

## **Trust and people's participation at Gram Sabhas: Implications for Grassroots Democracy**

**Seema P. Salgaonkar**

Associate Professor, Dept. of Political Science, Govt. College of Arts Science and Commerce, Khandola, Marcela, Goa.

Email: seemasalgaonkar@yahoo.co.in

**Pradeep B. Salgaonkar**

Director,

Sri Sri Institute of Management Studies, Margao, Goa.

Email: pradeepsalgaonkar@gmail.com

*People's expectations from the rulers are getting eroded and this is resulting in trust violations. These violations have resulted in emotional reactions, with a mixture of anger, disappointment, frustration, and a sense of being exploited. The authors examine the influence of trust on people's participation at Gram Sabha (basic unit of decentralized government). They conclude that the people have lost trust in their Panchas (elected representatives at the grassroots), whereas they corroborate trust in Gram Sabha, and as a result they are attending Gram Sabhas in larger numbers to question, counter question and keep checks on their Panch members.*

**[Key words:** Trust, Participation, Grassroots, Governance, Gram Sabha, Panchas, Villages, Panchayati Raj Institutions].

### **Introduction**

A good state is one which fosters robust relations of trust. State based on trust can have more freedoms and can deal with contingencies more effectively. It can curb the inefficiencies of the rulers, make optimum use of capabilities of its citizens, and thus provide sense of security and satisfaction to them. A Nation's well-being, as well as its ability to compete, is conditioned by a single, pervasive cultural characteristic: the level of trust inherent in a society (Fukuyama 1995). Legitimacy of any political system is built on trust. The concept of trust is more likely to thrive in democracy. In democratic form of government though the citizens enjoy the right to elect their leaders, it is not possible to know the intentions and motivations of these leaders in advance. This is where trust comes in. Democracy implies principles like legitimacy, periodic elections, division of powers, rule of law, constitutionalism, civil rights, proper law enforcement, etc. If there is constant violation of these principles people will feel cheated and thus loose trust. Therefore trust becomes

an important element for successful functioning of democracy. Trust and democracy are interdependent. Trust exists in democracy and to build trust there is need to build democracy and safeguard its functioning.

### **Significance of Trust at Grassroots**

There is a growing emphasis on grassroots democracy in India. Democracy emphasizes on decentralization and devolution of powers. Gram Sabha forms the basic unit of decentralized government. Often addressed as people's forum, Gram Sabha is an integral part of Gram Panchayat. The decision making of Gram Panchayat gets validity only when it is endorsed by Gram Sabha. Gram Sabha provides a platform to the people to meet at a common venue and debate, discuss and solve the developmental issues of their village. They can also get their elected representatives to be answerable. Gram Sabha appeals to the general mass of population, regardless of class/caste/gender distinction and political partisanship. It is an opportunity, guaranteed by the constitution of India, to the weaker sections to voice themselves. Active participation is possible through Gram Sabhas.

The degree of success of democratic governance at the rural level depends on how active, both in quality and in numbers, is the participation of people at Gram Sabha. Active participation in deliberation, decision making and implementation process at the grass roots can pave way for benefit of many (Kothare 1998). Participation can be seen to have intrinsic value for the quality of life. Indeed, being able to do something through political Action - for oneself or for others - is one of the elementary freedoms that people have reason to value (Dreze and Sen 2002). Gram Sabhas are described as 'watch dogs' and 'a force to reckon with' (Kothare 1998). They are also referred to as a soul of Panchayat (Bandopadhyay 2000).

Successful Gram Sabha is the outcome of interplay of large number of factors, one of the key factors being element of trust. It is significant whether people trust in powers allotted to Gram Sabha, and whether they trust their elected representatives and the Panchayati Raj Institutions in getting solutions to their problems. The atmosphere at the Gram Sabha has to be congenial. A friendly Gram Sabha not only serves as a watchdog but helps ensure total involvement of people in developmental initiatives. There has to be an element of trust, people should trust their representatives, and the representatives should respect the sentiments of their voters. Larger and qualitative participation by people can develop Gram Sabhas into purposeful institutions and could be entrusted with responsible work of economic planning and social audit. This would go a long way not only in empowering the people, but would also lead to over-all development of village.

### **Understanding Trust**

Trust is that type of resource where it is built rather than depleted by more use. Trust refers to believing in a person that he/she will do what is expected from him/her. Trust is the result of estimation, opinion and evaluation of the trustee by the person who trusts him. The phenomenon of trust has been

applied by social scientists to understand processes in social sciences. Political trust refers to the level of faith that people have in their government (Citrin 1974). Every state should strive to maintain trust culture where citizens feel that they have a more or less equal and potential chance of making a difference in the political decision making (Sztompka 1999). Trust is the main motor of good governance (Hetherington 2005). While democratic government breeds trust, trust is a prerequisite for democracy. The higher the political trust the more stable the democracy will be. Lower levels of trust can lead to destabilization and economic insecurity (Atkeson and Saunders 2007). Political trust happens when citizens appraise the Government and its institutions, policy making in general, and/or the individual political leaders as promise keeping, efficient, fair and honest (Blind 2007). Political trust is the judgment of the citizenry that the political incumbents are responsive and will do what is right even in the absence of constant scrutiny (Miller and Listhaug 1990). Political trust is the central indicator of public's underlying feeling about its polity (Newton and Norris 2000).

Political trust can be divided into different components; trust in Political System, trust in Political Organizations/institutions, and trust in Political incumbents/leaders. David Easton distinguishes between diffuse trust and specific trust (Easton 1965). Diffuse trust refers to trust for the system/regime, while specific trust refers to trust for the current political leaders. Diffused political trust is system based trust, which is when trust is based on citizens' evaluation of performance of overall political system. When the trust is limited to institutions/individuals it is specific trust. However the two types of trust are not independent of each other, but sometimes micro-level (individual political trust) can influence individual's perception at macro level and vice versa. Citizen becomes trustful/ distrustful of Government 'because of their approval or disapproval of certain political leaders' (Citrin 1974). Lack of trust in specific incumbents may result in distrust in political institutions which may result in distrust in political system as a whole.

Almond & Verba maintained that increasing social trust is associated with increasing political participation, especially in the form of voting (Almond and Verba 1963). Increased participation, in turn, is associated with increase in political trust and democratization. However, a paradox is observed to this phenomenon where less trust can result in participation all time high. Sociologists like Gamson associates increasing social distrust and not trust, with more active political involvement and eventually, enhanced political trust (Gamson 1968). Thus trust can build/mar good and effective governance. When politics becomes extremely unyielding, one doubts whether our choices of elected representatives were wrong. To rectify these wrongs, one may plunge into more participation. Ultimately government and the people are not substitute to each other but are only complementary and therefore it is expected that the trustees will be trust-worthy.

**The research problem**

Today democracy in India is facing a pervasive problem in politics and government. Majority people are increasingly becoming disgusted with their elected representatives. Politicians as a group are perceived as less trustworthy over time. In absence of trust, people may become cynical about their political system. Dissatisfaction may alienate and even withdraw them from political processes. But, paradoxically, if the distrust is deep rooted it may even lead to wide spread and intense participation. It may also happen that people lose faith in their elected representatives but may still have faith in democratic institutions and systems and therefore they may participate in large numbers.

**Hypotheses tested**

In this article an attempt is made to understand why people attend Gram Sabha taken the element of trust as an important factor. Do people trust Panchayat functionaries, or do they have faith in Gram Sabhas, do they have faith in both or they trust neither? Or do they have faith in Panchayat as a grassroots institution per se but not in their elected representatives? These are important questions needing a probe.

The hypotheses tested are:

1. Lower the trust in elected representatives higher is the attendance at Gram Sabha.
2. Higher the trust in the institution of Panchayati Raj, higher will be the attendance of people at Gram Sabhas.
3. Higher the trust in capabilities of Gram Sabhas, higher will be the attendance of people at Gram Sabhas.

The act of attending Gram Sabha is an important component of participation and hence for this study participation is measured as attendance at Gram Sabha. Similarly, trust for this study means people's belief in words, actions and decisions of their elected representatives and therefore willingness to abide by their decisions. It would also mean people's belief in constitutional provisions and performance of the Panchayat. It refers to the confidence people have in persons (their elected representatives) and institutions (Panchayats) and in democratic system (Gram Sabhas) that they will behave in an expected manner. Here trust is considered as a multi dimensional construct and multi item scale is used to measure it.

The political trust for this study comprises of the following:

- A.** Trust in elected leaders (Sarpanch and Panchas); it comprises of consistency, honesty, commitment, ability to perform, accessibility and decisions made.
- B.** Trust in political institutions (Panchayat Raj Institutions); it comprises of working towards development of the village, transparency, sensitivity, and cooperation.
- C.** Trust in functioning of democracy (Gram Sabha functioning); it comprises of Gram Sabha keeping a check on Panchas, as a tool for socio-economic

development and weeding corruption, control over allocation of funds, role in protection of natural resources, and credentials of decisions taken.

### **Research Milieu**

Goa, geographically small but fast developing state, has been witnessing spur of activities at the Gram Sabha level in the last few years. Goa comprises of twelve talukas consisting of 189 Village Panchayats. The liberation of Goa in 1961, and the Goa, Daman and Diu Village Panchayat Regulation Act, 1962, gave an opportunity to the people in Goa to elect their representatives to the village bodies on the basis of adult franchise. The first elections to the Panchayats were held on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1962. Today under Panchayat Raj Act of 1994 there are officially spelt out powers of Gram Sabha. The territorial jurisdiction is comparatively small and it is possible to convene a single Gram Sabha for the whole village.

All these years, till recently, Gram Sabhas in Goa were poorly attended and were mere an administrative body carrying out functions of auditing accounts and identifying beneficiaries for welfare schemes in Goa. However there is a positive trend observed in the participation at Gram Sabhas today. The whole atmosphere is volatile. If at one instance people question the Block Development Officer (BDO) for dismissal of a Sarpanch, at another Gram Sabha one witness all the Gram Sabha members kneeling down and reciting prayers asking God to forgive the Panchas (elected representatives) for their wrong deeds. People, including women have begun to attend Gram Sabhas in sizable numbers all over Goa. People are participating in villages and there are heated discussions on various issues. There are also verbal clashes and charges made against elected functionaries. It thus, is very interesting to study the changing trends in participation at the gram level in Goa.

### **Data Analyses**

A structured questionnaire was framed and administered to respondents on the basis of convenient sampling. Sample size was total 900 voters as respondents. This comprised of 25 voters from each Panchayat, and three Panchayats from each of the twelve talukas in Goa were taken. Thus making it to 25 voters from each of the 36 Panchayats spread all over Goa i.e. (25x36 = 900). Questions covering all the hypotheses cited above were administered. Ten questionnaires had to be rejected as they were incomplete, thus reducing the size of the respondents to 890. The data collected was analyzed as follows:

#### **A) Trust in elected leaders**

The respondents were asked a closed ended question as to how much trust they have in elected representatives at Panchayat level, and the choices provided were 'total' 'somewhat' and 'not at all'. In all 542 respondents (60.8%) from a total of 890 replied that they did not trust their representatives at all. While 258 respondents (28.9%) said that they had somewhat trust, only 90 respondents (10.1%) said that they had total trust in their elected representatives. From these 542 respondents who lacked trust, 454 respondents (83.7 %) said they attended Gram Sabha often or regularly.

A further study was made to understand the significance of various variables of trust in elected representatives and its influence on attendance at Gram Sabha. A five point scale from 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' was administered to the respondents and important conclusions were drawn. The various variables of trust in elected representatives (Panchas) were consistency, honesty, promises made, commitment, and whether the Panchas informed the people about important decisions.

People who did not have trust in consistency of the Panchas attended Gram Sabha regularly or often. Total 584 respondents (65.6%) stated that they disagree with the statement that the Panch member was consistent. From these 584 respondents, 440 respondents (75.3%) said that they attended Gram Sabha regularly or often.

Similar conclusions were drawn with regard to honesty. Honesty is an important component of trust and is directly proportionate to it. More the honesty higher is the trust and vice versa. In all 388 respondents (43.6%) said that they disagree with the statement that the Panch member was honest. From these 388 respondents who had no trust in Panchas, 286 respondents (73.7%) said they often or regularly attended Gram Sabha. However, 334 respondents (37.5%) preferred not to answer positively or negatively and remained neutral. Thus it can be concluded that the swing is towards the opinion that Panch is not honest. A total of 616 respondents (69.2%) of the total respondents felt that their Panchas did not do what they promised. From these 616 respondents, 466 respondents (75.6%) attended Gram Sabha regularly or often. Therefore it could be concluded that those who attended Gram Sabha strongly felt that the Panch did not do what he/she had promised.

The respondents were asked whether they agree with the statement that 'the Panch member informs us about important decisions'? Total 660 respondents (74.1 %) said that they disagree with the statement and said that the Panch member does not inform them about important decisions. From these 660 respondents 474 respondents (71.8%) said that they often or regularly attended Gram Sabha and were very dissatisfied with their Panch members as they did not take the Gram Sabha into confidence and often took decisions on their own, which proved harmful to the interests of the people and the village as a whole. This has led to growing of mistrust in the people about their representatives which might have resulted in larger participation at grassroots to question the audacity of the power holders.

### **B) Trust in Panchayati Raj Institutions**

The respondents were asked a closed ended question as to how much trust they have in Panchayati Raj Institutions, and the choices provided were 'total', 'somewhat' and 'not at all'. In all 432 respondents (48.5%) from 890 answered that they had total trust in Panchayati Raj Institutions, but sizable number that is 334 respondents (37.5%) replied that they had only somewhat trust in Panchayati Raj. Further analyses reflect that out of these 432 respondents who

replied that they had total trust in Panchayati Raj Institutions, 336 (77.7%) respondents said that they attended Gram Sabha often or regularly. And from among the 334 respondents who said that they had somewhat trust in Panchayati raj Institutions, 220 (65.8%) said that they often or regularly attended Gram Sabha.

The reasons why a large number of respondents said they had 'somewhat trust' were unfolded when individual variables were taken up and opinions of the respondents were sought. The respondents were given four statements and they had to tick mark their responses on a five point scale, 'strongly disagree' 'disagree' 'neutral' 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. The statements were:

1. The Panchayat has been working for the development of the village
2. The Panchayat has been transparent in its transactions
3. The Panchayat has been sensitive towards people's problems
4. The Panchayat has been cooperative to people's demands

The respondents were either confused or preferred to take a neutral stand on the various aspects on Panchayat functioning. Some of them even refused to answer and therefore there are missing values. The data analyses reflected mixed responses. The respondents were asked whether they agree with the statement that the Panchayat has been working for the development of the village. In all 415 respondents (46.6%) agreed that Panchayat worked for the development of village. From these 415 respondents, 366 respondents (88.1%) said that they attended Gram Sabha often or regularly. It was seen that respondents, whether they attended Gram Sabha sometimes or often or regularly, there was a consensus that the Panchayat has been working towards development of people.

However the respondents disagreed with the statement that the Panchayat was transparent in its transaction. It was observed that 386 respondents (43.3%) said that the Panchayat was not transparent, while 228 respondents (25.6%) preferred to remain neutral. Those who attended Gram Sabha regularly also disagreed that Panchayat was transparent.

The respondents again preferred to remain neutral on the question whether panchayat was sensitive towards people's problems. Total 368 respondents (41.3%) disagreed that panchayat was sensitive towards people's problems. From these 368 respondents, 264 respondents (71.7%) attended Gram Sabha regularly or often. About 260 respondents (29.2%) answered affirmatively and 258 respondents (28.9%) preferred to remain neutral. The responses were of mixed nature and the neutral responses being more it was difficult to draw definite conclusions.

About 372 respondents (41.7%) disagreed that panchayat was cooperative, while 254 respondents (28.5%) found panchayat cooperative. Once again there was large number of neutral replies, 260 respondents (29.2%) preferred to remain neutral and 04 respondents (0.4%) refused to reply. About 258 respondents (69.3%) from those who disagreed attended Gram Sabha often or

regularly. About 184 respondents (72.4%) from those who agreed that panchayat is cooperative attended Gram Sabha often or regularly and about 190 respondents (73%) who preferred to remain neutral, attended Gram Sabha often or regularly. The picture that came up was quite distorted to reach to definite conclusions. This was because of too many neutral replies.

Thus it could be seen from the above analyses that though people agree that panchayat is for the development of the village, they don't find this body sensitive, transparent and cooperative as is normally expected. This could be because of the leaders and other functionaries who constitute them, and in whom the people don't trust much. Also bureaucracy, red tape and corruption might have further reduced people's trust in panchayat bodies. However, with the available data it could not be established that attendance at Gram Sabha is influenced by the trust/lack of trust in Panchayati Raj Institutions, here it refers to panchayat.

### **C) Trust in Gram Sabha**

The respondents were asked as to how much trust they have in Gram Sabha, and the choices given were 'total', 'somewhat' and 'no trust at all'. It was heartening to note that people have lot of trust in Gram Sabha. In all 568 respondents (63.8%) from the sample of 890 answered affirmatively they had total trust in Gram Sabha. About 234 respondents (26.2%) said they have somewhat trust in Gram Sabha. Whereas only 88 respondents (9.8%) said that they have no trust in Gram Sabha.

304 respondents who attended Gram Sabha often, said that they had total trust in Gram Sabha, and 170 respondents who attended Gram Sabha regularly, said that they had total trust in Gram Sabha, thus totalling to 474 respondents (53%) who had trust and who attended Gram Sabha often or regularly.

A further study was made to understand the significance of various variables of trust in Gram Sabha and its influence on attendance at Gram Sabha. Variables taken were 'check on the Panch', 'weed off corruption', 'role in protecting natural resources', and 'implementation of decisions taken at Gram Sabha'. A five point scale from 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' was administered to the respondents and important conclusions were drawn.

The respondents were asked whether they agree with the statement that the Gram Sabha can keep a check on the elected representatives. A clear picture emerged when 724 (81.3%) respondents positively said that the Gram Sabha can keep a strong vigil over the Panch members. People have realised the power the Gram Sabha can wield over the Panchas. About 532 respondents (73.4%) from these 724 respondents said that they attended Gram Sabha often or regularly. Thus those who attended Gram Sabha have trust that Gram Sabha can keep a check on the Panchas.

Further the respondents were asked whether they agree with the statement that Gram Sabha can weed off corruption at grassroots. About 660

respondents (74.1%) agreed that Gram Sabha can be effective in weeding off corruption. From among these 660 respondents 482 respondents (73%) said that they attended Gram Sabha often or regularly. Therefore it can be concluded that people feel that Gram Sabha can weed off corruption at grassroots and therefore they feel confident about the Gram Sabha functioning, and attend it in large numbers.

Every village has its own natural resources, water bodies, forests, wastelands, hills, etc. The panchayat is expected to play a major role in protecting these resources, and therefore the onus lies on the gram members of that village. The respondents were asked whether they agree with the statement that Gram Sabha is effective in protecting natural resources of the village. It was amazing to note that 708 respondents (79.5%) agreed that Gram Sabha is empowered to protect natural resources of the village. In fact this trust in Gram Sabha has led to increase in participation at Gram Sabha as 528 respondents (74.5%) from 708 respondents said they attended Gram Sabha regularly or often. Therefore it can be concluded that people are attending Gram Sabha as they trust that Gram Sabha can be active in protecting natural resources of the village.

Gram Sabha can get the ultimate authenticity and power only when the decisions of Gram Sabha are implemented by the panchayat. People can trust the Gram Sabha fully only when they are sure that the decisions taken at this level are binding on the panchayat. The respondents were asked whether they agree with the statement, 'decisions taken at Gram Sabha are implemented by the panchayat.' The data analyses reflected a paradoxical scenario. Total 526 respondents (59.1%) disagreed with the statement that the decisions of the Gram Sabha were implemented by the panchayat. About 374 respondents (71.1%) from these 526 said that they attended Gram Sabha often or regularly.

In the above analyses of various components of trust in Gram Sabha i.e. whether Gram Sabha can keep a check on the Panch, whether it can weed off corruption, its role in protecting natural resources, etc the respondents were very optimistic and positive and the general trend was one of trust in powers and capacity of Gram Sabha. However, the analyses of whether the decisions of Gram Sabha were implemented by the panchayat gave completely a 'U' turn to the whole scenario. The question that arose was, if people feel that the resolutions adopted at Gram Sabha are not implemented by panchayat then what is the meaning in having trust in the capacities of Gram Sabha. Minute analyses led to a new proposition that since the people believe that Gram Sabha has lots of powers and capacity; people flock to the Gram Sabha to make the panchayat authorities obliged and succumb to the demands and pressure of Gram Sabha. They no longer want to allow the elected leaders to have their own way. They feel that since the decisions are not implemented, more force and vigour is required at Gram Sabha to exert pressure and get the panchayat authorities to listen to Gram Sabha. To stop the panchayat authorities from doing as they wish, people are more motivated to attend Gram Sabha in large numbers.

### **Trust and Participation: Regression Model Summary**

From the above analyses, it was clear that trust or lack of it does influence participation at Gram Sabha. Regression test was done to reconfirm these findings. The Regression Model summary reflects that trust in Panchayati Raj Institutions is insignificant as far as attendance at Gram Sabha is concerned.

Trust in elected representatives is significant but is negative, (beta value  $-0.240$ ) thus reflecting that less the trust in elective representatives the attendance at Gram Sabha is more. The trust value is **minus** 7.638 at significance level 0.000 that means it can be said at 95% confidence level that because of low trust in elected representatives the participation is high at Gram Sabha.

For the trust in Gram Sabha and participation at Gram Sabha, the 't' value is more, that is 8.497 at significance value of 0.000 that is with 95 % confidence it can be said that the trust in Gram Sabha and attendance at Gram Sabha is positively related.

The regression model summary between trust and attendance shows R Square value of 0.174 that means about 17.4% of the variation in participation at Gram Sabha is determined by trust. The model is significant at 95% confidence level.

### **Conclusion**

Trust is one of the important components influencing participation at grassroots. From the above analyses it is clear that people have lost trust in their elected representatives, and as a reaction they are attending Gram Sabha in larger number to question, counter question and keep checks on their Panch members. People's expectations of the rulers are getting disconfirmed and this is resulting in trust violations. These violations may result in emotional reactions, with a mixture of anger, disappointment, frustration, and a sense of exploitation. And this is what is happening at Gram Sabhas in Goa. It was observed that various reasons have led to lack of trust in the political leaders. The elected representatives have failed to solicit or engage the concerns of people. Lack of consistency, failure to keep promise and lack of commitment on the part of the former have resulted in diminishing trust. Bias towards family cronies, kith and kin, offering crumbs of state patronage in exchange of support etc, have resulted in diminishing trust. A corrupt system definitely breeds in distrust and the failure of the elected leaders to take people into confidence, and inform them about the important decisions taken, have further led to this distrust.

Local self government is the best form of government any community can aspire for. Decentralization coupled with local governance can repair the breach between the ruler and the ruled. It can promote partnership between governors and the governed. There can be partnership in sharing power, responsibility and achievement. And to further promote this partnership at grassroots, trust is all the more important. The trustee has to abide by duties and

responsibilities. They have to act in responsible manner. It is necessary to increase and rebuilt the trust. Rebuilding trust is not an event but is an ongoing process. It is a bilateral process where both elected representatives as well as Gram Sabha members will have to reconcile their differences and have realistic yet more authentic, welfare oriented model for the village and both work in cooperation towards its realization.

## References

- Almond, G and S Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political attitudes and Democracy in five nations*; Princeton; Princeton University Press.
- Atkeson, L and K L Saunders. 2007. 'The Effect of Election Administration on voter confidence – A Local Matter?'; *Political Science & Politics*, 40, 655-660.
- Bandopadhyay D. 2000. 'Panchayat in Karnataka'; *Economic and Political Weekly*; August 31, 35-41.
- Blind, P. 2007. 'Building trust in the Government in the twenty first Century, 7th Global Forum on reinventing Government; Building Trust in Government', 26th-29th June, Vienna, Austria.
- Carole Pateman. 1970. *Participation and Democratic Theory*, Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.
- Citrin J. 1974. 'Comment: The Political Relevance of Trust in Government'; *American Political Science Review*, 68, 3 September, 973-988.
- Dreze J., A.K. Sen. 2002. *India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity*; Oxford University Press; New York, United States.
- Easton, D. 1965. *A System Analysis of Political Life*; New York; Wiley.
- Fukuyama, F. 1995. *The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*; New York; Free Press.
- Gamson, W.A. 1968. *Power and Discontent*; Dorsey; Homewood III.
- Hetherington, M. J. 2005. *Why Trust Matters: Declining Political Trust and the Demise of American Liberalism*; Princeton; Princeton University Press.
- Kothare R. 1998. *State against Democracy: In Search of Human Governance*; Delhi; Ajanta.
- Miller, A.H and O. Listhaug. 1990. 'Political Parties and Confidence in Government: A Comparison of Norway, Sweden and US'; *British Journal of Political Science*, 20, 3 July, 357-386.
- Newton, K. and P. Norris. 2000. 'Confidence in Public Institutions: Faith, culture, or Performance?' in J.J. Pharr and P.D. Putnam (ed.) *Disaffected Democracies: What's troubling the Trilateral Democracy?*; Princeton University Press 52-73; New Jersey.
- Sztompka P. 1999. *Trust: A Sociological Theory*; Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.

[The final revised version of this paper was received on 07 November 2014]