifaceted and dynamic endeavor aimed at realizing the social and economic objectives of the local community while



addressing its fundamental needs. The evolution of global dynamics has prompted a reevaluation of traditional development models, emphasizing the need to tailor solutions based on each community's unique characteristics. Development is no longer imposed from above; instead, it has transformed into a grassroots process that necessitates the active participation of all local stakeholders. The state, no longer equipped with the means of monopoly, is compelled to operate on the principles of participation and decentralization.

In the context of this shifting paradigm, Algeria has embraced a new role for the state, aligning with economic and political reform policies. The nation has undertaken measures to support and advance the management of local development, positioning it as a fundamental element within the comprehensive development strategy. The commitment to participatory democracy and decentralization in Algeria's development approach can be highlighted through various elements:

III.1 Motives for Including the Principle of Participation in Local Development Management:

The integration of the principle of participation in local development management in Algeria is not merely a response to economic transformations but has evolved into a social imperative. Several motives underpin the emphasis on local development and the incorporation of participatory democracy (M. Sadoudi, 2007. Sp):

- ***Social Demand and New Relationship Dynamics:*** The impetus for local development arises from a social demand to establish a renewed relationship between the central state and local communities, framed within the principles of local governance and decentralization. This shift signifies a departure from traditional models and a recognition of the need for more inclusive and collaborative approaches.

- ***Historical Priority:*** Local development is deeply ingrained in the history of the Algerian state. It has been a historical priority and an integral element in the trajectory toward economic openness. The demand for freedom of initiative and decentralization has been a recurring theme in addressing the aspirations of local groups.

- ***Neglect under Previous Policies:*** During periods of socialism and planned economies, local development received minimal attention. Industrialization was concentrated in major cities, leading to internal migration issues. Economic reform policies further marginalized local groups. The realization of the negative impact prompted a reassessment of policies and a reevaluation of the importance of local development.

- ***Economic Revival in the 2000s:*** The turning point for local development in Algeria can be traced to the early 2000s when the country witnessed an economic

revival, particularly in the oil markets. Improved financial resources allowed for the initiation of specific projects aimed at boosting the growth levels of local communities. Addressing issues like unemployment and poverty became central to government strategies.

- **Transition to a Productive Economy:** Recognizing the limitations of a rentier economy, Algeria has shifted its focus to a more productive economy based on self-resources. Local development is deemed crucial in this transition. Participatory democracy has emerged as a vital element, offering an alternative to representative democracy, which has struggled to meet the aspirations and goals of local groups.

- **Codification of Participatory Approach:** Acknowledging the significance of participatory democracy, Algeria has taken steps to codify its inclusion in the development process. This involves expanding the powers of local actors and enacting legislation that regulates local partnerships. The participatory approach reflects a sense of belonging among residents and engages them directly in addressing their challenges.

- **Stimulating Success of Programs:** Motivating all local actors to contribute to local participation is seen as a key factor in the success of local development programs. By involving residents in the decision-making process and aligning programs with their concerns, a sense of commitment and enthusiasm is fostered, increasing the likelihood of program success.

III.2 The Importance of Local Development in Light of Administrative Reform and the New Role of the State:

The economic challenges faced by Algeria, particularly the impact of declining oil prices since 2014, have prompted a reassessment of its development strategy. The predominant reliance on hydrocarbons has underscored the need for an alternative approach, especially in anticipation of the post-oil stage. Key considerations regarding the importance of local development in the context of administrative reform and the evolving role of the state include (A. Mebtoul, 2018, p.1) (Badis Ben Hadda, 2017):

- **Diversification of Development Strategy:** The economic downturn resulting from the collapse of oil prices necessitates a shift away from a hydrocarbon-dependent economy. Algeria must diversify its development strategy to reduce its reliance on oil and gas exports and explore alternative sources of revenue and growth.

- **Economic and Social Indicators:** Despite efforts to diversify, the Algerian economy remains highly tied to hydrocarbons, with 97 percent of exports and 65 percent of general budget revenues coming from this sector. This heavy reliance poses a significant risk, and the Algerian economy is perceived as vulnerable to a severe economic and social crisis when cash reserves run out.

- **Preparation for Post-Oil Era:** In anticipation of the post-oil era, Algeria is focusing on new trends in development. Preparing for economic sustainability beyond hydrocarbons involves adopting comprehensive strategies that encompass various sectors and prioritize local development as a central component.

- **Equitable Distribution of Development Fruits:** Local development is considered pivotal for achieving comprehensive and equitable growth. Without a focus on rehabilitating local development and implementing targeted programs, the benefits of development might not reach all citizens in an equitable manner. Addressing the growing demand for services, such as water, health, housing, and public facilities, requires a regional development policy and resource exploitation.

- **Reform of Local Development Management:** Recognizing that the success of local development is contingent on effective management, Algeria has initiated reforms in local development management mechanisms. Organizational, legislative, and human factors play crucial roles, with human resources being especially vital. Developing capable human resources within local administration is essential for adopting and overseeing local development programs.

- **Decentralization and Supporting Local Initiatives:** Administrative and organizational measures have been taken to transfer some powers from the central government to local groups, aligning with the principle of decentralization. The state's recognition of its sometimes limited capacity to address economic and social challenges has led to the promotion of local initiatives and empowering regional groups to take an active role in their development.

- **Citizen Participation:** Algeria acknowledges the significance of citizen participation as a cornerstone in local development. The authorities believe that involving citizens in decision-making processes builds trust and positions them as partners and contributors to development. Establishing channels of communication and engagement with citizens, particularly through civil society organizations, is crucial to facilitate their participation.

- **Linkage of Local Development and Participatory Concepts:**

The concepts of local development and participatory democracy are intricately linked. Local development is now viewed through the lens of citizens' rights to development, emphasizing the expansion of the participation base. The interconnectedness of these concepts recognizes that true development cannot be achieved without the active involvement of the local community across various affiliations and social segments in shaping its future.

In conclusion, the importance of local development in Algeria, amid administrative reform and a shifting economic landscape, is underscored by the need for diversification, preparation for a post-oil era, and the realization that

development must be inclusive, equitable, and driven by the active participation of local communities. The state's role in empowering local actors and fostering citizen engagement is crucial for achieving these objectives.

III.3 Participatory Democracy and Local Development Management in Algeria :

Algeria has undergone significant transformations in its economic and social landscape, accompanied by a fundamental shift in the role of the state. This transformation is characterized by a move away from a monopolistic role to that of a guide, motivator, and monitor, reflecting the evolving nature of the state's intervention in the development process. Successive economic reforms have ushered in a new era where the state is no longer the sole agent responsible for development but is viewed as a collaborative partner. This paradigm shift has had profound implications for the management of local groups, emphasizing their autonomy and revisiting mechanisms for local development management with a focus on addressing citizens' concerns and involving them as active partners in finding solutions.

To actualize this partnership and ensure its success, comprehensive legislation was deemed necessary. A legal framework was established to guarantee the application of participatory principles, considering localism as the fundamental basis for development. Localism not only serves as the cornerstone for development but also provides the framework for democratic participation, decentralization, and citizen engagement in the management of public affairs. The People's Assembly is identified as the foundational body for exercising the right to participation.

The legislative measures, including the Municipal Law (No. 10/11) and the State Law (No. 12/07), were introduced to address the imbalances present in the laws governing local communities. These imbalances were identified during the reforms of the 1990s, highlighting issues such as the lack of cooperation and coordination among members of the local community, as well as a deficit in dialogue and consultation between citizens and local elected representatives.

III.3.1 Popular Participation in Constitutional Texts:

Popular participation stands out as a foundational principle in the realm of local development, providing a platform for various segments of the local community to actively contribute to the design and execution of development programs that cater to their needs. In the context of Algeria, a commitment to building a popular democratic state, emphasizing citizen participation, has been reflected in legislative and constitutional texts since independence (Hamouni Muhammed et al. (2019) (Ghitawi Abdel Qader et al.(2018):

-Constitution of 1976: The preamble of the 1976 Constitution articulated the importance of popular participation in the management of public affairs across

various domains. It underscored the necessity of active citizen participation in economic, social, and cultural construction, as well as in the administration and oversight of the state. This constitutional commitment reflected the principles of the revolution.

-Constitution of 1989: Following the transformative events of the October 1988 uprising, the 1989 Constitution marked a departure from unilateralism to multi-partisanship. It sought to establish democratic principles and the rotation of power. The constitution envisioned the creation of constitutional institutions that would involve every Algerian, emphasizing the management of public affairs with the goal of achieving social justice, equality, and individual freedoms. Elected councils were designated as foundational to decentralization and as spaces for citizen participation in public affairs.

-Constitutional Amendment of 2016: A pivotal moment in Algeria's constitutional evolution, the 2016 amendment explicitly referenced the principle of participation at the local level. The elected council emerged as a key framework where citizens could express their will and oversee the functioning of authorities. This constitutional update reflected a deliberate effort to encourage participatory democracy at the local level.

-Constitutional Amendment of 2020: The 2020 constitutional amendment continued the trajectory of fostering participation, particularly through civil society. Citizens were encouraged to contribute to the advancement of democratic practices and participate in the achievement of development goals. This amendment recognized the role of civil society as a vital force in promoting participation and contributing to the broader democratic landscape.

III.3.2 Consolidating the Principle of Participation in the Regional Communities Law :

The enactment of Municipal Law 11/10 marked a significant step towards introducing reforms to the management of local communities in Algeria. This legislative initiative, encompassing Articles 11-14, aimed to align local governance with the dynamic societal transformations and new developmental directions. The key focus of these reforms was on local development management, with an emphasis on decentralization and the active participation of the local community in decision-making processes (Ossama Hassan (2006)).

-Municipal Law 11/10 Objectives: The primary objectives of Municipal Law 11/10 were to modernize local governance structures, align them with societal changes, and strengthen the functionality of local councils. The law recognized the municipality as a crucial hub for decentralization, citizenship practices, and the embodiment of participatory democracy at the local level.

-Role of Municipal People's Council: The law underscored the pivotal role of the Municipal People's Council as the institutional framework for practicing



democracy locally. It became the cornerstone of decentralization efforts and citizen participation in managing public affairs. The Municipal People's Council was designated as the platform for expressing democracy and the locus for citizens to actively engage in local decision-making processes.

- **Promotion of Participatory Democracy:** Municipal Law 11/10 explicitly endorsed the adoption of participatory democracy at the local level. It granted citizens the right to actively participate in the management of local affairs, emphasizing the importance of their contributions to decisions that impact the community's welfare.

- **Involvement of Civil Society Organizations:** The law encouraged the active involvement of civil society organizations, granting them the right to contribute to initiatives that served the public interest. Civil society organizations were empowered to provide advice, data, and relevant additions to decision-making processes upon the request of the Municipal People's Council.

- **Transparency and Access to Information:** Municipal Law 11/10 underscored the principles of transparency and access to information. It granted citizens the right to view the deliberations of the Municipal People's Council, ensuring transparency in local decision-making. Moreover, individuals with a vested interest were entitled to obtain copies of the minutes of these deliberations.

- **Participation through Committees:** The law provided avenues for citizen participation through committees formed by the Municipal People's Council. These committees were designed to have specific tasks aligned with local development objectives.

- **Importance of Administrative Information:** Recognizing administrative information as a model for embodying participatory democracy, the law highlighted its significance in fostering citizen engagement and effective contributions to local development.

In summary, Municipal Law 11/10 represents a comprehensive legal framework that consolidates the principle of participation in local development. By recognizing the municipality as a key player in decentralization and promoting citizen involvement, the law lays the groundwork for a more inclusive and participatory approach to local governance. Through transparency, involvement of civil society, and the empowerment of citizens, Municipal Law 11/10 seeks to enhance the democratic fabric of local communities in Algeria.

III.3.3 Mechanisms for Embodying the Principle of Participation in Local Development Management:

Algerian legislation has established several mechanisms to facilitate the active participation of citizens, civil society, and all local actors in the management of local development. These mechanisms are designed to enhance



transparency, encourage dialogue, and foster a sense of shared responsibility. Key mechanisms include:

- **Transparency in Local Affairs:** Algerian legislation, particularly Municipal Law No. 11/10, emphasizes the principle of transparency in managing local affairs. This includes administrative management that seeks to strengthen the relationship between citizens and the administration, reduce mismanagement, and combat corruption.

- **Citizen Consultation and Opinion Expression:** Articles 11/12/13 and 14 of Municipal Law No. 11/10 explicitly outline mechanisms for citizen participation, enabling them to express their opinions and contribute to decision-making related to public affairs. This empowers citizens to actively engage in the development and management of their local communities.

- **Activation of Participatory Democracy:** Algerian legislation supports dialogue and consultation as essential tools for activating participatory democracy in local community management. This involves opening channels of dialogue and discussion with citizens and civil society, fostering an environment conducive to collaborative decision-making.

- **Consultation on Development Programs:** Municipal councils are mandated to consult citizens and actively encourage the participation of civil society in the development of proposed programs. This mechanism aims to embody participatory development by incorporating the perspectives and input of local residents and organizations.

- **Consultation with Local Figures and Associations:** Municipal Law No. 11/10 grants the authority to municipal councils to seek consultation from local figures, experts, and civil or professional associations. This collaborative approach aims to leverage the expertise and insights of various stakeholders in managing local affairs.

- **Right to Participate in Decision-Making:** Algerian constitutions and laws explicitly state the right and duty of local citizens to participate in decision-making processes. Citizens have the right to be continuously informed about developments in their environment and are entrusted with permanent responsibility for local development.

- **Information and Annual Presentations:** Municipal Law No. 11/10 specifies the necessity for Municipal People's Councils to provide annual presentations of their activities to citizens. This ensures that the local community plays an active role in approving, overseeing, and managing local development programs, preventing their role from being merely formal but actively engaged.

In conclusion, these mechanisms established by Algerian legislation underscore the importance of citizen involvement, transparency, and collaboration in local development management. By fostering an environment of

active participation and dialogue, the legal framework seeks to empower citizens and civil society to contribute to the decision-making processes that shape the future of their local communities.

IV. Results of the Study:

The study has yielded several key results, shedding light on the dynamics and challenges associated with participatory democracy and local development management in Algeria. The notable findings include:

- Participatory democracy has emerged as the foundational element in local development. This signifies a shift towards inclusive decision-making processes that involve various segments of the local community.

- Participatory democracy serves as an ideal mechanism for transforming citizens from mere voters to active partners in societal development. This transition involves turning citizens from beneficiaries into influential contributors who take responsibility for their decisions and their success.

- Participatory democracy requires a well-defined legal system that outlines the modalities and mechanisms of citizen participation. This legal framework is essential to prevent participatory democracy from becoming an impediment to development.

- The study emphasizes that participatory development hinges on the presence of clear and codified powers for local councils. Without well-defined roles and responsibilities, achieving genuine participatory democracy in local development is challenging.

- Community participation in local development management can only be promoted through decentralization with clear definitions and rules. Effective decentralization is essential for empowering local communities and facilitating participatory self-development.

- The study underscores the importance of an organized civil society for effective participation in local decision-making. In Algeria, civil society is still in the development stage and needs further organization to become a meaningful partner in local development decisions.

- The embodiment of participatory democracy in local development management requires an informed and responsible local community. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of decentralization as a prerequisite for local participatory self-development.

- Despite the attention given to participatory democracy in recent years and its inclusion in local council laws, its practical application in Algeria is still distant. The study highlights the need for enhanced and organized legislation to avoid chaos and hindrance to development.

- The study recommends the adoption of a participatory budget, allowing active parties in the local community to allocate the regional community's budget



to priority projects. This approach optimizes the utilization of local capabilities and aligns with the principles of democratic participation, drawing inspiration from successful international models.

These results provide valuable insights into the dynamics of participatory democracy and its role in local development management, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the Algerian context.

V. Conclusion :

This study underscores the imperative of the state's new role in achieving local development goals by involving the local community and embracing its diverse components and orientations. Representative democracy and top-down development models have shown limitations, failing to extend development benefits to all segments of the country. The study establishes participatory development as a cornerstone of democratic partnership, emphasizing the need for community involvement in advancing localities.

Participation in local development management is not merely an option but a fundamental pillar of community development. The study asserts that participatory development, rooted in the exploitation of local peculiarities and capabilities, is essential for addressing the complex challenges faced by communities. State intervention alone is insufficient, and stakeholders must actively contribute, leveraging their knowledge of priorities and effective strategies.

The success of local development in Algeria hinges on the adoption of effective laws, legislation, and management systems by the central authority. It requires granting freedom of initiative to local groups, allowing them to make decisions aligned with their specificities. Involving citizens in setting, monitoring, and implementing local development programs necessitates a transparent and rational local government system.

Algeria's development model, traditionally top-down, must undergo reconsideration. Development is no longer a unilateral process dictated from above; instead, it has evolved into a participatory grassroots approach that demands the engagement of all local actors. The state relinquishes its monopoly, compelled to work in a decentralized manner and share responsibility for the local community's well-being. Even modern economic theories acknowledge the significance of local economies as the foundation for comprehensive development.

The economic and social transformations in Algeria, coupled with the state's reform policies and occasional inability to address citizens' needs adequately, have led to a shift. The state is now transferring powers to local groups, activating decentralization, and encouraging civil society's participation

in development. This adaptive approach aligns with the evolving landscape of local development and reflects a commitment to democratic principles and community empowerment.

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