

# **COURSE GUIDE**

## **POL 411 POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY**

### **Course Team**

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## INTRODUCTION

### Welcome to **POL 411- Political Psychology**

This course is a three (3) unit course for undergraduate students in Political Science. The course guide gives you an overview of what political psychology is about. It equally, provides you with the necessary information on the organisation and requirements of the course.

## COURSEAIMS

The Course seeks to enable you to:

- be up to date with the methodological issues which the course has to grapple with;
- know whether political behaviour patterns is universal or is restricted to people who live in one particular culture or in one type of political system.
- discover which perceptions, personality, and group dynamics affect the policy-making arena.
- challenge the commonly held assumptions that self-interest drives behaviour and to explain how psychological factors affect our behaviour as well as others in ways we rarely recognise at the time the behaviour takes place.
- understand the interconnectedness of many patterns of behaviour which appear distinct;
- comprehend the enormous complexity of human behaviour and realise the importance of understanding political psychology's significant role in improving the human condition.

## OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Course, you should be able to:

- explore the psychological findings in studies of social identity, values, attitudes, emotions encompassed in personality and cognitive processes of the 'Political Being' in a particular political environment
- examine some of the saddest events in human history (e.g. Nazism/world war 1 and 11) and in recent times terrorism (such as Boko Haram, MEND, MASSOP); and on the other hand, explain the political psychology (i.e. the psychological causes) of ethnicity, communal conflicts, nationalism, political extremism etc.

- describe how to prevent conflict, how to resolve conflict, and how to recover from it.

## **WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE**

The course is written in study units within Modules. You are also provided with related reading materials for each topic examined. At the end of each unit, you will be required to attempt Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) for assessment purposes. And at the end of the course, you will write a final examination.

## **STUDY UNITS**

There are eighteen units in this course, spanning four modules. These are as follows:

### **Module 1 Meaning and Nature of Political Psychology**

- Unit 1      What is the Idea of Political Psychology?
- Unit 2      Methods Adopted in the study of Political Psychology
- Unit 3      Historical Perspectives of Political Psychology
- Unit 4      Components of the Political Being
- Unit 5      The Political Being in a Social and Political Environment

### **Module 2 Personality and Its Approaches**

- Unit 1      Personality: What does it Constitute?
- Unit 2      Psycho-Analytic/Dynamic Theory
- Unit 3      Psycho-Biographies/Psycho-Biographical Method
- Unit 4      Analysing Psycho-Pathologies of Political Leaders
- Unit 5      Personality Trait Theories

### **Module 3 Manifestations of Psychological Theories in Leadership, Power and Politics**

- Unit 1      Explaining Power
- Unit 2      Political Culture
- Unit 3      Public Opinion
- Unit 4      Political Information Processing and Decision-Making
- Unit 5      Perceptions and Foreign Policy

### **Module 4 Elections and Electoral Behaviour**

- Unit 1      Understanding Elections
- Unit 2      Personality of Politicians
- Unit 3      Political Socialisation

## **TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES**

Every unit contains a list of references/books for further reading. Try to get as many as possible of those textbooks and materials listed. The textbooks and materials are meant to deepen your knowledge of the course. For this course, the following textbooks are suggested for further reading:

Martha, Cottam, Beth Dietz-Uhler, Elena M. Mastors, Thomas Preston. (2004). *Introduction to Political Psychology*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group.

Iyengar, Shanto. (1993). 'An Overview of the Field of Political Psychology.' In, Shanto, Iyengar & William, J. McGuire. (Eds.). *Explorations in Political Psychology*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

## **ASSIGNMENT FILE**

An assessment file and a marking scheme will be made available to you. In the assessment file, you will find details of the works you must submit to your tutor for marking. There are two aspects of the assessment of this course; the tutor marked and the written examination. The marks you obtain in these two areas will make up your final marks. The assignment must be submitted to your tutor for formal assessment in accordance with the deadline stated in the presentation schedule and the assignment file.

The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will account for 30% of your total score.

## **TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

You will have to submit a specified number of the (TMAs). Every unit in this course has a Tutor-Marked Assignment. You will be assessed on four of them but the best three performances from the (TMAs) will be used for computing your 30%. When you have completed each assignment, send it together with a Tutor marked Assignment form, to your Tutor. Make sure each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline for submissions. If for any reason, you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor for a discussion on the possibility of an extension. Extensions will not be granted after the due date unless under exceptional circumstances.

## FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING

The final examination will be a test of three hours. All areas of the course will be examined. Find time to read the unit all over before your examination. The final examination will attract 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions, which reflect the kind of self-assessment exercise, and tutor marked assignment you have previously encountered. You should use the time between completing the last unit, and taking the examination to revise the entire course.

## COURSE MARKING SCHEME

The following table lays out how the actual course mark allocation is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Assignments (Best Three) Assignment out of Four Marked	= 30%
Final Examination	= 70%
Total	= 100%

## PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

The dates for submission of all assignment will be communicated to you. You will also be told the date of completing the study units and dates for examinations.

## COURSE OVERVIEW

Unit	Title of Work	Week(s) Activity	Assessment
	<b>Course Guide</b>		
<b>Module 1</b>	<b>Meaning and Nature of Political Psychology</b>		
<b>1</b>	What is the Idea of Political Psychology?	Week1	Assignment1
<b>2</b>	Methods Adopted in Political Psychology	Week2	Assignment2
<b>3</b>	Historical Perspectives of Political Psychology	Week3	Assignment3
<b>4</b>	Components of the Political Being	Week4	Assignment4
<b>5</b>	The Political Being in a social and Political Environment	Week5	Assignment5

<b>Module 2</b>	<b>Personality and its Approaches</b>		
<b>1</b>	Personality: What does it constitute?	Week1	Assignment1
<b>2</b>	Psycho-Analytic/Dynamic Theory	Week2	Assignment2
<b>3</b>	Psycho-Biographies/Psycho-Biographical Method	Week3	Assignment3
<b>4</b>	Analysing Psycho-Pathologies of Political Leaders	Week4	Assignment4
<b>5</b>	Personality Trait Theories	Week5	Assignment5
<b>Module 3</b>	<b>Manifestations of Psychological Theories in Leadership, Power &amp; Politics</b>		
<b>1</b>	Explaining Power	Week1	Assignment1
<b>2</b>	Political Culture	Week2	Assignment2
<b>3</b>	Public Opinion	Week3	Assignment3
<b>4</b>	Political Information Processing & Decision-Making	Week4	Assignment4
<b>5</b>	Perceptions and Foreign Policy	Week5	Assignment5
<b>Module 4</b>	<b>Elections and Electoral Behaviour</b>		
<b>1</b>	Understanding Elections	Week1	Assignment1
<b>2</b>	Personality of Politicians	Week2	Assignment2
<b>3</b>	Political Socialisation	Week3	Assignment3

### GETTING THE MOST FROM THIS COURSE

You will be required to study the units on your own. However, you may arrange to meet with your tutor for tutorials on an optional basis at a Study Centre. Also, you can organise interactive sessions with your course mates.



In distance learning, the study units replace the University lecture. This is one of the great advantages of distance learning, you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your pace, and at a time and place that suits you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to the lecturer. In the same way a lecturer might give you some reading to do, the study units tells you when to read, and which are your text materials or set books. You are provided exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise. Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit, and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units as a whole. Next to this is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. The moment a unit is finished, you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If this is made a habit, then you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course. The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from the reading section.

The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, telephone your tutor. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Read this course guide thoroughly, it is your first assignment.
2. Organise a study schedule.

Design a 'Course Overview' to guide you through the Course. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Important information, e.g. details of your tutorials, and the date of the first day of the semester is available from the Study Centre. You need to gather all the information into one place, such as your diary or a wall calendar. Whatever method you choose to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates and schedule of work for each unit.

3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please, let your tutor know before it is too late for help.
4. Turn to Unit 1, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. You will need your set books and the unit you are studying at any point in time.

6. Work through the unit. As you work through the unit, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
7. Keep in touch with your Study Centre. Up-to-date on course information will be continuously available there.
8. Well, before the relevant due date (about 4 weeks before due dates), keep in mind that you will learn a lot by doing the assignment carefully. They have been designed to help you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you pass the examination. Submit all assignments not later than the due date.
9. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
10. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
11. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking, do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutor's comments, both on the tutor marked assignment form and also the written comments on the ordinary assignments.
12. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the Course Guide).

## **TUTORS/FACILLITATORS AND TUTORIALS**

Information relating to the tutorials will be provided at the appropriate time. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must take your tutor-marked assignments to the study centre well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible. Do not hesitate to contact your tutor if you need help. Contact your tutor if you experience any of the following:

- do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings;
- You have difficulty with the exercises;
- You have a question or problem with an assignment or with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

Moreover, you should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face-to-face contact with your tutor and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in discussions actively.

## **SUMMARY**

The course guide gives you an overview of what to expect in the course- Political Psychology such as: how perceptions, personality, and group dynamics affect political behaviour patterns and subsequently policy-making. We wish you success in the course and hope that you will find it both interesting and useful.

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## **MODULE 1**

# **MEANING AND NATURE OF POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY**

Unit 1	What is the Idea of Political Psychology?
Unit 2	Methods Adopted in the study of Political Psychology
Unit 3	Historical Perspectives of Political Psychology
Unit 4	Components of the Political Being
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### **UNIT 1**

## **WHAT IS THE IDEA OF POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY?**

### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	What is the Idea of Political Psychology?
3.2	Why Politics (Political Science) and Psychology?
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit introduces the idea, nature of political psychology as an inter-disciplinary field of study that attempts to explain political behaviour through the application of psychological principles.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- highlight the idea behind the study of political psychology
- explain the field political psychology
- justify its inter-disciplinary nature.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 What is the Idea of Political Psychology?

As a student of Political Science who expectedly *studies* politics as well as *analyzes* it, the obvious question above is not out of place. Rather, it brings into focus the questioning of: ‘what counts as political’.

As a starting point to proffering answers, let us consider the understanding of the political (or politics) in the tradition of David Easton,(1965:50) (see box 1).

Box 1:

‘As interactions which are predominantly oriented toward the authoritative allocation of *values* for a society’.

As a fact/value distinguishing political scientist, you will agree that in the italicised word in *box 1* which inevitably presupposes the process of allocation of power should be treated as a subjective preference deriving from objective underlying forces. Implicit here is obviously Easton’s treatment of *values* as merely reflecting ‘power distributions or relations’ which definitely is unable to treat seriously the most important political consideration upon which political struggles are centred on e.g.: who moulds the values?; what moulds the values?; Where do the values originate from?

Therefore, to address these questions not as givens but substantively as people’s ideas (either values, justice or common good), that instigate arguments (by politicians, government, citizens, parties etc) on reasoning’s (about what forms and influences such opinions/reasoning’s either in the form of normative prescription or empirical description and in turn what they influence) that centre on political behaviour is the *fulcra* of **political psychology**.

At this point, you should get set for its concise understanding. **Political Psychology** is the understanding of the human *thought processes, feelings, emotions, motivations* and *behaviour* of people involved in political activity from the perspective of ‘psychology’. Implicit in this definition is the fact that political psychology inevitably interrogates ‘factual’ questions (*See box 2*) about actions which reflect all of the italicised concepts with political undertones yet solutions or answers proffered have been limited political answers.

## Box 2:

Why do people behave in a particular manner in politics? Why do Africans conceive politics as a do-or-die affair? What influenced or caused the Nigerian Civil War (as well as others in other African countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Syria etc or any war that appears pointless and futile e.g. World War 1, Vietnam war?) Why is terrorism fledging globally and what justifications can there be for the hideous barbaric acts which the perpetrators commit against innocent victims? What informs the decisions presidents/governments make? Why would amnesty be granted to ‘militants’? Why should there even be an on-going contemplation of same for ‘Boko Haram’ insurgents despite their hideous acts of barbarism in Nigeria in recent times? Why does the culture of impunity thrive among Nigerian leaders? Why would a governor tempt fate by marrying an underage girl, when he knows full well the controversy the action would cause. Why would the June 12, 1993 elections be cancelled?

Admittedly, proffering answers to these thought-provoking harmful acts to humanity that affected and still affects every citizen directly or (in) directly would appear to defy explanations if not seem incomprehensible if examined from the traditional explanations of political behaviour. However, with political psychology explaining the behaviour along the continuum of political issues or questions raised in *box 2* and more such as everyday political behaviour in voting, decision-making practices and any extraordinary kind of behaviour cannot be remote. In other words, political psychology or psychology of political behaviour explores the psychological underpinnings necessary in the understanding of the different but complex (political) behaviours which more or less was a dilemma for the traditional explanations. In the context of these explanations so far, is the imperative that Political Psychology transcends ‘merely’ describing political behaviour as it is without a psychological explanation of the (political) behaviour/activity of political actors.

Primarily, the premise of Political Psychology resides in two basic principles: *political influence and political behaviour*.

Consistent with what has been adduced so far, it is apparent: *what political psychology is not?* It certainly is not about ‘how to manipulate people’s behaviour’. Moving forward, this field, like other sciences, in seeking the Universalist understanding of phenomena, i.e. the many psychological patterns that influence how individuals act or behave in politics adopts psychological principles and multiple inter-disciplinary

methodologies such as: experiments, surveys and qualitative case studies, etc (*see unit 2 for more explanations*).

As a subject of behavioural pursuit, you should know that most early work which adopted a psychological perspective on politics were tilted in one direction-*individual psychological process to political behaviour*. Clearly, the contemporary political psychology opted for the much more far-reaching in influence-*bidirectional psychological process to political behaviour*.

The tenet of the latter strand is succinctly captured thus:

*The perceptions, beliefs, motives, opinions, values, interests, styles, defenses and experiences of individuals, be they citizens, leaders, group members, bureaucrats, terrorists, or revolutionaries – are seen as influencing what they do politically; and, in turn, the political culture, political system, mechanisms of political socialisation, political movements and parties and the international system are perceived as having an impact on what people are like' (Hermann, 1986:2).*

In addition, archival findings further indicates that people portray sensitive authoritarian tendencies – including a concern for power, aggression, submission, cynicism and superstition especially during periods when the environment is threatened (Doty, Peterson and Winter, 1991).

To round off this section, you should know that the two-way strands of political psychology provide for a wide range of mechanisms by which psychology and politics is intertwined which the next section would address.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Is the idea of political psychology crucial?

### **3.2 Why Politics (Political Science)and Psychology?**

The answer about the relationship between Politics and Psychology has been, and remains, more direct because from the outset, all sciences maintain some contact with philosophy and psychology before disassociating from it. Having said that, it is important to know on the one hand, that when Philosophers who inquire into how people know the world raise questions about human perception, thinking, and learning, it



is conceived as *empiricism*. On the other hand, Psychology is involved in ethics because of '*its interest in how people should and ought to behave. To this extent, psychology cannot be entirely divorced from describing how people behave*'.

In effect, Philosophers become Psychologists in practice, if not in name. This dovetails into why traditionally explanations about the nature of *homo politicus i.e.* (the nature of man as a political animal according to Aristotle), have been rooted in individual and collective psychology. The reason for this is not far from the fact that traditionally, psychology meant *psyche-logos*, the study of the soul. However, since the supernatural soul had no place in naturalistic science, to this end, pursuing psychology along traditional lines barred it from science on the grounds of unscientific dualism.

Further, the nexus between politics and psychology is also traceable to the work *Principles of Physiological Psychology*, Wundt, (1873) which centred on "an alliance between the two sciences". The first is physiology. This "informs one about those life phenomena that we perceive by our external senses", and the second, psychology, "looks at the person from *within*". The result of the alliance obviously culminated to a new science, *political psychology*, whose tasks were two: *to investigate and to throw light upon the totality of life*.

Political Psychology or Science of Psychology/Politics can be described as a marriage of first two disciplines; psychology and political science. This non-traditional relatively new field in the social science is usually conceived to be a hybrid of inter-disciplinary *pot-pourri* of disciplinary sources, including cultural anthropology, history, economics, neuroscience, behavioural genetics, sociology, public administration, criminal justice and organisational behaviour. Interestingly, despite the contribution of literature from all these disciplines, the *ideas* and *principles/methods* of psychology are stressed as central in the alliance. Importantly, in relation to the use of ideas, it serves as a guide to theories about how groups/ real-life group make decisions or the decision-making processes employed by (political) groups. This role is obvious in political advertising or campaigns with findings by psychologists in the United States which attested to the fact that often negative political advertisements/campaigns are ineffective, because the sponsor of the negative advert is evaluated negatively by same-party voters. Let us consider the following examples in Nigeria to buttress our point (*see examples in box 5 & 6*).

**Box 5: Negative Advertising/Campaigning**

Jonathan's chances at the polls (March 28 presidential elections) were impacted negatively by the... utterances of Femi Fani-Kayode, director of media and publicity, Peoples Democratic Party Presidential Campaign Organisation, PDPPCO, and Ayo Fayose, Ekiti State governor. This upset many movers who turned their backs on PDP and Jonathan- the President who though may have his faults, but carries the baggage of his party, believed to have taken Nigerians for a ride over the last 16 years(TELL April 13, 2015:29).

**Box 6:** Barack Obama, United States President, commended the Nigerian people for 'their resilience and commitment to deciding their future which spurred them to come out *enmasse* to exercise their civic rights during the March 28 presidential elections (TELL April 13, 2015:31).

This union of disciplines fosters a very fruitful dialogue that explains 'what people do as political actors by adapting psychological concepts, theories useful and relevant to politics, then applying them to the analysis of a political problem or issue.

Based on what has been explained so far about the nexus of Political science and Psychology (now Political Psychology), it is apparent the field thus strongly eschews the "disciplinary egocentrism" that has come to characterise academic norms (Iyengar, 1993), to reflect the diversity and multi-level foundations of political thought and behaviour. Specifically, research in this field on the bases of political attitudes, for example, points to a wide range of causal factors that cut across traditional disciplinary lines, including genes, physiology, personality, socialisation, historical period, economic conditions and group membership.

At this point, it is important you know that Political psychologists usually don't limit themselves to examining, observing, and diagnosing politicians. Rather, political Psychologists, try to analyse the motives of politicians, as well as provide valuable information on political social relations. Political psychologists may also observe the public as a whole as well as be interested in discovering what citizens really think of their government officials, how they feel about political events and news, voting behaviour, nuclear deterrence or politics of genocide. For this reason, politicians have an incentive to hire political psychologists to help them persuade public opinion, win elections, and win support for various issues.

The merging of these strands of disciplines culminate into understanding the psychological underpinnings of human behaviours in politics (behaviour of political actors) necessary in forestalling the claim by the traditional approach (traditionalists) in political science that the acts/behaviour of people in the pursuit of self-interest politics is rational (this is based on the assumption that human beings as social perceivers, often operate on the belief that behaviour is quite rational) and predictable based on common sense. But both notions: **rationality and predictability** was debunked by the research instituted by psychologists who discovered that:

- (1) Human behaviour transcends common sensical rational judgement (i.e. human behaviour is not always rational). This is based on the impetus to expect rational behaviour that is based on: people's need to **understand**-their world.
- (2) Human behaviour is predictable: Implicit here, is the tendency of people to **predict** the likely consequences of their behaviour as well as those of others. The two features (see further explanations in unit 2) dovetails into highlighting a more accurate perspective of human beings as political actors.

For political psychologists 'people are motivated to act in accordance with their own personality characteristics, values, beliefs, and attachments to groups'. This claim is justified by the behavioural imperfections of people at information processing and resolving complexities of world issues, thus, making people employ rational or commonsensical but often faulty, perceptions of the other person in decision-taking about whatever action(s) to take. The paradox of all these is the notion that people often do things that are contrary to their own interests, values, and beliefs. These perspectives highlight the imperative of understanding the complexities of political psychology in order to explain political behavioural exigencies that often seem *irrational*. Let us take an example from the first assumption which states that behaviour is not at all atypical (i.e. is not unusual and non-conforming with a people's beliefs and values) (*see box 3*).

**Box 3:** A commonly held belief was that Nigerians would vote as usual with parochialism for the incumbent based on the belief that the hate campaigns and the latent desperation of members of the political class, there was bound to be trouble, whichever way the pendulum swung during the March 28, 2015 Presidential election in Nigeria. Based on the belief and value of post-election violence as well as the fear that armed security men deployed to keep peace could molest them-a common fabric and indeed Africa. Thus, among these Nigerians who remained on ground, in the light of these features, the decision bothered on either

staying in-doors and watch developments from the media or pitched tent with the incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP, despite contentious issues of corruption surrounding his administration against Muhammadu Buhari, of the All Progressive Congress, APC who has widely acknowledged values of integrity and Spartan lifestyle (Adapted from TELL, April 13, 2015:9& 15).

The Second Assumption states that people are fully aware of their beliefs and attitudes and act in accordance with them, behaving in such a way as to maximise values (*see box 4*).

**Box 4:**

Despite the acrimonious stories running rampant on the airwaves and in print before March 28, 2015 Presidential election day, Nigerians who refused to be inundated with intimidation about attacks, threats and incumbent winning elections but were resolute in performing their civic duty to vote for 'change'. This came in the guise of the defeat of the incumbent by the opposition candidate. This behaviour is an illustration of renewed impetus for nation-building geared towards want for maximisation of values on democratic initiatives and structures (Adapted from TELL, April 13, 2015:9& 15).

Now, consider the two examples of assumptions. What difference do you notice in both of them? One, you will notice what happens when the 'beliefs and values' about the same subject is framed in a different way in box 3 & 4. Two, you obviously noticed that both examples portray human beings as violating their beliefs and values. Three, is the *power of social stereotypes*. This feature portrays the deeply held values and belief of the two different groups within (the ethnic groups/zones) despite their outward countenance which no doubt aligns with stereotyping.

Four, is the power of *social categorization* (to be discussed in full details later). This process to psychologists resides in the non-conscious categorisation of others into groups. The essence of addressing this feature is none other than that the act of categorising people into groups appears logical and rational. While, this is not so because of the consequences of categorising one because of the problem of categorising people into groups on the basis of characteristics that they might not possess.

What can be inferred from both illustrations? In sum, the two examples highlighted the effects of Nigerian citizens' decision to vote the opposition- Muhammadu Buhari considering that he lost in all three previous attempts in 2003, 2007 and 2011 against the incumbent. More

so, it sets all pondering on how the voting choices revealed a different voting behaviour of Nigerians especially as no harm was done in relation to acts of violence. All these must be considered in line with the big picture albeit the fact that not every vote cast was in favour of the winning candidate or a particular party. Further, ethnic politics, clientelism etc., which are all, in part, outcomes of stereotyping/stereotypes lend credence to what political psychology tries to explain which is that political actions/behaviour in human societies or in the polity cannot be understood through conventional political science explanations.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

In what ways has the ‘hybrid’ of politics and psychology been of use in the study of political behaviour?

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The unit explained what constitutes Political Psychology and also explored the relationship between Politics and Psychology especially its role in expanding the knowledge of political science or politics.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Political Psychology was explained as a field of study which seeks to expand knowledge on issues of common interest among many other traditional problems e.g. (dictatorship, sit-tight syndrome of African leaders, war, tyranny and corrupt leaders) of concern in political science with tools of psychology.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Explain Political Psychology as a reflection of diversity and multi-level foundations of political thought and behaviour?
2. How does thought process, feelings, emotions, motivations and behaviour of political actors justify the idea of political psychology?
3. Analyse how Political Psychology transcends ‘mere’ description of political behaviour.

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## **UNIT 2      SCIENTIFIC METHODS ADOPTED IN POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Observations & Explanations or hypothesis
  - 3.2 Features in Experimenting
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit introduces you to the scientific method approach adopted by Political Psychologists in understanding and predicting behaviour.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the scientific method
- list the four cyclical steps
- discuss the essence of variable(s) and experiment.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Observations & Explanations or Hypothesis**

The making of observations (see more explanation in p51 of your POL 318 course material) is the first method in any scientific analysis aimed at understanding and predicting of behaviour. In other words, the first task in the scientific method is identifying or ascertaining any variable(s) (i.e. factors that influence or rather is influenced by another factor). For instance, when an observation is initiated about a social or political phenomenon (e.g. to determine the motive of *Boko Haram* insurgency or electoral violence), the essence is to identify as well as understand the likely factors that facilitate the behaviour of the actors.

You should also note that variables vary in degree or differentiation hence the adoption of observation in political psychology is to ascertain *how* variance in one variable/factor explains change in another variable/factor. Equally, variables are measured and as a student when

conducting any research, a measurement instrument which is reliable and valid in apt so as to provide accurate measurement(s) of what is being investigated.

### **Explanations or Hypothesis**

Implicit in this second stage of the scientific method which entails the formulation of tentative explanations or hypothesis, is the making of predictions about the nature of the relationship between variables.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the justification for observing a social or political phenomenon in any scientific study?

### **3.2 Features in Experimenting**

Further observations about experiments revealed:

- (1) That experiments are of essence to psychologists because of the research and confidence associated with each finding.
- (2) That the careful conduct of experiments under carefully controlled conditions makes it possible for psychologists to make inferences about relationships which they suspect already exist. Implicit therefore, in experimenting or experimental research is its oscillation between *the manipulation of an independent variable, control over extraneous variables, and random assignment of participants to conditions*. Manipulation of *the independent variable* (expectedly should have values set and chosen by you prior the conduct of the experiment. For instance, if you are conducting a research/study on the effect of federal character in Nigeria and patriotism, federal character is the independent variable.

Also, the onus is on you as a researcher to randomly assign ratios to each federal character appointment(s), and then observe the impact or effect on patriotism) involves exposing participants to various levels of it and observing its effects on another variable, the **dependent variable**. The values here (i.e. the dependent variable) is predicted to change as a function of the former (independent variable). You can consider the first example here again. Patriotism is predicted on whether the appointments by federal character into various positions from each geo-political zone in Nigeria are biased or 'objective'.



The latter feature which you have to observe in any experiment is control over **extraneous variables**, i.e. variables that from the outset you had no interest in but which may alter the behaviour of your variable in whatever research you are conducting. Let us still consider the previous example here. Thus, if a particular zone gets wind of the fact that their appointments in 'plum' positions was facilitated through ceaseless pressures mounted by lobbyists before the federal character was reflected in the appointments, expectedly the feature of sectionalism or favouritism of one zone against another may be thrown-up.

Further, as a researcher you would do well by controlling the extraneous variables in your design of experiments. Having explained all the features there are in experimenting, it is important to reiterate that in this stage, the test of the validity of the hypothesis is dependent on observations made. Importantly, it is pertinent to reiterate that the *many experimental techniques of psychology cannot be applied to the study politics*. Why is this so? You wonder? The reason is none other than that the insights about *experiments are not possible with political science because the patterns of laboratory observation of behaviour in psychology does not holds sway in the same pristine quality in the practical world of human beings*. This is irrespective of not being able to isolate extraneous factors as influences on behaviour. For a better understanding of what has been discussed, let us consider these examples on the possibility of applying experiments (see box below).

**Example 1:** A psychologists who wants to study group behaviour, designs an experiment in which all other factors (such as competing group loyalties, personality characteristics, gender, or ethnicity) may be isolated from the study.

Example 2: In the practical world of politics, the experimentation of group behaviour cannot but deal with the isolated factors in the first example. The problem of experimentation with this second example is premised on the psychologists explaining further about the personality traits which influence behaviour. In effect, with the marrying of the two disciplines-political psychologists must figure out what personality traits are important in politics.

What important points have you taken away from the two examples in the box? One, that there can never be an exact parallel between what a psychologist sees and explains from a sample experiment and what is seen and explained of political behaviour in practice. Two, as relevant as the application of psychological concepts are to the explanations of behaviour; it still remains difficult because of the realities of the real world of politics. Implicit here, as alluded in the second example (see box) are the resolve of questions which bother on: what the political

personality traits are? And, if identified, why are they politically important?

Of essence from all these analogy is the notion that political psychologists claim that certain political personality traits abound which are not only relevant but important in influencing political behaviour. These behaviours' concern: how a person deals with conflict, how complex the person's thought processes are (i.e. how cognitively complex), etc. In effect, psychologists bring to bear the conditions, attitudes that might affect behaviour in either decision about voting, engaging in pre or post- election violence. Once these posers are addressed then the political question queries not only which attitudes about politics but under circumstances do these affect how we vote? In Nigeria, ethno-religious sentiments/attitudes determine issues about candidates, parties and groups in relation to elections. This runs contrary to the United States where attitudes about candidates, issues, parties and groups affect how people vote. Thus, although attitudes vary in importance in determining the vote, under differing circumstances, all the posers must be addressed for psychology to be said to have been applied to political behaviour.

### **Refining and Retesting Explanations**

Implicit in this fourth step is the notion of reformulating hypothesis consistent on the observations made in the previous step. Obviously, this would involve the exploration of the limits of the phenomenon to include causes of relationships, or expanding on the relationships discovered.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

How feasible is the controlling of extraneous variables in any Political Psychology?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The unit explained what the goal of Political Psychology is in adopting scientific methods in order to establish Universalist laws of behaviour geared towards explaining and predicting political behaviours and events.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The four cyclical steps of the scientific method were exhaustively explained as well as the challenges that may be experienced when applied to human behaviour.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain why the making of further observations and experimenting is of essence to psychologists and invariably Political Psychology.
2. Are dependent and independent variables mutually exhaustive?
3. Why is it necessary to reformulate hypothesis in any scientific study?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## UNIT 3 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES OF POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Origin of Political Psychology
  - 3.2 The Eras of Development in Political Psychology
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit explains the origin and developments in research interests in the different eras of development.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the origin of political psychology
- discuss the various research focus of each era of its development.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Origin of Political Psychology

It would interest you to know that the concept of political psychology first appeared in a London Times editorial in 1860, the same year Adolf Bastain published a book *Der Mensch in der Geschichte (Man in History)*, volume three of which was entitled, Politische Psychologies (political psychology) projected it as an academic discipline and subsequently appeared in a New York Times review in 1891. Emile Boutmy (1901; 1902; 1994) was also writing on political psychology well before it became an academic topic in the English-speaking world. Nevertheless, following the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the emergence of psychology as an autonomous science became ripe. The field of study became instituted at the height of World War 1, specifically in January, 1917, following G. B Grundy, an Oxford Historian's proposal titled: 'Political Psychology: A Science which has yet to be created with this opening paragraph:

*... ‘Those who are acquainted with history, and especially those who are by profession teachers of the subject, will recognize that this present war, and the circumstances which have preceded and accompanied it, have brought into prominence a new department of historical science, political psychology, the psychology, that is to say, not of the individual, but (wo)men acting in masses. The mass may vary from a very small company of individuals to the millions of a modern nation having a great utility in preventing international wars that may arise due to mistaken beliefs about other people’s based on our mistaken beliefs about ourselves.’ (Grundy, 1917:155(Words in bracket my addition)).*

The utility of this sub-field of study is further reinforced by Grundy argument that national behaviour could be understood as the product of the inherited qualities and sentiments of human nature, further shaped by national education policies and by the unique circumstances of each nation’s historical experiences. The reason for this he claimed was related to the many modern woes caused by governments conceiving theories of political psychology for their own population, and then generalising those for other nations. For example, fearful nations feel the effects of fear on themselves and therefore misconceive that fear can be used to terrorise others into submission and into accepting peace at any price. This conception can be faulty especially for Africa. Why? This is linked to faulty political psychology may work for western societies which have focused on education and sciences to the neglect of humanities. This is detrimental because: real-politik (masquerading under various aliases such as ‘Might is Right’ or ‘the End justifies the Means’ etc.) as science in its most ruthless form translated into political life. This form of reasoning expectedly focuses on education on sciences which more or less entails the dominance of Popperian theory and quantitative methods, to the neglect of contact with the disciplines of the humanities. In essence, Grundy was against a political psychology dominated by theories and qualitative methods at the expense of contact with other disciplines of the humanities. This is especially to checkmate the frequency of wars which most times are waged out of human psychology. Be that as it may, the formal application of psychology to politics (aimed at understanding political behaviour) is traceable to the early 1970’s.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain how Political Psychology as an academic discipline was instituted.

### 3.2 Era's of Development in Political Psychology

Prior, the specific year mentioned in the previous section of political psychology's application to politics, there have been different waves of its development. For you to understand this chequered historical development, I have chronicled the different eras of development into tables, as shown below.

**Table 3.1: Era's of Development(First Era)**

Era	Land Mark Developments
<b>First: 1920s; 1940s and 1950s</b>	<p><b>*Psychodynamic psychology (personality theory):</b> Focus on psycho-analysis or psycho-analytic studies of the personal characteristics (<i>motivation and traits</i>) of political leaders. This feature previously was conducted using psycho-biographies i.e life stories of a person for data until the adoption of new social scientific techniques (which include questionnaires, interviews, experiments, and stimulations).</p> <p><b>*influence of childhood socialisation</b></p> <p><b>*a broader culture on adult political preferences:</b> The focus here was on the general hypothesis on diverse aspects of personality such as anxiety, aggressiveness, ego-strength, self-esteem, dogmatism and social dominance), all of which are critical concepts in determining individual political attitudes and organising political belief systems.</p> <p>The most significant proximal development in the field's evolution toward maturity is generally credited to the work of the American political scientist Harold Lasswell. In the seminal works <i>Psychopathology and Politics</i> (1930), <i>World Politics and Personal Insecurity</i> (1935) and <i>Power and Personality</i> (1948), Lasswell applied psychoanalytic theory to a broad range of political questions, including the organisation of belief systems, the role of political symbols in mass persuasion, personality and democratic character and styles of political leadership. His most important idea was that political worldviews are rooted in psychological compensations, specifically in the displacement of private motives and emotions onto public objects which are then rationalised in terms of the public interest.</p> <p>*More recent European thinkers such as Marx, Pareto, Le Bon and Freud and later those associated with the Frankfurt School (e.g., Horkheimer, Fromm, Marcuse) crafted diverse theories of the interaction between society and the mind, producing a rich body of work out of which modern <i>political psychology</i> took shape in the middle of the 20th century.</p>

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Table 3.2

Era	Land Mark Developments
<p><b>Second:Post-1950s to 1960 and subsequent years</b></p>	<p><b>Substantive and methodological foci shift from macro humanistic and individual case studies to survey research on the ingredients of policy attitudes and vote Choice.</b></p> <p>Implicit here, is the shift or move from the study of personality to <i>public opinion, political attitudes and voting behaviour</i> (McGuire (1993). The need for an understanding and use of the italicised abstract concepts was related to its traditional consideration as a prerequisite of democratic competence, even if it constrained the capacity of ordinary citizens to comprehend and respond normatively to elite political debate. This explanation began with the pivotal large-scale survey collection of data from 1952 by researchers at the University of Michigan. The result of the research was the publication of <i>The American Voter</i> (Campbell et al., 1960).</p> <p><b>Main findings of the book</b></p> <p>The book sparked-off debate about the following: (a) differing models of electoral behaviour and the nature of political attitudes (the concern is on whether citizens derive their political attitudes from general ideological principles such as liberalism and conservatism) in the U.S; (b) the concept of party identification defined as a deeply rooted group attachment originating in childhood and adolescent socialisation; (c) conceptual frameworks such as reference group theory (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes 1960) and rational choice Theory (Downs 1957) and <b>in particular cognitive consistency theory (Festinger 1957)</b> which is concerned about ‘how partisanship or ones partisan orientation serves as a filter or perceptual screen of political information’ to explain political behaviour.</p> <p>Specifically, consequent upon the failure of ideological abstractions (position of the previous era) to provide a foundation for mass opinion, the general question which this era sought to address centred on ‘how do ordinary citizens manage to decide what they stand for politically’? Proffering an answer, political psychologists concerned themselves with the possibility</p>

	<p>of <b>self-interest</b> with the aim of “people supporting policies that promote their own material interests while opposing policies that threaten them” (Kinder and Sears, 1985: 671).</p> <p>Interesting, despite the empirical evidence of the concept which gained it the popularity, the caveat with the above proposition is none other than that <b>‘self-interest</b> plays only a minor role in shaping evaluations of issues and candidates and has pronounced effects only when the stakes are large, clear and certain (Sears and Funk, 1991). Further, in the review of their work Kinder and Sears (op.cit:671), drew attention to the fact that ‘neither losing a job, nor deteriorating family financial conditions, nor pessimism about the family’s economic future has much to do with support for policies designed to alleviate personal economic distress’.</p> <p>In the same guise as the former, the question about ‘the political relevance of asking what the government has done for <i>me</i> lately’ – pales in comparison to <b>“sociotropic” voting</b> (asking what the government has done for the country as a whole (Kinder and Kiewiet, 1981).</p> <p>This positions prompted Edelman, (1964); Kinder and Sears (1981); Sears and Henry, (2005) to contrast between ‘the weak effects of self-interest to the more powerful influence of political symbols’. This position is supported by the theory of <b><i>symbolic politics</i></b> (Sears 1993) which holds that during childhood and adolescence, people acquire affective responses toward a variety of symbols through a <b>process of classical conditioning</b>’. A cogent example which buttresses this point is that of many white Americans who likely encounter the pairing of the symbol “blacks” with a negative evaluation.</p> <p>The point you have to take away from this analysis is that ‘the strongest of these learned symbolic responses become stable predispositions, which are thought to guide the attitude formation processes.</p> <p>What should also be of particular interest to you about this era is <b><i>the theory of symbolic politics</i></b> which holds that ‘attitude objects are composed of one or more symbolic elements and that attitudes toward the object as a whole reflect some combination of the affects previously conditioned to the specific symbols included</p>
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	<p>in it” (Sears, op.cit: 120). This theory has been explored most prominently in the domain of race, where Sears and his associates have shown that racial prejudice exerts a powerful influence on racial policy attitudes. Equally, Sears (op. cit) provided an expansive theoretical account of symbolic politics theory and contrasts it to other theories of attitude formation and inter-group relations.</p> <p><b>Subsequent research:</b> Centred on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a)influence of partisanship in shaping political perception and evaluation;</li> <li>(b)analysis of political socialisation,</li> <li>(c ) the role of media in affecting political attitudes,</li> <li>(d) radical politics in the United States, and other aspects of American political behaviour.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.3**

<b>Era</b>	<b>Land Mark Developments</b>
<b>Third:1980s</b>	<p><b><i>Cognitive revolution:</i></b> The attention is in the way information is acquired, represented and organised in memory and retrieved in making political judgments. This endeavour culminated into several <b><i>fundamental insights about the nature and quality of public opinion and electoral behaviour.</i></b></p> <p><b>Other important developments</b></p> <p>(a)Proponents by the two schools make different assumptions/distinctions about the manner in which political information is represented in the cognitive system and about the processes that underlie the construction of opinions. The <b><i>distinction between memory-based and on-line models of political evaluation</i></b> (Lavine, 2002). The former (<b><i>memory-based</i></b>) make the assumption that citizens’ conscious recollections of information mediate political judgments. In effect, judgment is hypothesised to be constrained by memory – by citizens’ capacity to recall what they like and dislike about political issues and candidates as they enter the voting booth or when they are asked to express an opinion in a survey (Zaller, 1992). The latter (on-line models), on the contrary, argue that citizens extract the evaluative implications of political information at the</p>

	<p>moment of exposure, integrate them into an on-going running tally and then proceed to forget the non-gist descriptive details. The implication of this is that judgments are not constrained by the pros and cons citizens can subsequently recall; to express an opinion, they need only to retrieve the current value of the updated on-line tally (Lodge, McGraw and Stroh, 1989).</p> <p><b>Note:</b> It is pertinent for you to understand that this <i>process-focused model of political evaluation</i> forcefully challenged the longstanding assumption that rational choice flows from information-holding and ideological awareness.</p> <p>Consistent with the aforementioned two models that proffered popular solution to the paradox between citizens' informational deficits and their propensity to make good decisions is the concept of <i>heuristics</i>, or cognitive shortcuts. This allows inferences to be made about more detailed political information. This perspective is termed "low information rationality" (Popkin 1994). It is predicated on the view 'of humans as 'limited information processors' or 'cognitive misers' who have become quite adept at applying a variety of information 'shortcuts' to make reasonable decisions with minimal cognitive effort in all aspects of their lives" (Lau and Redlawsk, 2001; p. 952). It is apt to know that the occasional skepticism about <i>normative utility of heuristics</i> (Kuklinski and Quirk, (2001) :295); Lau and Redlawsk 2001), is premised on the conventional wisdom that they "elevate the ordinary citizen from a hopeless incompetent to a reasonably capable participant in democratic politics" (Kuklinski and Quirk 2001, p. 295). Further, is its claim to have provided a plausible account of how a chronically inattentive electorate can manage to make political judgments in line with its values and interests. These positions have made cognitive shortcuts have undeniable appeal. On the other hand, there appears to be a dearth of direct empirical evidence on whether citizens typically use heuristic cues <i>appropriately</i>; that is, whether they actually improve the quality of political decisions.</p> <p>Let us now consider a list of <b>cost-saving devices</b> as identified by researchers includes: parties, interest groups, polls, endorsements, politicians, horse-race information, and physical appearance, consensus among political elites, presidential approval and feelings toward</p>
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salient social groups. For example, rather than taking the trouble to learn the details of a complex policy debate, citizens can save time and effort by delegating their judgments to trusted experts (e.g. friends, party leaders, the Club members or religious Coalitions) who are perceived to hold the same values (Lupia and McCubbins 1998).

(b) Decision-making: The focus here was on the role of emotion. The bane of this focus runs contrary to the long-held belief that passions are a negative force in human behaviour. This is because recent insights from neuroscience suggest quite the opposite – that the experience of emotion is crucial to making good decisions (Damasio, 1994; Le Doux, 1996). In support of emotions is contemporary research in social psychology which indicates that emotions: (a) regulate the quantity and quality of information processing; (b) elicit specific cognitive appraisals; (c) affect perceptions of risk; and (d) increase the explanatory power of models of decision-making (Loewenstein and Lerner 2002), and recently, the exploration of the role of emotion in politics (Lerner, Gonzalez, Small and Fischhoff, 2003). The specific focus on whether emotion can exert a causal impact on risk perceptions related to terrorism especially after the World Trade Center attacks was so as to ascertain whether participants' experience of anger or fear in relation to 9/11 can be manipulated.

The best-known conceptual framework linking emotion to political judgment is Marcus and colleagues' (1993, 2000) **theory of affective intelligence**. This theory applied the findings from neuroscience in which positive and negative emotions are regulated by independent bio-behavioural systems in the brain.

Of particular importance here, is:

(a) **the disposition system**: This not only mediates the emotion often enthusiasm but is reward-seeking in its response to positive incentives by directly initiating behaviour. Further, in providing on-going feedback about goal attainment and reward acquisition, it manages reliance on habits and previously learned decision strategies.

(b) **the "surveillance system"**: This mediates the experience of negative affect. Its focus is to maximise attention on the physical and social environment for the presence of threat and danger. When applied to the

	<p>political realm, anxiety is expected to lead voters to reduce their reliance on existing predispositions (such as party identification) and to pay greater attention to relevant information in the environment. In effect, Marcus <i>et al.</i> (2000), demonstrate that when voters are anxious, they (a) pay greater attention to the political environment and acquire more information about candidates' policy stands;</p> <p>(b) rely less on partisanship and more on policy and assessments of candidate character in forming candidate evaluations; and (c) defect at higher rates from the party's candidate.</p> <p>On the other hand, Brader (2006) provided more powerful evidence of the role of anxiety (and for the theory of affective intelligence) by manipulating it experimentally in the context of political adverts.</p> <p>Among the findings is the discovery that compared to an emotionally pallid advertisement, a fear advertisement led to greater attentiveness and more persuasion. In effect, the work suggests that anxiety leads to voting decisions that are more <i>rationaly</i> informed by contemporary information and less by prior predispositions.</p> <p>In sum, the application of all these concepts to explain behaviour is what Sears, (1993) refers to as 'death and horror'-a growing body of literature which covers the study of the following: terrorism, ethnic cleansing, genocide, and other patterns of behaviour that entail extra-ordinary levels of politically motivated violence. Inclusive are: nuclear deterrence, past wars, decision-making in crises, nationalism, ethnic conflict, and a wide variety of traditional topics in international politics.</p>
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Table 3.4

Era	Developments
Fourth:2002---	<p>* <b>the use of behavioural genetics, neuroscience and evolutionary psychology to explain the dismal roots of political preference and behaviour.</b> The prompting of political psychologists to begin to look to the aforementioned is the spread of biological approaches throughout the social sciences (Pinker, 2002). The focus became necessary following studies of Tesser (1993) and Alford, Funk and Hibbing, (2005). Their studies demonstrated a strong genetic</p>

	<p>influence on political attitudes marked by high levels of heritability are more cognitively accessible (i.e., retrieved more easily), more resistant to change and more likely to influence other attitudes than less heritable attitudes. What this suggests is that an attitude's power and functionality, is dependent on the extent to which it is genetically determined. Further, using a twin design, Alford, Funk and Hibbing, op, cit found that political ideology is influenced much more heavily by <b><i>genetic inheritance than by parental socialisation.</i></b></p> <p>Going forward, several recent studies have also linked the intensity of physiological responses to political beliefs. For example, Oxley et al. (2008) found that compared to liberals, conservatives manifest stronger sympathetic nervous system activity (measured by skin conductance) in response to threatening images and a harder eye blink response (an involuntary reaction indicative of heightened fear) in response to startling auditory stimuli. Westen and colleagues (2006) examined the neurobiological basis of "motivated reasoning," or the desire make judgments that validate rather than challenge one's political beliefs (Kunda, 1990; Lodge and Taber, 2000). They found that responses to threatening political information were mediated by areas of the brain specifically known to regulate emotion (e.g., the ventromedial prefrontal cortex) and were unrelated to brain regions known to control "cold" reasoning tasks (i.e., the dorsolateral pre-frontal cortex).</p> <p>Finally, Amodio <i>et al.</i> (2007) identified a neurological basis to the behavioural finding that liberals are more responsive than conservatives to informational complexity, ambiguity and novelty.</p>
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### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the major difference in the developmental progression of political psychology in the first, second era and fourth era.

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

You must note in this concluding section that the political psychology experienced different research developments following the failure of ideological positions of the previous era.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This unit chronicled the different research developments to date of political psychology in different eras.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the main features of the third era.
2. Distinguish between the research focus of each of the eras of political psychology development.
3. With relevant examples, discuss the intensity of physiological responses to political beliefs as alluded to in the fourth era.

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## **UNIT 4 THE COMPONENTS OF THE POLITICAL BEING**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Personality
  - 3.2 Attitudes
    - 3.3 Emotion
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

One hazard in the development of political psychology is that related but slightly different concepts such as: personality, values and identity, attitudes/beliefs, emotions and cognitive processes have become popular as explanatory tools for different kinds of political behaviour. Another problem with these varied concepts which exist in the literature of political psychology is that they are rarely discussed in the context of their overlap as well as differences. To therefore, understand the differences in connotations, this unit undertakes some clarification of these internal factors in relation to how and why people think and act politically.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain concepts such as: personality, values and identity, attitudes/beliefs, emotions and cognitive processes
- discuss the political psychology connotations of the above concepts
- examine generally the concepts affect how and why people think and act politically.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Personality**

This is at the core of one's political being and it is unique to each individual. There are certain personality traits in many people. Although



the traits are different in each individual but there are still certain common traits which include: (a) degrees of complexity in thinking processes; (b) desires for power and achievement. The combinations of these traits still differ in each individual thereby making each individual unique.

Personality occupies the core of the Political Being's brain (mental activity resulting from biological processes, such as the action of nerve cells and associated chemical reactions ) because of the under listed features:

- (a) It affects other aspects of *the thought process*; the thought process on the other hand, is affected *by life experiences*;
- (b) Tendency to be very stable in relation to amenability to change;
- (c) Its influence on ones behaviour and behavioural predispositions perpetually.
- (d) Affects behaviour non-consciously so much so that people rarely realise the impact of their personalities on their political preferences.
- (e) Drives behavioural predispositions, without one having to give conscious consideration to the sources of those preferences.

Considering these features, you will come to the understanding that personality constitutes the core component of political thinking and feeling. In sum, personality in political psychology focuses on the personality traits of political leaders and the impact of combinations of those traits on various dimensions of leadership (see subsequent units).

**Values (and Identity):** Value is an ideal component closely related to the previous feature which is beliefs that reflect whether what one thinks is true, while values reflect what one wishes to see come about, even if it is not currently true. Consistent with this understanding is Rokeach(1973), who posited that there two types of values, *terminal values*, which are goals, and *instrumental values*, that endorse the means to achieve these goals. An example of the terminal value is: the desire for a safe society and the expectation that the police would maintain law and order. This example highlights the well-being of the people. A cogent example of instrumental values is: the value of civil liberties.

In tandem with this deeply etched belief about what is right or wrong (values) equally, is a deeply held sense of who a person is (identity). Values often include a strong emotional component. You will agree that often as individuals we feel strongly about some of our beliefs and goals for ourselves, those we care about, and political principles. For instance,

a person may have a strongly held value that corruption is an anathema to development of a country, which translates into a political predisposition to oppose corruption, empowers institutions that would thoroughly investigate petitions before prosecution of suspects. In a case like this, such a person's identity like that of President Muhammadu Buhari, involves personal self-descriptions that are usually tied to his repeated saying that 'if Nigeria does not kill corruption, corruption will kill Nigeria.

To walk this talk, the administration has not only set-up an anti-corruption panel but has passed on a body-language that places very sharp focus on the issue of corruption. The mass mobilisation, everybody is speaking with one voice on the issue of corruption' (TELL, September 28, 2015: 30&31). With this exposition, it is evident that the president has strong value opposing violence, identity most expectedly may include, a strong attachment to a religion and religious inclination. In other words, being religious forms a part of his identity, and strongly value the religious group which constitutes a part of his identity. From the above analysis, it is evident that values, emotions, and identities (important concepts in case studies of voting, ethnic issues, and nationalism) are deeply held and fairly permanent aspect of one's psychology that is paramount in the core of our Political Being.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain how personality constitutes the core component of political thinking and feeling.

### 3.2 Attitudes

This concept is defined and thought of differently by psychologists. In general terms, attitudes are units of thought composed of some cognitive component (i.e. knowledge) and an emotional response to it. Specifically, it is conceived as 'an enduring system of positive or negative **beliefs; affective** feelings and emotions, and subsequent action tendencies regarding an **attitude objects**, that is, the entity being evaluated' (Cottam et al, 2004). **Beliefs (or attitudes)** which often used to describe these components of the *cognitive system/processes / components* refer to what happens in the mind or the knowledge organized in our minds while people move from observation of a stimulus to a response to that stimulus. They are also conceived as 'associations people create between an object and its attributes (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). For instance, it is an expected constant that Democrats are liberal. It can also be defined as 'cognitive components that make up our understanding of the way things are' (Glynn, Herbst, Okeefe,

Shapiro, 1999:104). Accordingly, a *belief system* refers to when beliefs are clustered together. An example of this (especially for Americans and any democratic state/country), is the belief system about democracy with beliefs as ‘free speech is a necessity’, ‘the people have a right to decide who holds political power’.

Stone and Schaffner (1988:63), define attitudes as ‘an organised set of beliefs, persisting over time, which is useful in explaining the individual response to tendencies’. Eagly and Chaiken (1998; 269) conceive it as ‘a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour’.

Of these definitions of attitude, it is important to note the one by Duckitt (1994) which reviews two different ways in which attitudes have been conceptualized in psychology. The first strand is composed of *cognitive, affective, and behavioural components*. However, the criticism with this strand is this: that there is little or no specifics as to how the three components interacted as well as whether there was consistency between the trio. The reason for this scepticism is none other than that affect and cognition are hardly consistent just as it is evident from personal experiences that attitudes and behaviour are often inconsistent.

The second is the behavioural component in the original conceptualisation of attitudes. The controversy here stems from the assumption that a person’s attitudes determine his/her behaviour. For instance, a person who prefers a certain candidate for election may likely vote for the candidate or a person who is Muslim or Christian may likely support any candidate of either religious inclination. However, as much as these positions may be true but studies conducted have discovered findings which challenged the notion that there is a direct connection between attitudes and behaviour. A cogent Nigerian example is the 2015 presidential elections which culminated in the win by an opposition-Muhammadu Buhari against an incumbent, which goes a long way to show that people do not always behave in accordance with their attitudes. These concerns resulted to the questioning of when and under what circumstances attitudes and behaviour are likely to coincide.

Attitudes that are strong, clear, and consistent over time, and that are directly and specifically relevant to the behaviour under examination, are more likely to be associated with attitude-behaviour consistency (Fazio & Williams, 1986; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980; Krosnick, 1989). Inconsistencies may spring from weak or ambivalent affect. Implicitly, the affective and cognitive components of an attitude may be in some conflict, thereby reducing the changes of attitude-behaviour consistency. The following examples are paramount here. Women and men may

think intellectually gender-based discrimination is wrong, while on the other hand, they are emotionally upset when either sex do not conform or adhere to gender-related roles. This goes to show that in the study of the relationship between attitudes and behaviours, observing the behaviours which are related to attitudes, becomes apt in order to get a specific picture of the relationship. Let us consider this too.

Many studies have tried to examine the relationship between religious attitudes and religious behaviour through the asking of people whether they believe in God or consider themselves religious by wanting to affirm if they were church goers. Often, a weak relationship exists between the two. The reason is that going to church is not directly related to belief in God or even to being religious. This is because many people who believe in God do not go to church while some attend church for social reasons. Be that as it may, you have to come to terms with the fact that looking at a series of a person's actions over time in order to get an accurate picture of the relationship between attitudes and behaviour (Epstein, 1979; Fiske & Taylor, 1991). This goes a long way in eliminating interference from situational conditions that interfere in the attitude-behaviour relationship.

The next aspect to address under this concept is *situational pressures*. This can also affect the relationship between attitudes and behaviour. This occurs when an individual engages in overt behaviour, and can be influenced both by their attitudes and by the situation they are in. The point being made here is that when situational pressures are very strong, attitudes are not likely to be as strong a determinant of behaviour as when situational pressures are relatively weak. Situational pressures can include social norms or contextual effects, which heighten the salience of or perspective on, a certain attitude (Bentler & Speckart, 1981).

Accordingly, individual differences are paramount in explaining inconsistencies between what people think and how they behave. The implication of this is that some people are high self-monitors who presuppose that they are very attentive to social norms and the impression they make in social situations. To this end, they are less likely to act consistently on the basis of their attitudes and instead act as they think the situation demands (Perloff, 1993; Snyder, 1987).

Based on the above, other dimensions on attitudes exist. The first is centred on a uni-dimensional approach to attitudes, wherein attitudes are regarded solely as *affect* (Ajzen, 1980). Here, the cognitive and behavioural components are separated based on the contention that both should be observed and measured separately.

Consistent with this stance, the following issues can be teased out from Duckitt (1994:13) explanation of this definition. These are:

- (a) Does not expect a strong relationship between an attitude to an object as well as specific behaviours to that object;
- (b) The prediction of a specific act requires both the attitude to that act and act-specific social norms which need to be considered apt;
- (c) a generalised attitude toward an object should predict the overall tendency to behave in a favourable or unfavourable way toward that object, as aggregating over a variety of different situations and
- (d) Acts should largely average out normative and situational influences.

Others who aligned with Duckitt are Judd and Krosnik (1989:100) who explained an attitude as ‘an evaluation of an attitude object that is stored in memory’ while Levin & Levin, (1982), restricted attitudes to affect and beliefs solely.

Evidently, the analysis so far portrays the following:

- (a) No agreement exists on a universally accepted understanding of what an attitude is and how its component parts relate to each other;
- (b) The attitude concept has been widely used in studies of voting behaviour, persuasion, and media effects on political behaviour;
- (c) the attitude concept can more easily separate cognition and affect, a dichotomy that is apt in the study of voting behaviour e,g U.S where people have political attitudes premised on little and inaccurate cognition;
- (d) An attitude is spurred on by affect, albeit the often inaccurate knowledge embodied in them;
- (e) On the alternative, according to Eagly & Chaiken, (1998),an attitude may be primarily cognitive in content i.e. it would be based solely on beliefs without *affect*.

Of concern here, for you as a student of political psychology is to understand that research on political psychology obviously with the focus on America revolves around their subsequent political behaviour with focus on some central questions regarding attitudes such as:

- (a) Are attitudes consistent with one another? Implicit in this, is the question about whether people have liberal and consistently conservative attitudes?
- (b) Are political attitudes consistently related to political behaviour? The implication of this is premised on the question: 'do people consider themselves as belonging to one party (Republicans/Democrats or PDP/APC in Nigeria) because they adhere to the political views of the party and subsequently go on to vote for the party candidates?
- (c) How do people use attitudes to process political information?
- (d) How do people acquire their political attitudes?
- (e) How sophisticated are political attitudes in a given population?
- (f) Are they cognitively complex?
- (g) If people do have inconsistent attitudes, how do they balance the inconsistencies?

The above questions bring to bear the fact that attitude or rather most important political attitudes are acquired through socialisation has a long tradition in the study of public opinion or rather, the schema concept which is a new introduction to the study of political psychology.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the controversy that a person's attitude is determined by his/her behaviour.

### **3.3 Emotion**

The previous element culminates into this i.e the emotional responses to political issues, actors, and events as well as to political principles and ideals that they value. This element is difficult to study given the challenge about what it is and how to measure it especially as political science prides itself with rational decision-making that must be devoid of emotions or be unemotional. However, in political psychology, it is pertinent to understand the impact of emotions on behaviour. The reason is none other than that emotion, in the form of prejudice, is more closely associated with behaviour than the cognitive component (Fiske, 1998). In effect, one cannot understand terrorism, mass violence, genocide without unpacking the role of emotions. Within this context, it is evident according to research that emotion is a positive element in decision-making. A study by Richards & Gross, (1999) found that suppressing emotion impairs memory. To this end, you will agree that not only is emotion important, but trying to be unemotional can indeed impede key elements of decision-making.

Consistent with the above analysis, emotion have been defined differently by varied scholars however, the definition by Fiske and Taylor (1991:411) is that it is a 'complex assortment of *affects*, beyond mere good feelings or bad to include delight, serenity, anger, sadness, fear and more'. An *affect* is defined as 'a generic term for a whole range of preferences, evaluations, moods and emotions' (Fiske and Taylor (op.cit:410). Ottati and Wyer (1995) define emotions as affective states that are more precisely labeled, such as anger, hatred, fear, love, and respect. Emotions clearly influence information processing, decision-making as well as behavioural pre-dispositions. Its positive effects according to Isen (1993) are that it promotes improvements in problem solving, negotiating, and decision-making.

Pre-dispositions for behaviour occasioned by particular emotions such as anger studies have revealed to be associated with moving against, or lashing out at, the perceived source of the anger; similarly, contempt described as cold and distant, lead to depersonalisation and dehumanisation of others: thus, it is because of these characteristics that contempt can motivate murder and mass destruction of people' (Izard, 1977:340). Emotions and the behaviours influenced are interlinked to goals at stake in a situation especially political goal which vary over time depending on the political contexts and values. Be that as it may, the general assumption is that out-groups hinder in-group goals, and therefore the out-group (usually assumed to be different as well as its goals) is automatically with negative emotions. Emotions vary in intensity and can increase in response to certain psychological properties; the nature and impact of events (see characteristics in subsequent units).

### **Cognitive Process**

This is the final component of the mind of the political being. It is the channels through which the mind and the environment initially interact. First, the *concept of cognition* is the core in the understanding of how people process information and understands the world around them. In effect, it is 'a collective term for the psychological processes involved in the acquisition, organisation, and the use of knowledge' (Bullock& Stallybrass, 1977:109). The term *cognitive system/processes* refer to what happens in the mind or the knowledge organized in our minds while people move from observation of a stimulus to a response to that stimulus. The cognitive processes receive and interpret information from outside.

In order words, they are the minds computer, which facilitates a person's ability to process information, interpret the environment which is too

complex for any individual or for our brains to handle) without thinking too much and yet manage their environments effectively. The cognitive system in our brains helps us organise that environment into understandable and recognisable units as well as aids in the filtering of incoming information. The essence of this is so that one does not have to consciously access the utility of every piece of information available to one in the environment. For instance, your cognitive system of politicians includes the belief that all politicians are corrupt, if you have evidence both confirming and disconfirming that *politician xyz* has taken a bribe, and then you will believe the confirming evidence. These are cognitive processes in operation. Thus, it helps people understand the environment they live in without paying close attention, process information especially as people tend to accept information that is consistent with our pre-existing ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions about the environment we reside in.

In sum, cognitive systems help people to organize and simplify the environment, so as to be able to process all the information available in order to make decisions necessary in making sense of complex social and physical realities. Further, cognitive processes include everything from perception, memory, attention, and problem solving to information processing, language, thinking, and imagery.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain how the cognitive system in our brains helps us organise that environment into understandable and recognisable units.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The unit considered the inner components such as personality, values, emotions, and identities affect political thinking and feeling in case studies of voting, ethnic issues, and nationalism.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit explored the varied inner deeply held and fairly permanent aspect of one's psychology that is paramount in the core of our Political Being.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Use the following: cognitive, affective, and behavioural components, to explain the conceptualisation of attitudes in political psychology.



2. Cognitive systems help people to organise and simplify the environment, discuss.
3. Explain how emotions and the behaviours which vary over time depending on the political contexts and value influences interlinked to goals in any polity.

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## **UNIT 5 THE POLITICAL BEING IN A SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 3.1 Social Identity
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit explores how political psychology concerns the individual and the individual's interaction with the political environment. The term here, which is relevant to the Political Being, is: *social identity and groups*.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain how the individual interacts with the political environment.
- Understand what constitutes social identity.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Social Identity**

You will recall that in the introductory part of this unit, the highlight was about political psychology being concerned about the individual's interactions with their political environment. Be that as it may, it then becomes of essence to know the social units, or groups which are politically relevant to the Political Being and the extent to which that Political Being is equally strongly attached. In effect, this constitutes the assessment of the term Social identity.

But before the definition of the term, you also have to be acquainted with the fact that groups are depicted in the perspective of the Political Being generally in terms of the *in-groups* (those groups people belong

to) and *out-groups* (those they do not belong to). Having grasped that, let us consider what social identity is?

Social identity according to Tajfel (1978:63), posits that is 'that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his/her knowledge of membership in a social group(s) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership'. Further clarification was provided by Tajfel and Turner's (1979) in three theoretical principles namely:

1. Group members strive to achieve or maintain a sense of positive social identity.
2. The focus of group members favours comparisons being made between *in-group (the groups we belong to or us)* and relevant members of *out-group (the ones we do not belong to or them)*. These political groups (i.e. social categories which are part of the general cognitive organisation of the social and political world), of which individuals are members provide individuals with a social identity. This ensures comparison between in-group(s) with related out-group(s), thereby ensuring an individuals' self-esteem, because they allow them to define the members of their group as either better than other groups. The point to note is that in order to gain a positive sense of self, individuals compare their group with other groups, to create a favourable distinction between the groups. In fact, Tajfel and Turner (1979) reiterate that inter-group discrimination is an off-shoot of a motivation to evaluate one's own group more positively than a relevant out-group. In effect, by comparing one's in-group to a relevant out-group, individuals attempt to differentiate their group from other groups, so as to enhance their social identity.
3. An attempt is always made by group members to leave their group or join a more positively distinct group, when their social identity is far from satisfactory.

Further, a necessary pre-condition of social categorisation into the two groups (in-group and out-group) according to Tajfel and Turner's (1979) entail at least three additional variables that should influence inter-group differentiation. The three are:

1. Members of a group must have internalized their group membership as an aspect of their self-concept. Implicit in this variable is the clear perception of themselves as members of the in-group as well as be likely to describe themselves as bona-fide group member(s).

2. The social situation must allow for inter-group comparisons. However, group members must be able to make evaluative group comparisons, in order to perceive their in-group as positively distinct from the out-group.
3. The out-group must be perceived as a relevant comparison group. Here, it is important that members of an in-group do not engage in comparison game of their group to any available out-group. In place of comparison, rather factors such as similarity, proximity, and situational salience should determine whether an out-group is considered a valid and reliable comparison group (Campbell,1958).

Having understood the above, the next aspect to address is: the ways in which individuals might react to *threatened or actual negative social identity*.

The reaction of the individual is in three phases as adeptly captured by Tajfel(1978 ) and Tajfel and Turner (1979). These are:

1. **Social mobility:** This is the enhancement of positive social identity by advancement to a group of higher status. The implication of this, is none other than that, when any individual's social identity is threatened or is perceived as being negative, the individual will attempt to dissociate themselves from the in group by joining a group that is higher in status. Further, examination of strategies of identity enhancement by Van Knippenberg and Ellemers(1990) concluded that the permeability of group boundaries appears to play key role in the determination of which strategy is used to enhance social identity. The example proffered was that, when it is relatively easy for a group member to move to a higher status group, then that member is more likely to move to the new group than when it is more difficult to change group memberships.
2. **Social creativity:** This encompasses three strategies namely: (1) comparing the in-group to the out-group on a different dimension; (2) re-evaluating the comparison dimension, so that previously negative dimension are perceived as positive; and (3) comparing one's in-group to a different or lower status out-group.
3. **Social competition:** In-group members might directly compete with the out-group to attain positive distinctiveness or positive social identity.

Having exhausted these categories, research on social identity has tested the original in-group bias effect i.e., whether individuals tend to favour their own group over a relevant out-group. The findings prove this to be

true. More so, the arbitrary assignment of individuals to groups has been repeatedly demonstrated to result in preferential reward allocations to in-groups members as well as the further heightening of not only in-group attractiveness but perceptions of in-group similarity and homogeneity. In addition to this is the assignment of positive traits to in-group members. The sum of the above is that when individuals are categorised into two distinct groups, there is the tendency for individuals to favour their own group over another relevant group, presumably to enhance their social identity. The creation of social categories can produce many important behavioural pre-dispositions, including stereotyping, discrimination, and ethnocentrism. Meanwhile research seeks to identify ways in which in-groups and out-groups may cooperate with one another or extinguish the tendency to compete. Now let us consider the circumstance that can warrant an individual accepting a group's inferior situation whenever they believe their position is just and legitimate. This was evident in the submission to and eventual rejection of colonial domination e.g. by people in territories that were conquered by such colonial powers as Britain, France, Germany, and others, that often accepted domination. They perceived the colonial powers through the imperialist image hence conceived them as superior in culture and capability. The point to note here is that resisting that domination would have brought severe punishment hence their acceptance of it as just and legitimate until movements of independence progressed with political activists arguing that their subservience to the colonial power was unfair, unjust and illegitimate. With the change in perception, the comparison of their situations with that of the colonial power and the decision reached was that the colonial country was rich while they were poor due to the former taking all their resources to enrich themselves. The result was the agitation for independence because they compared themselves to the other group (the colonial power), having discovered that the comparison to be unacceptably negative. This engagement in other words, is social competition.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the manner in which an individual might react when his/her social identity is threatened or tilting towards the negative.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The unit addressed a person's social identities which is akin to how values and attitudes, can motivate behaviour.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This unit explored social identity and groups especially as behaviour is impacted upon.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss how individuals might react to threaten or actual negative social identity.
2. Compare and contrast the relevance of the *in-group and out-group* social identity in politics.
3. Explain in relation to group bias the circumstance that can warrant an individual accepting a group's inferior situation as just and legitimate.

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## **MODULE 2      PERSONALITY AND THEORIES/APPROACHES**

Unit 1	Personality: What does it constitute?
Unit 2	Psycho-Analytic/Dynamic Theory
Unit 3	Psycho-biographies/Psycho-graphical Method
Unit 4	Analysing Psycho-Pathologies of Political Leaders
Unit 5	Personality Trait Theories

### **UNIT 1      PERSONALITY: WHAT DOES IT CONSTITUTE?**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Personality: What is it?
3.2	Of what Relevance is Personality in Politics?
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
5.0	References/Further Reading

#### **1.0      INTRODUCTION**

This unit introduces you to what personality is in psychology, politics and evidently political psychology. Equally, examined here, is how personality affects political behaviour as well as its relevance in politics or rather what personality characteristics are most politically relevant?

#### **2.0      OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain what personality is within the three disciplines?
- discuss the relevance of personality in Politics?



### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Personality: What is it?

From the outset, personality is the most fundamental element in psychology. Why is this so? This is premised on the fact that personality encompasses how individuals think and behave in the political arena including their life experiences. If this is so, you wonder what conception would best capture the essence of personality in political psychology given its general to specific conceptions by psychologists, social psychologists and personality theorists.

Psychology, the parent discipline of political psychology, proffered the working answer thus: “an attempt to provide a commonly agreed upon definition of personality in this field of political psychology is unproductive because none apparently exists” (Ewen, (1998:3; Maddi, 1996; Magnavita, 2002). Be that as it may, now let us consider some of the conceptions as well as analyse their commonalities. Generally, psychologists argue that personality is subsuming as well as comprehensive of all important psychic regularities in an individual’s behaviour. Allport (1961:28) conceives it as “the dynamic organisation within the individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine an individual’s characteristics behaviour and thought”. Greenstein, (1969) obviously embracing the position of personality theorists referred to it as “an inferred entity inferred i.e non-observable phenomena, and not a directly observable phenomenon excluding cognition, affect motivation, and identification, as well as processes of ego-defense. For Di Renzo(1974:16), it is “an individual’s acquisition of a relatively enduring, yet dynamic, unique, system of predispositions to psychological and social behaviour”. Hermann, Preston and Young’s, (1996), position is that it is “a construct that is introduced to account for the regularities in an individual’s behaviour in consonance with their response to diverse stimuli”.

Social psychologists, conceive it as being limited to a residual category which will not debar emotion, cognition, or motivation (George& George, 1998), but entails “important and relatively stable aspects of a person’s behaviour that account for consistent patterns of behaviour which may be observable or unobservable, and conscious or unconscious”(Ewen,1998:3-4). In any case, Weinberg & Gould, (1999), see it as “the characteristics or blend of characteristics that make a person unique”. A recent conception of it by political scientists and implicitly political psychologists is that it encompasses “the different

behaviour between individuals (who in this case are “politicians”) which remain relatively stable across variety of situations’ Brehm, et.al, 2005). On the whole, the varied complexities of this remarkable concept, in no way makes either irrelevant or wrong. In spite of this, it is apt to consider of specific knowledge in each. Let us begin thus: Allport(introduced the idiographic and nomothetic views to personality to American psychology in 1937)and Weinberg & Gould reiterate the uniqueness of the individual and consequently highlight what is known as an idiographic view which states that each individual is not only endowed with a unique psychological structure but possesses some traits impossible to compare with another. The information gathering technique adopted here is case studies.

The nomothetic describes the study of classes or cohorts of individuals or a population and their corresponding personality traits and behaviours. This view, in other words, emphasizes comparability among individuals as well as seeing traits as having the same psychological meaning in everyone. It achieves this by using self-report personality questions, factor analysis, etc. given that people differ in their positions along a continuum in the same set of traits. For the political psychology literature the focus was not on the ‘specificity of a comprehensive definition of personality’ but ‘upon how particular aspects of personality translate into political behaviour’. Implicit here, in order to explain behaviour or personality psychologists focused on the specific or particular individual (rather than the whole) differences/ aspects’ (e.g.cognition, motivation, affect, ego, attitudes, etc which are not only narrow but restrictive considering the almost all-inclusive aspects (listed above) by personality theorists) of an individual’s personality make-up which translates into political behaviour.

To conclude, personality can be understood, as the patterns of behaviours, attitudes and values that are distinctive characteristics (which may be notable for success as well as failures) of a given individual. Here, the positions highlight that an individual’s personality reflects the ability, effectiveness, influence and credibility of a leader. This in turn, explains why the role of personality in leadership is determined not only by the context of the interaction, experiences, expectations and perceptions of the participants by the personalities (Pfeiffer, 1972:186). Comprehensively, it culminates in the ‘conjoint development of political personality and political leadership or politics which is the oldest tradition in political psychology (Lasswell, 1948; Leites, 1951).

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Is the credibility of a leader dependent upon the understanding of his/her personality?

### 3.2 Of What Relevance is Personality in Politics?

The obvious assumption given the positions/claims from the previous section is that personalities at times may matter in politics especially in relation to making decisions about policies. The paradox, is that its relevance is however limited. While taking into account the contrast of these assumptions in relation to the reality of the question of the relevance of personalities, according to Lewin, (1935), “it is necessary to understand both a person’s personality and the context in which the behaviour is observed; while emphasizing that the most important fact in the understanding of individual behaviour is placed on interaction between the person and the situation”. From this perspective, Mischel, (1973), proposed a focus of attention on the degree to which situational factors govern behaviour. Still according to this author, whose research on how pertinent personality is in predicting behaviour across a variety of situations yielded results about how people’s behaviour could be contradictory to what is expected of them. This revelation prompts a careful consideration of the situation which appears to exert powerful effects on behaviour.

This indeed fits into a general acceptance among scholars in the personality and leadership field who noted that: *context* (or situation) matters more (Preston & Hart, 1999). The wide-ranging impact of their position is obvious. They underscore the scientific stage upon which the person interacts with the environment both in relation to facilitating opportunities for action and constraints which can be anticipated. From this angle, Greenstein,(1969), observed that: “personality may oftentimes be considered unimportant in relation to either political behaviour or policy outcomes. The reason being that the likelihood of personal impact which oscillates between:

- (i) increases to the degree that the environment admits of restructuring;
- (ii) differs with the political actor’s location in the environment, and;
- (iii) The variance with the personal strengths and weaknesses of the actor.

The summary of the features above is that: elite’ individuals such as the president, vice-president, senate president, speaker of the House of Representative, governors, chairmen of local governments etc who by

virtue of their positions possess personal power resources exert influence on the policy process. Within this context, the strengths as well as weaknesses of these individuals which constitute the embodiment of his/her personality as well as experience definitely will have an impact on any policy. You should note that, barring in foreign policy which enjoys freedom of action, the presidents of America do not exert any influence on any domestic policy given that Congress, the courts, interest groups, etc., play substantial roles in determining policy outcomes (Neustadt, 1990).

There is need to reiterate that policy-making in any given country is being directed by both government and non-governmental bodies which play crucial roles in making process. The primacy of power resource or personality for the individual leader is either positive or negative. For instance, Abraham Lincoln after a contentious vote by his education cabinet in which the votes cast was 11 to 1 ruled that the winner was the sole vote. Implicit in this judgement is making the one vote evidently the count even if the majority apparently held sway. This democratic/liberal example is a contrast in relation to the authoritarian/repressive leadership of Saddam Hussein's use of the power resources within his ambit to invade Kuwait.

In Nigeria, the exertion of power resources by elites or those in governance is subsumed in the principle of federal supremacy as stipulated in the constitution about the overall direction and leadership necessary from the formulation stage through to the implementation and evaluation stage. In other words, decision-making is conducted through the Economic Council presided by the vice-President who advises the president concerning the economic affairs/programmes of various states and their institutions through: ministry of finance and economic planning, the public bureaucracy and non-governmental actors: political parties, interest groups and citizenry.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

When and how could personality be said to be relevant in politics?

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The unit explained the problematic nature of having a common definition of personality; yet still proffered some varied conceptions of the concept with a summary of the definition of the concept as the patterns of behaviours, attitudes and values that are characteristic of a given individual.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In conclusion, it is evident from the discussions that the emphasis for political psychologists is 'upon how particular aspects of personality translate into political behaviour', rather than on a concise conception of personality. In sum, the focus is on the behavioural differences of an individual (rather than the whole group of people).

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. The definition of personality is problematic. How does this affect your view of it?
2. Explain how the study of 'individual differences rather than the whole' constitutes the bane of personality in political psychology?
3. Using any leader of your choice, contextualise how an individual's behaviour/personality impacts on any policy-making.

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## **UNIT 2 PSYCHO-ANALYTIC THEORY OF PERSONALITY**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Psycho-Analytic or Dynamic Theory
  - 3.2 Personality Structures
  - 3.3 Mental Techniques/Strategies of the Mind
  - 3.4 Techniques Employed in Studying the Theory
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit reviewed the personalities of political individual(s) through the psycho-analytic methodological frameworks. As a result of this, discussions revolved around the development of an individual's personality from the different layers of the mind and their influences on (political) behaviour.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the psychoanalytic or psychodynamic theory from the perspective of the conscious and unconscious mind which drives behaviour
- examine the three concepts- id, ego and super ego, which influence personality
- identify techniques/strategies which protect the mind.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Psycho-Analytic or Dynamic Theory**

This incidentally is the oldest out of the traditional theories of personality in psychology. It is premised on highlighting the role of the *unconscious mind* (i.e. the motives and drives) which underlie/influence the behaviour of political beings. Having established this, you need to know the origin of psycho-analytism. The initiator of the idea although

relatively unknown however, was popularised by the Jewish physician Sigmund Freud born May 6, 1856, in Freiberg, a small town in the Moravian-Silesian Region of the *Czech Republic* who having observed the two layers of the mind: *the unconscious and the conscious*, was convinced of the mind operation being likened to an iceberg which most times is more or less none existent given its nature of being about 90% underwater, and in other words, this portion is conceived as unconscious while the infinitesimal or small portion which remains visible above water, is referred to as *the conscious*.

The understanding of how conflict occurs below the level of one's consciousness; let us have a peek into Freud's topography of the structure of the two layers of the mind which is divided into three different zones of mental awareness. These are as follows:

### **The Unconscious Mind**

This contains psychological forces/material that the mind cannot easily retrieve. These forces which have their origins in the mind are: our drives or instincts, and memories and emotions, wishes, desires –all motives which underlie behaviour. These motives associated with trauma, conflict, anxiety, or pains are not easily available to awareness or accessible to protect the person from distress. Freud conceives the unconscious as the source of one's motivations, however simple the desires/motives may be either neurotic compulsions or innate. This layer of the mind is important because of it is often driven to deny or resist becoming conscious of motives which most times are often available to one only in disguised form(s).

Before moving on to the next layer of the mind, let us consider the critique of the unconscious which is that although the unconscious accounts for some of an individual's behaviour, however, what should be of concern is rather how much and the exact nature of the influence. This argument informed the belief by behaviourists, humanists, and existentialists that (a) contrary to Freud's assessment, only few motivations and problems can be attributed to the unconscious, and (b) the unconscious as he conceived it is not entirely the conduit pipe where activities take place. Occasioned by these criticisms, contemporary psychologists conceive the unconscious as what an individual does not need and as well may not want to see or be associated with. In fact, this explains why some theorists have more or less jettisoned the concept in its entirety.



## The Conscious Mind

This refers to the level or state when people are aware of thoughts at any particular moment. In specific terms, it relates to ones present perceptions, memories, thoughts, fantasies, feelings, etc which readily comes to mind even if at that point one is not at the moment thinking about it.

## The Pre-Conscious Mind:

This aligns with the conscious mind given that it is conceived as the 'available memory'. Implicit here, is the understanding of it as the content of thought which may not be in awareness although could be brought to awareness. That said, Freud reiterated that neither of the two layers are in contest with each other; and importantly, the **conscious mind** is the smallest while the largest part is the **unconscious** (i.e. motives and derives) mind.

Consistent with these psychic forces, Freud reiterates that (life) *instincts* (mental representations), complexities which arise out of biological or physical need are cushioned by the *pleasure principle* (i.e. the seeking of pleasure and the avoidance of pain). This principle serves as an energy system for the aggressive drives with the inevitable consequences in the form of: anxiety, obsessions, and defense mechanisms which constantly motivate people to satisfy with the pleasure principle that should be denied. The reason for this is none other than that the pleasure principle inevitably engenders conflict occurring below the level of one's conscious awareness level irrespective of the unconscious efforts by individuals to suppress and channel the desire to act out in search of satisfaction.

What then is the implication of this in relation to the human mind as well as the political being's personality? Implicit in this, is the need for you to understand the role of the mind especially as people are conscious of only a small part of the mind rather than the majority of the unconscious mind's operation which is like the portion of the iceberg under water. Now, let us consider the personality structures.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain how the unconscious mind can influence the personality behaviour of any political actor.

### 3.2 Personality Structures

Consistent with your understanding of the unconscious and conscious mind, is the need to examine **the structures of Personalities**. The personalities of human/political beings according to Sigmund Freud are premised on a tripartite composition of elements of different levels of consciousness which are:

**Id:** This element is at the most basic level submerged in the unconscious. It includes instincts and responses to bodily functions (e.g., hunger) which are evidently inherited impulses and desires which operates according to the pleasure principle. The innate driving force for this element is aggression which is checkmated by the *superego*.

**Superego:** This is the internalisation of societal and parental standards of conduct; otherwise conceived as the moral arm or human conscience of personality (Hall & Lindzey, 1970).

**Ego:** This part of the personality submerged between the *id* and the *superego*, moderates with rational thought the desire for pleasure, and the social realities within the political system. To achieve this, the ego operates within the ambit of the *reality principle*, which the demands of the **id** is blocked or channelled not only in accordance with reality, but with the final element of the personality, the *super-ego*. This personality structure according to Hall and Lindzey, (op cit), is conceived as “the moral arm or conscience of the personality” plays-out during one’s interaction with an individual that one is in disagreement with. In effect, this personality (*id*) prompts one to lash out angrily at another while the ego restrains one from doing so, rationalising such behaviour is socially inappropriate, while the superego enjoins one to be humane and forgive all irrespective of their aberrant behaviour.

This is of essence because when the ego is threatened, people feel *anxiety*, which is in two forms namely:

- (a) *realistic or neurotic anxiety* is a fear of being punished for doing something the *id* wants the person to do; while the
- (b) the *moral anxiety* occurs when there is a conflict between the *id* and the *superego*.

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Analyse how anxiety impinges on the behaviour of any political actor.

### 3.3 Mental Techniques/Strategies of the Mind

The anxiety which the ego feeling creates in an individual evidently creates conflicts/disagreements which need to be doused or resolved. The *defense mechanisms* (i.e unconscious mental techniques/strategies) or technique employed to shield and protect the mind from distress include the following:

- (a) **Repression:** This concerns the involuntary elimination of an unpleasant memory.
- (b) **Projection:** This is the attribution of one's own objectionable impulses to another person, or projecting them onto another.
- (c) **Rationalisation:** This is in relation to the interpretation of an individual's objectionable behaviour (by blaming situational factors over which they have little control) to make it seem less objectionable.
- (d) **Denial:** This is the denial of reality (such as the denial of the reality of the security implications of the rate of unemployment of youths in the country), on the one hand and on the other, the denial of an impulse (this is as it relates to the proclamation that the country is not at risk of (e.g. book Haram, Kidnapping) when indeed it portends danger).

#### Discussions about Other Contributors to Psycho-Analysis

Other psychologists spanning from Fromm (1941, 1955, 1964), who succeeded Freud and adopted his psycho-analytic theory ideas, explored the interactions between people and society based on the conviction that freedom from certain restraints (serfdom and slavery), occurs only through change in human society. The caveat in the process which will produce change in people is that alienation and insecurity cannot be isolated. To therefore, checkmate the opposing positions involves: pursuing positive freedom of a humanist society that honours the treatment of people in respect and love; renouncing freedom; and acceptance of totalitarian and authoritarian political social systems.

For Erickson, (1958, 1969), his interest in politics and political leaders centred on the individual stages of personality and development and identity. To reiterate this, he conducted studies on Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther, 1958(cf: 2001), with findings that even after the cradle stage of an individual, the ego (see discussion in section on personality structures), is in continuous progression as well as the society which has an impact on the personality of the individual in the society.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

In what ways do you think an individual's daily battles with mental conflicts can be resolved?

### 3.4 Techniques Employed in Studying the Theory

The numbers of techniques adopted for data collection in psycho-analysis, by political psychologists include:

**(Freudian) Therapy:** Freud and psycho-analysts conceive this as a key component for projecting the repressed ideas and memories to the conscious level, given the repression of the unconscious in order to avoid painful re-collections. For a client to feel inhibited to express anything, the therapy situation as a unique social situation is devoid of social judgment or ostracism as well as the perception of the non-existence of the therapist. Implicit too here, is an approach referred to as *free association*. Just as the phrase depicts, it entails an individual freely speaking about almost everything in their mind. The theory is that, with relaxation, the unconscious conflicts will inevitably drift to the fore, making the client talk about anything.

**The Couch and Dream Analysis:** This therapeutic technique is premised on Freud's belief that dreams are symbolic representations of thoughts, desires, fears, and things which have occurred in the individual's life. His position is that in the physically relaxing couch, dim lights, sound-proof walls, with the stage set and in sleep; an individual is somewhat less resistant to his/her unconscious thus allowing a few things, in symbolic form to come into their awareness. Also, for this analysis, the wishes from the id provide the client is aided to provide more clues for the therapist who is trained to recognise certain clues to problems and their solutions that the client would overlook. One of these clues is resistance(s) such as a client trying to change the topic, drawing a complete blank, falling asleep, coming in late, or skipping an appointment altogether, suggesting that the client is nearing something in his/her free associations that he/she -- unconsciously, of course -- finds threatening.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The unit examined the psycho-dynamic theories through the id, ego and super ego concepts in order to explain the influence of the conscious and unconscious mind on the behaviour of political beings.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In sum, the discussion here oscillated between the psycho-analytic theoretical framework and the role of the concepts - id, ego and super ego as the moral arm or conscience of an individual's personality.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What implications does the unconscious mind have for the political being's personality?
2. Analyse how the pleasure principle engenders conflict irrespective of the unconscious efforts by individuals to suppress the desire of satisfaction.
3. Discuss each of the tripartite level of consciousness in relation to personality.

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## **UNIT 3                      PSYCHO-BIOGRAPHIES/                      PSYCH- OBIOGRAPHICAL                      METHOD**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Psycho-Biographies/Pscho-Biographical Method: What is it?
  - 3.2 Classic Examples: Woodrow Wilson; Nelson Mandela
  - 3.3 Nnamdi Azikiwe; Ahmadu Bello and Obafemi Awolowo
- 1.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The unit examined psycho-biographies so as to understand the personalities of political actor(s) through their childhood socialisation experiences.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the psycho-biographical method
- discuss the classic examples of some political leaders.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Psycho-Biographies/ Psycho-Biographical Method: What is it?**

Following two major critiques of the psycho-analytical framework (see previous unit) which are: (a) the non-optional nature of the couch and dream analysis technique of collecting data; and (b) its accessibility to political leaders (i.e. in relation to person-to-person psycho-analysis), the psycho-biographical method to the analysis of political figures became inevitable. In effect, psycho-biography in politics is conceived as a detailed in-depth case study of individual leaders, which entails the tracing of the personal, social, and political development of a particular leader's behaviour from cradle through adulthood. Implicitly, psycho-

biographies examine an individual's political figures life history (George and George, 1998). The common understanding here is that leaders' personalities or political styles are shaped by their early childhood socialisation experiences. Importantly, psycho-biographies evidently identify with *consistent patterns of behaviour* over a long period of time and are susceptible to being explained with the use of psycho-analysis.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain psycho-biography and its origination due to the impracticability of the psycho-analytical framework.

### 3.2 Psycho-Biographies of Leaders

The classic studies of the psycho biographies of leaders/ political figures discussed here include but not limited to: Woodrow Wilson of America; Nelson Mandela of South Africa; Nnamdi Azikiwe; Ahmadu Bello and; Obafemi Awolowo of Nigeria.

- (a) **Woodrow Wilson:** The study by George and George (1964) revealed a highly moralistic, rigid, and uncompromising political figure/personality whose patterns, developed throughout his childhood and young adult life culminated in his political style in the white House. This disposition to leadership was linked to his childhood experiences in a strict Calvinist household where morality and distinctions between good and evil were emphasised above all else so much so that his minister father belittled Woodrow and severely punished him for any perceived transgressions impressed on his leadership personality.

This explains his quest to accomplish great moral deeds to compensate for his own feelings of low self-esteem. This difficult relationship with his stern, disciplinarian father made Wilson to have face-offs with persons in authority because of his conviction that their criticisms were personally against him. Importantly too, not only did he see the world in absolute terms, Wilson felt that compromise on moral issues was immoral. In fact, the Georges (*op cit*), claim that the ultimate reason for the political defeat over his efforts to create the League of Nations, is his political personality that is rooted in his inability to compromise on morality as an issue.

**(b) Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela**

Studies reveal this statesman and former president of South Africa (1994-99), as one who worked to bring about the transition from minority rule and apartheid to black majority rule (through directing a campaign of peaceful, non-violent defiance through the ANC dedicated to sabotage the South African government and its racist apartheid policies); promoted reconciliation between whites and blacks with the 1996 signing into law of the new South African constitution, established a strong central government based on majority rule and guaranteed rights of minorities, women's equality, demanding an end to atrocities, and supporting initiatives to address humanitarian crises and promote democracy and freedom of expression. This groundswell of leadership disposition is traceable to the dramatic change in his life with his adoption by the acting regent of the Thembu people, under whose guardianship he was groomed to assume high office as a counsellor, a position which made him sit and learn about how the African people had lived in relative peace until the coming of the white people who not only shattered the fellowship but shared the land, air, and the water which the former later confiscated from the chiefs who came to the Great Palace on official business.

Although he was sentenced to life imprisonment (in Robben Island for which he spent 18 of his 27 years in prison following the launch of a coordinated international campaign for his release), he stated that the words of the elders which initially didn't make total sense to him previously, would work on him and would eventually formulate his resolve for an independent South Africa.

His continued potent as a symbol of black resistance through his commitment to toward peace negotiations amid demonstrations and armed resistance, prevailed in his emergence at age 77, on May 10, 1974 as the country's first black president with de Klerk as his first deputy with whom in 1993, he also shared the Nobel Prize for Peace for their work towards dismantling apartheid.

**(C) Nnamdi Azikiwe**

The political personality of this foremost West African nationalist and the first president of Nigeria (Nov. 16, 1904- May 11, 1961), was succinctly captured by the *New York Times* in this phrase "a personality who towered over the affairs of Africa's most populous nation, attaining the rare status of a truly national hero who came to be admired across the regional and ethnic lines dividing his country"., was one of the. His disposition to leadership is linked his parents residing in Zungeru,



Northern Nigeria, where his father worked as a clerk in the Nigerian Regiment, which necessitated his schooling in Onitsha, Lagos, and Calabar, which not only explains his fluency in the languages of the three major ethnic groups (Hausa, Ibo, and Yoruba), but served as a major asset which played out in his future role as a Nigerian nationalist. All these socialisation processes culminated into forming his personality as a nationalist which came to bear during the Nigerian-Biafran civil war, May 1967-January 1970, when he at first reluctantly supported before campaigning against the secession in August 1969 in favor of a united Nigeria.

#### **(D) Al-haji Sir Ahmadu Bello**

Bello, (1962; Paden, 1986), adduce that this Northern Nigeria leader, politician and the first premier of the Northern Nigeria region from 1954-1966, the combination of his traditional leadership qualities with knowledge of Western governance, which garnered him the Knight of the British Empire (KBE) by Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom in 1959, is linked to lineage. He was the son of a district head and heir to the Sokoto Emirate, given his lineage with his great-grandfather being the Sultan Bello, son of the revered Usman Dan Fodio who founded the Fulani Empire, which was the largest in Sub-Saharan Africa. He was educated at the feet of Muslim masters, studying the Quran, the hadith, and Shariah. In fact, history has it that after his unsuccessful bid to become the new Sultan of Sokoto in 1938, the successful sultan subsequently conferred on him the traditional, now honorary, title of "Sarduna" and elevated him to the Sokoto Native Authority Council. In sum, he was concerned about national and Pan-African unity; hence his spirited efforts to develop his region and to adapt from the West what suited Nigeria, while retaining those cultural practices and values that were cherished and integral to Nigerian identity.

#### **(D) Obafemi Awolowo**

His most important legacy: the rapid spread of Western education, was shaped by his parents who wanted him to go to school. The education which came with Spartan discipline at the slightest of mistake shaped his disinclination with "any position, status or preferment that comes only by mere patronage or favouritism has never since interested me". At the very core of his work ethic values of defiance, toughness, fearlessness, and truth that developed as a result of individualism that disregards ascriptive rights, and his acquisition of both secular and religious training from missionary education. All these shaped his strong habits of discipline in terms of consumption, hard work, and resoluteness.

He accepted the ideas of the nation-state but, at the same time, he had his own ideas about ethnicity and even the larger project of a continental identity for Africa. Chief some of these assumptions of modernity and the identity that resulted

His belonging to an extended lineage of township, and culture, which resulted in his becoming in 1945 one of the leading founders of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa (a formation necessitated by colonial control and the rising politics of decolonisation), his Yoruba identity became a form of political instrumentality. You will recall that his Ikenne roots grew out of Ijebu-Yoruba identity (thus, he became Ijegba, an identity that grew out of living in Abeokuta). For Awolowo and other Africans of the colonial era, their identities were not only multifaceted but often thrown into crises and flux. The Ikenne boy became a Yoruba man and a Nigerian politician. He engaged in local politics, competed at the provincial level, became a regional leader, and aspired to national leadership. In all these identities, the most definitive in Awolowo's life and career was that of his Yorubanness, that is, of an ethnicity framed by the colonialists as "tribe."

Having explained this much, you need to know here that not all psycho-biographies are psycho-analytic (i.e. adhere to the methods of the former). To this end, some psycho-biographies either adopt (a) The Freudian analysis or ego-defense (Link & Glad, 1994; Renshon, 1996); or (b) concentrate on the two personality disorders which Birt, (1993; Post, 1993), conceive as *narcissism and paranoid personality disorders* (see next unit for further explanations about these disorders).

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Considering the classic examples stated herein, discuss how the childhood patterns of development of any political actor in your community impacted on his/her political leadership personality.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This unit discussed the political personality of political figures from the perspective of their early childhood socialisation experiences.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The unit re-affirmed that the totality of one's personality is premised on the *consistency of behaviour* which span from childhood to adulthood.

## 6.0 TUTORED-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the bane of psycho-biography.
2. Explain how Wilson and Mandela align in personality inclinations.
3. Did the personality developments of Nnamdi Azikiwe, Ahmadu Bello and Obafemi Awolowo play a role in their leadership role(s) in the Nigerian nation –state?

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## **UNIT 4 ANALYSING PSYCHO-PATHOLOGIES OF POLITICAL LEADERS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Psycho-Pathology
  - 3.2 Examining Personality Disorders in Leaders
  - 3.3 Criticisms of Freud's Theory and Psycho-analysis
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

As a sequel to the discussions in the previous unit, about the psychobiographies of political leaders, this unit will analyse the psychopathology or psychological disorders of political individuals.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- analyse psycho-pathology;
- examine personal disorders.
- understand the critique of Freud's theory

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Psycho-Pathology**

This is another branch of psycho-analytical studies of personality and politics, which entails the examination of the behaviour of political leaders', as a possible product of psycho-pathologies. Importantly, although this form of examination commenced following Lasswell's, (1930) basic argument that the behaviour of some people in political roles is affected by psycho-pathologies; its modern understanding undoubtedly is attributed to Freud's innovative ideas. To therefore, understand it better, political beings/figure are analysed based on identification of their psychopathologies.

Let us now examine these *psycho-pathologies* and their variegated nature. These are:

- (a) **Neuroticism:** McCrea and Costa, (1985cf: McCrea, R.(1993) argued that this personality disorder is associated with anxiety, self-consciousness, vulnerability, hostility, depression, and impulsiveness.
- (b) **Narcissism:** This form of disorder Volkan, (1980) posits that people seek leadership roles in a relentless search for power in order to attain it at the expense of others. The paradox with these individuals is that they often seem charismatic, and ascend the ladder of power even in perilous times while followers are searching for strong leaders who will steer the ship of state effectively.
- (c) **Paranoia:** Based on Birt's, (1993) study of Joseph Stalin which discovered that descriptions of his personality align with the pattern associated with paranoia. This disorder is conceived as a pervasive and unwarranted tendency to interpret the actions of people as deliberately demeaning or threatening beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts. In other words, it is the pervasive pattern of grandiosity (in fantasy or behaviour), lack of empathy, and hypersensitivity to the evaluation of others.  
Complexity is the stock-in-trade of the victims of this personality disorder, so much so that they swing from one end of continua to the other. This explains disorder according to Birt(op, cit), function along two continua: (a)*aggression*: this manifests itself at one extreme as victim and at the other as the aggressor; *and*;  
(b) *Narcissism*: This oscillates between feelings of inferiority to superiority.

This contrasting extreme of complex paranoid personalities again according to Birt's, (op. cit) analysis of Joseph Stalin's personality pattern affected not only the international policies of the Soviet Union, but his career subsequently specifically captured thus:

*...Stalin is the classical example of a paranoid individual whose paranoia helped him rise to the top of a highly centralized political structure and, once there, turn the bureaucratic institutions of the S.U into extensions of his inner personality disorders.*

Further findings from the study include how Stalin's personality oscillation between phases affected the Soviet/USSR foreign policy prior the *blitzkrieg attack by Germany* during the Second World War. These phases are:

- (a) **First: aggressor/superior phase/position.** Here, any individual could be delusional about the possibility of an opponent/enemy attacking just as in Stalin's non-belief that Hitler would attack.
- (b) **Second: victim/superior phase/mode.** Here the 'victim' who usually feels he/she deserves better like Stalin who believed he deserved better from Hitler but was disgraced became a victim of insecurity. Often times when this happens, the personalities/individuals, like Stalin (who assumed his personality rather than the Soviet Union) believe they are under attack.
- (c) **Third: aggressor/inferior stage:** This occurs with the progression of time; and the subsequent culmination into the next stage;
- (d) **Fourth: victim/inferior mode(s):** Here, the individual just as in the typical case of Stalin is absolved from depression but relapses into the next stage;
- (e) **Fifth: aggressor/superior mode(s):** This final mode sets the stage for the disposition of any individual in decision/action taking. When the Second World War broke -out, this mode came to bear with our empirical case-study personality-Stalin.  
From these stages or modes which dove-tails into one another abound techniques adopted for data collection (see the next unit) for each of the explained approaches.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Analyse the possibility of different forms of disorders manifesting at dual extremes in an individual.

### 3.2 Examining Personality Disorders in Leaders

To guide and structure any analysis of leader personality and behaviour, political psychologists seeking to examine personality disorders employ the method of the *American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic criteria* (see table 1 below): This technique is globally accepted in the examination of personality disorders (psycho-pathology or psychological).

**Table 4.1: DSM-IV Diagnostic Criteria for Selected Personality Disorders**

Personality Disorder	FEATURES
Narcissistic Disorder	It is a pervasive pattern of grandiosity(either in fantasy or behaviour), which lacks empathy, and

	<p>is hypersensitive to the evaluation of others, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts, as indicated by at least <i>five</i> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The tendency to react to criticism with feelings of rage, shame, or humiliation(whether expressed or not);</li> <li>(b) Interpersonally exploitative: the implication of this is that one with a narcissistic disorder personality takes advantage of others to achieve their own ends;</li> <li>(c) Possesses a grandiose sense of self-importance, e.g, exaggerates achievements and talents while expecting to be noticed as ‘special’ without appropriate achievement;</li> <li>(d) Has the conception that their problems are unique and can be understood only by other special people;</li> <li>(e) Is preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love;</li> <li>(f) Possesses a sense of entitlement which is unreasonable in the expectations of favourable treatment. Here, the narcissist assumes that he/she does not have to wait in line when it is evident that others are aligning:</li> <li>(g) Requires constant attention and admiration. To this end, the constancy in the quest for compliments is their stock-in-trade;</li> <li>(h) This personality not only lacks empathy but is riddled with the inability to recognize and experience how others feel;</li> <li>(i) Is pre-occupied with feelings of envy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Paranoid Disorder</b></p>	<p>This pervasive and unwarranted tendency is evident from the cradle through adulthood in varied contexts oscillating between the interpretation of actions of people as deliberately demeaning or threatening. The under listed four features depict this disorder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a)Expects most at times without sufficient basis, to be exploited or harmed by others;</li> <li>(b)questions, without justification, the loyalty or trustworthiness of friends or associates;</li> </ul>

	<p>(c)interprets hidden or threaten meanings into benign remarks or events or actions;</p> <p>(d)bears grudges or is unforgiving of insults or slights</p> <p>(e)reluctance in confiding in others, occasioned out of baseless fear that the information may be used against them;</p> <p>(f)easily slighted and quick to react with anger or to counter-attack</p> <p>(h)questions, without justification, fidelity of spouse or partner</p>
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Adapted from: *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorder* (4<sup>th</sup> ed., text revision; pp.690-714) by American Psychiatric Association, Washington, D.C: Author. Copyright by *American Psychiatric Association*.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Discuss the techniques of understanding personality disorders.

### 3.3 Criticisms of Freud's Theory, and Psycho-Analysis

The 'attack, revile, ridicule, and slander' (Hall and Lindzey, 1970:68), are of two strands:

- (1) **Empiricism:** This is based on the stance that Freud's research was not controlled, given his reliance upon recollections of therapy sessions with patients, most at times recorded after the process. The query here is his tendency to present findings as personal conclusions, without the original data (due to reliance on his own recollection of discussions). These biases evidently made his conclusions subject to query by Hall & Lindzey, *op cit*: 69) on the grounds that "his method of arriving at conclusions neither revealed nor systematically presented qualitative or quantitative empirical findings.
- (2) **Non-amenability to Empirical Testing:** This critique is two edged; one is the part blame on Freud's theory about personality as unobservable abstract ideas; and two, the existence of so many theoretically possible behaviours that are manifestations of psycho-analytic issues which an individual may possess. To buttress this, again Hall & Lindzey, (*op cit*), proffered a cogent example in the study of Stalin's paranoia\* with a finding that if diametrically opposite patterns of behaviour can result from the



same psycho-analytic condition, then developing testable, and therefore falsifiable, hypotheses is a difficulty.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

The unit examined the psycho-pathology or psychological disorders of political individuals, the technique used in examining personality disorders (psycho-pathology or psychological) and importantly, the critique of Freud's psycho-analysis.

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

The issues examined here include: *psycho-pathologies* as a strand of *psycho-analytical studies* of personality and politics, its examination of personality disorders through the adoption of the *American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic criteria* and lastly, the attack on the Freudian psycho-analysis.

#### 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain the Narcissistic and paranoid disorder using the DSM-IV Diagnostic criteria.
2. The criticisms of Freud's theory and psycho-analysis indict his ideas on psycho-pathology. Analyse.
3. What are the phases which an individual must undergo in personality change(s)?

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## **UNIT 5 PERSONALITY TRAIT THEORIES**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Personality Trait Theories
  - 3.2 Personality Assessment Measures
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit examines one of the additional personality theories in psychology, known as the traits/ trait-based theoretical framework that borders on the understanding of the individual characteristics (traits) of political beings in the political environment in relation to decision-making, inter-personal interaction, information processing, and management of political office/leadership.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain personality traits
- discuss personality assessment measures.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Personality Trait Theories**

Broadly, these are traits used to characterise not only ourselves but the personality of others. Specifically, traits are personality characteristics that are stable or consistent over time and in different situations are conceived as traits (Pervin & John, 1997). Its consistency facilitates the production of predispositions to think, feel, or act in particular patterns toward people, events, and situations. For instance, if you were asked to describe Mohammed Buhari, the incumbent president of Nigeria, the obvious trait that comes to mind is ‘incorruptible, disciplined and uncompromising’.

Trait theories originated following the traceable to the disagreements by Allport (1937, 1961, 1968), over the following contentions Freud: (a) that personality dynamics are governed by the unconscious. The basis of disagreement is premised on the belief that childhood experiences are less important in the adult's personality, contrary to Freud's proposition. Advancing further, Allport conceived personality as a central determinant in how individual's respond to their environments. Following this, he proposed three dimensions of addressing an individual's personality. The dimensions arranged in the order of importance are: *cardinal, central, and secondary traits*(see tables below)

**Table 5.1: Dimensions of Traits by Allport**

<b>Cardinal Traits</b>	These traits explain an individual's personality characteristics. They are rare which explains why most people have little or none at all of it albeit it's being critically important. An example of this trait is: authoritarianism.
<b>Central Traits</b>	This trait affects people regularly although not in all situations. An example is : honesty or sincerity
<b>secondary traits</b>	This is the least important and most irregular in affecting behaviour.

### Dimensions of Traits by Eysenck

Eysenck, (1975; 1979), is another political psychology trait theorist who also identified three other personality trait dimensions namely: *introversion-extroversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism*.

**Table 5.2**

<b>introvert-extrovert trait</b>	This refers to how extroverted or outgoing an individual is.
<b>neuroticism trait</b>	This bothers on the emotional stability of an individual.
<b>psychoticism trait</b>	This refers to how isolated and insensitive to others an individual is.

To further understand personality, psychologists in recent years further developed taxonomy of personality traits which constitute the basic units

of personality. This was achieved using several different research techniques, including *factor analyses of trait* terms commonly used in everyday language, and the analysis of trait questionnaires. What were achieved were five central personality traits known as the Big Five personality dimensions. The traits which are: *neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience and conscientiousness* (Costa & McCrae, 1985), are arranged on a continuum.

**Table5.3: Big Five Personality Dimensions**

<b>Neuroticism</b>	<p>This personality trait is fundamental in the study of psychology traditionally called <i>neuroses</i>. It has been adjudged as having an enduring tendency of an individual to experience negative emotional conditions/states. Individuals with this trait (i.e. neuroticism) more often than not experience such feelings as anxiety, anger, guilt and depressed mood (Matthews and Deary, 1998). Specifically, those <i>high in neuroticism</i> is a characteristic of people who worry and are nervous, insecure and creative, while those <i>low in neuroticism</i> is associated with calmness, being secure and unemotional/ low emotional intelligence (this involves emotional regulation, motivation, and interpersonal skills) self-consciousness, shy and may have trouble controlling urges and delaying gratification.</p> <p>Within the context of the feelings expressed above, the tendency is for an individual with high neuroticism to interpret everyday situations as threatening, and minor frustrations as herculean. Neuroticism has been included as one of the dimensions that comprise core self-evaluations (a concept first examined by Locke) which has proven to have the ability to predict several outcomes, specifically, job satisfaction/ performance as well as in political leadership.</p>
<b>Extraversion</b>	<p>Here, individuals <i>high in extraversion</i> are sociable, optimistic, fun-loving and affectionate, while those <i>low in extraversion</i> are quiet, reserved and aloof</p>
<b>Openness to experience</b>	<p>An individual <i>high in openness</i> is curious, creative, and has many interests, while one <i>low in openness</i> is conventional and has narrow interests.</p>
<b>Agreeableness</b>	<p>Individuals who are <i>high in agreeableness</i> trust,</p>

	good natured, helpful and soft-hearted, while a person <i>low in agreeableness</i> have the tendency to be cynical, rude, irritable and uncooperative.
<b>Conscientiousness</b>	A person <i>high in conscientiousness</i> is organised, hardworking and reliable, while a person <i>low in conscientiousness</i> is aimless, unreliable, negligent and hedonistic(Pervin &John, 1997).

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the personality assessment measure using Allport's dimensions of traits.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

The unit examined how personality characteristics are consistent hence its role in explaining the predispositions of how an individual thinks, feels, or act in particular patterns toward people, events, and situations.

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

Here, we looked at the theory of trait, and the relationship between the Big Five personality traits; and social comparisons were examined.

#### 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss traits as personality characteristics that are stable over time and in different situations.
2. Examine the personality trait dimensions.
3. How does the big five personality trait impact on personality behaviours of political leaders?

#### 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **MODULE 3            MANIFESTATIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES IN LEADERSHIP, POWER AND POLITICS**

Unit 1	Explaining Power
Unit 2	Political Culture
Unit 3	Public Opinion
Unit 4	Political Information Processing and Decision-making
Unit 5	Perceptions and Foreign Policy

### **UNIT 1            EXPLAINING POWER**

#### **CONTENT**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main content
	3.1    The Concept of Power
	3.2    Forms of Power
	3.3    The Nexus between Power and Politics
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

#### **1.0            INTRODUCTION**

Central to the study of politics is the concept of power. Power as the ability to make individuals, groups and societies make and take decisions which they will not do without being forced is an essential and key element in political discourse. As a matter of fact, politics will not be complete without power as power complements the politics. Power of the state to compel obedience and enforce laws, power in the quest and struggle amongst political actors to acquire political power and remain relevant in a polity, power to be global and regional hegemony remains a crucial factor in the study of politics. This unit therefore will analyse these two important concepts in the study of Political Science.

#### **2.0            OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the concept and forms of power
- discuss the concept of politics
- state the nexus between politics and power.



### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The Concept of Power

Defining any concept in the Social Science is an enormous task owing to the divergent views on such concept. Power as a concept has been defined to mean different things. Max Weber (1947: 152) defined power as 'the Probability that one actor within a social relationship will in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis On which this probability rests'. For Roskin et al., 2010, power is a connection among people, the ability of one person to get others to do his or her bidding. Henderson, 1997, defines power as the capacity of one actor to persuade or coerce another, thus allowing for the control of that actor. From a different but similar perspective, Akeke (2000) defined power as the use of force by groups or institutions against one another. In his main words:

...power is generally understood today as ability backed by control of the means of coercion of an individual or institution to compel another person or group to accede to an action that is contrary to his interest (Akeke, 2000:3)

Also, Power is the ability to influence others to believe, behave, or to value as those in power desire them to or to strengthen, validate, or confirm present beliefs, behaviours, or values. Hence, Power is an essential element of human existence and we can find signs and manifestations of power in every dimension of social life, from interpersonal relations through economic transactions, to religious and political disputes (Pallaver, 2011). From all these definitions power can be defined as the ability of one person, group or institutions to get others do his/her bidding.

#### 3.2 Forms of Power

Having understood what power constitutes, let us now consider the different levels and forms of power as power. There are basically four forms of powers thus:

**Political Power:** as the name connotes political power implies power that revolve itself around the state and this means power that comes from the government. Hence it means that political power are power that can be found in the both the arms and levels of government in going about the administering of the state. Here political powers are used to

make and enforce laws and ensure the compliance of rules and regulations of the state. As Maclver, 1965 states it,

... the power of government is one aspect of power among many. It is formally supreme, in the sense that government alone has the ultimate right to use direct coercion ... (Maclver, 1965: 68)

As the most important agent of the state, the government has the legitimate monopoly of the use of force to compel obedience in a state which in sum means political power and this in turn involve persons (President, Vice president Law makers, Governors, e.t.c). Political power is strongly tied with economic power

**Economic Power:** This is one of the most important forms of power. Economic power has to do with the economy of the society in terms of capitals, finance, industry etc. The group, individuals that owns this power controls the majority of the populace as the case maybe. In the words of Maclver, 1965: 68 which best connotes the meaning of economic power :

... for the first place, economic power is multi-centred and is the scene of internecine warfare, business against business, industry against industry, capital against labour, industry seeking to cheapen agriculture and vice versa, primary producer against manufacturer, manufacturer against retailer with wholesaler jockeying for position against borrower, white collar class squeezed between the demands of other interest, and so on through multifarious jumble relationships

From the above, economic power exists at different levels as both micro and macro level of politics and it is used for the holders to make certain decisions on their behalf. An example at the micro level is Dangote in Nigeria he has the economic power to have some decisions made on his advantage because he has different company that he has invested to in Nigeria and this has helped the growth of the Nigerian economy making him a force to reckon with in the Nigerian Polity. At the macro level of political analysis, the United States of America and the members of the Security Council of the United Nations are examples of states that have economic power hence other developing states dance to their tune and make decisions and policy that are in tandem with the dictations of the super powers. The Anti gay law in Uganda is a typical example when the USA threatened to withdraw support from Uganda because of its

Anti-Gay law the Ugandan government soft pedal on the policy because it has lots to gain from the United States of America. During the war on Iraq the United States of America used her economic strength to convince her allies to support her on the war which she succeeded.

At this point, it is apt you get acquainted with the indices of economic power which includes:

- High level of industrialisation
- Stable and buoyant economy
- Strong currency
- Low rate of unemployment

On the other hand, at the intra state level of analysis indices of economic power includes: Ownership of industries, Employment of labour and Ownership of capital.

**Military Power:** This form of power is the most dangerous out of all the forms of power as it involves the use of weapon of all sorts and it is negative as lives and properties are destroyed during usage. Military form of power involves the use of armaments of various kinds to achieve various aims. States are judged in terms of their military capability both in terms of military equipment and technology, and the number of their military prowess. The United States of America have one of the best military capabilities in the world and their military is well funded so also is China and the some developed countries. In terms of the relation of states with another, the military prowess of a state can determine her status in the international political system and can be used to make and influence decisions. Military power complements economic power.

**Physical Power:** This form of power has to do with the strength of individual. Even though this is a form of power it is less relevant in political analysis but also counts as individuals might use their psychical power over the weak in the society and that will result in the other weak individual doing with her or she will not want to do if given a choice.

These sources of powers mentioned above are the conventional sources of power but does not represent the whole foray of forms of power. For instance the education status of an individual can also be a source of power depending on the society in question. The physical attribute of an individual can also serve as a source of power. The character and behaviour of an individual can also serve as source of power and this varies across societies. Individual such as the Late Princess Dianna Princess of Wales (formerly lady Diana Frances Spencer) of the Great

Britain is an example of this she was loved by all and till date is still idolized based on her personality. Entertainment star such as Beyonce Knowles, Oprah Winfrey have power and control the mind set of people based on their persona. In the just concluded 2015 general elections in Nigeria entertainers were used by politicians to campaign in order to win the votes of the populace. Hence the persona of an individual can serves as a form of power.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What is your understanding of power and its varied forms?

### **3.3 The Nexus between Power And Politics**

Politics and power are two concepts in the study of political science that are mutually in exclusive. As a matter of fact, government cannot maintain peace, guarantee security, promote economic growth or pursue effective policies without the use of power. Power is a tool that is to be used through politics. At different level, political power comes to play in the achievement of aims of individuals or groups as the case may be. As in international politics, economic powers of developed states like the United States of America, China and Russia, Germany, France, Great Britain use their economy influence to make developing countries do their bidding. Economic incentives are given to these developing countries to keep them under their control. Embargo of products are placed on the goods of countries that are found wanting and do not want to dance to the bidding and dictates of the powerful countries hence showing the importance of economic aspect of power.

The Military form of power is also utilised by states as form of deterrent to other states and is eventually used by states to suppress another state. Example is the United States of America in the Middle East the USA has embarked on war against terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan using her military strength in these countries. The military prowess of the United State of America is a crucial factor in the USA relations with other states hence; the United States of America has an upper advantage in international politics against other countries.

Even at the state and intra state level of politics, power is eminently visible in these spheres. In the making of decisions there is a constant struggle for power amongst political actors in a state in the quest for the authoritative allocations of values.

The jostling for the head (Senate President) of the upper chamber (The Senate) in the Nigerian upper legislative arm is an example of the power

struggle in politics which bring the definitions of Harrold Lasswell who gets what and how. Politics is which individual or group has the control of power in a polity. Therefore, there is constant struggle for power in a polity as there are a lot to gain when in control of political power. Even at the intra state level of politics there is constant struggle to head organisations and associations owing to the incentives that comes along with it. So power and politics are two important concepts in political discourse that are mutually in exclusive.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This unit explored the concepts of “Power and Politics”. Equally, highlighted were how different types of power helped in identifying which aspect of politics one would be interested in analysing.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

The unit examined power as an important element in politics and its different levels of use.

#### **6.0 TUTORED-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Discuss power in relation to its use in your polity.
2. Explain how Power and Politics are inseparable concepts in political psychology.
3. Discuss how peace, security, and economic growth project power

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## UNIT 2 POLITICAL CULTURE

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 What is Political Culture
  - 3.2 Types of Political Culture
  - 3.3 Assessment of Political Culture in Nigeria
- 4 Summary
- 5 Conclusion
- 6 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Political culture is one factor that influences the political behaviour of individuals in a polity. To this end, this unit focuses on Political Culture and examines the nature of political culture in politics.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain political culture
- identify types of political culture
- assess political culture in nigeria.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

The focus of this unit is political culture and its nature. Also, explained here, are its different types and the illustration of the concept in Nigeria.

#### 3.1 What is Political Culture?

**What is Culture?** Culture refers to those shared beliefs that people learn from society. While all human beings hold beliefs, they do not all hold the same beliefs. Members of the same culture acquire a common belief system. Those shared beliefs also set norms expectations of how people are expected to behave.

Culture affects the way people think, including the way they process and order information. Culture shapes who we are, how we see the world, and what values we place on what we see.

Culture is also an important source of identity. Identity is the way people define themselves and are defined by others. Identity also satisfies the need people have to be part of something bigger than them. Culture is the total way of life of some people or groups in a particular society. The culture will include particular attributes of specific society such as their political systems, economic system, religious system, and family patterns.

Having created an understanding of what culture is, you then need to know: what then is **Political culture**? Like any other concepts defining political culture differs across societies and climes as culture differs across societies so those contents differ too. This was rightly noted by Kolb, 1978 in her main words thus:

... Culture also differs with respect to their permeation throughout the society and the intensity of attachment of people to prevailing beliefs. In some countries a distinct cultural pattern or creed is dominant in that it prevails among most people and it is either explicitly subscribed to, or unquestioningly accepted by, most members of the society (Kolb, 1978:91)

Political culture was first proposed by Gabriel Almond (1956) and subsequently employed in *The Civic Culture* (Almond and Verba 1963 cited in Pavone, 2014 ), the term promised to solve in a scientific, cross culturally valid way the micro-macro problem: the classic problem of specifying how people affect their political system, and vice-versa (Chilton, 1988). Since the employment of the topic by Almond, political the concept has been used to explain political phenomenon. Political culture is the pattern of individual attitudes and orientations toward politics among members of a political system (Almond and Verba, 1963). To Elkins & Simeon, 1979 political culture defines the range of acceptable possible alternatives from which group or individuals may, other circumstances permitting, choose a course of action. Lowell Dittmer (1977: 566) defines political culture as "a system of political symbols, and this system nests within a more inclusive system that we might term 'political communication.'" These symbols differ across climes and affect the political behaviours in the society an example is the British political system which is parliamentary even though the British practice democracy there is still respect for the monarchy due to the culture as a matter of fact, the monarchs are respected in the society and they influence decision-making in the society.



Political culture refers to the belief system and value or value orientations, which influence political behaviour, institutions and processes of these various cultures (Kolb, 1978). In sum, you can conclude that, Political culture consists of people's shared, learned beliefs about their political system and their role within that system. Political culture influences the way people see their political world. Political culture also influences what people value most in their political world. Some political cultures place a high value on individual freedom while other cultures prize community solidarity. An example is the northern Nigeria women are not allowed to participate in governance as compared to other regions in Nigeria and women in that part of the country adhere to that rule you rarely find women in politics.

Also, in the same region, due to the nature of their pre-colonial political organisation which was centralised, the political leaders are respected and not questioned in that part of the country. This can be attributed to the centralised nature of the political system in the pre-colonial northern Nigeria where power, influence and authority revolve around the Sultan of Sokoto during the Sokoto caliphate. During that period, the Sultan of Sokoto was also the head of the Muslim community hence he had so much power and was respected. Therefore, even with the demise of that political system in northern Nigeria, northern leaders are still respected by the populace this could be the reasons for the high level of unaccountability by the politician in that region. This is one reason (Olojo, 2013) attributed the Boko Haram insurgency to the lack of development in the northern region. The leaders focus on religion and other scrupulous policies that are unproductive. This simply illustrates how the cultures of certain communities have impact on their political culture which transcends to generations.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain what political cultures projects in politics.

### **3.2 Types of Political Culture**

Let us begin by examining Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verber's typologies.

Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verber were American social scientist scholars who in their work "political culture" tried to measure citizen's participation in politics in five different states the United States of America, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, and Mexico in an attempt to examine the political culture in these states and the people's active participant or non-participant in politics. This research was considered

ground breaking as it was the first systematic collected data measuring citizen's behaviours across different states.

They compared and contrasted the patterns of political attitudes in the five countries and contended that, across states, a democratic system required a political culture encouraging political participation. Hence, there are factors which are psychological that influences and accounts for a certain group political behaviour. The civic culture is not taught in school but transferred from generations to generations true different social institutions in the society such as the family, peer groups, political institutions amongst others. In their analysis they identified three types of political culture namely:

- Parochial
- Subject
- Participant

**Parochial:** This according to Almond and Verba they are the political sleepwalkers, who are not involved in politics, and have little or no knowledge or interest in the domestic political system. They do not care about laws or policies made by government they just take it as they see it.

**Subject :** The category of people in this group are somewhat aware of political institutions and rules which is a huge departure from the Parochial group who are not involved and interested in politics at all.

**Participant:** People in this group possess a strong sense of influence, competence and confidence in understanding the domestic political system. They influence decision-making by the government and also are involved in politics (Chen, 2005).

The above are classifications of political culture by Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba. There are other classifications of political culture notably among which is Arend Lijphart. In his analysis, Arend Lijphart classified political culture into two namely:

First classification consists of two main classes which are

- Mass political culture
- Elite political culture

The mass political culture consist of people who are in the lower carder of the society these are people who are poor and they do not really influence the decision-making bodies.

The elite political culture as the name implies consists of the elite who are *crem de la crem* of the society. They influence policies and of the government. They consist of the rich and powerful in the society.

Political culture has also been classified by different scholars in different ways apart from the above mentioned classification but the above are the basic conception of political culture.

### **3.3 Assessment of Political Culture in Nigeria**

With the description of the meaning and types of political culture, it is then imperative to examine its application in Nigeria. From the above, you can see that there are different types of political culture and each of these exist in any society.

Nigeria as the most populous Black Country in the world is made up of different ethnic groups with the Igbo's Yoruba's and Hausa's being the majority. With this diversity exists different cultures and practices which have implications on their political activities. The political culture amongst these three ethnic groups in Nigeria is greatly influenced by the nature of their pre-colonial political system. During the pre-colonial era in northern Nigeria, the political system that existed was centralised with power, influence and authority revolving around the Sultan of Sokoto in the Sokoto caliphate. This is coupled with the fact that the sultan of Sokoto was the head of Muslim community at that moment he had so much powers which was absolute. That cultural orientation still exists to date.

The political culture of the northerner is one as such that their political leaders are not questioned and held accountable in office, their leaders are being respected and seen as symbols of worship which accounts for the high rate of poverty and underdevelopment in that region. In the eastern Nigeria, the political organisation is different from that of northern Nigeria. The pre-colonial political organisation in eastern Nigeria was decentralised system of governance were by there was no central political authority who has power to make and enforce laws as found in other regions (Northern and Southern), rather political power was decentralised this has influenced the political culture of the region till date.

While the political organisation in the Northern region was centralised, the political organisation in the western region was also centralised but not absolutely centralised as there were checks and balances put in place to checkmate the excesses of the king. The Oyomesi and the Ogboni cult of elders serve as institutions of checks and balances against the central

political authority which was the Alafin of Oyo. These political systems have over the years influenced the political culture in Nigeria. The voting patterns and political behaviours in different parts of the nation are determined by the political cultures of these regions. As a matter of fact, in northern Nigeria, women were not allowed to vote until 1979 (Tsebee, 2010). With this, it can be seen that political culture in Nigeria is that of ethnic rivalry and bigotry. This has been the norm throughout the years and has slowed down the pace of development in the country. Tesebee, 2010 summarises the state of political culture in Nigeria. In his main words:

...There is a general culture of violence, which has come to be accepted as a norm and which has unfortunately come to pervade our entire socio-political consciousness as well as appear to have been canonized. Under this setting, there is the tendency that some people see killing, brutality and intimidation as "normal" ways of living and gaining political power. This is the culture that has created past and present Nigerian political class as well as creating the future political class. Those at the winning side celebrate while those at the losing side mourn and bury their dead (Tsebee: 142; 2010)

This has been the nomenclature in Nigeria. Majority of the citizens in Nigeria do not care about the government because they have been let down by the government over the years. Elections are rigged; votes do not reflect the true mind sets and choices of the Nigerian populace. All these have affected the political culture in Nigeria. Most Nigerians are best said to be parochial in nature as they are unconcerned in decision-making with the elite and few members of the society that have lots to gain concerned and interested in politics. This has also been compounded with the prolonged military rule in Nigeria. There have been cases of bad governance and leadership on the part of the government and which have lead to corruption (Ogbeidi, 2012). All these have lead to the bad state of Nigeria political culture which has not lead to Nigeria's development.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE**

What factors do you think have affected the political culture in Nigeria?

## 4.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt the meaning of political culture, different types of political culture as well as political culture as it is experienced in Nigeria especially what influences it.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

From the above, it is clear that political culture of a society affects the political behaviour of that particular society. Political culture also differs across climes and this explains development and underdevelopment of societies because the political culture of a particular society influences the pace of development.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Analyse what political culture is and its varied types.
2. With your understanding so far of political culture, assess it in relation to Nigeria.
3. How does the diversity which exists in different cultures and practices have implications on their political activities?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 3 PUBLIC OPINION**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Concept of Public Opinion
  - 3.2 Elements of Public Opinion
  - 3.3 Means of Measuring Public Opinion
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Human beings as Political beings behave in certain ways based on their political socialisation or political culture in politics. Assessing or gauging people's perception on political issues, public opinion is needed as it is a means of getting people's views on matters of relevance to the development of the state. To this end, this unit reviews the conceptualisation of public opinion, means of measuring it, its types and the processes of its formation.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define public opinion
- describe how public opinion are formed
- explain the means of measuring public opinions.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Concept of Public Opinion**

In conceptualising public opinion, the two basic concepts will be explained. The term public, from the Latin *publicus* meaning "the people," similarly had several discernable meanings. In some of its earliest uses it referred to common access, with areas open to the general population deemed public (Habermas, 1962/1989 cited in Donsbach, 2007). In a second usage, public referred to the common interest and common good, not in the sense of access (or belonging to) but rather in

the sense of representing (that is, in the name of) the whole of the people.

As any other concept within the social sciences, public opinion has been defined differently by various scholars. Bernays, 1928 defined it as the thought of a society at a given time towards a given object which might be political, economic or cultural. In early usage, public opinion referred to the social customs and manners of this growing class of prosperous “men of letters” but by the close of the century it was being used in an expressly political context, often in conjunction with cousin phrases such as “common will,” and “public conscience.”(Donsbach, 2007)

As a matter of fact, there was transformations overtime of the meaning of public opinion. Barker (1990) argued that, the change from absolute monarch rule in England brought about public opinion as a new source of authority. In his words Baker:

Baker (1990) argues that with the dissolution of absolute monarchical power, both the crown and its opponent alike invoked public opinion as a new source of authority and legitimacy, largely in rhetorical fashion and without any fixed sociological referent. Hence the term remained, in some sense intentionally, vague. (Baker, 1990 cited in Donsbach; 2007)

It was linked quite explicitly with free and open discussion of political affairs among educated men of financial means. Yet it often acquired (as in the writings of Rousseau, 1762/1968) an abstract and almost super-human quality as an expression of the common will, divined through reasoned debate, and framed as a powerful new tribunal for checking and thus controlling, as right would have it, the actions of the state. Despite these communitarian origins, however, the concept of public opinion came to acquire much of its contemporary meaning from its deployment in the work of later liberal thinkers, particularly “utilitarian” philosophers such as Mill (1820/1937) and Bentham (1838/1962).

Also, the meaning of public opinion has changed over the years to include and suite different variations of research. (Converse, 1987) It relates to “action or readiness for action with regard to a given issue on the part of members of a public who are reacting in the expectation that others in the public are similarly oriented toward the same issue.”(Davidson, 1958). Hence public opinion can be summed up to mean, different views of the populace about different issues on the state



in total most especially in a democratic dispensation (Lax & Philip, 2009).

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Examine public opinion as a concept in the Social Sciences.

### **3.2 Elements of Public Opinion Process**

This has to do with the various forms and types of public opinions; as there are different aspects to public opinion which covers different range of subjects which can be political, social-cultural, economic etc.

The followings are the elements of public opinion process

- **Issues:**

These relate to the topics about which people have opinions. These topics can fall within or cut across the three public opinion dimensions—i.e., cognitive/theoretical matters of truth, or normative/practical matters of rightness, or expressive/evaluative matters of sincerity and authenticity. Issue agendas are typically set by opinion leaders and by the mass media. Also, issues have their own dynamics of development, and these dynamics set parameters for the development of public opinion.

- **Communication:**

This concerns the social and/or technologically mediated channels through which opinion circulates. Most public opinion forms through combinations and interactions of interpersonal and mass-mediated communication.

- **Perceptions of Reality:**

People's perceptions of "what the case is" in the material world, in the social world, and in themselves, as well as their judgments about how those three levels of reality intersect.

- **Demographic, Social, and Psychological Characteristics:**

These are different attributes or tendencies that vary across, and often within, individuals. Many of these characteristics are potentially relevant to public opinion research, including the following: race, class, gender, age, educational level, cultural tastes, group affiliations, access to

information, media use, social position, occupation, opinion leadership etc

### 3.3 Means of Measuring Public Opinion

There are different methods in measuring public opinion. Basically, the methods can be divided into two: Formal way of measuring public opinion consists of methods that are scientific and systematic. Under this means of measuring public opinions, it involves painstaking and rigor procedures methods. In this category, methods of measuring public opinion are classified into quantitative and qualitative approach. Formal ways of measuring of public opinion includes:

**Sample surveys:** This is the simplest form of measuring public opinion. Basically, there are three ways of conducting sample surveys they include:

**Face-to-face interviews / in-depth interviews:** this was the most common means of measuring people's opinion on different issues. The interviewer talks to the respondents in person and asks relevant questions which is then recorded by the interviewer. The advantage of this method is that it is easier to use and none expensive. There are also disadvantages of this method. First it is time consuming as the interview might take a long time to be conducted hence consuming a lot of time. Another disadvantage is the validity of the interview as the respondent will not like to give negative answers to the questions asked and some of them are influenced by the interviewee.

**Telephone:** Telephone interviews are also formal means of gathering public opinion conducted via the phone. One of the advantage is that it is easier, shorter and precise unlike face to face interview which can take a long time to conduct. The disadvantage is that it is costly to use and because of the cost the essence of the interview might not be achieved.

**Mail surveys:** This method of opinion collection is not commonly used as the other methods of formal measuring of public opinion have overshadowed it. It involves the use of mails in getting public opinions. The disadvantages of this method is that not everyone reply's mails and the mails might be replied lately, hence, the objective of the research will not be achieved. The advantage is that it is cheaper and easy to use and responses of the respondents are not controlled.

The disadvantages of sample surveys therefore are: The informal ways of measuring public opinions are ways that not scientific. These are methods which are not measured by any scientific methods and the

processes are not rigor. Equally, there are no guidelines in their processes of elections, interests group and lobby, the media and during protest

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the quantitative and qualitative approach in measuring Public Opinion.

#### **Elections**

The most common way for a democratic government to learn about public opinion is through elections. Elections are built into the system, at regular intervals in Nigeria and at irregular intervals in other democratic countries. They are important because they determine who staffs the government, and they are also one way for the public to express its feelings about politics. But they are not a particularly precise method for ascertaining public opinion.

Politicians and researchers may try to figure out why one person won an election rather than another, but usually there are so many factors that it is impossible to single out one or a few and “the” reason or reasons. A candidate may have won because he or she is in touch with the voters and understands their needs better than any other candidate. But, on the other hand, a candidate may have won because he or she is a better speaker or because of more or better television advertisements. Even if a candidate won on “the issues,” it may be difficult to determine which issues were most important. Some voters may have decided on the basis of economic issues, while others decided on the basis of a candidate’s stand on abortion or gun control.

In the end, all that elections tell us about “what the public wants” is that they preferred one candidate over another and not why. Just like the current Nigeria’s President Mohammed Buhari majority of Nigerians elected him because of his stance on corruption the president was against corruption and promised to fight corruption to the last and the Nigerian populace voted for him. Elections are also imperfect measures of public opinion because they reflect only the opinions of those who voted. Certainly, in societies in which all adults have the right to vote, elections can reflect the various views of all the people. But in practice, not everyone votes especially in United States, where only about half the eligible voters participate in presidential elections, and even fewer do so in other elections. Therefore, elections tend to reflect the views of those who vote, who are not necessarily representative of the public. As we

shall see later, elections tend to reflect the viewpoints of more educated, wealthier citizens.

While elections are a blunt measure of public opinion, they are the most effective means by which public opinion can control the government and public policy. Elected politicians, who are future candidates, will avoid taking especially unpopular positions on issues because they know that voters might notice and could show their displeasure at the polls. If voters do not notice a candidate's position on their own, opposing candidates will be happy to point it out. In this way, elections serve to hold politicians accountable to voters' opinions even latent opinions that the voters may not consciously hold. Politicians' perceptions of public opinion, then, may be as important as the actual public opinion itself. A state legislator may refrain from voting for an obscure but unpopular bill because she is afraid that constituents would be offended and vote for her opponent in the next election even if, in fact, they would never know. Just as the Nigerian senators voted against the same sex bill in Nigeria.

### **Interest Groups and Lobbying:**

Interest groups are also means through which public opinions are measured. It may seem unlikely that interest groups would be valid measures of public opinion. They are remarkably unrepresentative of the public as a whole. The wealthy and the educated members of society are much more likely to be organized into interest groups and employ representatives. The poor and uneducated are much less able to speak to the government through lobbyists. Nevertheless, legislators, staffers, and other government personnel do pay attention to what interest groups say. They have good reason to do so. Good lobbyists tend to be well informed about their issues concerning their employers, they have access to facts necessary to write laws, they understand the political process, and they are present when necessary to answer questions.

- **The Media:**

In this 21<sup>st</sup> century the media is one avenue for the measurement of public opinions as people in a polity expresses their opinions through the mass media. Many government officials, and many regular citizens, look to the media to understand the views of the public. In Herbst's study, she found that legislative staffers also considered the media to accurately present public opinion. The media are important in understanding people's opinions, and we will devote an entire chapter to the media later in this book. Media, such as television, newspapers, and magazines are important because of the news they choose and how they portray the issues. In other terms, they are important in determining the

political agenda (what people in the government are thinking about) and in framing the issues (how the issues are being considered).

The print media are also important as conduits of opinions from editorialists, columnists, and ordinary people who write letters to the editor. Most large newspapers print the opinions of their editors and run the articles. Most also print letters to the editor that allow ordinary people the power to express practically any sort of opinion. Some magazines, such as *The Nation* newspaper and *Punch* cover politics in an essentially nonpartisan way, but there are many more magazines that represent practically any political point of view in the Nigerian political spectrum. Media houses such as African Independent Television (AIT), Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Silverbird TV have programmes whereby the people express their views on the polity.

- **Protests:**

In democratic governments as well as dictatorships, protests have served governments as indicators of citizens' dissatisfaction with government policies. In Nigeria, especially in the last 40 years, protests have been a staple way of communicating with the government. The goal of protest is to get the media, and by extension the public and government officials, to notice a problem they have been ignoring. The fuel subsidy protest was witnessed in Nigeria in 2012 whereby the Nigerian populace protested against the fuel increase to demonstrate their dissatisfaction.

Another example of protest is that of Martin Luther King, Jr. was a master at handling the media to magnify the impact of protests. King wanted his protest marches in the south to show the brutality of the Jim Crow, segregationist, political and legal system. He aimed his protests at the most visibly brutal Southern lawmen, such as Sheriff Jim Clark in Selma and Bull Connor in Birmingham, Alabama. By being brutalised on television, King and the other civil rights workers showed that the southern legal system needed physical coercion to maintain white supremacy. These protest marches were very successful; they turned the attention of the media and Presidents Kennedy and Johnson and the Congress to the southern oppression of African Americans and resulted in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Since the success of the civil rights protests, many other groups have adopted protests as part of their repertoire in communicating with the government. The women's movement, the pro-life and pro-choice forces, and the gay rights movement have used protests over the last thirty or so years. But what was novel in the early sixties is commonplace today, and it is increasingly difficult to attract the media's attention and to be noticed in protests.

In the 2003 Iraq war, there were numerous anti-war protest marches, but they attracted minimal media attention and did not appear to change government policy at all. Again, protests are not especially useful for determining what the public as a whole thinks. While protest seems to be a method that anybody, even the poorest people, could use, in fact, those citizens who are better educated and have higher incomes tend to protest more than others. Protest, like the other “informal” methods of ascertaining public opinion, is skewed toward the well-off segments of the public. Protests are allowed in a democracy and not in an authoritarian regime. Even during colonialism in Nigeria, there were protests against colonial rule. You will recall the Aba women riot.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Protests have served governments as indicators of citizens' dissatisfaction of their policies Discuss.

## **4.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit you have learned about public opinion. Public opinion is viewed as the views of the people about the government in a state. It also means people's view of different activities of the state and it is a form of assessing the performance of the government. Furthermore, you have learnt different way by which public opinion are being measured. These methods are categorised into two with different subdivisions such as Media, Mail Survey, Mail Survey, Interviews etc.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

From the above, Public opinion is important in a democratic administration as it helps to checkmate and assess the performance of political authority in a polity through the views of the people in the polity.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. List and explain the informal methods of measuring Public Opinion.
2. Explain how Interest groups and the media are means through which public opinions are measured.
3. Discuss the elements which public opinion process.

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## **UNIT 4 POLITICAL INFORMATION PROCESSING AND DECISION-MAKING**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Processing of Political Information
  - 3.2 Factors Influencing Judgment and Decision-Making
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor- Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/ Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In a political system, Political Information is important as it serves as an avenue through which political office holders gets information from the citizens on issues bothering on governance, public policies and decisions of governments all in quest to attain the goals of the state. By so doing there are different processes in processing political information and there are factors that influence the judgments and decision-making of political office holders as the processing of political information is paramount in democratic consolidation. This unit discourses the processing of political information and factors that influences judgments and Decisions-making amongst political office holders in political systems.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- explain the processing of political information
- identify factors that influences judgments and decision-making
- explain factors that influences judgments and decision-making.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Processing of Political Information**

Political information is an important element in a democracy. As the goals of Modern economies are the provisions of pure public goods by the government. As a matter of fact, Political information



political information will have a polarising impact on democracy as media users become less likely to encounter information that challenges their partisan viewpoints. As a matter of fact, information processing approaches are argued to provide a language for expressing theories for political decision-making with greater than before (Sylvan *et al.*, 1990). Politics is about solving, or at least dealing with, real problems (and the associated solutions and preferences).

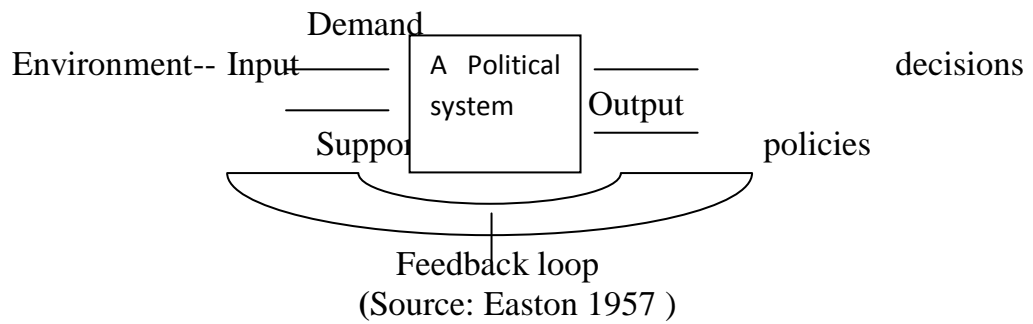
Information is the trigger of the responsive process. Politics is about tackling societal problems and governments are expected to attend to, and try to solve, real world problems (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen 2010). For example during his tenure, President Jonathan was made to meet the Chibok girls parent due to the outcry of the populace and his attention was diverted to other duties that were burning during his tenure based on the political information gathered from the populace. Also several times the good luck administration had to reduce the price of fuel as the people were not happy with the fuel price. Political processing has been analysed using different methods such as Bem, Daryl J. 1978 Model used by Bishop *et al.*, 1982 Hence this shows how political leaders react or make decision that were not among their manifesto during campaign based on the political information gathered. Political processing has many steps which includes:

1. Information gathering
2. Information processing

These two key steps are vital in processing political information before decisions are made in any polity.

1. Information gathering: here in information from the public are gathered through various means such as television, radio, the internet, opinion poll, vox pop etc., here in government gets the reactions and the views of the people on burning issues in the society which are key to the development of the state.
2. Information processing: after the information has been gathered through various means, then the processed through various methods such as meetings, dialogues between the political office holders to come up with what they will do with specific information gathered.

After these steps, decisions are now made based on the information gathered after the information processing. Systems approach by David Easton illustrates how political information is processed.



**Fig. 4.1: How Political Information is Processed**

It is useful to view political life as system of behaviour.

2. Environment. A system is distinguishable from the environment in which it exists and opens to influences from it.
3. Response. Variations in the structures and processes within a system may usefully be interpreted as constructive or positive alternative efforts by members of a system to regulate or cope with stress flowing from environmental as well as internal sources.
4. Feedback. The capacity of a system to persist in the face of stress is a function of the presence and nature of the information and other influences that return to its actors and decision-makers.
  - From the following, it can be understood how political information is being processed and used in a polity. After the processing of political information these information are now implemented as policies this brings us to the Factors that influences Judgments and Decision-making.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the processing of political information.

### 3.2 Factors Influencing Judgments and Decision-Making

From the above it has been explained how political information is processed in a polity after the processing, the information gathered are acted upon and used as a course of actions by the government to make laws and policies. Decision-making is a broad term that applies to the process of making a choice between options as to a course of action (Thomas *et al.* 1991) for Donald *et al.*, 1990 in their work stated that, :

... Decision-making behaviour of political units we argue is the result of interactions between these political and information in processing mechanisms

depending upon the norms of a political culture  
(Donald et, al., 1990)

The process of decision-making is one of the most complex mechanisms of human thinking, as various factors and courses of action intervene in it, with different results (Lizarragr *et al.*, 2007). In going about this, there are many factors that influence judgments and decision-making of political office holders so also are there many processes to be taken in the making of decisions. In the words of Halpern, 2007:

...There are several steps that must be followed in order to arrive at a decision: one must realize that it is going to be necessary to make a decision, determine the goals to be achieved, generate alternatives that lead to attaining the proposed goals, evaluate whether these alternatives meet one's expectations and, lastly, select the best alternative, the one that implies an efficient global result (Halpern, 1997)

Factors that influences judgment and decision-making varies across situations for example decision-making in business differs from decision-making in politics or in health matters as this exist so does the factors that influences decision-making differs. For the purpose of this course, the factors that influence political decision-making will be assessed.

There are many factors that affects political decision-making and they differs across climes based on the nature of the polity. The factors include:

1. Religion
  2. Economic factor
  3. Ethnicity
  4. Environment
- 
1. Religion: Religion is a key factor that affects decision-making of political office holders. The religion of the political individual affects and influences his or her decision-making such as a Muslim leader will make laws that are in line with their religion.
  2. Economic factor: The economic factor of the society determines the decision-making of the leaders. How strong the economic is determines and influences the decisions made by leaders in a polity. An example is the USA when George Bush Junior embarked on war in the Middle East for security reasons; but when president Barack Obama came into office, the US economy

was bad and Obama could not afford to go on with wars; rather the foreign policy of president Obama was diplomatic in nature to avert any war with rival super-powers. This is how the economy affects the decision-making.

3. **Ethnicity:** This one key factor that influences decision-making most especially in developing climes. The tribe an individual belongs to influences the individual in making choices or decisions. This has been the most influential factor in decision-making in Sub-Saharan Africa as political office holders show strong affiliations to their tribe and sometimes favour their tribe in decision-making.
4. **Environment:** Out of all the factors that influence decision-making, the environment is one key factor that influence and determines the decision-making of political office holders. The ecology of the environment (peaceful, violent, chaotic) influences the choice of policy or polices that will be made by political office holders. Because of this fact, policy formulators' asses the environment before making of polices as this can be detrimental to the success or failure of the policy. Lack of acknowledgement of this factor is the Fuel hike by President Goodluck which resulted into series of protest by Nigerians.

The environment can be divided into two types based on the type of policy or decision in question. The two environments are namely:

1. Foreign environment
  2. Domestic environment
1. **Foreign environment:** This refers to environment outside that of the origin of the decision-making. Here it is the receiver of the decision that is to be made by decision makers in a polity. Normally, foreign polices decisions are examples of foreign environments that falls within this category as they are meant for the outside world. An example of this is Uganda when she enforced an anti gay law for anyone practicing homosexuality but the law was rebooked by the lawmaking body because the United States of America threatened to withdraw financial support from the country. Another example is that of North Korea and Iran in their quest for Nuclear weapon they knew that this will pitch them against the United States of America. Hence before laws and decisions are made, the receiver environment is studied to understand the nature and consequences of these decisions.

2. Domestic environment: This environment has to do with the local environment of from where the decision-making originates from and the decisions that originate from any decisions made are directed towards the domestic populace. Most policies of decision makers are directed towards this environment.

In spite of all these, decision-making in third world countries are not based on critical rational approach rather decision-making are based on ethnic and religious motives. Such is the example of privatisation policies in Nigeria. Despite the fact that privatisation policy has failed to produced the much desired result in Nigeria, government after government have continue to privatise government public enterprises.

In 2011 the senate committee on privatisation after an inquiry on privatisation policy in Nigeria where erstwhile director bureau of public enterprises were invited and interrogated, they concluded that, privatisation policy in Nigeria has failed despite this subsequent governments are still embarking the policy. This shows that decision-making is not based on critical rational thinking in developing and Sub-Saharan Africa as compared to other parts of the world. Also the fuel hike in Nigeria by President Jonathan in January 2013 is another example.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Examine the domestic environment of decision-making

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Political information is crucial in democracies as it bridges the nexus between political office holders and the populace. Political information processing takes several stages which are important to the political process. Also, there are factors that influence decision-making in a political system, but vary across climes. In third world countries most especially in the Sub-Saharan Africa decision-making are not based on rational thinking.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, you have learnt that about the processing of political information and the factors that influences decision-making amongst leaders. You have also learnt about the differences in the environments in decision-making in a polity and how it affects decision-making.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain the processing of political information.
2. List and explain the factors that influence decision-making.
3. Differentiate between the domestic environment and the foreign environment in decision-making.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURHER READING

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## **UNIT 5 PERCEPTIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Concept of Foreign Policy
  - 3.2 Aims of Foreign Policy
  - 3.3 Factors Influencing Foreign Policy Decision-Making
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/ Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The international political system consists of states (countries) which interact with one another. The interactions of states in the international political system vary across climes. Countries interact with one another based on their national interest. Hence countries establish different guidelines in their interactions with other countries. That guideline which serves as a framework in the conduct of relations between states is known as Foreign Policy. There are several factors that are considered before the formation of a foreign policy of a State these include the nature of the external environment (international political system), the state of the economy, and the national interest of the nation. Hence, these are some of the factors that influence the perceptions amongst foreign policy advisers in making decisions on states relations with another. This unit explores the intricacies of foreign policy and perceptions amongst foreign policy makers.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the intricacies in foreign policy making
- discuss the factors that influences the perception of foreign policy advisers
- state the aims of foreign policy.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The Concept of Foreign Policy

As any concept in the Social Science foreign policy has been defined by different scholars to have different meanings. For easy understanding of the concept of foreign policy, we begin with conceptualising the first term: “foreign.” We typically make the distinction between foreign policy and domestic policy. “Foreign” is meant to apply to policy toward the world outside states’ territorial borders, and “domestic” is meant to apply to policy made for the internal political system (Kaarbo *et al.*, 2012). Going to war with another country, signing an international trade agreement, or aiding a rebel insurgency in another country are examples of foreign policy. Taxes, education standards, and civil rights are examples of domestic policy (Ibid).

*For Pearson and Rochester, 1997 foreign Policy refers to:*

*... the set of priorities and precepts established by national leaders to serve as guidelines for choosing among various course of actions (behaviour) in specific situations as they strive to achieve their goal (Pearson and Rochester, 1997: 127)*

The existence of a “foreign policy” presupposes a distinction between inside an actor and its domestic context and outside/foreign the environment the actor faces -, and some form of political relationship between the two (Schunz, 2008). These two environments are important in the making of foreign policy as it determines the success or failure of the policy.

In a sum foreign policy are set of rules and guidelines that guide a state in her relations with another state. These rules serve as templates in the relations of one state with another which is in tandem with their national interest. It is important to note that, there are two environments in the making of foreign policy the domestic and external environments. Foreign policy is meant for the external environment as the receiving stimulus of the foreign policy.

From all these, we can define foreign policy as:

- A policy that guides a state in its relations with other state
- A framework that guides a state in its interactions with others.



### 3.2 Aims of Foreign Policy

Foreign policy as deduced from the conceptual clarification is set of rules that serve as guidelines in the conduct of state relations. Basically, the aims and objectives of foreign policy differ across states as different states of the world have different aims and objectives in their interactions with other states e.g. Africa has been the centre piece of Nigeria foreign policy over the years and this has been passed to different governments.

This accounts for Nigeria peace keeping mission in the continent over the years. Also the United States of America has over the years been an advocate of democratic rule and thus has been at wars with states that are not democratic this which is in tandem with her foreign policy. Also the United States of America's relation with states of the world "its quest and maintenance of her hegemonic power" is based on its foreign policy hence the aims of foreign policy differs. In Nigeria, Africa has been the centre piece of its foreign policy with the aim of promotion of peace and prosperity, stability and development in Africa, international cooperation, and eradication of apartheid in South-Africa and all forms of discrimination (Ashaver, 2014)

Generally, the aims of foreign policy are to ensure peaceful conduct of relations amongst states based on the personal national interest of each state. This means that the major aim of foreign policy is to propagate and attain national interest of states which of course varies across states. In the words of Arnold Wolfers, an intelligent observer of international relations in his analysis of foreign policy behaviour briefly explains what foreign policy encapsulates, cited in Pearson and Rochester, 1997:

... all foreign policy behaviour ultimately boils down to three possible patterns: (1) self-preservation (Maintaining the status-quo); (2) self extension (revising the status quo in one's favour) and self abnegation (revising the status quo in someone else's favour); and (3) self abnegation (revising the status quo in someone else's favour).

At the heart of the field of foreign policy analysis is an investigation into decision-making, the individual decision-makers, processes and conditions that affect foreign policy and the outcomes of these decisions (Alden, 2011).

### 3.3 Factors Influencing Foreign Policy Decision-Making

The primary responsibility of all framers of foreign policy is to articulate in clear terms their country's national interest and to relate them to those of other nations within the international system (Ashaver, 2013). In the making of foreign policy, there are many factors that influence the decision of foreign policy makers. These factors vary across climes and can be divided into two. These are:

- domestic determinants of foreign policy
- external determinants of foreign policy.

Domestic determinants of foreign policy are those factors that emanates from the internal environment from where the foreign policy is developed. These determinants ranges includes,

- The type of government
- Perceptions of the leaders
- National interest of the country

**Type of government:** the type of government matters as it influences the type of foreign policy decision made. The form of government in existence determines the foreign policy made in a state as foreign policy made by military governments tends to be different from that of a democratic system of government. An example under the military era in Nigeria, Nigeria's foreign policy was not based on Nigeria's national interest Africa has remained the centre piece of Nigeria's foreign Policy and this raises many questions on the Nigerian state as subsequent governments. As stated in the words of Okpokpo (2000:34)

... Our vital national interests have to be redefined. Does Africa still represent the cornerstone of our foreign policy when we have more respect from other countries than we get from African nations despite our whole-hearted commitment to them? If yes, what are the benefits we get from the choice? If the response is no, then we should reorient our foreign policy towards more profitable ventures like economic, scientific, cultural and technical cooperation with more advanced countries including Asia...

Furthermore, under the military regime Nigeria's foreign policy was most powerful notably under the Muritala Administration Nigeria foreign policy was vibrant as Nigeria spearheaded many events in Africa

during this period also contributed to many peacekeeping missions (Foluke, 2011). As a matter of fact, Ashaver, 2013:291 noted that this period (1975-1979) was the golden era of Nigerian Foreign Policy. He further stated that, "As a precursor to a vibrant foreign policy, the Mohammed Regime embarked on a cleaning exercise domestically, intended to rid Nigeria of rotten eggs that populated the civil service"(Ibid). This showed the nature of Nigeria's foreign policy under the military regime most especially the period (1975-1979). The Angolan crisis provided the leadership with the opportunity to demonstrate their new orientation in Nigeria's foreign policy (Ibid).

**Personal Interest of leaders:** The perception and personal interest of the leader at the helm of affairs of a state notably the president or Prime Minister as the case may be influences the making of a foreign policy. The personal interest of the leader comes to bear in the making of foreign policy decisions. For example, during the George Bush Jnr's Administration the USA foreign policy was much pronounced as it embarked on series of wars against terrorism and extremist regimes most especially in the Middle East. These acts could not be divorced from the personal interest of George Bush Jnr as his personal vendetta to kill Sadam Hussein which his father George Bush Snr. failed to do. Hence, the personal motives of leaders come to play in the making of foreign policy decisions.

**National interest of the country:** The national interest of a country influences the foreign decisions making of states in the making of foreign policies. Over the years the National interests of countries have been a driving force in the making of foreign policy decisions. For example Nigeria's foreign policy has been the same over the years as Africa has consistently been the focus and centre piece of her foreign policy as Nigeria aim is poised towards maintaining her status quo as the giant of Africa and Africa's big brother. This has seen Nigeria embarking on series of peacekeeping missions in the continent and spearheaded the agitations of independence of many African states. Hence subsequent Nigerian governments have maintained this viewpoint in Nigerians foreign policy and follow suit. The United States of America is another example the quest to remain as a world super power has been the major aim of most American government after the Second World War. This and the promotion of a democracy throughout the world and the protection of her citizens and allies when need be. These national interests have guided the conduct and relations of the United States of America and other states.

It is important to note that foreign policy decisions are collectively made by stakeholders (diplomats, foreign affairs ministry) and are given as

“suggestions” to the head of the state as the case may be and the head of state has the final say in the making of foreign policy decisions and most times, foreign policy decisions are made and based on the perception and personal interest of the leader (president, prime minister) and are influenced by the above mentioned factors.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit, you have been able to learn that foreign policy is framework and guideline that guides a state in her relations with other states based on her national interest. Also, we have been able to examine the factors that influence the perceptions of foreign policy advisers. From that, it was established that advisers of foreign policy differs across climes but are mostly diplomats, international relations scholars and permanent secretaries as the case may be. Even though their perceptions are influenced by series of factors in the making of foreign policy their decisions are not final and are tentative and are subjected to the head of the government (the president or prime minister or as the case may be). Hence, foreign policy decisions balls down to the head of government.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has been able to conceptualise foreign policy as set of rules and guidelines that guide a state in her relations with another state and it serve as templates in the relations of one state with another which is in tandem with their national interest. Also from this unit it was deduced that, the aims and objectives of foreign policy of states differs across climes as different states have different aims and objectives in their interactions with other states. Also from this unit it was learnt that factors such as the type of government, personnel interests of the leaders, and National interest of the country.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Discuss foreign Policy
2. List and explain the factors influencing foreign policy decision-making.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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## **MODULE 4      ELECTIONS AND ELECTORAL BEHAVIOUR**

Unit 1	Understanding Elections
Unit 2	Personality of Politicians
Unit 3	Political Socialisation

### **UNIT 1      UNDERSTANDING ELECTIONS**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main content
3.1	Definition of Election
3.2	Nexus between Election and Democracy
3.3	Factors that Influence Electoral Behaviour
3.4	Electoral Agencies
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	Reference/Further Reading

#### **1.0      INTRODUCTION**

Election is an essential feature in a democratic administration as it helps to curb dictatorship by change of government. It is a means whereby the citizens of certain polity vote to change or usher in new government. The conduct of elections differs across climes as the factors and conditions that affect voting behaviours vary as a result of their political culture, religion, environment and economy of the clime. Hence, the preparation of elections by the electoral agencies (body) also differs across climes. Therefore, this unit assesses the essence of elections in a democratic dispensation.

#### **2.0      OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain essence of elections in a democratic dispensation and
- explain the factors that influences electoral behaviours in a polity
- discuss the impact of electoral agency on elections.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Definition of Election**

The concept of election is associated with so many meanings that it is hardly difficult to say its exact meaning. Election can be defined as a procedure that allows members of an organisation or community to choose representatives who will hold positions of authority within it (Awopeju, 2011). According to Omonijo *et al.* (2007) cited in Awopeju, 2011, election is the act of choosing public officers to fill vacant posts by vote, it is an act of choosing those that govern a state; it may be conducted periodically. Elections can also be defined as a means by which people in a polity vote in their leaders to rule on their behalf.

In sum, Elections are central institution of democratic representative governments. The reason is that, in democracy, the authority of the government derives solely from the consent of the governed. The principal mechanism for translating that consent into governmental authority is the holding of free and fair elections.

#### **3.2 Nexus between Election and Democracy**

Elections provide a mechanism for aggregating private information, ensuring a better collective decision (Feddersen and Pesendorfer, 1997). Democracy here is defined as a social system of administering a nation-state where political parties and independent candidates compete for elective positions in a free and fair election atmosphere, and in which the citizens are legally empowered to choose those who will run the affairs of the state in a given period (Obakhedo, 2011). As a matter of fact, the authority of the government in democracies derives solely from the consent of the governed (Agbor *et. al.*, 2011). This shows the importance of elections in a democratic administration. As averred by Aristotle, cited in (Ibid) the fundamental principles of ruling and being ruled are derived from election as a basic feature of democracy. Democracy as a principle whereby power comes from the people to elect their chosen representatives to lead and govern on their behalf will be incomplete without elections as elections is the process whereby citizenry of a polity elect their representatives to rule on their behalf hence through elections democracy will be put to test in a polity.

Elections may be conducted, but the failure of the voter registration process or the denial of a level playing ground for the political parties to operate or the lack of independence of the electoral management body or uncertainty in the constitutional and legal framework for the conduct of elections may produce results that may not be acceptable to the generality of the people. In an exhilarating discussion of the popularity of election in democratic rule, Pammet (1981) cited in Agbor *et. al.*,

2011 has argued that elections are virtually omnipresent institutions of the nations of the modern world. This was corroborated with Luqman, 2009. In his words:

*...that election is at the heart of democracy and democratization process has become widely acknowledged. Election performs indispensable roles and thereby remains central to the whole essence of democratic process (Luqman, 2009: 59)*

From the above, it is quite clear that elections in a democracy are important and vital for the growth and sustenance of democracy. As Schumpeter (1942) puts it “democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them” Be that as it may, the conduct of elections in democracies differs across climes. The conduct of elections has been a recurring problem in third world countries and emerging democracies (Kuhne, 2010). Africa’s experience with electoral democracy has been mixed: progress has been made, but challenges remain. The various elections in the past several years from Kenya and Zimbabwe to Ghana and Sierra Leone have become historical landmarks for different reasons, varying drastically in their conduct and outcome (Cyllah, 2010).

Newly democracies have problems in the conducting elections as there are problems of election riggings, ballot box snatching, and election inconveniencies due to lack of preparations by electoral agencies in charge this is no difference in Nigeria. The Nigerian experience with general elections has shown that the political elite have not fully come to terms with the referents of elections for democratic sustenance and national security.

*...in some advanced democracies, elections are such a routine matter, that the credibility and validity of each electoral process and cycle is assessed on the quality and performance of new technologies and innovations and how well such creative enterprises bolster the performance of the electoral management body and enhance voters’ confidence (Okoye, 2013: 5-6).*

*He further noted that:*

*...In other countries, including Nigeria especially those with a history of military dictatorship, one party and “big man” rule, the process of holding elections as a peaceful and orderly means of power transfer has been problematic (Ibid)*



This shows the nature of elections in young democratic states like Nigeria and this is having an impact on the consolidation of democracies in those climes and compared to what is obtainable in the west.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the nexus between election and democracy in a polity.

### **3.3 Factors that Influence Electoral Behaviour**

Elections as an important element in a democratic administration are influenced by the citizenry in certain ways. During voting in elections there are many factors that influences the electoral behaviours of certain voters in election in different climes. These factors vary across climes depending on the political culture, nature of the environment and polity, level of education of the citizens, and their culture. Among political behaviour, the study of voting behaviour over the years has occupied a central position, both in terms of quantity and quality

Generally, factors that influence electoral behaviours of voters include:

- Religion
- Ethnicity
- Education
- Personality
- Religion

This is one factor that influences the voting behaviour of electorates during elections. Mostly voters vote according to religious believe to protect their interest as a matter of fact, this pattern occurs in global south were democracy is still young and there are issues on religious motivated violence (Nigeria, Central African Republic (CAR), Egypt etc). Voters vote according to religious line to protect their belief and rather vote in leaders that share same believe with them. In Egypt, after the ouster of the ex President Mubarak in office Egyptians voted for the Islamic party for obvious reasons but when the party under Morsi failed to tackle issues the party was ouster via a coup. Also, Central African Republic has witnessed and still witnessing turmoil based on religious issues relating to power tussle between the Northern Muslims and the southern Christians this has lead to formation of militia groups (Seleka and Anti – Balaka group) fighting (NPSIA, 2014). In Nigeria this has always been the case but as a developing democracy the just concluded 2015 general elections saw Nigerians uniting in all fronts to vote out the dominant political party (PDP). To buttress religion as a key factor in

voting behaviour, Bola Tinubu the father of All Progressive Congress (APC) choose a Christian (Akinwunmi Ambode) as the next governor of Lagos state solely because it was said that all the previous governors in Lagos state are Muslims hence he was determined to win the votes of Lagosians for his party (APC) and his candidate won. This is the powerful influence of religion on electoral behaviours of voters.

- **Ethnicity:**

This is one factor that has over the years influenced the political behaviour of voters as voters vote across ethnic lines an example was the just concluded 2015 general elections in Nigeria when the voters in the South-South and South East region of Nigeria voted massively for ex president Jonathan Goodluck while voters in up North voted for President Mohammed Buhari. Be that as it may, ethnicity as a factor that influences voting behaviours of voters majorly exist in third world countries and not considered factors that influence voting behaviour in developed countries.

- **Education:**

The education level of the political aspirants influences the voting behaviours of the voters as some voters believe the higher the educational status of the political aspirants the better the candidates will rule them. In some developed climes political candidates are to attain certain educational level to contents and win elections.

- **Personality:**

The personality of individuals involved in elections influences voting behaviours during elections as the persona of the political aspirants comes to bear in during elections. The way the contestant carries his or her self-influence political behaviour of voters such as the United States of America's president Barack Obama.

These factors listed above are main factors that influence voting behaviour. Other factors that influence voting behaviour of voters includes:

- Mass media
- Religious bodies
- Political Party ideologies
- Social status

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

List and explain the factors that influence voting behaviour.

### **3.3 Electoral Agencies**

Electoral agencies are bodies that conduct elections in a state (Idike, 2014). Electoral bodies are set up by the executive arm of government in a state to see to the administrations and affairs in the conduct of elections. Electoral agencies are usually independent and funded by the executive arms of government and through other sources such as donations from international organisations.

Electoral body differs across climes. In some climes the electoral body is independent of the executive arm of government and the appointment of the head of the agency is not appointed by the president or as the case may be. This is to ensure free and fair elections as this will reduced the power of the incumbent over the electoral board. This was witnessed in Ghana when the incumbent president lost a re-election bid which is a huge departure from the nomenclature in Africa. Hence, electoral agencies are crucial to democratic consolidation in a polity as its handling of an election in terms of administration and the conduct of the elections matters and go a long way in strengthening democracy.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Elections are important elements in a democratic administration as without which democracy will be truncated. For elections to be successful the electoral body must be transparent to conduct transparent elections.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit explained the concept of elections and why it is conducted in a polity as well as factors that influence electoral behaviours. Furthermore, factors such as religion, ethnicity, personality, and education status of the political aspirant in question were highlighted

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Discuss the factors that influence voting behaviour.
2. What is the relationship between democracy and elections in a Polity?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Idike, A.N. (2014) “Democracy and the Electoral Process in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects of the E-Voting Option “*Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (AJHSS) Volume 2—Issue 2, May, 2014.*

## UNIT 2 PERSONALITY OF POLITICIANS

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Personality and Politics
  - 3.2 Personality of Politicians
  - 3.3 Factors Influencing Personality of Politicians
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor- Marked Assignment
- 7.0 Reference/ Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The study of the behaviour of individuals, groups and societies are one of the major tenets of behaviouralist in the study of politics. Therefore, through the study of these behaviours you can understand the true nature of politics and explain and predict phenomena. Politicians being who they are have their different personality and are influenced by different factors which make them become or not become what they are when they venture into politics and gain political power.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the personality of the political being
- explain the factors and conditions that influence their behaviour in politics.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Personality and Politics

In recent years, personality psychologists have refined the understanding of personality and have reached a working consensus that personality traits can be comprehensively conceptualized and reliably measured in terms of five traits (the Big Five): Agreeableness, Openness (to Experience), Emotional Stability (sometimes referred to by its inverse, Neuroticism), Conscientiousness, and Extraversion (Gerber, *et al.*, 2010). Politics in many democracies of the Western World and different parts of the world has presumably become increasingly personalised (Caprara, Barbaranelli, & Zimbardo, 1999, 2002; Giddens, 1998; Ricolfi, 2002).

The personalisation of politics encompasses two presumed processes. First, the personalities of candidates capture center stage and become the focus of voters' attention. Second, the individual personalities of voters, rather than their social locations in various interest groups, become decisive for political choice (Caprara & Zimbardo, 2004).

The importance of the personal characteristics of individuals for political choice may be increasing for several reasons (Wattenberg, 1998). The distinctiveness, diversity, and extremity of parties may be declining as they seek the political center to attract groups with diverse interests. Political issues are increasingly complex and political units' increasingly interdependent, cutting across traditional cleavages. And the electorate is showing greater concern with social relations and intimacy.

As an example, the personality of current Nigerian's president Mohammed Buhari as a corrupt free and upright person influenced people voting for him. As a matter of fact this was the major reason people voted for him in the March, 2015 presidential elections. His win against an incumbent was the first of its kind in the Nigerian Polity. In Oyo state , PDP fielded an ex-convict to run as governor same in Osun state " Omisore" touted to have had an hand in the death of Bola Ige and this culminated in PDP's loss. All these examples show the significance of the personality of any political aspirant to be fielded in an election.

### 3.2 Personality of Politicians

Personality of politicians in a Polity matters a lot as their personality are product of their family, culture and society. For clarity, personality includes any individual psychological variations that influence behaviour (Elms, 1976). The behaviour of individuals "politicians" as to understand the differences between individuals that remains relatively stable across variety of situations (Brehm , *et.al*, 2005). The expression of personality characteristics in political behaviour is often entertaining, but it is also important. For example, during the ex- president Jonathan Goodluck's administration the Nigerian state was in comatose.

Fuel scarcity was a regular feature, the rate of unemployment was high and the military under his administration could not curtail the *Boko haram* crisis as a matter of fact, the *Boko haram* crisis manifested during his administration because it was not properly checked from the inception "the system" was frequently blamed for national troubles. The political system is tremendously significant in giving people opportunities to express certain kinds of behaviour and in restraining them from other kinds. But people eager to take advantage of the system, people driven by their private needs to use the system in unanticipated ways. Understanding the system is only a part of

understanding politics; understanding the role of personality and the interactions of personality and system is also vital. The personality of Bola Ahmed Tinubu as the brain behind All Progressive Congress (APC) has given him that status of respect in the Nigerian society. Because without him the political party known as APC will not stand.

Furthermore, it is important to note that, individual personality is shaped by experience family dynamics, cultural forces, work experiences, and educational experiences. However, a great deal of evidence indicates that substantial variation in foundational personality dispositions such as the Big Five is stable from very early in life. There is evidence that these dispositional traits have some genetic basis and can be a reason why certain politicians behave certain ways. (Bouchard 1997; Plomin *et al.* 1990) and are quite stable through the life cycle (Caspi, Roberts, and Shiner 2005; Costa and McCrae 1992; Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann 2003).

These personality differences affect how individuals respond to the stimuli they encounter in their environment. As such, personality traits can likely be viewed as predated, rather than being caused by, social and political influences, offering an opportunity to examine how fundamental, enduring personality differences affect an array of social outcomes, including political attitudes and behaviours (Gerber, *et al.*, 2010). In understanding the personality of politicians we have to study different factors that influence them as these politicians are part of the society. The personality of politicians in Nigeria and Africa will differ greatly from the personality of politicians in Europe, and the America's which is due to the nature of the society. In those developed climes, the personality of the politicians are that of service to the country and that of sincerity even though there might be some of them that are corrupt and dubious, it differs greatly from countries in the global south Nigeria inclusive. In the countries of global south, the personality of politicians is that of insincerity as a result of the nature of the environment.

These politicians see politics as a profession and when they get to elective post they try as much as possible to acquire money for themselves. An example can be seen in Nigeria as most of the governors after completing their tenure in office are questioned by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and those politicians that are not the custody of the EFC are questionable this can be witnessed in the case of Osun state as the governor owing workers' salaries in the state despite his elections promises. Hence the personality of politicians differs across climes and can be judged by their level of output in the society.

## SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Examine the nexus between personality and politics

### 3.3 Factors Influencing Personality of Politicians

There are many factors influencing the personality of politicians and these factors vary across climes. The factors that affect the personality of politicians in the global south differ from the factors that affect the personality of politicians in the western world. Hence, these factors are put in the context in analysis.

The followings are factors that influence the personality of politicians they include:

1. The Society
2. The political system
3. The Economy
4. The Education level
5. The Political party

1. **The Society:** the society is an important factor that influences the behaviour, and personality of politicians. Different societies have their peculiar culture that influences the personality of its people. Culture refers to the total way of life of any society. In the words of Ember & Ember, 1990:

*... this totality includes such mundane activities as washing dishes or driving an automobile and for the purpose of cultural studies these stand quite on a par with the finger of life...*

Society is a complex system of relationships. Its existence depends on successfully coordinating the needs and behaviours of each individual with the majority's needs, and with adopted models of socially desirable behaviour (Markovik, 2010).

The culture of the society in question might be that of corruption and dubious activities and such attributes of that society will rub off on the personality of the individuals in question. Politicians as part of members of the society get influenced by the happenings in the society. The society as a social system functions hand in hand with other sub structures in the social system to make the functional and in order. In going about that, other sub-structure interacts with one another and this in turn, has effects on human behaviour.



The economy structure of a society has effect on the thinking, and personality of individuals of which politicians are part of. As an example, the Nigerian society is that of survival of the fittest. The economy is bad, the level of industrialisation is at its lowest, there is high level of insecurity, there is high maternity death rate, and the life expectancy is low with all these, the Nigerian society is that of the survival of the fittest. Hence Nigerian Politicians makes promises but when they get into office they fill their pockets and fail to fulfil their promises and this leads to the constant underdevelopment in the Nigerian society.

This accounts for why politicians in Nigeria are seen as corrupt and politics is seen as an avenue to make money which accounts for the reason why there is constant juggle to be into politics which quite differs from the west. In the west or developed countries, politics is seen as an avenue to serve their people and contribute to the development of the society. In these climes, that the economy is good and stable there is high level of industrialisation and that influences the perception of the politicians. That is not to say that politicians in the developed climes are not corrupt as well but it is minimal and that shows in their perception. Major concerns of these politicians in the west is how to strength their state and bring development to the populace. The structure and nature of a society affects the behaviour and personality of individuals in the society of which politicians are inclusive of.

## 2. **The Political System:**

Political systems are the formal and informal political processes by which decisions are made concerning the use, production and distribution of resources in any given society. Formal political institutions can determine the process for electing leaders; the roles and responsibilities of the executive and legislature; the organisation of political representation (through political parties); and the accountability and oversight of the state. Informal and customary political systems, norms and rules can operate within or alongside these formal political institutions (GSDRC, 2014). International African Institute: 1987 xxiii puts it "... political systems involve a set of relations between territorial groups..." Political systems that have developed and been refined over centuries went through various processes, though under less immediately dire circumstances i.e through revolts such as the Glorious War in Britain, the French Revolution in France, and in global south countries through colonialism.

## Types of Political Systems

Political systems are of different kinds. Over the years the world has witnessed different forms of political systems as change is the only constant thing in life. The forms of political systems include but not limited to:

1. Monarchism
2. Authoritarian and Totalitarian
3. Democracy

**1. Monarchism:** Monarchism which is also referred to as Monarch is a political system in which power resides in a single family that rules from one generation to the next generation. The power the family enjoys is traditional authority, and many monarchs command respect because their subjects bestow this type of authority on them. Other monarchs, however, have ensured respect through arbitrary power and even terror. Royal families still rule today, but their power has declined from centuries ago. Today the Queen of England holds a largely ceremonial position, but her predecessors on the throne wielded much more power. Also countries like Spain, Denmark, Norway, Sweden Morocco still practices Monarchy but at a minimal level as their power is not absolute. While climes like Oman, Qatar, Brunei, Saudi Arabia, and Swaziland are absolute monarch states hence, power is vested in the hands of these monarchs.

**2. Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism:** authoritarianism and totalitarianism are general terms for nondemocratic political systems ruled by an individual or a group of individuals who are not freely elected by their populations and who often exercise arbitrary power. To be more specific, authoritarianism refers to political systems in which an individual or a group of individuals holds power, restricts or prohibits popular participation in governance, and represses dissent. Totalitarianism refers to political systems that include all the features of authoritarianism but are even more repressive as they try to regulate and control all aspects of citizens' lives and fortunes. People can be imprisoned for deviating from acceptable practices or may even be killed if they dissent in the mildest of ways. Compared to democracies and monarchies, authoritarian and totalitarian governments are more unstable politically. The major reason for this is that these governments enjoy no legitimate authority. Instead their power rests on fear and repression. The populations of these governments do not willingly lend their obedience to their leaders and realize that their leaders are treating them very

poorly; for both these reasons, they are more likely than populations in democratic states to want to rebel. Sometimes they do rebel, and if the rebellion becomes sufficiently massive and widespread, a revolution occurs. In contrast, populations in democratic states usually perceive that they are treated more or less fairly and, further, that they can change things they do not like through the electoral process. Seeing no need for revolution, they do not revolt.

Since World War II, which helped make the United States an international power, the United States has opposed some authoritarian and totalitarian regimes while supporting others. The Cold War pitted the United States and its allies against Communist nations, primarily the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, and North Korea. But at the same time the United States opposed these authoritarian governments, it supported many others, including those in Chile, Guatemala, and South Vietnam, that repressed and even murdered their own citizens who dared to engage in the kind of dissent constitutionally protected in the United States.

1. **Democracy:** This is the type of government whereby power comes from the people, or a political system in which citizens govern themselves either directly or indirectly. The term democracy comes from Greek and means “rule of the people.” In Lincoln’s stirring words from the Gettysburg Address, democracy is “government of the people, by the people, for the people.” In direct (or *pure*) democracies, people make their own decisions about the policies, issues and distribution of resources that affect them directly. An example of such happened in April 2015 when there was a referendum in Scotland to decide the Scots should remain part of the United Kingdom. However, such direct democracies are impractical when the number of people gets beyond a few hundred. Representative democracies are thus much more common. In these types of democracies, people elect officials to represent them in legislative votes on matters affecting the population.

Representative democracy is more practical than direct democracy in a society of any significant size, but political scientists cite another advantage of representative democracy. At least in theory, it ensures that the individuals who govern a society and in other ways help a society function are the individuals who have the appropriate talents, skills, and knowledge to do so. In this way of thinking, the masses of people are, overall, too uninformed, too uneducated, and too uninterested to run a society themselves. Representative democracy thus allows for “the cream to rise to the top” so that the people who actually govern a society

are the most qualified to perform this essential task (Seward, 2010). Although this argument has much merit, it is also true that many of the individuals who do get elected to office turn out to be ineffective and/or corrupt. Regardless of our political orientations, Americans can think of many politicians to whom these labels apply, from presidents down to local officials. The defining feature of representative democracy is voting in elections. When the United States was established more than 230 years ago, most of the world's governments were monarchies or other authoritarian regimes. Like the colonists, people in these nations chafed under arbitrary power. The example of the American Revolution and the stirring words of its Declaration of Independence helped inspire the French Revolution of 1789 and other revolutions since, as people around the world have died in order to win the right to vote and to have political freedom.

Democracies are certainly not perfect. Their decision-making process can be quite slow and inefficient; as just mentioned, decisions may be made for special interests and not "for the people"; and, as we have seen in earlier chapters, pervasive inequalities of social class, race and ethnicity, gender, and age can exist. Moreover, not all democracies have all people enjoyed the right to vote. In the United States, for example, African Americans could not vote until after the Civil War, with the passage of the 15th Amendment in 1870, and women did not win the right to vote until 1920, with the passage of the 19th Amendment. Other political systems that operated in different part of the world include:

1. The centralised system of government in Africa notably in Northern Nigeria
2. The decentralised system of government as practiced amongst the Tiv people of Nigeria and the Igbo people of Nigeria
3. The holy roman empire prototype of the
4. The ancient city states of the classical Greece and Rome

Hence, the type of political system in a polity affects the personality of the individuals in a state. In this contemporary international political system, democracy is the most popular and accepted form of political system today and the practices of democracy of a state affect the personality of the people and politicians in the state. In young and developing democracy like that of Nigeria, democratic principles are not adhered to and when the politicians come into office they follow suit.

**The Economy:** The economy of a society affects and influences people in a polity. The purpose of economy is to satisfy the people's want through the resources of the state. The economy of a state tells on the people as economic growth transforms the life and increase industrialization (Edgmad, 2004). The economy of a society is measured

in terms of its productivity and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which is a measurement of the of a states' economy total output or production of goods and services (Ibid, 2). The economy in developed countries is strong and hence the level of industrialisation is high and this in turn rubs off on the people as there is job enough for people unlike states in the global south. The economy of the states in the global South is low and poor. Most of the states are mono –cultural economy (they rely on a single commodity as their source of income i.e. Nigeria (Crude Oil), Ivory Coast (Coco) in sum their economy are not diversify. With is, there is high unemployment rate and the level of development is low and poor this influence the psyche of individuals in those states of which the politicians are part of and robs of their personality when they get into political positions.

**Education status:** education is defined as the process of educating or teaching. Educate is further defined as “to develop the knowledge, skill, or character of...” Thus, from these two definitions, we might assume that the purpose of education is to develop the knowledge, skill, or character of students. Education is also seen as a lifelong process of learning. Education takes place right from birth and can be formal and informal. Informal education takes place within the family or in a non-formal environment while formal education takes place in a formal and structured environment. We have the primary, secondary and tertiary level of education. The education status of individual affects their personality.

As a matter of fact, education is viewed as a means of social change in the contemporary globalised setting (Elliott, 2012). An individual with tertiary education qualification will behave different from a person with secondary qualification. This has a significant impact on how the politician in question will behave. An example is in the Nigerian polity the citizens were disappointed with the erstwhile president Goodluck Jonathan as a Doctorate degree holder people expected him to act differently but he did not as a matter of fact, the education sector was in comatose as there was constant strike by different Unions in the education sector. The more educated a politician is the higher the expectations from him but that is not the case in all societies.

**Political Party:** The political parties are institutions that serve as platforms used by political aspirants that have ambitions to hold one political position or the other in a polity. In a democracy, most if not all citizens should be involved in political activities. However, a direct democracy where every citizen is directly involved in all political decisions is not possible within modern mass societies. This is why a modern democracy needs institutions and organisations that represent the will and the interests of the citizens as authentically as possible.

These can be associations, informal groups or non-governmental organisations.

In particular, the political parties carry out such a representative function. They offer to the citizens the possibility to influence politics and political decisions. They are an important instrument and institution of politics. Without political parties, a modern representative democracy is not conceivable. Only, the parties ensure that the citizens are permanently capable to act politically. They articulate and integrate different interests, visions and opinions. They are also the main source for the recruitment of political elites. In order to participate successfully in elections, the political parties have to be the voice of broad sectors of society. Associations, social organisations or citizens' initiatives normally concentrate more on individual and a limited scope of issues. Political parties, in contrast, are expected to take positions on all those questions and topics that are related to public order and the organisation of society.

Parties are competing amongst each other for the best ways of resolving political problems. They are in competition for influence and power. Without the power to enforce political vision it is not possible to organise a society. Internal discussions and conflicts within, as well as between, the parties accompany this contest for ideas and power. They are legitimate and essential in a policy that is why Magstadt, 2011: 349 noted that "political parties thrive to gain or retain certain political power in practical terms this means capturing control of government". With the aim of gaining control of government, political parties have certain principles and ideologies that influence its party members and that in turn influence politicians.

The ideology of the political party is key and essential in the understanding behaviour of its party members. For example in the United States of America president Barack Obama policies reflects that of his party as a democrat he implemented policies human liberty policies such as the Obama Health care, Signing of same sex law which is opposite of the republican party whereby they are conservative and against same sex practices. In Nigeria the APC and its slogan for change has influenced its party members such that the politicians running under its platform tries to bring about change in their various states. This can be said about Lagos, Oyo and Ogun states. This is how the political party influences the personality of politicians.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain how a Political System influences the personality of political personalities.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The politicians are part and parcel of their various environments thus the society has the greatest influence on the personality of the politicians. Thus, the personality of politician varies across climes and can be the reason for the development and underdevelopment of societies in context.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This unit examined the personality of politicians and from the findings is that there are many factors that influence the personality which includes the society, education status, the economy, political systems and political party of which the society is the greatest. Also, you must have understood that personality of politicians differs across climes and that accounts for development and underdevelopment in different climes.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

List and explain the various factors that influence the personality of politicians.

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## **UNIT 3 POLITICAL SOCIALISATION**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Concept of Socialisation
  - 3.2 The Concept of Political Socialisation
  - 3.3 Socialisation and the Processes of Learning
  - 3.4 Agents of Political Socialisation
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 Reference/ Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The political culture of a society is learnt as soon as a child is given birth to and this continues till death. The process of learning the political culture such as national anthem, duties of the citizens to the state, colour of the flag, names of past and current president, forms and levels of governments, name of currency etc. is learnt through a process called political socialisation. Hence this unit explores this concept and how it affects political obligation in a state.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand and explain the concept of political socialisation
- explain socialisation and the process of learning
- identify and explain the agents of socialisation.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Concept of Socialisation**

Socialisation is “the process by which individuals learn the culture of their society” (Harambos and Holborn, 2000:4). Culture itself is “the totality of learned, socially transmitted customs, knowledge, material objects and behaviour. It includes ideas, values and artifacts of groups of people” (Schaefer, 2010:53). Extrapolating from this definition, political socialisation refers to “the process of induction into a political system” (Marshall 1996:400). Ofoeze (2001:13) referred to political socialisation

Inter-alia:

*...the long development process by which an infant (even adult) citizen learns, imbibes and indeed internalizes the political culture (core political values, beliefs, norms and ideology) of his political system so as to make meaning of the world around him*

Culture such as religion, political system, marriage and kinship patterns, political organisations and the economic systems are transferred from one generation to another. For example amongst the Fulani in northern Nigeria a young boy is given cattle to learn how to rear and as he goes the cattle keeps increasing by the time he becomes a full grown man he already knows how to rear cattle's. Also amongst the eguns of Badagry in Lagos State from their young age girls are taught how to prepare and hawk smoke fish and this grows with them this is how they are socialised into their environment.

### **3.2 The Concept of Political Socialisation**

Broadly construed, political socialisation is the transmission of political culture to new generations of citizens in a given society (Almond and Verba, 1963, Gimpel, *et al.*, 2003). It is the product of interlocking sets of macro and micro level phenomena. At the macro or political system level, political socialisation is the means by which polities and other political societies inculcate appropriate norms and practices in citizens, residents, and members (Sapiro, 2004: 2). Polities convey established patterns of thought and action, laws and norms, and traditions and folkways through agencies, such as the family, educational system, peer groups, mass media, political institutions, community organisations religious organisations, and the military (Beck, 1977; Marshall, 1998).

The kinds of questions that are addressed at the macro level focus on “where and how people develop the kinds of political orientations and practices that transform the design of democratic constitutions and institutions into the creation of real, functioning democratic politics” (Sapiro, 2004: 19) At the micro or individual level, political socialisation constitutes “the patterns and processes by which individuals engage in political development and learning, constructing their particular relationships to the political contexts in which they live” (Sapiro, 2004: 3). As a result of political socialisation, individuals acquire knowledge about the political system and how it works. They internalise the society's political value system and ideology, and come to understand its symbols and rituals. They become informed about the role of active and passive members of the polity, and may participate in political and civic life. Having a strong grasp of how the socialisation process works can

provide us with tremendous insights into the changes that are going on in a society and how they are affecting democratic regimes. According to Almond, political socialisation “not only gives us insight into the pattern of political culture and subcultures in [a] society, but also locates for us in the socialisation processes of the society the point where particular qualities and elements are being sustained or modified” (Almond, 1960: 31). In sum, we can define political socialisation as the process by which citizenship orientations are transmitted, is conditioned by shifts in the political, social, and economic contexts at the community, nation-state, and international levels.

### 3.3 Socialisation and Processes of Learning

A child apparently possesses no human nature at birth; at best he is merely a new homo sapiens with human nature potentials that need to be cultivated through the process of socialisation. Smith [1953] has this to say about a new born baby:

*“You came into the world a polymorphous perverse little ape with billions of biological evolution precipitated, so to speak in your dimpled organism. You came naked, without shame, without language, food habits or manual dexterity, ideas or religious faith, without respect for law and order, without any discernible admiration.... You came with no higher desires than to have your capacious belly filled with milk and your somatic and viscera itches scratched by loving hands”*

It has been expressed in literature that new born babies minds are just like a *tabula rasa* an empty slate upon which the society write its norms and values hence as said above socialisation becomes the process through which the new born baby acquires group norms, habits and ideals. However, there are four features of this process of learning group values. These are language, suggestion, imitation and identification. A brief description of these four features is crucial.

- **Language**

Language is the medium of social intercourse. It is the means of cultural transmission. At first the child utters some random syllables which have no meaning, but gradually he comes to learn his mother-tongue. Through language, information is passed down from one generation to another. Each tribe has its own unique language which serves as a means of communication in a society. i.e the Igbo’s have their Igbo dialect , the Ijebu’s have their dialect so also are the Ekitis, Uhrobo’s , Itsekiris , the Ijaws, and the Ogoni’s amongst others.

- **Suggestion**

Suggestion is the process of communicating information, which has no logical or self-evident basis. It is devoid of rational persuasion. It may be conveyed through language, pictures or some similar medium. It influences not only behaviour with others but also one's own private and individual behaviour. In trade, industry, politics, education and every other field people acquainted with psychological facts make use of suggestions to have, their ideas and notions accepted by other people and to make the latter behave according to their wishes. In fact, propaganda and advertising are based on the fundamental psychological principles of suggestion. The suggestibility of the child is greater than that of the adult because in childhood he is devoid of maturity and reason.

The suggestibility of an individual decreases with an increase in his maturity and mental level. It may be however necessary to keep in mind that there can be a difference in the suggestibility of children belonging to different society and also the same society. There are several external and internal conditions, which enhance suggestibility. Thus, temperament, intellectual ability, ignorance, inhibition, dissociation, emotional excitement and fatigue are some of the internal conditions of suggestibility. Among the external condition, mention may be made of group situation, prestige of the suggested and public opinion.

- **Imitation**

According to Tarde cited in Martindale [1970 p.307] "Imitation or repetition, accounts for the transmission, constancy, and spread of social forms." Imitation can be said to be the act of copying by an individual of the actions of other. Thus when may be conscious or unconscious, spontaneous or deliberate, perceptual or ideational. The person imitating performs exactly the same activity as the one being performed before him by the person he is imitating. Imitation therefore, is the main factor in the process of socialisation of the child. Through it he learns many social behaviour patterns. It is because of the tendency to imitate that children are so susceptible to the influence of their parents and friends whose behaviour they imitate indiscriminately. Just like a little girl will copy her mother dressing so it goes for political choices. A parent who supports All Progressive Party (APC) will also have children who supports the same party as children tends to copy their parent's choices when developing.

- **Identification**

In his early age, the child cannot make distinction between his organism and environment. Most of his actions are random. They are natural reaction of which he is not conscious. As he grows in age, he comes to know of the nature of things, which satisfy his needs. Such things become the object of his identification. Thus, the toy with which he plays, the picture book, which he enjoys or looking and the mother who feeds him become the object of his identification. The speed and area of identification increase with the growth in age. Through identification he becomes sociable. Through these process mentioned children learns a lot about the political culture of their environment and passes it down to different generations.

### **3.4 Agents of Political Socialisation**

Political socialisation as a process whereby the political culture of a society is learnt and transferred from one generation to another operates through different agents which include:

**The Family:** First of all, the major source of socialisation is the family. Scholars identify home orientations as an important variable potentially influencing civic learning outcome; particularly with respect to students' interest in political and social issues. The family domain is directly and indirectly influenced by parents. The direct influences evolve through discussions about politics, which are regarded as a key element in democratic society. In general, participation in political discussions with peers and parents proved to be a more influential predictor than civic knowledge. The role of political discussion is seen as a predictor of both feelings of efficacy and expected participation. Furthermore, the behaviour of parents also seems to be important, as activities in the political domain influence other people to follow the same track. On the other hand, political interest and activities are in some way related to each other, even if this is not a causal relationship and the direction of the relationship remains unclear.

#### **The School**

From the school the child obtains skills with which he arms himself to interact with the social world. The teacher replaces the parents giving instructions, directing, and ordering the taught process of the child and helping him to think logically. Examples are given to enable the learner think the way the teacher wants. In this manner regular imitation of the teacher and rehearsing what the child has been taught and assimilating same equips him for eventual role he is expected to play in the larger society and in his family. Here also he internalises values of punctuality,

drudgery, hard-work, independent decision-making and mastery over his tasks and profession.

### **The Peer Group**

This is one major influence in the life of youths as young children are influenced by their peer groups in making choices regarding the political culture of their society. The child also learns a lot from his peers, the group to which a child belongs is a measure of his social or anti-social behaviour. For example, a certain group might be religious and votes for candidate. Just like the 2015 general elections in Nigeria most religiously and up right people voted mostly youths voted for Mohammed Buhari this accounts for the high number of votes from the *almagiri* pupils in the Northern Nigeria. In schools and religious houses children want to join the happening groups in order to exercise their hidden prowess on a lot of social issues. He displays an unalloyed loyalty to the group that offers him voice, recognition and protection. He participates in group activities and in its values and *dis*-values thereby becoming self-conscious. Group identification and loyalty for him becomes intense psychological actualities, of a trans-rational nature.

### **Religious Institutions**

This is one avenue whereby the political culture of a state is passed across generations. Through religious institutions such as churches, mosques political information is passed a crossed. As a matter of fact most of the conveners of these religious institutions are into politics- for instance, Pastor Tunde Bakare of the Latter Rain Assembly, Pastor Chris Okoite of the House Hold of God. These are all men of God that ventured into politics and by that means influence their congregations. They tell their congregation their political rights and admonish them to participate in the electoral process. Religious institutions were a major factor in the success of the 2015 general elections. Most religious institutions admonished their members to come all out and vote for change which they did and which resulted in the success of the 2015 general elections in Nigeria.

### **Mass Media**

This is the most contemporary means through which political socialisation occurs. The political culture and heritage of a polity is learnt through the media. The media is divided into three folds namely: the print media, which mean news papers, magazines, newsletters etc. The electronic media: which is divided into different folds such as Television, Radio? We also have internet media such as E-mails,

Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter e.t.c. through these means people in a polity learn about the political culture of their society.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Political socialisation as a process whereby people of a society learn about the political culture of their environment is important as it influences the political behaviour of person. This process differs across climes and the level and process of political socialisation is a determining factor in the political process in a political system. This accounts for the success or failure in political systems most especially in a democratic.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

From this unit you have learnt that political socialisation is a process by which a child or person learns the political culture of his or her society. Political culture in terms of national anthem, colours of national flag, names of past and present president, names and history of political parties. etc. Also it has established that the process of political socialisation differs across climes and this can account for the success and failure of political systems.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. List and explain the socialisation processes of learning.
2. Discuss the agents of political socialisation.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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- Beck, Paul Allen. 1977. "The Role of Agents in Political Socialisation," In, Stanley Allen Renshon (ed.), *Handbook of Political Socialisation Theory and Research*. New York: The Free Press: 115-142.