

---- Deliberative Democratic Tournament Election (DTE) ----
(Joji WATANABE, 2017 June 8)

One of my senior friends with international experience says “The idea of Deliberative Democratic Tournament Election (DTE) is worth Nobel Peace Prize.”

I also quite agree because DTE has all the necessary elements to make our society productive and sound for all the engaged citizens through series of discussions to establish mutual understandings on any issues in our society. If you are interested and have chances, I hope you will challenge to implement this and find its results and long-term effects.

DTE can be a great system at schools, communities, etc. as an innovative method to choose leaders and/or projects to vitalize the whole organization or the society, because this can also collect ideas and suggestions from the participating members at the same time. Through holding many “Small Meetings¹” by proper facilitation, the participants will establish human networks, which can work to create synergy and /or solve problems at later stage.

Tournament is an ordinary practice to find a champion in sports e.g. soccer and tennis, because this is an open, competitive, yet fair system as far as the players keep rules of the game. It should be also stressed that people, especially good ones can get motivated in competitions. The same as any sports.

One of the strengths of DTE is that the number of participants at each “Small Meeting” can be 4 to 30 depending on the situation. Also the election rate² at each “Small Meeting” can be 10% to 50% depending on the allowed time/number of “Small Meetings”. Even in case all run for President of the student union at a school with 3,125 students, 5 tiers of “Small Meetings” can choose one President at the election rate 20% at each “Small Meeting”.

The other benefits of DTE are;

a. Endurance and tough-mindedness (non-violence) can be developed among the participants.

¹ At “Small Meetings”, all participants provide opinions with Q & A with the other participants without any psychological pressure by effective facilitation. If any one of them keeps silent throughout the meeting, it is categorized as “Big Meetings” which do not provide effective solutions and develop frustration in the society. (Source of extreme actions/terrorism by youths) In general, current elections in the world is categorized as “Big Meetings”, because most voters have neither face-to-face discussion with the candidates, nor learning opportunities by facilitation (management body) of the election. I developed this idea from my consulting experience in Asia, Africa, CIS, etc. for more than 30 years. I had extremely successful cases even under desperate conditions where no proper exit can be found in Africa and CIS.

² The proportion % = those chosen / the total number of the participants. The chosen are candidates to be leaders and/or candidates to be voters in the final “Small Meeting”.

- b. Learning opportunities on issues & solutions through discussion. (Kaizen effect)
- c. Informal networks can be created among the participants.
- d. Bottom-up Approach will enable more effective Top-down Approach. (Group dynamics e.g. "QCC activities in Singapore")
- e. Proper facilitation can establish sound organization culture, and good ones will rise.
- f. Can identify extremists or the like at an early stage (expected to reduce terrorism).
- g. No vote counting at the center is necessary. (Vote counting is often dubious.)
- h. Minimized effect of media which seeks scoops/scandals, creating big ups/downs by nature.
- i. No money is needed for candidates, but official screenings by the election committee.

Case: Election of Chairman/officers of Students' Council

--- Application of Deliberative Democratic Tournament Election (DTE) ---

In discussing politics of various countries, we often use the word "Democracy". However, the concept of the western "Democracy" which is supposed to lead to proper governance & effective management, does not seem well supported by the election system prevailing in today's world.

Although the level of understandings on "Democracy" and the political system depend on the country, it can be generally agreed that voters' decisions too much depend on the influence of certain media which seeks scoops/ scandals for high view rating, and even certain forms of bribes (or reciprocal dealings), either legal or illegal particularly in the developing world.

⇒Leadership / Election system is an issue

- Election = 「Big Meetings」 (Voting without enough knowledge on candidates.)
- Inadequate information (Manifest?) (Current question is Not What, But How.)
- Don't-care attitude by voters. (Due to very small individual influence.)
- Number of candidates too small (Candidacy-divide, family successors)
- Influence by big organization (Seeking livings, reciprocal dealing on the short term)
- Inappropriate influence by media (Make sensations for money)
- Very few experienced hands-on in realities
- (No hands-on experience even for science & tech.-graduates politicians)
- No one tells who vote who, when scandals take place (No PDCA possible for Kaizen)
- 「Zero Bottom-Up Effect」 (Decreased propensity by sweet words, subsidies, stipends)
- No community building (Due to no Small Meetings)

All issues to be tackled by the people / community
being taken by Politics (Big budget?),
and "Small Meeting" can.

The other problem about media is that some reporters choose to promote turbulences/conflicts, by emphasizing potential threats among races, ethnicities, religions, etc. to sell themselves.

Moreover, just one-vote-for-each voter irrespective of individual understandings/efforts does not seem reasonable to choose good leaders of the community/society, because some voters use so many hours by seeing several candidates and exchange opinions with them for better understandings, whereas others look at the pictures of candidates and just vote without

thinking. The worst of all is that one-vote-for-each system provides disincentive for voters to think about their own future in relation to the leadership to be established by the election.

In DTE, however, those who participate in face-to-face group discussions will influence others, and can learn from one another. Some of them will be motivated to learn or teach, and even feel responsible for the leadership, because of their direct engagement in selection process. (even at one-vote-for-each)

In DTE, those who think better and deeper can talk longer than others. Occasional discussions at each election in respective regions will provide some warnings on certain extremists, yet providing opportunities for the youths and the under-privileged to express opinions in proper manners.

The essence of DTE is created opportunities for all the individuals to be heard by others with various views to exchange ideas, thereby creating learning opportunities for the future leaders to contribute to the community and the society.

Now let me suggest a case of applying DTE for choosing student leaders at student councils/unions at high schools and universities. Steps are as follows.

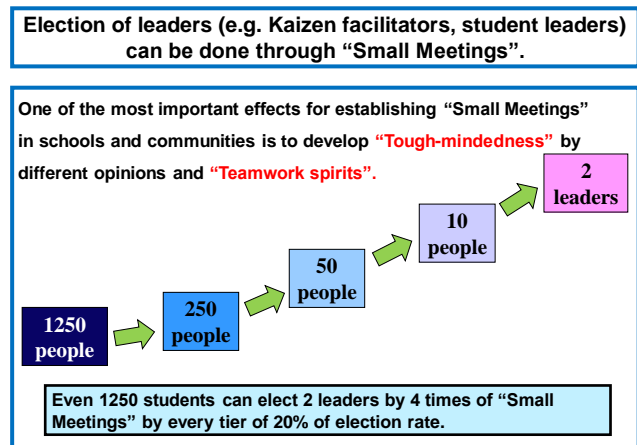
1. To make four groups with 10 students each in case there are 40 students in class.
2. To assign 2 facilitators (Chief and an assistant.) for each group.
3. To read out “Rule and Code of ethics for DTE” and put signature. (All the participants sign.)
4. To define agenda for discussion through group discussion. Typically,
 - a. The current school conditions and areas for improvement
 - b. The ideal conditions or image of the school
 - c. The barriers to change to the ideal conditions & image
 - d. The action plans to realize the ideal conditions
5. To discuss and define an image of leadership to implement the action plans.
6. To have a session to have speeches and Q & A from candidates.
7. To vote to choose final voters and/or candidates to be leaders.
(to choose, for instance, 20% of the total number of the participants)
8. To provide suggestions/requests to the chosen final voters/leader candidates
(Those chosen are called “Honorable” with certificates to establish pride in themselves.)

In the next tier, all those chosen in the first tier form 10-membered groups again and take the same steps as the first Deliberative Discussion.

In this way, 20% of all the voters are chosen every time. If the total number is 1250, the first tier of discussions will choose 250 students, and the next will choose 50 out of 250. The next 10. Those 10 students can be councilors to represent and manage the student union with different roles with the top leader to be chosen by their discussion also.

The established network through discussions can be used so that all the chosen councilors are connected to all the voters through “Small Meetings” for Deliberative Discussions, and anyone can provide any suggestions through the bottom-up network even at the later stage.

(The slides taken from my seminar “Enterprise Mongolia” as a keynote speaker at the International Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development in Ulaanbaatar on May 12-14, 2016.)



Understandings to be shared among the participants are;

- A. Difference in opinions comes from four kinds of difference.
“Knowledge”, “Experiences”, “Logical flow to conclusion” and “Definition of the issue”.
- B. Every time difference is found, the participants should discuss “Why” to understand more, which will then reduce mutual unconcern each other.

One of the major reasons why terrorism continues is that the feelings of individuals, especially young ones are just being neglected, not giving them chances to express their opinions in the current politics. But in DTE, all voters are connected to the chosen top leader(s), and suggestions to the top through the established “Network” will be a normal practice.

In the current political systems in any country, politicians are not well connected to the under-privileged and the lowest income group. Moreover, they work too far from wisdom at the shop floor necessary to solve problems, creating lots of inefficiencies/ wasteful decisions, either domestically or internationally.

During political campaign, most politicians promote themselves, but avoid raising difficult issues which require endurance and efforts by the people, which will then keep problems unsolved for a long time. Moreover, the cost of campaign is too big for anyone to bear, including most successful politicians. This high cost is one of the major reasons for hidden business by politicians. Troublesome is the fact that some candidates promote hatred and despise to certain ethnic groups to win elections. In other words, they take advantage of negative emotions of the voters.

If DTE is applied, it will train the participating people, in terms of endurance, deepen understandings of various perspectives, importance of mutual communications among people, etc. which will then reduce source of terrorism.

Moreover, some with balanced and mature educated perspectives on the country and the world, most suitable to be our leaders will rise through the competitive tournament election through face-to-face discussions. I believe that rather than the current prevailing election system dependent on media, we need to establish better election systems based on individual discussions and individual decisions.

Thank you for your reading. (Your message is welcome, if any, to watanabe_j@nifty.com)