**EVALUATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY AND FEDERALISM**

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**PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY**

1. **Principle of popular control**

This principle dictates that the right to a controlling influence over public decisions and decision-makers lies squarely on the people ; the citizens have a say in the decisions that affect their lives.

Popular authorization is actualized through regular elections which are competitive according to the universal secret ballot, which ensure voters a choice of candidates and policies and give them an opportunity to do away with politicians who no longer command their confidence. Although elections form a key mechanism for the popular control of government, they are not fully effective on their own without institutions to continuously secure a government’s accountability to the public and it is at this point that the parliament comes in to approve proposals for legislation and taxation on behalf of the electorate.

1. **Principle of freedom of information**

This principle stresses that no effective accountability of government is possible without the openness of their activities to public inspection. This principle provides a scope for the views of users in public service provision and for mechanisms of citizen redress. In order to actualize this principle, a democratic government should be responsive to public opinion.

1. **Principle of equal citizenship**

This principle dictates that the people should be treated with equal respect and as of equal worth in the context of public decisions. This principle of equal citizenship allows room for differences of belief, lifestyle and identity. Equal citizenship thus entails a complex form of equality rather than simple uniformity.

**PRINCIPLES OF FEDERALISM**

1. **Principle of distribution of powers**

There is no prior framework to determine which powers to be devolved to the federal authority and which to be devolved to the regional authorities. Despite this variation, there are some general trends in the distribution of powers which include :

* Granting a list of exclusive powers to the federal government and leaving the residual powers to the constituent states.
* Identifying a list of powers pertaining to the federal and constituent states respectively, with an added clause according residual powers to the federal government.
* Drawing up two lists; federal jurisdictions and concurrent jurisdictions. The constitute states have all the residue powers. The main purpose of residual powers is to identify an authority in charge of new affairs for which a jurisdiction has not been determined.
1. **Principle of legislating and administering**

In parliamentary setups, both the legislative and executive powers are mostly conferred on the same order of government. This principle offers the advantage, from an executive viewpoint, of being responsible and accountable for the implementation of its own legislation. Regardless of any asymmetric approach to Federalism, this principle ensures that the constitution remains the supreme legal instrument and cannot be amended unilaterally.

1. **Principle of continuous negotiations**

This principle states that a Federalism is not just a system of government but it is also a process of ongoing negotiations, an art of resolving conflicts, a cooperation and an approach based on compromise. It ensures that nothing is ever established once and for all.

**References**

Inter-parliamentary Union. (1998). Democracy: its principles and achievements. (103)

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